



# RDA Governance Document

**Version:** 2.3

**DOI:** [10.15497/RDA00001](https://doi.org/10.15497/RDA00001)

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**Abstract:** The role of the RDA Governance Document is to describe the structures of RDA, and their relationships, that support the activity and principles of RDA, and Council's powers and authority. The Governance Document is the responsibility of the RDA Council.

**Language:** English

**Published:** 19 July 2018

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**Citation and Download:** Research Data Alliance (2018): RDA Governance Document, Version 2.3. DOI: [10.15497/RDA00001](https://doi.org/10.15497/RDA00001).



## **RDA Governance Document**

*Researchers and innovators openly share data across technologies, disciplines, and countries to address the grand challenges of society*

The current global research data landscape is highly fragmented, by disciplines or by domains, from oceanography, life sciences and health, to agriculture, space and climate. When it comes to cross-disciplinary activities, the notions of "building blocks" of common data infrastructures and building specific "data bridges" are becoming accepted metaphors for approaching the data complexity and enable data sharing. The Research Data Alliance enables data to be shared across barriers through outputs developed by focused Working Groups and Interest Groups, formed of experts from around the world and drawn from academia, industry and government. Participation in RDA is open to anyone who agrees to its guiding principles of openness, consensus, balance, harmonisation, with a community driven and non-profit approach.

The role of this RDA Governance Document is to describe the guiding principles of RDA, its structures and their relationships, and Council's powers and authority. The Governance Document is the responsibility of the RDA Council.

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## LOG

V.1	Initial published version (originally working draft 3)
V.2	Updated to reflect the work of the OAB Task Force to clarify the roles of the OAB and Organizational Assembly and maintenance of the Organisation Plan
V.3	Revised figure 2. Expanded introduction. Comments from law firm helping establish the RDA Charity.
V.4 + changes	Base version: V4, dated Oct 2013 + draft changes by Stefanie Kethers in April 2015, in consultation with Mark Parsons
V.5	Changes by RW
V.5.1	Comments from AT, further changes by RW and SK
V5.2	As approved by Council in June 2015
Revisions 2018 V1	Revisions 2018: to revise the RDA Governance Document in line with the new 2018 RDA Strategy
2018 V1.1	Version that went to Council on 14 Feb 2018, following input from Council subgroup and TAB and OAB Chairs
2018 V1.9	Consistency check by AT following on from contributions from KA, AN, JB, BM and others
2018 V2	Final tidy up post Council meeting in Berlin
2018 V2.1	Reorder of headings and consistency check
2018 V2.2	Minor edits, conversion of future tense to present tense (where this makes sense)
2018 V2.3	Version approved by Council on 9 July 2018

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## Introduction and Guiding Principles

The goal of the Research Data Alliance is to accelerate international data-driven innovation and discovery by facilitating research data sharing and exchange. This is achieved through the development, adoption, and deployment of infrastructure, policy, practice, standards, and other outputs, as expressed in the RDA Mission: “The Research Data Alliance (RDA) builds the social and technical bridges that enable open sharing of data”.

To effectively facilitate the achievement of this goal, members of the RDA are asked to subscribe to the following Guiding Principles that underlie and steer the conduct and evolution of the organization.

### Guiding Principles of the RDA:

- **Openness** - Individual membership is open to all interested individuals who subscribe to the RDA's Guiding Principles. RDA community meetings and processes are open, and the outputs of RDA Working Groups are publicly disseminated;
- **Consensus** - The RDA moves forward by achieving consensus among its membership. RDA processes and procedures include appropriate mechanisms to resolve conflicts;
- **Balance** - The RDA seeks to promote balanced representation of its membership and stakeholder communities;
- **Harmonization** - The RDA works to achieve harmonization across data standards, policies, technologies, infrastructure, and communities;
- **Community-driven** - The RDA is a public, community-driven body constituted of volunteer members and organisations, supported by the RDA Secretariat;
- **Non-profit** - RDA does not promote, endorse, or sell commercial products, technologies, or services.

Individual members are also required to abide by the RDA [Code of Conduct](#).

