

RDA TAB Election Process

V0.01	This version is just some initial thoughts put down to focus the discussion. All points are open for discussion.
V0.02	This version incorporates suggestions from the first round of discussions. Some key remaining questions are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the right number of people on TAB? • Do we enforce regional balance in the TAB election process? If so, how? • How do we bootstrap the TAB election process?
V0.03	For comment by RDA Organising Group
V0.04	For comment by RDA Membership
V0.5	Including changes responding to comments on forum
V0.6	Incorporating outcomes of TF Teleconference on 3 May.
V0.6-2	Some small corrections
V1.0	Following comments from membership
V1.0-1	A few minor changes following comments from Council.
V1.2	Revision based on the community understanding of how the TAB works.
V1.2.1	Further revision and clarification of several issues
V1.3	Revision based on decisions made by council at the May 2014 council meeting.

Background

The role of the TAB is defined in the Governance Document. For convenience the relevant sections of that document are reproduced below. Note that this inherited text is also open for discussion separately.

“The Technical Advisory Board (TAB) provides technical expertise and advice to the Council, as well as helping in the development of Working Groups case statements and outputs to promote their impact and effectiveness. Membership of the TAB is elected from the RDA membership. The TAB is responsible for the technical approach of the RDA and the development and maintenance of an RDA Technical Roadmap document. A co-chair of the Technical Advisory Board serves as an ex-officio member of Council. The procedures which govern TAB membership and activities are described in the Organisational and Process Plan.

Function	The Technical Advisory Board provides technical expertise and advice to the Council. It also assists in developing and reviewing RDA Working Groups to promote their impact and effectiveness. The Technical Advisory Group is responsible for the development, maintenance and evolution of the RDA Technical Roadmap.
Membership	Members of the TAB are elected from and by the RDA membership. TAB members normally serve for a term of 3 years and may be re-elected. Each year, approximately a third of the TAB opens up for election. The Technical Advisory Board has two co-chairs who oversee meetings and activities of the Technical Advisory Board
Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A co-chair of the Technical Advisory Board will participate as a non-voting ex-officio member of the RDA Council

Expectations and Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Technical Advisory Board is responsible for guiding the technical work of RDA through interaction with the RDA community • The Technical Advisory Board is responsible for the development and evolution of the RDA Technical Roadmap • The Technical Advisory Board is expected to cultivate candidate Case Statements and Working Group deliverables that promote the RDA goals of adoption and impact • The Technical Advisory Board is expected to work with RDA Working Groups to promote adoption and effectiveness of their deliverables. • The Technical Advisory Board is expected to provide technical advice to Council in their review of the Working Group Case Statements • The Technical Advisory Board is expected to advise RDA membership and Council on impact-oriented WG opportunities and discussion topics • The Technical Advisory Board is expected to provide technical advice to Council and the RDA community to inform strategic approaches and decisions • The Technical Advisory Board members are expected to act in the interests of the RDA, declaring any conflicts of interest, and to work with the Council and other boards to spread the message of what the RDA is doing globally.
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Additional TAB responsibilities include:

- The TAB is responsible for developing and maintaining the Technical Roadmap document. The TAB will determine precisely what is in this document but it is likely to include sections which:
 - Provide the overall technical vision for the RDA
 - Maintain List of Interest Groups and Working Groups
 - Analyse Overlaps and Gaps between WGs
 - Highlight technical areas which are emerging or in need of attention.
- TAB will work with the WGs to build consensus around WG programme and if necessary discuss and try to resolve technical disagreements between WGs. If necessary, TAB will hear appeals from members on technical matters where there is disagreement which cannot be resolved within a WG.
- TAB will liaise with affiliate organisations and other non-RDA activities in technical matters where coordination and alignment of work is required. In particular it will ensure that groups are aware of any similar work going on in other organisations so as to avoid duplication.

TAB scope is technical; it should not consider administrative or organisational matters.

TAB discussion will be via two lists/forums – one open to all, one open to TAB members only. Unless there is specific reason not to do so, all communications should be via the open list.

