

# National Facility Technical and Scientific Forum Terms of Reference

**Prepared by:** ACTRIS ERIC Head Office

**Approved:** 5<sup>th</sup> ACTRIS ERIC General Assembly (2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025)

**Amended:** 6<sup>th</sup> ACTRIS ERIC General Assembly (8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025)

# National Facility Technical and Scientific Forum Terms of Reference

## Contents

1. Objective .....	3
2. Scope .....	3
3. NF Forum Composition .....	3
4. NF Forum Chairs.....	3
5. NF Forum programme committee.....	4
6. NF Representatives.....	4
7. NF Forum Meetings .....	4
8. Voting .....	5
9. Resources.....	5
10. Ethics policy .....	5
11. Advisory Practice.....	5
Annex I: Election process of the NF Forum Chairs.....	6
Annex II: Role and election process of the NF Representatives .....	7

## 1. Objective

The ACTRIS National Facility (NF) Technical and Scientific Forum (referred in the internal ACTRIS documentation as “NF Forum”, while outside as “ACTRIS NF T&S Forum”) is an advisory body that may provide recommendations to the Research Infrastructure (RI) Committee (RI Committee) or to the ACTRIS community (National Contact Persons - NCPs, Principal Investigators (PI) of the NFs, scientists, technicians and administrative staff of ACTRIS NFs) or to ACTRIS Central Facilities (ACTRIS ERIC Head Office, Topical Centres and Data Centre) regarding matters related to NF operations.

The objective of the NF Forum is to support the development of the RI and strengthen the link between scientific expertise and technological development in the RI. The NF Forum is also a platform for engaging and broadening the community, exchanging the technical expertise on the development of the RI and sharing the scientific expertise available within the ACTRIS community.

## 2. Scope

The NF Forum tasks include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Enable interaction and exchange of scientific and technological expertise between ACTRIS NF PIs, ACTRIS NF scientists and technicians and ACTRIS Central Facilities;
- (b) Enable interaction and exchange of scientific and technological expertise between the ACTRIS community and ACTRIS users;
- (c) Engage the ACTRIS community;
- (d) Elect the NF Forum Chairs, and the NF representatives in the ACTRIS ERIC RI Committee representing the six different ACTRIS components;
- (e) Make recommendations regarding ACTRIS NFs to the RI Committee or to the ACTRIS community as deemed necessary.

## 3. NF Forum Composition

- 3.1 The Forum is composed of the Principal Investigators (PIs), scientists (including early career investigators), technical and administrative staff, with no limit on the number of participants per NF, country or ACTRIS component.
- 3.2 The NF Forum is inclusive; in addition to ACTRIS NFs, the NF Forum is open to the whole ACTRIS community.

## 4. NF Forum Chairs

- 4.1 The NF Forum shall elect two Chairs for a period of two years at a time. The initial term of the Chairs may be continued for the following two years, if they are willing to continue.
- 4.2 The Chairs shall be affiliated to a NF located in ACTRIS ERIC member, observer or permanent observer country. They shall not be part of any ACTRIS Central Facility and not be a NF Representative.

- 4.3 The Chairs steer the work of the NF Forum programme committee.
- 4.4 The Chairs oversee the preparations and organisation of the NF Forum Meetings and chair these meeting.
- 4.5 The Chairs may attend the ACTRIS RI Committee meetings as external experts.
- 4.6 The Chairs report to the Director General.
- 4.7 At least one of the Chairs should attend in person the meeting, known as ACTRIS Week, where the whole ACTRIS community is brought together, if not fully online.
- 4.8 If an NF Forum Chair steps down before the end of their designated term, the ACTRIS ERIC Head Office will initiate a procedure for electing a new Chair.

## 5. NF Forum programme committee

- 5.1 The NF Forum programme committee shall consist of the NF Forum Chairs, the Atmospheric Simulation Chamber Community Chair and six NF Representatives.
- 5.2 The programme committee steers the NF Forum Meeting arrangements.

## 6. NF Representatives

- 6.1 The NF Forum shall elect six NF Representatives for a period of two years. The initial term of the six NF Representatives may be extended for the following two years, if the representative is willing to continue.
- 6.2 The NF Representatives represent each of the six components of ACTRIS (aerosol in situ measurements, reactive trace gases in situ measurements, cloud in situ measurements, aerosol remote sensing, reactive trace gases remote sensing and cloud remote sensing). They shall not be members of the Respective Central Facility and shall not be NF Forum Chairs.
- 6.3 The NF Representatives shall be from an ACTRIS ERIC member, observer or permanent observer country.
- 6.4 The NF Representatives shall participate in the RI Committee meetings organized virtually or as face-to-face meetings.
- 6.5 The NF Representatives shall launch and oversee the Working Groups relevant to their component and summarize their progress at the NF Forum Meetings.
- 6.6 If an NF Representative steps down before the completion of their designated term, the NF Forum Chairs will follow the established process for electing a new NF Representative.
- 6.7 The detailed role of an NF Representative and election process are described in the Annex.