Individual RDA membership is free and open to all interested individuals who subscribe to the RDA's Guiding Principles. Organisations can also become members of the RDA; this is not free but does bring additional advantages. More information on individual and organisational membership can be found in the next sections.

## Participation and Involvement

### Individual Member Participation

Individual Members are actively involved in the work of the RDA and can participate through:

- Working Groups which are engaged in creating outputs that will directly enable data sharing, exchange, or interoperability. Working Groups operate to achieve a defined objective on a finite timeline. These are described in their ratified Case Statements and agreed upon establishment. Upon completion of the Working Group effort as described within the ratified Case Statement, a Working Group will be disbanded. Working Group membership is open to all RDA members; members are volunteers who may be supported by their sponsors or be self-motivated.
- Interest Groups which are comprised of experts from the community that are committed to directly or indirectly enabling data sharing, exchange, or interoperability. Interest Groups serve as a platform for communication and coordination among individuals, outside and within RDA, with shared interests. They produce important deliverables such as surveys, recommendations, reports, and Working Group Case Statements. Interest Group membership is open to all RDA members; members are volunteers who may be supported by their sponsors or be self-motivated.

- The Plenary which is the bi-annual meeting of the RDA. Attendance at the Plenary is strongly encouraged and open to all RDA Individual Members.
- Discussions where ideas are discussed within the scope of the RDA. Any RDA member may participate in the use of the official RDA online platforms.

### **Organisational Member Participation**

Organisations may join the RDA. Organisational Members (OM) provide organisational and operational guidance to Council and the Secretary General. They support the RDA by encouraging and facilitating the adoption of relevant RDA outputs among organisational members to drive broad adoption. Organisational Members should share some or all of the RDA goals and work according to its guiding principles. OM can be of any type, and currently include R&D agencies, for-profit companies and non-profit foundations, community organisations and research institutions. Organisational Members must make an application for membership and are required to pay member fees according to the schedule set out by the RDA. They receive the right to send an RDA Individual Member as their representative to meetings of the Organisational Assembly and to put forward candidates for the Organisational Advisory Board, one of the RDA's key governing bodies. Amongst other roles, the Assembly is asked to comment on RDA Working Group proposals before acceptance and to review the outputs of Working and Interest Groups from an adoption perspective.

It is desirable that Organisational Members of the RDA

- work to accelerate international data-driven innovation and discovery by facilitating research data sharing and exchange, use and re-use, standards harmonisation, and discoverability; and
- send an RDA Individual Member as representative to attend and vote in the Organisational Assembly (OA) meetings.

The Organisational Assembly (OA) is the body of representatives from the Organisational Members and Organisational Affiliates (see below). The OA meets during RDA Plenaries. The Organisational Assembly also elects the Organisational Advisory Board (OAB), which provides advice to Council on adoption of RDA Outputs, and the directions, processes, and mechanisms of RDA. At least one chair of the OAB serves as a consensus-forming but non-voting observer member of Council.

The processes governing Organisational Members, Organisational Affiliates, the Organisational Assembly and the Organisational Advisory Board are described in the Organisational Membership Processes document.

### **Affiliation with other Organisations**

The Research Data Alliance wishes to work with likeminded organisations in order to coordinate efforts in mutual areas of interest and to avoid unnecessary duplication and conflict. The processes governing Organisational Affiliates are described in the Organisational Membership Processes document.

## **Governing and Supporting Bodies of the RDA**

The governing and supporting bodies of the RDA provide the environment to support the work of the Individual Members, Organisational Members and Affiliates, Interest Groups, Working Groups, and Plenary, and ensure that the organisational perspective remains focused on the longer term aims of the Research Data Alliance.

The RDA Governing Bodies are:

- **Council:** The Council is responsible for maintaining the vision of RDA, ensuring the guiding principles of the organisation are maintained, and formally endorsing official RDA documents, group Case Statements/Charters, as well as the outcomes of the RDA activities in line with RDA

principles. The Council is responsible for the overall oversight, success, strategy, and sustainability of the RDA. The powers and authority of the Council are described in this document. Council members are the Trustees of the Research Data Alliance Foundation and have the financial and legal responsibilities described in the Articles of Association. Details of the processes governing Council membership and responsibilities are described in the Organisational and Process Plan document.