TAB meetings The TAB will decide on the frequency and mechanisms for its meetings. The meeting times will be chosen to share the pain of time zones fairly across the members. The quorum for a meeting should be two thirds of the membership. Each meeting will choose a note-taker from those present. Notes will be made available through the open TAB list.

TAB reports to Council through an open report prepared twice a year one month before the plenary.

TAB decision making – The TAB will make decisions by consensus where possible. It will define its own procedures for operating and reaching consensus under the guidance of the co-chairs whose role includes encouraging and detecting that consensus. The decision and outputs of the TAB will be made open for discussion in the online forum.

TAB Membership

The TAB consists of 12 elected members including 2 co-chairs, and some ex-officio participants as described below.

TAB Members are expected to have demonstrated deep expertise and a broad overview about data issues, for example through comments on the forum.

Role of TAB members is to provide technical expertise not to represent their employer or other organisational interests.

Term of elected TAB members

- Elected for three years, maximum one consecutive re-election
- A third of TAB is replaced each year

The role of ex-officio TAB participants is to ensure coordination of TAB with other RDA bodies. The ex-officio members will include:

- A representative from the Secretariat, specifically the Secretary General or their delegate.
- A representative from the OAB, specifically one of the OAB co-chairs or their delegate.

The TAB will decide on whether to invite other individuals to participate in their activities, for example individual experts brought in for specific tasks if and when needed and agreed by the TAB

Term of ex-officio TAB participants

- Appointed for duration of their other role or for 1 year. No limit on reappointment.

TAB Membership Constraints

Overlaps between TAB and other RDA bodies

- TAB members must be members of the RDA
- TAB members should **not** be on Council or OAB
- TAB members are likely to be members of working groups. However, in order to ensure the independence of TAB, TAB members should recuse themselves from any decisions about working groups of which they are members.

TAB Elections

This section describes the TAB election process once it is in a steady state. The process will need to be slightly different in order to establish the initial TAB. This initialisation process is described below in the section "Bootstrap TAB election process".

Aim

TAB members are chosen for their technical expertise so technical merit should be the major consideration in TAB member selection. On the other hand, the TAB needs to make decisions which are informed by a broad range of expertise, so there should not be over representation of any particular domain of expertise on the TAB. For example, it will be necessary for the TAB to have a wide range of disciplinary and technical expertise and to be broadly considerate of different geographic and organizational factors. It is also desirable for the TAB to be balanced in respect of personal attributes such as gender, age or race.

The TAB election process is designed to empower the membership to create these balances within TAB by making it clear which expertise and backgrounds the individual candidates have and by using a voting scheme where each member has multiple votes so that they are more likely to include votes for a range of candidates with a balance of expertise.

Process

The process is run on a fixed 12 month cycle, with fixed dates for each stage. The cycle is synchronised with the Plenary so as to make best use of face-to-face discussions at the Plenary.

Any member can put themselves forward as a candidate for election to the TAB. To do this they canvass for 3 seconders and put themselves forward by submitting a "statement" of less than 200 words by a specific date 1 month before the plenary. These statements should describe the candidate's background and expertise including how they match the balancing criteria described below (region, discipline, role in research). The statements will be shown on the RDA website. The existing TAB may wish to endorse specific candidates or recommend a "slate" of candidates, which they believe would achieve the required balances on the TAB.

Members can ask questions of the candidates and get replies. These discussions will be conducted via an open forum and at the plenary. At the plenary there will be a session for candidates to present themselves and to have an open Q&A interaction.

Voting rights are given to all members. An on-line voting system will be used to conduct the election. The voting scheme will have a mechanism built in which ensures the set of candidates elected achieve the required balances in TAB.

Voting Scheme

The aim is to have a voting system which enables the membership to elect a balanced TAB. By giving each voter a number of votes equal to the number of places being elected, and by making clear what gaps are to be filled by the new TAB members and what expertise each candidates would bring to the TAB, voters are empowered to elect TAB members who fill those gaps if they so wish. However,

if the result of the voting does not achieve the required balances a balancing algorithm will be used to adjust the result to restore the required balances.

