

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES TRADUCTEURS

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF TRANSLATORS

FIT Task Force and Standing Committee Guidelines

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Objective

FIT Task Forces and Standing Committees serve as the foundation for a large part of the Federation's efforts on behalf of its members. Task Force and Standing Committee members are volunteers with special skills and/or special interests who have agreed to contribute time and energy to the benefit of FIT. The objective of these Guidelines is to facilitate and harmonise the activities of Task Forces and Standing Committees.

Small working groups that are set up ad hoc by any Council member and have a planned maximum term of three months are not subject to these Guidelines.

General Provisions

Task Forces and Standing Committees are governed by the provisions of Section VI of the FIT Rules of Procedure and by these Guidelines.

The FIT Council will continuously monitor the activities of Task Forces and Standing Committees and may intervene if it feels that no or inadequate progress is being made. If deemed necessary, it may appoint new or additional members and may propose a new Chair.

Questions and issues concerning a Task Force or a Standing Committee are to be submitted to the Chair. Should the Chair not be able to assist, the Council member on the Task Force acting as liaison may put the question to the Council.

The facilities and publicity channels available to Task Forces and Standing Committees are detailed in Appendix 1.

I - FIT TASK FORCES

Establishment of a Task Force

The establishing body, which is either the Statutory Congress or the Council, determines the precise mandate and term of office and has to appoint at least three members of the Task Force.

It is important that the Task Force gathers expertise and experience from the wider FIT membership. A general call for nominations will immediately be issued. Nominations have to be submitted jointly by the relevant association and the nominee. Once the call is closed, the Council should ratify the Task Force members within two weeks.

Following this ratification, a Task Force Chair has to be elected from amongst the Task Force members within two weeks. No later than four weeks after his or her election, the elected Task Force Chair must submit a Task Force proposal containing the work plan and budget to the Council for approval.

Eligibility

Any member of a FIT regular or associate member in good standing is eligible to serve on a Task Force, provided he or she has the support of his or her association and the necessary skill, knowledge and interest. The Council may also nominate any of its own members.

Members of a Task Force may be appointed for a maximum of three consecutive terms of office. They are not eligible to be nominated to any Task Force or Standing Committee of similar nature until a three-year hiatus has lapsed.

Experts from outside FIT may be called in to assist a Task Force; they have no voting rights.

Election of Task Force Chair

The Task Force Chair is elected by the Task Force members by open majority vote. At the request of any member of the Task Force, the Chair may be elected by secret ballot. In such case, the Council will designate a person to organise the election.

Council Liaison Observer

The Task Force must have at least one Council member. Where the only such Council member is Task Force Chair or where there is no Council member included in the Task Force, a dedicated Council member has to be appointed by the Council as an observer member of the e-group to act as liaison to the Council. This Council Liaison Observer participates in all activities of the Task Force except voting and has to inform the Task Force of any Council decision affecting its work and of any other relevant matter.

Members' Engagement

All members must participate regularly and in a positive way in the e-group discussion to facilitate the work. Task Force members, outside experts and Council Liaison Observers must respect the confidentiality of discussions. If possible, regular virtual meetings should be held to advance the work of the Task Force.

The Chair is responsible for the general progress of the work. For all meetings, an agenda is prepared and distributed at least a week in advance; minutes are taken and, after approval by the Task Force, deposited in the Dropbox folder accessible to the Council.

Voting

Task Force decisions are taken by a simple majority of the Task Force members in accordance with the principles outlined in Sections 34-36 of the FIT Rules of Procedure. Participation by at least half the Task Force members constitutes a quorum.

Reports

The Task Force has to present a mid-term report to the Council. This report must be approved by the Task Force members. On request, the Council Liaison Observer must report to the Council as detailed in Appendix 2.

Payments

Requests for refunds or payments must be submitted to the FIT Treasurer via the FIT Secretariat at secretariat@fit-ift.org and must be within the previous agreed budget, using the FIT reimbursement form and attaching all corresponding original invoices. Requests for reimbursement have to be sent within three months from the date of the expenditure. Extraordinary extra-budgetary expenditures have to be approved in advance by the FIT Treasurer in accordance with the FIT Rules of Financial Procedure (para. 4.5).

Renewal of Term of Office

A request for an extension of the term of office of a Task Force should be exceptional. It is important that the work plan is drawn up in line with the stipulated term of office. If the Task Force needs more time to accomplish its task(s), a request for additional time together with a detailed justification has to be submitted to the Council. All requests for renewal will be handled at the discretion of the Council, and its decision is final.

Dispute Resolution

In cases where the collaborative working environment breaks down within the Task Force, or where there is evidence of misconduct, any Task Force member should inform the Council, which has the responsibility to investigate and resolve the matter. Council decisions are final.

II – FIT STANDING COMMITTEES

Purpose

Following the introduction of FIT Task Forces at the 2014 Statutory Congress in Berlin, Standing Committees have the function of enabling the Council to handle specific areas of work on a continuous basis.

Mandate and Budget

The mandate of a FIT Standing Committee is defined by the establishing body, i.e. the Statutory Congress or the Council.