- **TAB:** The Technical Advisory Board (TAB) is responsible for the technical direction of the RDA and provides technical expertise and advice to the Council, as well as helping to develop and review RDA Working and Interest Groups to promote their impact and effectiveness. Membership of the TAB is elected from the RDA membership. At least one co-chair of the Technical Advisory Board serves as a consensus-forming but non-voting member of Council and of the OAB. The responsibilities of the Technical Advisory Board are described in the RDA TAB Responsibilities and Processes document.
- **OAB:** The Organisational Advisory Board (OAB) provides advice to the RDA Council. The OAB advises Council on the adoption of outputs, directions, processes, and mechanisms of RDA. At least one co-chair of the OAB serves as a consensus-forming but non-voting member of Council. The responsibilities of the Organisational Advisory Board are described in the Organisational Membership Process document.

The RDA Supporting Body is:

- **Secretariat:** The Secretariat supports the administrative, logistical, and other activities of the RDA by implementing the processes defined in the planning documents. This includes supporting the Membership and Bodies of the RDA in their undertaking of RDA activities. The Secretariat is responsible for the RDA Organisational and Process Plan document, which describes how the RDA works, its decision making, mechanisms, and general processes. The Secretariat is led by a Secretary General who is appointed by and reports to Council. The Secretary General serves as a consensus-forming but non-voting member of Council. The Secretariat is responsible for the operation of the RDA including development and maintenance of the annual work plan. An annual budget proposal is prepared by the Secretariat for Council review and approval.

An individual can only serve on one of the RDA governing and supporting bodies at a time.

In addition to the above formal RDA bodies, the chairs of the Working and Interest Groups meet informally at Plenaries (when TAB holds a joint session with them to discuss issues of common interest) and between Plenaries (typically around June in Europe and around December in the US). These meetings are not official RDA meetings.

## RDA Constituent Bodies in Detail

This section provides more detail for each of the constituent bodies (which includes the governing and supporting bodies outline above) of the RDA. The characteristics, roles and responsibilities of these bodies are expected to evolve over time as the organization acquires more experience and continues to evolve its structure for effectiveness and impact.

### Individual Members

<b>Function</b>	Active involvement in the work of the RDA.
<b>Membership</b>	Membership is open to any individual who subscribes to the RDA Guiding Principles.
<b>Joining</b>	Any individual may join the Research Data Alliance; they do so through the RDA website.
<b>Leaving</b>	Members may leave by contacting the Secretariat for removal from the RDA mailing lists and forums. Individual Membership can be revoked in respect of any member who is found not to be operating in line with the aims of the RDA or adhering to its Code of Conduct. The procedures for this and appeal mechanisms will be described in the Organisational and Process Plan.
<b>Duration</b>	There is no term limit on membership.
<b>Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members may participate in all RDA Forums, Plenaries, Working and Interest Groups and other open activities.</li> <li>Members receive regular updates on the work of RDA.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members are expected to subscribe to the Guiding Principles and goals of the RDA.</li> <li>Members are required to abide by the RDA Code of Conduct.</li> <li>Members are encouraged to be active members, i.e. to participate in RDA Discussion Forums, Interest Groups, Working Groups, Plenaries, etc.</li> <li>Members are encouraged to comment on Candidate Case Statements, Charters, RDA Outputs, plans and documents, and within open community discussions.</li> <li>Members are encouraged to promote the RDA and its outputs to the broader community to contribute to the effectiveness and the impact of the organisation.</li> </ul>