- A list is prepared of which expertise is available in the TAB members who are remaining in post and which expertise and background are required from the new members to be elected.
- Each Candidate makes clear what range of expertise they would bring to TAB by selecting their expertise and background from a list of topics which balance is to be achieved.
- Each Member of RDA has a number of votes equal to the number of seats being elected.
- Votes are cast and the candidates with the most votes are elected to TAB with the caveat that the balancing quotas are not exceeded.
- The balancing algorithm will be employed when any particular category of expertise and background is overrepresented.
- The balancing algorithm is described in a separate section below.
- In the unlikely event of a draw the secretariat will define a mechanism to ensure a fair outcome.

TAB resignation

- TAB members can resign at any time during their term. If a place on the TAB is vacated during a person's term, it will be left open and one extra place made available at the next election.
- TAB members can be ejected from TAB by TAB on the grounds of not following the principles of RDA or TAB. Any decision in this regard will be made by Council on hearing evidence from TAB or RDA members.

Election of the TAB Co-Chairs

Note: This section describes the TAB election process once RDA is in a steady state. The bootstrap process is described later.

At any given time there are two co-chairs of the TAB.

The TAB co-chairs are elected from the TAB members by the TAB members.

The TAB co-chairs are elected for 2 year at a time with a maximum of 1 re-election (ie max 4 consecutive years). The co-chair elections are staggered so that one co-chair is elected each year.

Each TAB co-chair is elected by simple majority voting with one vote for each TAB member.

A TAB member who is elected as TAB co-chair towards the end of their first term on TAB will be considered to be automatically re-elected to TAB should their term as TAB member come to an end during their term as co-chair. A TAB member who is in their second term on TAB should not stand for election as TAB co-chair if their term as co-chair would take them beyond their maximum time on TAB.

Balancing Algorithm

The balancing algorithm is employed only if the TAB elections do not produce the required balances in the new TAB.

Where a particular expertise would otherwise be under-represented or over-represented as a result of the voting, the balancing algorithm will eliminate the lowest ranked candidates from any over-represented categories and in favour of the highest ranked candidates from underrepresented categories.

The following table gives a simple example. Say balance is required of expertise in three colours: RED, GREEN and BLUE with at least 1 and at most 6 from any one colour. Say there are eight continuing members of TAB whose expertise is as in the following table and the voting produces results for the new candidates as shown. Then, working down the list of new candidates ranked in order of the number of votes received, candidate New1 is elected because they have the most votes and selecting New1 does not exceed any quotas. However, candidate New2 is eliminated as the maximum quota on RED has been reached. Continuing down the list, candidate New3 is elected but candidate New4 is eliminated so that the minimum quota for BLUE can be reached. Then candidate 5 is elected and all seats are filled.

Candidate	Classification	#Votes	Count of	Count of	Count of	Elected?	Reason
			RED	GREEN	BLUE		
Continuing 1	RED		1	0	0		
Continuing 2	GREEN		1	1	0		
Continuing 3	RED		2	1	0		
Continuing 4	GREEN		2	2	0		
Continuing 5	RED		3	2	0		
Continuing 6	GREEN		3	3	0		
Continuing 7	RED		4	3	0		
Continuing 8	RED		5	3	0		
New 1	RED	100	6	3	0	YES	
New 2	RED	90	7	3	0	NO	max RED
New 3	GREEN	80	7	4	0	YES	
New 4	GREEN	70	7	5	0	NO	min BLUE
New 5	BLUE	60	7	5	1	YES	
New 6	BLUE	50	7	5	2	NO	
New 7	RED	40	8	5	2	NO	
New 8	GREEN	30	8	6	2	NO	
New 9	GREEN	20	8	7	2	NO	

It is clear that care needs be taken in choosing quotas since the imposition of too many quotas or quotas that are too strict could soon lead to the election of candidates with lower electoral mandate.

Dimensions requiring Balance

The aim is to achieve a TAB with sufficient breadth of expertise to enable it to discharge its responsibility effectively. It will be necessary, for example, for the TAB to make judgements which (1) are cognisant of best practice in a broad range of disciplines and which (2) have to be implemented by, and provide benefit to, practitioners in a broad range of roles. It will also be necessary for the TAB to (3) have knowledge of initiatives across different geographical regions. It is appropriate therefore for quotas to be implemented in the balancing algorithm for these three dimensions.

