



United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)

UN-GGIM Academic Network Americas (ANA)

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Objective

The primary objective of the UN-GGIM Academic Network Americas (ANA) is to academically support the aims and objectives of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) in the Americas region.

The Academic Network Americas will facilitate access to research and education for UN-GGIM by producing knowledge in the region's main languages. The UN-GGIM Academic Network Americas will be comprised of recognized universities and education centers involved in the research and development of geospatial information and related matters in different parts of the Americas. Academic Network Americas will be a subsidiary of the UN-GGIM World Academic Network and membership will be on a volunteer basis.

Functions

The following are the main functions of the Academic Network Americas:

- a) Provide academic advice to the UN-GGIM: Americas Committee of Experts on subjects involving strategic knowledge, research, education and training in geospatial information management.
- b) Provide a coordination and dialogue forum for academics and researchers from the geospatial information management community with a view to advancing activities related to the competencies and qualifications needed for the administration, management, and use of geospatial information.
- c) Serve as a subsidiary arm for UN-GGIM World Academic Network and its related organizations and affiliated members so that they can achieve their visions and goals based on needs in the Americas.
- d) Undertake activities that foster collaboration amongst universities and research centers in the Americas; this includes identifying and addressing common research topics and overarching trends.
- e) Elaborate academic strategies according to the UN-GGIM Americas Plan of Action.
- f) Identify the challenges and opportunities in which UN-GGIM World Academic Network and UN- GGIM: Americas can promote inclusion and development based on an academic response.
- g) Promote links with the UN-GGIM Americas Private Sector Network.

- h) Translate important documents from the World Network into Spanish, Portuguese, and French where appropriate or in English if it is necessary.
- i) Advise on UN-GGIM capacity building programs in the Americas region.
- j) Identify and inform UN-GGIM concerning gaps in academic knowledge or problems that may exist or arise, and propose initiatives when appropriate to address such questions and challenges;
- k) Create an inventory of leading education programs and recommend them to UN-GGIM actors.
- l) Encourage countries in the Americas to undertake research and academic work that contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and other areas related to the UN-GGIM Americas specific agenda.
- m) Encourage the development and sharing of geospatial analytical tools and technologies in the Americas.
- n) Maintain an exchange site on the Internet, which contributes to the functions described above.

Membership, Composition, and Terms of Office

Membership

- a) Only universities, academic institutions, and research centers that have a direct link with UN-GGIM Americas' topics of interest and that are headquartered in participating nations of the UN-GGIM Americas may apply for membership through an online application form.
- b) Members of the UN-GGIM World Academic Network will be automatically accepted.
- c) Membership is free of charge.
- d) A member may withdraw from ANA after having informed the Chair or Secretariat with thirty days' written notice. Such notice shall be delivered electronically.

Composition

- e) ANA will elect a Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary, and a four-member Advisory Board for the operation and coordination of the Academic Network, for a period of four years. The group composed of the Chair, Deputy Chair and Secretary will form the Executive Committee. Ideally all members of the Advisory board will be from different countries in the Americas.
- f) Candidates for Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and members of the Advisory Board may be nominated by any of the officially listed delegates from any current member organization. Only delegates from an existing member organization may be elected for these positions.

- g) Chair, Deputy Chair, Executive Secretary and the Advisory Board will be elected at the meetings of ANA, which could take place with the meeting of the Regional Committee of UN GGIM: Americas.
- h) Chair, Deputy Chair, Executive Secretary and Advisory Board can be re-elected; however, no single person can remain in the position for more than two consecutive terms. After an interval of one or more periods, they may be eligible once again.
- i) ANA will review and modify, as needed, its Terms of Reference every two years, which will be ratified by the Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and the four members of the advisory board.
- j) In the event of the temporary or permanent absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair will assume his/ her functions during the temporary absence, and, if absence is permanent, a new Chair will be elected at the next meeting of ANA.
- k) If there is a vacancy for Deputy Chair or Executive Secretary during the term between the meetings of ANA, the Advisory board will internally elect a member, until a new representative is appointed, the deadline for which is the next meeting of the Regional Committee. If this does not take place, the Advisory Board will request applications from other member countries to elect the new Deputy Chair or Executive Secretary to occupy the position for the rest of the period. If more than one country proposes itself as candidate to occupy the vacancy, an election will be held by the members of ANA to determine the new member of the Advisory Board.
- l) If another vacancy in the Advisory Board appears during the term between Regional meetings of ANA, the Advisory Board will request that the member country in charge of the vacancy position designates another member from the same nation to occupy the position until the end of the period. If this is not possible, the Advisory Board will request nominations from other member countries, and may elect the new member of the Advisory Board as a replacement to act until the next meeting of ANA. If there is more than one country posing as a candidate to occupy the vacancy, then an election will take place to determine the new member of the Advisory Board.

