

**PUGET SOUND PARTNERSHIP
SCIENCE PANEL
BY-LAWS**

Preamble:

We, the members of the Science Panel (Panel) of the Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership), duly appointed by the Leadership Council, under the authority of section 90.71. of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), approve these by-laws to clarify the Panel's organization, responsibilities, characteristics, actions, and procedures.

Article I - Organization.

The Science Panel is comprised of members appointed by the Leadership Council to four-year terms, except that the terms of the original Panel members are staggered and one non-voting Ex Officio member representing the Puget Sound Institute. Panel members are listed on the Partnership website (www.psp.wa.gov).

Election of Officers:

- The Panel will hold an annual election process at the November/December meeting (whichever is latest) and vote for a chair and vice chair for a one year term,
- Current voting members of the Science Panel are eligible,
- Interest in serving as the chair will be provided to staff in written form one-month prior to the election meeting,
- Staff will provide a memorandum to Panel members two weeks prior to the meeting providing listing of interested candidates,
- The election of officers will be conducted via ballot at an open meeting of the Science Panel,
- Highest vote is elected chair, person with second highest number of votes becomes the vice chair, and
- New officers will take their seat on January 1.

Article II – Role of the Science Panel.

Review

- Develop and implement an appropriate process for peer review of science activities
- Develop a competitive peer-reviewed process for soliciting, prioritizing, and funding research and modeling

Integrate

- Integrate regional science
- Continually update scientific knowledge relative to the 6 Puget Sound goals
- Ensure the Action Agenda is science based
- Develop environmental indicators and benchmarks

Advise

- Offer an ecosystem-wide perspective
- Provide input on the selection of performance management indicators
- Provide input on implementation strategies
- Address monitoring, modeling, data, management, and research
- Identify science gaps
- Recommend scientific research priorities

Article III - Ethics, Preventing Conflicts-of-Interest, and Recusal

The requirements of state ethics laws apply to all Panel members operating in their Science Panel role. (See RCW43.52 and the reference resources at the Web site for the Executive Ethics Council, <http://ethics.wa.gov/>.) The laws include prohibitions against conflicts of interest, acceptance of most gifts, and release of confidential information. State law also restricts use of state facilities and resources, solely for official public business. The Science Panel and its members will strive to maintain full awareness and compliance with these requirements in the conduct of its work.

Any member of the Panel who feels that she/he has a conflict of interest on any matter on the agenda shall notify the Chair or Director as soon as possible. The member shall:

- a. Choose to not to participate in or attend the meeting, or
- b. Recuse for the discussion - that is voluntarily excuse him/herself, vacate her/his seat, leave the meeting room, and refrain from discussing and voting on the item.

If possible, where there is a known conflict-of-interest issue, it will be located on the agenda in such manner that the member can participate on other action items and then be excused.

Any member of the Panel who feels that he/she has no prohibited conflict-of-interest but does have an personal or professional interest which the public might misconstrue in the particular situation, shall notify the Chair or Director as soon as possible. The member may either:

- a. Voluntarily recuse, or
- b. If the member feels that they can impartially participate in an issue or decision they shall fully disclose the circumstances at the beginning of the discussion, state their commitment to fairly and impartially deal with the matter, and offer Board members and the public in attendance the opportunity to seek clarification as needed.

Article IV - Open Public Meetings Act.

Meetings of the Science Panel are not subject to the Open Public Meeting Act as defined in Chapter 42.30 RCW, but, in the spirit of transparency, meetings will generally be open to the public.

Article V - Public Records Act.

The Public Records Act, RCW 42.56, applies to the records of the Panel.

Article VI - Equal Access.

Persons with disabilities have an equal right and opportunity for effective participation in the activities of the Panel.

Article VII – Regular and Special Meetings.

Meetings are scheduled at the beginning of the calendar year, with meetings held at different locations in the Puget Sound region. The meeting schedule can be accessed on the Partnership's website. The Chair and Executive Director may call special meetings. Schedule changes may occur to best address the goals of the Partnership.

Article VIII - Quorum.

A quorum is required to convene and conduct the business of the Panel. A quorum consists of a majority of Panel members.

Article IX - Presiding Officer, Agenda and Order of Business.

The Chair or Vice-chair shall preside at Panel meetings. If both the Chair and Vice-chair are absent, a majority of Panel members present may determine who shall preside at that meeting. Unless contrary to state law or these bylaws, Board discussions and decision-making processes generally will be guided by “Robert’s Rules” processes. The Chair may waive technical parliamentary issues as needed for effective discussion or clarification of issues and action items. Attendees desiring to provide comments to the Panel during meetings must obtain recognition from the presiding member. Each meeting is conducted according to the approved agenda established at the beginning of the meeting. Agenda items and issues may be suggested by any member of the Panel and the Executive Director or his designee.

Article X - Voting.

Panel decisions and actions require a majority vote approval of all Panel members. The Panel’s philosophy is that it should achieve consensus whenever possible. Thus, prior to taking a vote on a decision or action, the Panel will strive to reach consensus. The Panel shall take its vote after it has reached consensus or, when in the judgment of the Presiding Officer, it is not possible for all Panel members to reach consensus on a particular matter.

Abstention: Abstention occurs when a Panel member remains present at a meeting for purposes of a quorum but abstains from voting on a particular matter. A Panel member should abstain from voting only when the Panel member concludes that there is a valid reason not to vote, such as the Panel member lacking the necessary preparation to vote on a matter.

Recusal: Recusal occurs when a Panel member announces his or her decision not to participate in all or part of a meeting. When a Panel member recuses him or herself, the member is considered absent from the meeting for purposes of a quorum. A Panel member should recuse him or herself for exceptional reasons only, such as a medical emergency or identification of a conflict of interest that may require recusal under state law.

Article XI – Minutes.

The minutes of all Panel meetings will be retained by the Partnership in accordance with its retention schedules and made available for public inspection and copying.

Article XII – Travel and Other Reimbursement

- (1) Members of the Panel shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

Article XIII - Compensation

As authorized by RCW 90.71.270 panel members may be compensated for specific assignments performed for the partnership in accordance with chapter 39.29 RCW. Such assignments will be developed in advance by preparing a statement of work, performance schedule, and cost estimate for review and approval by the Executive Director.

Article XIV - Puget Sound Scientific Research Account

In the event that the Puget Sound scientific research account is funded (RCW 90.71.110), the Chair shall work with the Science Panel to develop recommendations on the process of how to solicit, award, and perform peer-review of projects to be funded by the account. The

recommendations will be subject to panel review and acceptance and forwarded to the Leadership Council for approval.

Article XV - Adoption of and Amendments to Bylaws.

Adoption of, and amendments to, these Bylaws require a majority vote of all appointed Panel members.

The Science Panel of the Puget Sound Partnership approves these by-laws during a regular meeting of the Panel on this 11th day of July, 2011.