Whilst it is also desirable for the TAB to be balanced with respect to the personal attributes of its members such as gender race and age, and the membership may wish to take these into account when voting, it is not considered appropriate to enforce quotas on these attributes as elimination of candidates on these criteria could be considered discriminatory.

Balancing for Region

If we begin with the standard 7 continent model: Asia, Africa, America, Antarctica, Europe and Australia; and discounting Antarctica, it is probably overly constraining to require representation from all 6 continents. If instead we group the continents into three pairs by longitude: (1. North America and South America, 2 Europe and Africa, and 3 Asia and Australasia) we can give quotas that ensure some degree of balance whilst not being overly constraining, for example by requiring a minimum of 2 and maximum of 5 from any one longitude group.

Region	Maximum quota	Minimum quota
N America and S America	5	2
Europe and Africa	5	2
Asia and Australasia	5	2

Proposed quotas for balancing by region

Balancing for Discipline

There are many classifications of discipline that could be used. Some examples are given in the appendix. Commonly used classifications include the Dewey Decimal classification, the Library of Congress classification, the Colon classification and the UNESCO international Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) Fields of Education and Training¹. All of these have too many categories for our purposes. The Fields of Science and Technology FOST² 2007 in the OECD Frascati model classify

¹ See for example the 2013 consultation draft at <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/isced-fos-consultation-draft-2013-en.pdf>

² See <http://www.oecd.org/sti/inno/38235147.pdf> (Annex 1)

R&D into fields which are then divided into approximately 40 second level fields. (Note that Computer and information sciences is a subcategory of 1 Natural Sciences.)

1. Natural sciences
2. Engineering and technology
3. Medical and health sciences
4. Agricultural sciences
5. Social sciences
6. Humanities

Using these 6 categories again with a maximum quota of 5 but this time with no minimum quota might be a way to achieve disciplinary balance.

Discipline	Maximum quota	Minimum quota
Natural sciences	5	none
Engineering and technology	5	none
Medical and health sciences	5	none
Agricultural sciences	5	none
Social sciences	5	none
Humanities	5	none

Proposed quotas for balancing by discipline

Balancing by role in the research data process

For this dimension of balance it is less clear what classification to adopt. The idea is to balance for the different types of role that individuals play in the research process. One classification could be based on the individual's relationship with respect the research data they engage with. For example

1. Data Generator
2. Data Manager
3. Data Technologist
4. Data User
5. Data Policy maker
6. Other

Role	Maximum quota	Minimum quota
Data Generator	5	none
Data Manager	5	none
Data Technologist	5	none
Data User	5	none
Data Policy maker	5	none
Other	5	none

Proposed quotas for balancing by Role

Bootstrap TAB Election Process

The election of the first TAB needs to be significantly different from the usual process in several ways. Specifically,

- All 12 seats of TAB have to be filled at once whereas later only 4 seats will be replaced in each election;
- There is a need to establish a TAB quickly without the chance to have a full discussion at the Plenary;
- As there are no continuing members, it is impossible to see which gaps in expertise have to be filled by the new members;
- There has been little time for the membership to see who the key figures are in the technical work of the RDA; and
- In order to introduce the stagger in future elections, some members will have to have a term of just 1 year, and others 2 years.

Therefore, the initial TAB selection process will have to be substantially different from the process described above.

This section proposes a selection process for the first TAB which addresses these differences by selecting the initial TAB in two halves. One half of the members of the initial TAB are nominated by council as interim members who will play the role of the continuing TAB members and stand down after one year. The other half are chosen by the election process above in the normal way. The nominated members will be chosen so as to provide a minimum level of balance and introduce the stagger which will be used in later elections.