### Organisational Members

<b>Function</b>	To provide an organisational perspective on the work of RDA, to provide perspective on current and future technical requirements and to enhance adoption of the outputs of RDA Working and Interest Groups. Organisational and affiliate members designate Individual Members as representatives to the Organisational Assembly.
<b>Membership</b>	Membership is open to any organisation that subscribes to the RDA Guiding Principles and submits the required fees.
<b>Joining</b>	Organisational Members apply to join through the RDA website.
<b>Leaving</b>	Organisational Membership is annual, and is renewed upon payment of an annual fee. Council approves and removes affiliate members and delegates the decision on organisational member expiration (e.g. non-payment of annual fee) and revocation (e.g. non-compliance with RDA guiding principles) to OAB. Where necessary Council

	will make the final decision. The procedures for this and appeal mechanisms will be described in the Organisational Membership Processes document.
<b>Duration</b>	There is no term limit on membership.
<b>Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in all RDA Organisational Forums.</li> <li>• Receive regular, customized updates on the work of the RDA.</li> <li>• Attend Organisational Assembly meetings and vote on proposed policies for consideration by the RDA Council and for members of the Organisational Advisory Board (OAB), with one vote per Organisational Member. Organisational member views are represented on Council through the OAB co-chairs</li> <li>• Provide advice to Council through the Organisational Advisory Board.</li> <li>• Be recognised on the RDA Website and at RDA Meetings as a supporter of data interoperability.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work towards the aims of the RDA and subscribe to the RDA Guiding Principles.</li> <li>• Contribute financial support to the RDA at a level defined in the published fee structure for the term of their membership.</li> <li>• Participate in the Organisational Assembly.</li> <li>• Generally adhere to the “<a href="#">Norms for contributing to and using RDA products</a>” when contributing to the development, review, and implementation of formal RDA Recommendations.</li> </ul>

## RDA Working Groups

<b>Function</b>	Working Groups (WGs) are engaged in creating Recommendations that will directly enable data sharing, exchange, or interoperability. Working Groups must produce at least one Recommendation but can also produce other kinds of outputs. Working Groups operate to a defined objective and on a finite timeline.
<b>Membership</b>	Working Groups are open to participation from all RDA members. Members are international experts, and ideally the group spans at least 3 continents.
<b>Creation</b>	<p>Working groups are expected to 1) propose one or more concrete impact-oriented Recommendation(s), 2) include a plan for adoption of the Recommendation(s) within the proposed timeframe and by Working Group members, and 3) articulate within the Case Statement what specific community will benefit by adoption of the Recommendation(s) and include representatives of this community within the proposed Working Group membership.</p> <p>A Working Group is established once the Working Group Case Statement has been endorsed by Council. Each Working Group has two or more Working Group co-chairs who serve as the point of contact for the Working Group.</p>
<b>Duration</b>	The Working Group is expected to provide a duration and timeline for activity in the Case Statement. Working Groups are expected to have a duration of no more than 18 months.
<b>Termination</b>	Working Groups are normally disbanded upon completion of the Recommendation(s) described within their endorsed Case Statement or at the end of the timeframe

	designated within their Case Statement. Other possible outcomes as described in <a href="#">Creating or Joining an RDA Working Group</a> are decided on a case by case basis.
<b>Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working Groups have access to appropriate administrative and communications support from the RDA Secretariat.</li> <li>Working Groups' efforts are supported by technical expertise and guidance from the Technical Advisory Board.</li> <li>Working Group Recommendations and other outputs are widely promoted and distributed by RDA, the Council, and the OA.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working Groups are responsible for carrying out the work described in their endorsed Case Statement without any major variance in scope or stated outputs.</li> <li>Working Groups are responsible for the initial adoption of their Recommendation(s) within a community of impact during the duration of the Working Group effort.</li> <li>Working Groups are responsible for presenting their work at Plenary meetings and working with the RDA on promotion and outreach about their Recommendation(s) and other outputs.</li> <li>Working Groups are encouraged to conduct open discussions on the RDA online platform during the course of their work.</li> <li>Working Groups are responsible for upholding the RDA Guiding Principles, including achievement of progress via consensus.</li> </ul>

