



SOOS
SOUTHERN OCEAN
OBSERVING SYSTEM

Conflict of Interest Policy

Version 1
16/05/2023



SOOS Conflict of Interest Policy

This policy covers all individuals engaged in any of the wide variety of activities within the Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS), including but not limited to the SOOS International Project Office, Scientific Steering Committee, and implementation groups members.

Conflicts of interest are relatively common, and this policy serves to ensure that:

- Actual, perceived, and potential conflicts of interest that exist or are likely to arise are acknowledged and addressed as soon as possible,
- Actions, judgment, and decision-making are professional and unbiased.

For the purposes of this policy, “conflict” means any matter, circumstance, or activity which may appear to impair the ability of SOOS to carry out its activities in line with its [values](#), especially in selection of individuals for leadership positions.

All Executive Committee members, International Project Office members, Scientific Steering Committee members and implementation group members will be made aware of the SOOS Conflict of Interest Policy at the beginning of their tenure.

Any individual who has an engagement or interest/plans to engage (either compensated or uncompensated) in an activity or organisation with competing interests or diverging values to SOOS must immediately disclose such engagement following the process outlined by the SOOS Conflict of Interest Policy.

If an individual's conflict of interest and/or actions, judgement and decisions are considered to be significantly against the values that SOOS upholds, their term may be reduced and/or terminated at the discretion of the SOOS Executive Committee and International Project Office. Such action would be taken as a last resort, and only if attempts to reconcile differences through dialogue and discussion between the individual(s) concerned and SOOS Executive Committee and International Project Office do not reach a mutually agreeable outcome.

Process to remind, identify and address Conflicts of Interest within SOOS

Adopted by the SOOS Steering Committee in May 2023

1. All Executive Committee members, International Project Office members, Scientific Steering Committee members and implementation group members will be made aware of the SOOS Conflict of Interest Policy. As appropriate, members will be asked to review the conflict of interest policy every two years.
2. Once a year, the Chair reminds all individuals at the Scientific Steering Committee meeting to declare any actual, perceived, and potential conflicts of interest either privately or to the Executive Committee. However, if at any moment between meetings an individual identifies a potential conflict of interest, he/she should address his/her concerns to the Executive Committee as soon as possible, as indicated below.

3. If conflict arises or appears likely to arise,
 - i. Immediately disclose conflict to the Executive Committee
 - ii. The Executive Committee will discuss the actual, perceived, and/or potential conflicts of interests with the individual.
 1. If the conflict can be resolved easily, appropriate action is taken and the conflict is simply recorded for future reference.
 2. If the conflict can be resolved, but with greater complexity or effort required, steps are taken to resolve the conflict over an agreed time period and then the conflict is reviewed.
 3. If the conflict cannot be resolved and no solution can be found, the term of service may be reduced or terminated.
 - iii. If the conflict is with a member of EXCOM, the conflict will be discussed with SOOS's governing bodies, SCAR and SCOR following the above procedure.

This policy will be reviewed every two years and updated if necessary.