- An initial half-TAB is chosen by nomination by Council. These TAB members are chosen in order to provide a breadth of expertise which forms a basis for the balances which need to be established. These members are interim members of TAB and will stand down or stand for re-election after one year. Their initial year as interim members of TAB will not count towards these individual's maximum term on TAB.
- A second half TAB is chosen by the normal election process albeit time-compressed and without the opportunity for the usual process at the plenary.
- If one or both of these elected members are elected as co-chairs of TAB, they do not have to stand for re-election to TAB as per the usual process for co-chair elections.
- Note that exactly how many TAB positions will be available at each election will depend on which group the TAB co-chairs are chosen from and whether some TAB members resign their position before their term is finished.

The second TAB election (September 2014) will bring us closer to steady state:

- Four of the appointed members will step down and may stand for election.
- One of the chairs will remain based on mutual agreement or random selection.

- Four new members will be elected to 3-year terms.
- Council will make one final appointment for a one-year term.
- Prior to the September 2015 Plenary and election, the two remaining appointees and two of the initial six elected members will step down. The two elected members who step down will be chosen by mutual agreement or randomly. They may run for re-election.
- The September 2015 election process will then be in steady state as described above.

Bootstrap TAB co-chair election process

Once the initial TAB is established, the co-chairs will be elected by all 12 TAB members in the usual way. The co-chairs will take on their role immediately.

After 12 months one of the co-chairs will stand down or stand for re-election in order to introduce the normal timing and stagger to the co-chair elections. The initial 12 months will not count as part of this co-chairs maximum term.

The choice of which co-chair will stand down first could be voluntary or random.

Appendix Some other possible classifications for balancing

Domain

Below are three possible classifications of domain. We might need to merge so categories as we need a very small number of categories (about 4-6).

Top level Dewey Decimal Classification Classes

- [000](#) – Computer science, Library and Information science & general work
- [100](#) – Philosophy and psychology
- [200](#) – Religion
- [300](#) – Social sciences
- [400](#) – Language
- [500](#) – Science
- [600](#) – Technology
- [700](#) – Arts
- [800](#) – Literature
- [900](#) – History, geography & biography

Possible groupings of Dewey Decimal

- Social science (300)
- Science (500)
- Technology (600)
- History, geography, biography (900)
- Philosophy, Psychology, Religion, Languages, Arts, Literature (100, 200, 400, 700, 800)
- Computer science, Library and Information science & general work (000)

Library of Congress classes

- [1.1 Class A – General Works](#)
- [1.2 Class B – Philosophy, Psychology, Religion](#)
- [1.3 Class C – Auxiliary Sciences of History \(General\)](#)
 - [1.4 Class D – World History \(except American History\)](#)
 - [1.5 Class E – American History](#)
 - [1.6 Class F – Local History of the United States and British, Dutch, French, and Latin America](#)
- [1.7 Class G – Geography, Anthropology, Recreation](#)
- [1.8 Class H – Social Sciences](#)
- [1.9 Class J – Political Science](#)
- [1.10 Class K – Law](#)
- [1.11 Class L – Education](#)
- [1.12 Class M – Music](#)
- [1.13 Class N – Fine Arts](#)
- [1.14 Class P – Language and Literature](#)
- [1.15 Class Q – Science](#)

- [1.16 Class R – Medicine](#)
- [1.17 Class S – Agriculture](#)
- [1.18 Class T – Technology](#)
- [1.19 Class U – Military Science](#)
- [1.20 Class V – Naval Science](#)

[1.21 Class Z – Bibliography, Library Science](#)

Possible groupings of Library of Congress Classification

- Psychology, Religion, History (Classes A, B, C, D, E, F)
- Social Science, Political Science, Law, Education, (Classes G, H, K, L)
- Music, Fine Arts, Language and Literature (Classes M,N,P)
- Science (Class Q)
- Medicine (Class R)
- Agriculture, Technology, Military Science, Naval Science (Class S,T,U,V)
- Bibliography, Library Science (Class Z)

Colon Classification

- B Mathematics
- C Physics
- D Engineering
- E Chemistry
- F Technology
- G Biology
- H Geology
- HX Mining
- I Botany
- J Agriculture
- K Zoology
- L Medicine
- M Useful arts
- N Fine arts
- O Literature
- P Linguistics
- Q Religion
- R Philosophy
- S Psychology
- T Education
- U Geography
- V History
- W Political science
- X Economics
- Y Sociology
- Z Law.