## 7. NF Forum Meetings

- 7.1 The NF Forum shall convene physically or virtually at least once a year to discuss all relevant technical and operational issues.
- 7.2 In addition, meetings of sub-groups of the different fields and workshops related to different topics are foreseen and may be organised separately.
- 7.3 The NF Forum is convened by the Chairs.
- 7.4 The ACTRIS ERIC Head Office supports the NF Forum Meeting arrangements and communication within the Forum.

- 7.5 The NF Forum will select a minute-taker for the meetings, as seen necessary.
- 7.6 The meetings are open to the whole ACTRIS community. External guests (representing, e.g., other RIs, international organisations and networks, users of ACTRIS and stakeholders) may be invited to the events upon agreement, as necessary.

## 8. Voting

- 8.1 In case voting is needed, each NF (represented by its PI) has one vote, except in case of NF Representative election each NF component has one vote.
- 8.2 The agenda of the NF Forum is sent two weeks before the meeting, indicating if decisions are to be made.
- 8.3 To reach a quorum at least 50% of NFs must be represented, from at least 50% of the member, observer and permanent observer countries. Decisions will be taken by simple majority of the NFs present in voting.
- 8.4 In case of a tie, the Chairs shall make the decision jointly. If a consensus between the Chairs cannot be reached, the question can be left undecided and worked further to find an agreement. The Director General can always be consulted on unsolved issues.
- 8.5 When voting concerns election or nomination of a Chair or NF Representative, voting shall be by a secret ballot.

## 9. Resources

- 9.1 All the participants of the NF Forum Meetings are responsible for securing their travel and accommodation costs related to the meetings.
- 9.2 The ACTRIS ERIC Head Office supports direct meeting cost, including online connection.

## 10. Ethics policy

- 10.1 The members of the NF Forum shall follow the ACTRIS Ethics policy and its conflict-of-interest rules, accepted by the ACTRIS ERIC General Assembly.

## 11. Advisory Practice

- 11.1 The NF Forum shall aim to formulate its advice by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, the advice will be given as a simple majority opinion. The statement of the minority is to be recorded in the meeting minutes and can be included as an annex to the meeting minutes.
- 11.2 The ACTRIS ERIC Director General will report the activities of the NF Forum in the annual report of ACTRIS.

## **Annex I: Election process of the NF Forum Chairs**

Elections for the NF Forum Chairs are held online prior to the NF Forum Meeting. The election process is conducted for two Chairs: one representing the in-situ domain and the other representing the remote sensing domain.

Voting is coordinated by the ACTRIS ERIC Head Office. Candidates are nominated by the National Contact Persons (NCPs) to the ACTRIS ERIC Head Office no later than one month prior to the NF Forum Meeting. Each candidate is required to submit a short CV (maximum two pages), a written confirmation of their candidacy and a statement affirming their commitment to actively contribute to the work of the NF Forum.

Each NF has one vote for each domain: in situ and remote sensing. To reach a quorum, at least 50% of all ACTRIS NFs must have participated in the voting, from at least 50% of the ACTRIS ERIC member, observer and permanent observer countries. Voting decisions for both domains are made by a simple majority of the NFs participating in the vote.

In cases where only one Chair position is to be filled, the candidate shall represent either the in situ or remote sensing domain, corresponding to the domain of the Chair who has stepped down or completed their term.

NF Chairs are appointed in the following NF Forum Meeting.

## Annex II: Role and election process of the NF Representatives

The NF Representatives shall participate in the RI Committee meetings as members to

1. Support the strategic planning and development of ACTRIS,
2. Contribute to the preparation of materials and proposals to the General Assembly in establishing processes to ensure consistency, coherence and sustainability of the operation of the RI,
3. Prepare and contribute to scientific and technical documents deemed necessary for planning and implementing RI service,
4. Strengthen communication within the ACTRIS community,
5. Contribute to the liaison and communication activities.

NF Representatives shall participate in supporting the preparations of NF Forum Meetings via being part of the NF Forum programme committee.

Elections for the NF Representative of each component are held online prior the NF Forum Meeting. Voting is coordinated by the ACTRIS ERIC Head Office. Candidates are communicated by the National Contact Persons (NCPs) to the ACTRIS ERIC Head Office and NF Forum Chairs at least one month before the NF Forum Meeting takes place. The candidates must provide a short CV (max. 2 pages), a written agreement for candidacy and statement of dedicating time to take active part in the RI Committee regular activities.

For each NF Representative voting is performed separately. The PI of each ACTRIS NF operating a specific component can vote for the respective NF representative candidate. One NF has one vote in each voting. To reach a quorum at least 50% of NFs must be represented in each voting, from at least 50% of the member, observer and permanent observer countries that are part of the respective ACTRIS NF component. Decisions will be taken by simple majority of the NFs present in a voting. In case of equal votes for candidates who have received the most votes, the Chairs shall make the decision. If consensus between the chairs cannot be reached, the voting needs to be rearranged.

NF Representatives are appointed at the following NF Forum Meeting.