

Charter: Science Steering Committee

Identifies research priorities, sets the Center's science goals, and monitors progress

A. Purpose

The Science Steering Committee (referred hereafter as “Committee”) is established within the Science Steering branch of the SCEC organizational structure. Its primary function is to provide strategic guidance and leadership for the Center's scientific endeavors through:

1. Vision and Innovation: The Committee identifies and cultivates promising new research ideas. It fosters the development of scientific leadership within a focused group, enabling a nimble approach to address emerging areas in earthquake science.
2. Collaborative Problem-Solving: The Committee serves as a forum for tackling grand challenges in earthquake science. It facilitates collaborative brainstorming and the development of interdisciplinary solutions. This collaborative effort can also lead to the generation of proposal ideas for new, Center-wide research initiatives and identify smaller-scale special projects that support the Center’s major activities, while engaging new collaborators as co-investigators.
3. Research Planning and Monitoring: The Committee plays a key role in both developing and monitoring SCEC's scientific progress. It formulates the annual science plan, which solicits proposals from the research community to contribute to the Center's ongoing research program. The Committee also tracks and reports on progress toward achieving SCEC's established scientific milestones.
4. Planning the Annual Meeting: The Committee provides input on the SCEC annual meeting program to showcase recent research progress and illuminate new science directions for the Center initiatives.

The Committee will report to the Center Director.

B. Membership

The Committee will consist of no more than 12 members: a Chair, Vice-Chair, and up to ten members (eight chosen for their expertise in the Center's "major activities" as defined in Section E, and only if necessary, two more members to span the disciplinary expertise required to accomplish SCEC’s science objectives). Every effort will be made to ensure Committee membership reflects the diversity of both science and society.

The Center Director will appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, subject to approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors. The Chair will lead the Committee's work, ensuring it fulfills its purpose outlined in Section A. The Vice-Chair will assume the Chair's role if the designated Chair is unavailable.

The Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, in consultation with the Executive Operations Committee (ExCom), will recommend candidates for the member positions. The Board of Directors will then confirm these selections by a majority vote. These members will serve staggered two-year terms, renewable once, to balance fresh perspectives with institutional knowledge.

C. Meetings

The Committee will convene in-person twice a year: at the May SCEC Leadership Retreat (2.5 days) and the September SCEC Annual Meeting (3.5 days). The purpose of these meetings is to review and report on the Center's current research program and activities, and to collaboratively plan its future direction. SCEC will cover travel costs for Committee members to attend both meetings.

Quarterly web conferences will be held on March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1 of each year. The Committee Chair may convene additional meetings as needed to fulfill the committee's objectives, with the schedule determined in consultation with Committee members. Meeting outcomes and Committee recommendations will be reported to the Center Director.

Committee members should anticipate up to two 1-hour conference calls and an additional 4-6 hours of work per quarter to address committee priorities.

D. Deliverables

The Committee oversees the annual science plan, including its development, progress tracking, and reporting on progress towards achieving SCEC's scientific milestones. The Committee also provides input on the SCEC annual meeting program held in September of each year. The Committee's deliverables are due as follows:

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| March 1 | Meet to develop a work plan and schedule for the Committee to accomplish its objectives for the next 12 months. |
| April 1 | To prepare for the May Leadership Retreat, review past SCEC project reports to develop key themes, achievements, and research areas of interest to the SCEC community. |
| May 1 | Prepare and deliver a presentation at the SCEC Leadership Retreat summarizing (a) year-to-date research progress, (b) proposed science milestone updates, (c) emerging research areas, (d) new collaborative efforts and proposal ideas for Center-wide initiatives, and (e) feedback on the proposed themes and presenters for the September annual meeting program. |
| June 1 | Complete draft of research accomplishments for sponsoring agencies, highlighting progress and updates on Center's science milestones and a work plan to achieve the science objectives for the following year. |
| August 15 | Complete draft annual science plan to distribute at the September SCEC annual meeting for community input. |
| September 1 | Prepare and deliver a presentation(s) at the SCEC Annual Meeting, showcasing major research accomplishments, highlighting poster session findings, and introducing the annual science plan priorities and objectives. |
| October 1 | Incorporate community feedback to finalize the Center's annual science plan, which will be announced with a call for proposals to SCEC. |

- December 1 Summarize the Center's annual research accomplishments for sponsoring agencies and inclusion in year-end Director's highlights to the SCEC community.
- Ongoing Identify and cultivate promising research ideas from the broader community and recommend new Center initiatives to the SCEC Director.

E. Major Activities

The Committee includes up to eight members chosen for their expertise in the Center's "major activities". These represented activities can evolve as new opportunities arise and resources allow, and contract when activities are completed.

Based on the current awards that fund Center operations, the Committee needs expertise in:

1. Improving Observations and Closing Data Gaps
2. Developing Rheologies and Bridging Multi-Scales
3. Advanced Modeling Frameworks
4. Improving Predictive Analyses of Seismicity
5. Applied Science Implementation
6. Research Computing
7. Education and Workforce Development
8. Outreach and Community Engagement

The above list (last updated 5/9/2024) is subject to change as the Center priorities evolve.