

Call for Expressions of Interest to Host the ICSU World Data System – International Technology Office

Background

The ICSU World Data System (ICSU-WDS: www.icsu-wds.org) was established by the International Council for Science (ICSU: www.icsu.org) in September 2008 to support its vision and promote long-term stewardship of, and universal and equitable access to, quality-assured scientific data and data services, products, and information across a range of disciplines in the natural and social sciences, and the humanities.

ICSU-WDS aims to facilitate scientific research by coordinating and supporting trustworthy scientific data services for the provision, use, and preservation of relevant datasets, while strengthening their links with the research community.

The strategy for achieving these objectives is outlined in the current five-year [Strategic Plan 2014–2018](#), structured round five major targets:

1. Make trusted data services an integral part of international collaborative scientific research.
2. Nurture active disciplinary and multidisciplinary scientific data services communities.
3. Improve the funding environment for trusted data services.
4. Improve the trust in and quality of open scientific data services.
5. Position WDS as the premium global multidisciplinary network for quality-assessed scientific research data.

ICSU-WDS is governed by a Scientific Committee ([WDS-SC](#)) appointed by ICSU and made up of leading scientists and experts who are actively involved with data and/or computer sciences.

An International Programme Office ([WDS-IPO](#)) was established in March 2011 by ICSU and is hosted by the Japanese National Institute of Information and Communications Technology, with funding from the Japanese Government for two 5-year periods (2011–2015, and currently 2016–2020). With guidance from the Scientific Committee, the WDS-IPO has the task of coordinating the operations of ICSU-WDS, and is responsible for implementing WDS-SC decisions.

WDS International Technology Office

ICSU-WDS has developed a vision in its [Strategic Plan 2014–2018](#) that involves significant contributions to the Global Research Data Infrastructure (GRDI), including supporting elements of such GRDI on its own. To date, the technical systems capabilities required by ICSU-WDS have been provided pro bono by WDS Member Organization or by Scientific Committee members. This model is not sustainable, and leads to disruption of operational environments.

These considerations lead us to propose the formation of a **WDS International Technology Office (WDS-ITO) and to invite Expressions of Interest from interested parties**. The establishment, funding model, and governance of the WDS-ITO will follow the example of the WDS International Programme Office and are explained in more detail in the attached WDS-ITO Concept Note.

WDS-ITO Mission

In coordination with the WDS-IPO, and under the oversight of the WDS-SC, the WDS-ITO will

1. Operate and manage contribution of ICSU-WDS to operational systems that form part of the GRDI.
2. Coordinate the development and integration of components of GRDI with other major operational actors: DataCite/re3data, ORCID, science publishers, and international programmes such as the Group on Earth Observations and Future Earth.
3. Host a *Trusted Brokering Service* on behalf of the GRDI community. This role entails allocation of Persistent Identifiers (PIDs) for transformation and brokering components. Such PIDs are critical for the reproducibility of science.
4. Coordinate the ICSU-WDS contribution to technical working groups in organizations, such as the Research Data Alliance.
5. Work in concert with the WDS-IPO and WDS partners—the Belmont Forum, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the ICSU Committee on Data for Science and Technology, and other organizations—on policy and funding focus formulation, development of technical concepts, technical guidance, promotion of standards, and identification of sustainability gaps in the GRDI.

WDS-ITO Requirements

Funding and human resources

Host institutions or authorities are expected to make a financial contribution for an initial period of 3 years minimum. Longer commitments are preferable for ensuring better sustainability of the ITO. Hosts are expected to provide fully equipped office space and supporting services in an internationally recognized institution with experience and expertise in an area of scientific data stewardship or data services, data products, and/or information provision.

We would expect most of the funding from the host/sponsoring institution(s) to be used for the salaries of WDS-ITO staff (3 to 5 Full-time Equivalent), the cost of operations that includes the marginal cost for cloud infrastructure, as well as equipment, software, and travel.

We would expect to see a Technology Director, plus two other supporting staff serving as Technology Officers. Technology Officers would need to have some systems development and integration experience, and be in a position to run and maintain IT infrastructure on behalf of ICSU-WDS. Secretariat and support services will be supplied by an Administrative Support position.

The Technology Director would be appointed through open, international competition, and the appointment would be made by the WDS-SC, in consultation with the host institution. The host institution would be expected to provide all possible assistance in securing appropriate residential and working papers for international staff appointed. The other posts might be filled by suitably qualified candidates through national recruitment, but in full consultation with the WDS-SC. All post holders would be appointed by the host institution in accordance with national labour laws, and their salaries would be in line with international research pay scales.

Performance assessment and contract renewal of the Technology Director and all other staff of the WDS-ITO would be the subject of joint consultation between the WDS-SC and the host institution.

The host institution would, within and as part of its own accounting system, be expected to maintain separate records of all income and expenditure for the WDS-ITO as governed by national law and conditions set by funding organizations. Overhead charges would be kept to a strict minimum.

Location

The WDS-ITO will be established at a single location to serve the ICSU World Data System. A prime requirement of the WDS-ITO will be that it is hosted in an institution that is accessible in terms of international transport. In addition, there needs to be unimpeded access for international scientific visitors attending meetings. Meetings of the WDS-SC and other international meetings are likely to be held on or close to the WDS-ITO premises.

All financial activities of the WDS-ITO would be subject to the institution's internal rules and regulations with regard to signature of contracts, approval of expenditure, receipt of donations, financial control, and audit. This includes any expenditure associated with the ongoing activities of the WDS-SC and its Subcommittees.

Expressions of Interest

Submission of Expressions of Interest can be done by completing the online form available here <https://goo.gl/forms/JIiPBCIGRTqjKOXu2>; or to completed offline using the form below and returned to ipo@icsu-wds.org **no later than 10 September 2017**.

All Expressions of Interest will then be reviewed by the WDS-SC, and further negotiations with selected bidding organizations will take place to finalize the hosting arrangements, governance model, and funding.

Expression of Interest to Host the WDS International Technology Office

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Basic Information

Name of point of contact

Email address of point of contact

Name of WDS-ITO host institution

Earliest operational starting date

**Expected period of hosting
(minimum 3 years)**

Positions to be supported:

**Please indicate how many
(minimum 3 to 5 Full-time
Equivalent).**

Technology Director

Technology Officer

Administrative Officer

Other:

**Do you have any specific
recruitment procedure?
If yes, please explain.**

Experience and track record of the host institution

**In providing technology to support
scientific data, data services, data
products, and scientific information.**



<p>In hosting and/or contributing to multinational programmes.</p>	
<p>Financial information</p>	
<p>Name of the organization(s) providing the funding for the WDS-ITO.</p>	
<p>Estimated annual cost/budget for hosting/operating the WDS-ITO.</p>	
<p>Level of secured funding, starting date, and duration. Please specify: likelihood of approval, when funds would be available, and duration of support.</p>	
<p>Expected in-kind support and duration.</p>	
<p>Additional information</p>	
<p>Other relevant information you would like to share (400 words maximum).</p>	