Under exceptional circumstances and only with prior authorisation from the Council following consultation with the Treasurer, a Standing Committee may claim reimbursement of expenditure incurred in carrying out its work. Requests for refunds or payments must be submitted to the FIT Treasurer via the FIT Secretariat at secretariat@fitift.org, using the FIT reimbursement form and attaching all corresponding original invoices. Requests for reimbursement have to be sent within three months from the date of the expenditure. Extraordinary extra-budgetary expenditures have to be approved in advance by the FIT Treasurer in accordance with the FIT Rules of Financial Procedure (para. 4.5).

Eligibility and Term

The body establishing a new Standing Committee, which is either the Statutory Congress or the Council, has to appoint at least three members to it, who in turn elect a Chair from among their own number.

Any member of a FIT regular or associate member in good standing is eligible to serve on a Standing Committee, provided he or she has the support of his or her association and the necessary skill, knowledge and interest. The Council may also nominate any of its own members.

A Standing Committee's term of office ends at the next Statutory Congress, but will be automatically renewed unless the Statutory Congress or the Council decides otherwise.

Chairs and other members of Standing Committees may be appointed for a maximum of three consecutive terms of office.

Election of Standing Committee Chair

The Standing Committee Chair is elected by the Standing Committee members by open majority vote. At the request of any member, the Chair may be elected by secret ballot. In such case, the Council will designate a person to organise the election.

Council Liaison Observer

The Standing Committee must have at least one Council member. Where the only such Council member is Standing Committee chair or where there is no Council member included in the Standing Committee, a dedicated Council member has to be appointed by the Council as an observer member of the e-group to act as liaison to the Council. This Council Liaison Observer participates in all activities of the Standing Committee except voting and has to inform the Standing Committee of any Council decision affecting its work and of any other relevant matter.

Members' Engagement

All members must participate regularly and in a positive way in the e-group discussion to facilitate the work. Standing Committee members and Council Liaison Observers must respect the confidentiality of discussions. If possible, regular virtual meetings should be held to advance the work of the Standing Committee.

The Chair is responsible for the general progress of the work. For all meetings, an agenda is prepared and distributed at least a week in advance; minutes are taken and, after approval by the Standing Committee, deposited in the Dropbox folder accessible to the Council.

Voting

Standing Committee decisions are taken by a simple majority of the Standing Committee members in accordance with the principles outlined in Sections 34-36 of the FIT Rules of Procedure. Participation by at least half the Standing Committee members constitutes a quorum.

Reports

Reports have to be submitted annually three weeks before a physical Council meeting. These reports must be approved by the Standing Committee members. On request, the Council Liaison Observer must report to the Council as detailed in Appendix 2.

Dispute Resolution

In cases where the collaborative working environment breaks down within the Standing Committee, or where there is evidence of misconduct, any Standing Committee member should inform the Council, which has the responsibility to investigate and resolve the matter. Council decisions are final.

Appendix 1 – Facilities / Publicity

Facilities

The following facilities are available to assist the work of Task Forces and Standing Committees:

(a) e-Group

For all communication within a Task Force or Standing Committee, a Yahoo e-group will be automatically set up by the FIT Secretary General or by a person assigned by the FIT Executive Committee as soon as the Task Force or Standing Committee has been established. This e-group is to be used for the purpose of electing the Chair and all other subsequent communication. This constitutes the record of the Federation.

(b) Virtual Meetings

Virtual meetings may be very useful to help a Task Force or Standing Committee accomplish its work and are encouraged. Any software may be used for this purpose, particularly Go-To-Meeting, for which FIT has a licence.

(c) Survey Tools

Surveys may be very useful to help the Task Force or Standing Committee accomplish its work and are encouraged. The survey questions must be submitted to Council for approval, and the FIT Secretary General will set up the survey on the FIT template on the system normally used by FIT.

Publicity

Task Forces and Standing Committees are encouraged to disseminate their progress, garner member support or publicise their activities through all of the FIT communication channels. The two main channels are:

(a) Translatio

Articles on Task Force / Standing Committee activities for publication in FIT's quarterly newsletter, Translatio, should be sent to translatio@fit-ift.org

(b) Webpage

A dedicated webpage will be created on the FIT website for a Task Force or Standing Committee. The Task Force or Standing Committee will decide which of its members will have access to maintain and add content to its page created by the FIT webmaster or any other FIT website administrator. The purpose of this webpage is to inform the public about the mandate, members, work plan and results. The Task Force or Standing Committee may publish any other information in compliance with the FIT Bylaws or Rules of Procedure.

Appendix 2 – Checklist for Reporting by Council Liaison Observers

Reports by Council Liaison Observers to the Council, which have to be submitted at least once a year when requested by at least two Council members, must at least contain answers to the following questions:

- Does the Chair perform his/her own tasks adequately?
- Are tasks delegated to the Task Force/Standing Committee members by the Chair?
- Is an e-group used for communication?
- Are all reports/minutes/actions agreed with the members?
- Are all members actively involved?
- Has concrete progress been achieved (if so, please specify)?

If the answers to most of the above questions are negative, the Council may decide to

- call for new / additional members,
- nominate a new Chair or
- – as a last resort – terminate the Task Force or Standing Committee.