## RDA Interest Groups

<b>Function</b>	Interest Groups (IGs) form to investigate and discuss any issues relevant to the RDA. Interest Groups are comprised of experts from the community that are committed to directly or indirectly enabling data sharing, exchange, or interoperability. Interest Groups serve as a platform for communication and coordination among individuals, outside and within RDA, with shared interests. Interest Groups cannot produce Recommendations but can produce other kinds of outputs. They produce deliverables such as surveys, recommendations, reports, and Working Group Case Statements.
<b>Membership</b>	Interest Groups are open to participation from all RDA members. Members should be international experts, and ideally the group should span at least 3 continents.
<b>Creation</b>	An Interest Group is established once the Interest Group Charter has been endorsed by Council. Each Interest Group has two or more Interest Group Chairs who serve as the point of contact for the Interest Group.
<b>Duration</b>	There is no fixed duration for an Interest Group.
<b>Termination</b>	Interest Groups are disbanded on request or when, in the opinion of Council and after seeking advice from TAB, they are deemed to be inactive.
<b>Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest Groups have access to appropriate administrative and communications support from the RDA Secretariat.</li> <li>Interest Groups' efforts are supported by technical expertise and guidance from the Technical Advisory Board and Organisational Assembly.</li> </ul>

<b>Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest Groups are responsible for progressing the activities described in their Charter.</li> <li>• Interest Groups are expected to participate in Plenaries on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Interest Groups are encouraged to conduct open discussions on the RDA online platform during the course of their work.</li> <li>• Interest Groups are responsible for upholding the RDA Guiding Principles, including achievement of progress via consensus.</li> </ul>
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## RDA Secretariat

<b>Function</b>	The Secretariat supports the activities of the RDA, including logistical, scheduling, and other support. The Secretariat is responsible for maintaining, evolving, and getting Council approval for an annual Operations Plan. The Secretariat is funded through the RDA budget.
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>The Secretariat is led by a Secretary General, who is appointed and reviewed by Council. The Secretary General is responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the distributed Secretariat. All members of the Secretariat work under the direction of the Secretary General. The Secretary General reports to Council. Poor performance by the Secretary General may result in dismissal by Council.</p> <p>Secretariat staff members are appointed according to local arrangements. The size and constitution of Secretariat staff will be described in the annual Operations Plan and approved by Council.</p>
<b>Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Secretary General participates as a consensus-forming but non-voting member of the RDA Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Expectations and Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Secretary General is the company secretary of the RDA Foundation.</li> <li>• The Secretary General is expected to provide operational and financial oversight to Council.</li> <li>• The Secretariat will support the activities of the IGs, WGs, Plenary, Council, OAB and TAB as appropriate including logistical, administrative, and other support.</li> <li>• The Secretariat is responsible for operating the RDA in line with the RDA planning documents, including the RDA Organisational and Process Plan and the RDA Operations Plan.</li> <li>• The Secretariat is responsible for preparing and maintaining an annual Operations Plan which is approved by Council. The Operations plan includes a Financial plan, Staffing plan, and Activities plan.</li> <li>• The Secretariat is responsible for event and other planning for the RDA bi- annual Plenaries.</li> <li>• The Secretariat is responsible for communications and promotion of RDA efforts and outputs, including the development of appropriate reports to stakeholder groups and partners.</li> <li>• The Secretariat is responsible for open dissemination of RDA strategic documents, including the RDA Organisational and Process Plan, and the RDA Operations Plan.</li> <li>• The Secretariat is expected to work with the Council Nominations Committee and the TAB to conduct elections for Council and TAB members respectively.</li> </ul>