Functions and Responsibilities of the Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary, and the Advisory Board

- a) Chair and Secretary of the ANA will send operational correspondence to delegates from each member institution.
- b) Functions of the Secretary:
 - Receive membership applications, maintain list of contacts, and distribute the Executive Committee's correspondence.
 - Maintain the lists of the member institutions, delegates, and subsidiaries.
- c) The Executive Committee will decide on the management of the Network and will coordinate the tasks.

- d) The Advisory Board and Executive Committee will collectively define the general guidelines, membership applications, and academic actions. The elected chair has casting vote in the event of divisions.
- e) ANA will meet regularly at the UN-GGIM America regional meeting of the Committee of Experts, the High Level Forum, and any other formal meetings.
- f) ANA will liaise, as required, with other international academic groups and non-government organizations that may have an interest in the management of geospatial information to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Membership Process

- a) In order to become an ANA member, an Expression of Interest (EOI) form should be submitted online.
- b) All membership applications will be reviewed and evaluated by the ANA Advisory Board and Executive Committee.

Members

- c) Through its delegates or other members, each member organization is expected to substantively contribute to the work of at least one UN-GGIM Americas initiative each year. In the event that a member ceases to actively participate for two years, the President will send a query to the hierarch of the university center about his interest in staying in the network. In front of absence of response, the respective center will be discharged;
- d) There is no limit to the number of universities, academic institutions and research centers from any one country that may qualify for and be granted membership.
- e) Any person affiliated with a member institution (faculty, researcher, administrator, student, etc.) may volunteer to contribute to committee work and attend Academic Network meetings. Any person may become a member on the individual's own request or by nomination from another Network officer or institution delegate.
- f) The principal delegate of each member organization will be designated by the center to which he belongs, at the time of the nomination and in case of change of delegate, the president and secretary of ANA must expressly notify the authorities of the center that have made the nomination.
- g) After reviewing all candidates' documentation, the lead delegate of current member organizations qualified to vote will receive an automated email sent to their official address asking them to rank vote all nominees for the position. Lead delegates will be given five days to cast their ranked votes. All voters receive the results of the election process from the system at the same time that the Secretariat receives the results.

Specific activities

To achieve these objectives, the ANA initial work plan will focus on the following:

- a) The first meeting, which will be in Cartagena, Colombia and will be held as part of the FIG Commission 7 Conference and Annual Meeting that is taking place from 4th- 8th December 2017.

- b) Reviewing the current UN-GGIM WGs' work plan to identify areas that need support and input;
- c) Promoting the AmericaNetwork to potential member institutions;
- d) Registering current capabilities, degree programs, training programs, research, and courses that are relevant to UN-GGIM and part of the membership application process; additional mechanisms can also be used.

Note: The Registry will only hold the information related to universities and research centers interested in collaborating on a voluntary basis with UN-GGIM. The member institutions have the responsibility to update the Registry.

Reporting procedure

ANA Executive Committee will report annually to the UN-GGIM Academic Network and to the UN-GGIM Americas board.

Frequency of Meetings and Communication

- a) ANA will normally operate virtually, will meet in concurrence with related geospatial meetings, and will also officially meet during each UN-GGIM Committee of Experts and High Level Forums. ANA does not have funds, by its own, to finance attendance at these events.
- b) The UN-GGIM website and other relevant telecommunication tools will be used by ANA for communication, collaboration, knowledge management, information sharing, and dissemination.

Indicators for success

- Annual Number of universities/research centers answering the questionnaire
- Annual number of members involved in ANA, members, and affiliates
- Annual number of ANA representatives attending UN-GGIM meetings (High level, Expert, Region, Working Group, etc.)
- Annual number of academic activities promoted by ANA.