

Operating Procedures for the GEO ADC Standards and Interoperability Forum

The SIF was created by, and reports to the GEO Architecture and Data Committee.

The SIF will make decisions via a consensus process.

These proposed operating procedures will be subject to approval of the entire SIF.

Composition

The SIF will be composed of experts nominated by GEO Members and Participating Organizations. The SIF will also draw on subject matter experts who possess an understanding of the protocols, standard arrangements and other technological practices specific to a particular domain of knowledge, community of practice or other endeavor in support of the GEOSS designated Societal Benefit Areas.

Approach and Functions

The SIF will:

- Respond to interoperability issues brought to it;
- Monitor interoperability challenges, identify impediments to GEOSS objectives, identify gaps in current standards, and promote the creation of standards by appropriate standards organizations to address these issues.
- Enhance and broaden the scope of applicability for interoperability arrangements that are registered to GEOSS
- Demonstrate the benefits of interoperability, showcasing successes of projects and initiatives that use GEOSS registered standards to achieve interoperability
- Educate component contributors, and, as appropriate, data consumers and integrators, regarding GEOSS registered standards and the resources available to assist in using them.

SIF Activities include:

- Analyzing proposed interoperability special arrangements coming from components offered to GEOSS and overseeing the entry of these special arrangements into the GEOSS Standards and Interoperability Register
- Helping in the identification and promotion of standards required to achieve GEOSS interoperability objectives;
- Monitoring relevant activities within GEO to determine whether there are impediments in the application of interoperability arrangements that are registered to GEOSS

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- Identifying organizations and individuals that can play a bridging function among GEOSS components and Societal Benefit Areas (SBAs)
- Facilitating cooperation among the many organizations involved in selecting, developing and using diverse standards applicable to GEOSS
- Facilitating linkages and partnerships between established Standards Development Organizations, users and new groups or organizations interested in collaborating in GEOSS standards efforts.
- Responding to requests within scope of its ToR

Meetings of the SIF.

- The SIF will meet at such times and places as determined by its participants, and will be conducted using Robert's Rules of Order.
- All meetings will be public and announced to the SIF mail list and posted to the SIF homepage calendar.
- As necessary, members of the SIF will meet telephonically or through email correspondence to determine a course of action for high priority issues needing short term response.
- Representatives from SDOs, and other stakeholders, will be invited to meetings of the SIF as appropriate and applicable.
- The SIF will maintain a data base of SIF meetings, issues and actions and their status. This database will be accessible through the SIF web site.

Reporting

The SIF chair or designee will make a status report to the ADC at each of their meetings, and to the ADC co-chairs as requested. Any activity or recommendation of the SIF that is of a sensitive or potentially controversial nature will be brought before the ADC co-chairs before any such action or recommendation is carried out.

Review of Items to be Considered for the Registry

Standards or special arrangements not already in the registry (i.e. not selectable from pre-populated lists during the service registration process) should be submitted to the SIF if the component contributor wishes to have that standard or special arrangement considered for inclusion in the special arrangements registry. The process is illustrated in the following two diagrams.

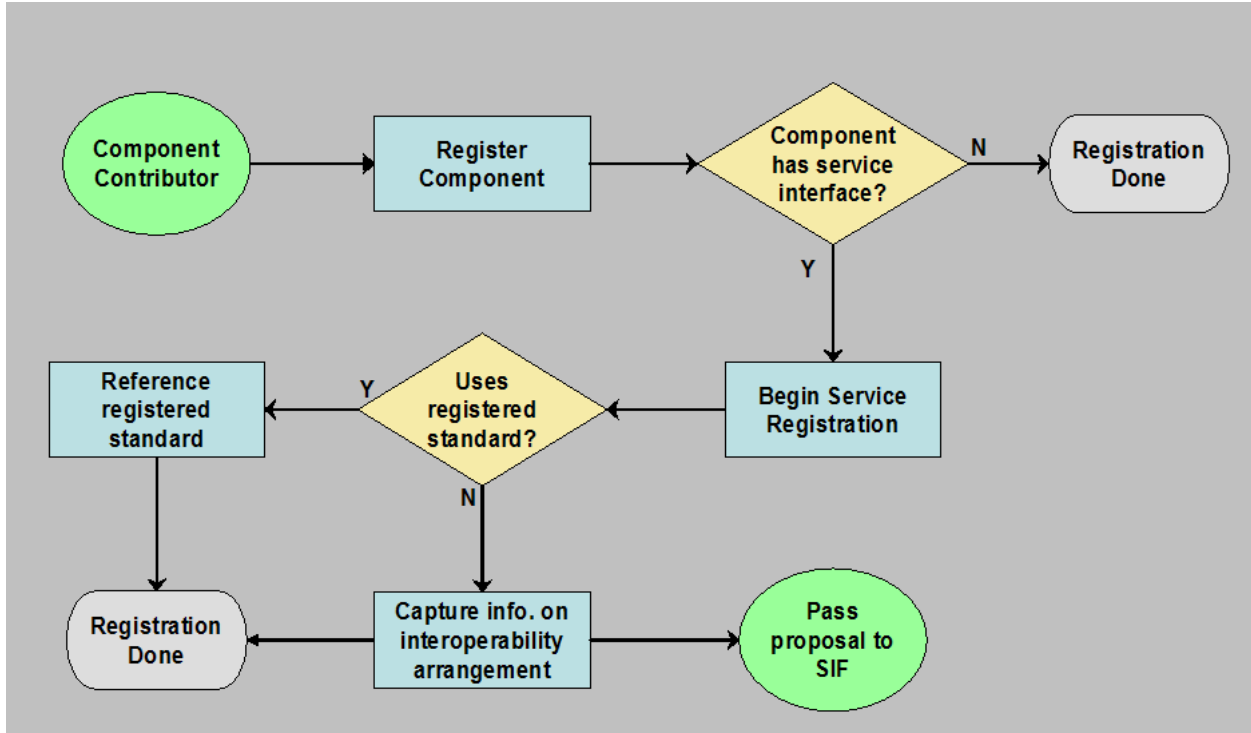


Fig. 1 – Flow for Component, Service and Standard registration process.