## RDA Technical Advisory Board

<b>Function</b>	The Technical Advisory Board (TAB) is responsible for the technical direction of the RDA and provides technical expertise and advice to the Council, as well as helping to develop and review RDA Working and Interest Groups to promote their impact and effectiveness.
<b>Membership</b>	<p>Members of the TAB are elected from and by the RDA membership. Each year, approximately one-third of the TAB stand down and their positions are filled by election. TAB members normally serve for a term of 3 years and may be re-elected for an additional term. Details of the processes governing TAB membership are described in the TAB Responsibilities and Processes document.</p> <p>The Technical Advisory Board chooses one co-Chair annually for a term of two years. The two co-chairs co-ordinate the work of the Technical Advisory Board.</p>
<b>Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TAB is supported by the Secretariat in executing its activities.</li> <li>• At least one of the co-Chairs of the Technical Advisory Board participates as a consensus-forming but non-voting observer member of the RDA Council.</li> <li>• At least one of the co-Chairs of the Technical Advisory Board participates as a consensus-forming but non-voting observer member of the Organisational Advisory Board.</li> </ul>
<b>Expectations and Responsibilities</b>	<p>The Technical Advisory Board has three streams of activity: technical, strategic, and organisational. In each of these, TAB members should not promote special interests, domains, regions or disciplines.</p> <p>From a strategic perspective, TAB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides advice to Council to inform strategic approaches and decisions;</li> <li>• Advises RDA membership and Council on impact-oriented WG opportunities and discussion topics.</li> </ul> <p>From a technical perspective, TAB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivates candidate Interest Group Charters, Working Group Case Statements, and RDA Outputs that promote the RDA goals of adoption and impact;</li> <li>• Assesses candidate Working Group Case Statements and Interest Group Charters and provides feedback to ensure they are achievable and meet RDA goals;</li> <li>• Assigns a TAB member as liaison for each Working Group and Interest Group;</li> <li>• Works with RDA Working and Interest Groups and the OAB to promote adoption and effectiveness of their Outputs;</li> <li>• Works with Council if requested to evaluate Interest Group and Working Group outputs;</li> <li>• Works with the OAB to help them evaluate WG and IG Outputs;</li> <li>• Works with Working and Interest Group chairs ahead of Plenaries to solicit attendance and assist them with their session proposals.</li> </ul> <p>From an organisational perspective, TAB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops the group meeting schedule for Plenaries to minimise clashes.</li> </ul>

## RDA Organisational Advisory Board

<b>Function</b>	The Organisational Advisory Board (OAB) is constituted from representatives of RDA Organisational Members and Affiliates and provides advice to Council on RDA organisational and process issues, overarching strategy, etc.
<b>Membership</b>	<p>Organisational Members nominate an Individual Member of the RDA as representative of the organisation to be a member of the Organisational Assembly (OA), which in turn elects the OAB. The election process is described in the RDA Organisational Membership Processes document. Member organisations may also designate alternate representatives. Only one representative from each organisation can vote at any particular OA meeting. Member organisations may replace their organisational representatives or alternates at their discretion.</p> <p>The Organisational Advisory Board chooses one co-Chair annually for a term of two years. The two co-chairs co-ordinate the work of the Organisational Advisory Board</p>
<b>Duration</b>	Organisational members may serve on the OAB as long as their organisations are approved Organisational Members of the RDA. Council approves and removes affiliate members and delegates the decision on organisational member expiration (e.g. non-payment of annual fee) and revocation (e.g. non-compliance with RDA guiding principles) to OAB. Where necessary Council will make the final decision.
<b>Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The OAB is supported by the Secretariat in executing its activities.</li> <li>• At least one of the co-chairs of the Organisational Advisory Board participates as a consensus-forming but non-voting observer member of the RDA Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Expectations and Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The OAB provides input to Council on any aspect of RDA's work, with a particular remit to consider the organisational processes, structure, strategic direction, and sustainability of the RDA and the adoptability of RDA outputs.</li> <li>• The OAB provides input to the RDA Organisational and Process Plan.</li> <li>• OAB members are expected to subscribe to the RDA Guiding Principles and attend OAB meetings and the bi-annual Plenaries.</li> <li>• OAB members are expected to act as conduits between their organisations and the RDA.</li> </ul>

## RDA Council

<b>Function</b>	The Council is the decision-making body of the RDA, receiving and deciding on recommendations from the RDA membership and other bodies. Evidence of a rough consensus is a key factor in Council decision-making. The Council is responsible for the overall oversight, success, strategy, business plan and sustainability of the RDA.
<b>Membership</b>	Council is an elected body of the RDA. Its voting members are "statespersons" committed to enabling broad and robust international scientific and research data infrastructures, and not to promoting special interests, regions, domains or disciplines. There are three kinds of consensus-forming but non-voting members of the RDA Council: Chairs of the Technical Advisory Board, Chairs of the Organisational Advisory Board, and the Secretary General. Council terms are structured so that 3 voting members of Council are elected each year.