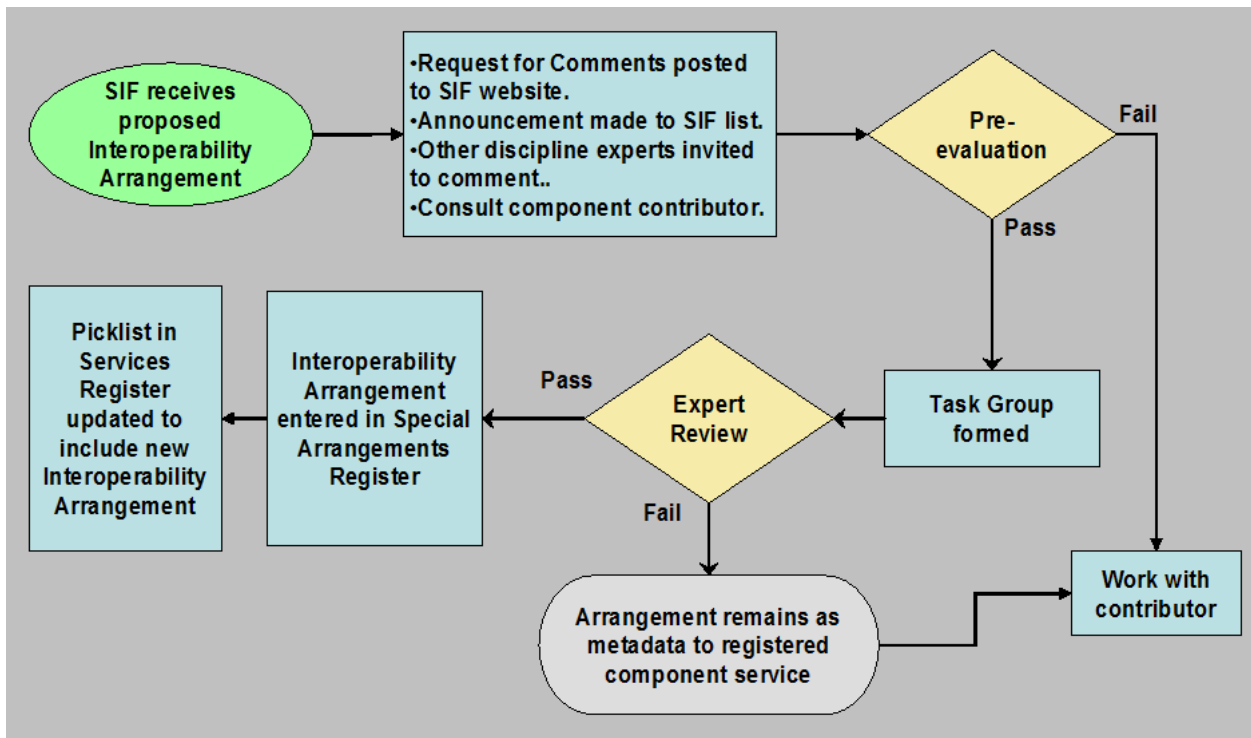


Fig. 2 – Interoperability Arrangement review process.

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The task groups referred to in Fig. 2 will be regionally based. To carry out its work most effectively, the SIF will form regional teams consisting of subject matter experts representing each (or most) of the societal benefit areas of GEOSS. The lead of each regional team will serve as the regional representative on the SIF.

Interoperability arrangements that are submitted to the SIF for consideration will be directed to regional teams for review. The regional teams will analyze and provide an opinion on the acceptability of this arrangement, based on criteria established by the SIF. These recommendations will then go to the SIF leadership team for consideration and disposition with the original submitter. We anticipate that the participation in the regional activities and the SIF will be by telephone and that, for the regional leads only, there will be one to two meetings per year where travel may be required.

Discussions within the SIF on proposals for entries into the GEOSS Standards and Interoperability Register will continue until the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The proposed Interoperability Arrangement supports the GEOSS architecture principles in effect at the time of the proposal. Currently, these include:
 - a. “must be based on non-proprietary, open standards, and profiles must be specified when standards are not sufficiently specific.”
 - b. “interoperability specification states exactly how the service and the data must be described”
2. The proposed Interoperability Arrangement is well-documented (in terms of semantics, syntax, service, security, internationalization)
3. The proposed Interoperability Arrangement has support within at least one user community.
4. The proposer asserts a commitment to maintaining, and making the proposed Interoperability Arrangement more interoperable, e.g. building gateways to other standards and arrangements that are already registered.
5. The proposer asserts a commitment to provide additional information as necessary for implementation of the Interoperability Arrangement within the GEOSS context.
6. The proposed Interoperability Arrangement is suitable for wider use within GEOSS
 - a. Cross-domain application is desirable

These criteria may be revised by consensus of the SIF

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A proposed standard or interoperability arrangement needn't reference a GEOSS service exposed by a component.