<b>Election</b>	<p>Candidate Council members are nominated by a Nomination Committee, a committee of the Council that is responsible for nominating Council members. The Nomination Committee is appointed by the current RDA Council. Details of the membership of the Nomination Committee (including the conditions for admission to and termination of such membership) and the regulations governing Nomination Committee proceedings are set out in the RDA Organisational Process Plan document.</p> <p>The Nomination Committee calls for nominations through the RDA Secretariat. The Nomination Committee then provides a set of three candidates, taking into account individual capability, the purpose of council, and the balance of council membership. This set is presented to the Plenary and the recommendation of the Nomination Committee is either accepted, or rejected by simple majority. If the recommendation is rejected, the process re-commences for consideration at the following plenary.</p> <p>Each year, council normally selects one co-chair to serve a two-year term, at the first face to face meeting after the close of the election period. Each co-chair should have an overlapping term with the other co-chair. The two co-chairs coordinate the work of the Council.</p> <p>When the end of a co-chair's term goes beyond the termination of their term on Council, the co-chair in question may be asked, with the approval of Council members, to extend their term to ensure a smooth, efficient and timely handover to the new co-chair.</p>
<b>Term</b>	<p>Council member term is for three years and members may re-nominate themselves for one successive term. Council members whose term ends officially step down when the voting for the next set of Council member candidates closes and if accepted by the majority. If the candidates are not elected by the majority, then the existing council members remain in office until new council members are elected.</p> <p>When a Council Member's term is completed they will hand over their responsibilities in an orderly fashion to their successor.</p> <p>Council members are expected to actively contribute to the work of the RDA Council, and in the event of non-attendance for the duration of one year, their term will be viewed as effectively completed and they will be invited to resign from the Council.</p>
<b>Expectations and Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Council members are expected to participate in all Council and Plenary meetings.</li> <li>● Council members are expected to contribute to and represent the RDA in a manner that facilitates the successful accomplishment of its goals, mission and vision.</li> <li>● Council is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the RDA Operations Plan, including the annual plan of activities and budget which sets the organisational membership framework.</li> <li>● Council is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the RDA Organisational and Process Plan.</li> <li>● Council approves and removes affiliate members and delegates the decision on organisational member expiration (e.g. non-payment of annual fee) and</li> </ul>

	<p>revocation (e.g. non-compliance with RDA guiding principles) to OAB. Where necessary, Council will make the final decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council is responsible for reviewing and evaluating all candidate IG Charters, WG Case Statements for impact and alignment with the goal of the RDA.</li> <li>• Council endorses Working Group Recommendations upon demonstration of community consensus and successful adoption.</li> <li>• Council is responsible for setting RDA's strategic direction and disseminating it by maintaining and evolving the RDA Strategic Plan.</li> <li>• Council is responsible for the ultimate vote on governance and organisational matters.</li> <li>• Council is responsible for the long-term financial sustainability of the Research Data Alliance (see note below).</li> <li>• Council members are the Trustees of the Research Data Alliance Foundation and have the financial and legal responsibilities described in the Articles of Association.</li> </ul>
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### **RDA Council Sub Committees**

RDA Council Sub committees are focused groups responsible for aspects of the RDA Council's work. They consider specific topics and provide recommendations and options for RDA Council to decide. The membership of these Council Sub committees is mostly drawn from the membership of the RDA Council and TAB and OAB Representatives at Council, as well as the RDA Secretary General. Other RDA members can also be invited to join.

In addition to the standing Finance, Legal and Nomination sub committees, other sub committees may be created on a standing or ad hoc basis as required. Sub committees are dissolved when their work is complete. Ultimate responsibility and authority for the work of the sub committees lies with Council itself. Sub committees are expected to report to Council on a regular basis, with the mechanism and frequency to be determined by Council for each subgroup.

#### *RDA Council Finance Sub Committee*

<b>Function</b>	The Finance Sub Committee is responsible for the oversight and due vigilance of the finances of the RDA. The sub committee is also responsible for the financial audit of the RDA Foundation. The sub committee monitors and reports on the RDA finances at every RDA Council meeting and brings to the attention of the Council all issues arising. Support is provided by the RDA Secretariat, and expert audit advice is secured as required.
<b>Membership</b>	Membership comprises three Council members, preferably from different regions, the Secretary General, the assistant for finances of the Secretariat and an OAB member. Membership is agreed by the RDA Council.
<b>Duration</b>	<p>Membership is for the duration of the member's term of election (for members of Council or OAB) or as invited by Council for other members.</p> <p>Upon completion of their terms, members hand over their responsibilities in an orderly fashion to their successors.</p>

	Finance Sub committee members are expected to contribute actively to the work of the sub committee, and in the event of non-contribution for longer than one year, the member is invited to resign from the sub committee.
<b>Rights</b>	The Finance Sub committee is supported by the RDA Secretariat, and expert audit advice will be secured as required.
<b>Expectations and Responsibilities</b>	<p>The Council Finance Sub committee is responsible for the financial oversight of the centralized funds of the RDA and all funds in the RDA Foundation. Funding for individual RDA regions is not the responsibility of the sub committee.</p> <p>The sub committee is responsible for reporting on all aspects of the finances to the RDA Council, and bringing to the attention of Council any and all issues arising.</p> <p>The sub committee is responsible for the audit of the RDA Foundation.</p>

#### *RDA Council Legal Sub Committee*

<b>Function</b>	The Legal Sub committee is responsible for the oversight and due vigilance of the legal affairs of the RDA.
<b>Membership</b>	Membership comprises legal experts from the RDA membership in addition to three Council members, preferably from different regions. Membership is agreed by the RDA Council.
<b>Duration</b>	<p>For Council members, membership is for the duration of the Council member's term. Upon completion of their terms, members hand over their responsibilities in an orderly fashion to their successors.</p> <p>Invited legal experts from the RDA membership are appointed for a three-year term.</p> <p>Legal Sub committee members are expected to contribute actively to the work of the sub committee, and in the event of non-contribution for longer than one year, the member will be invited to resign from the sub committee.</p>
<b>Rights</b>	The Legal Sub committee is supported by the RDA Secretariat, and expert legal advice is secured as required.

<b>Expectations and Responsibilities</b>	<p>The Council Legal Sub Committee is responsible for the oversight of legal aspects of the organization including the RDA Foundation. Individual regional legal issues are not the responsibility of the sub committee.</p> <p>Legal issues may include (and are not limited to) IPR and brand of the RDA, Data Protection for RDA, indemnification and contracts.</p> <p>The sub committee is responsible for reporting on all aspects of legal issues to the RDA Council, and bringing to the attention of Council any and all issues arising.</p>
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#### *RDA Council Nomination Committee*

<b>Function</b>	<p>Candidate Council members are nominated by a Nomination Committee, a subcommittee of the Council that is responsible for nominating Council members.</p> <p>The Nomination Committee calls for nominations through the RDA Secretariat. The Nomination Committee then provides a set of three candidates, taking into account individual capability, the purpose of council, and the balance of council membership. This set is presented to the Plenary and the recommendation of the Nomination Committee is either accepted, or rejected by simple majority. If the recommendation is rejected, the process re-commences for consideration at the following plenary.</p>
<b>Membership</b>	The Nomination Committee is appointed by the current RDA Council. Details of the membership of the Nomination Committee (including the conditions for admission to and termination of such membership) and the regulations governing Nomination Committee proceedings are set out in the RDA Organisational and Process Plan.
<b>Duration</b>	Membership is for a one year term.
<b>Rights</b>	The Nomination Committee is supported by the RDA Secretariat.
<b>Expectations and Responsibilities</b>	The RDA Nomination Committee is responsible for nominating Council members.

In addition to the RDA Council Sub Committees described above, during 2017-2018, four drafting sub committees are working on the development of RDA Strategy for 2018 - 2021. These sub committees are considering: RDA Value Proposition, Financial Sustainability, Growth Management and Regional Engagement. These drafting sub committees are effectively 'task and finish' sub committees and will dissolve when their work is completed. The Regional Engagement strategy may lead to the creation of new roles or responsibilities for Council, and potentially an expanded membership for Council to include Regional Liaisons / Leaders. If so, this document will be updated accordingly.