

The International Council of RSE Associations - Charter of the International Council of RSE Associations

The Charter of the International Council of RSE Associations has passed the Council's vote and was adopted on 2021-07-14.

Charter of the International Council of RSE Associations

The “International Council of RSE Associations” (“the Council”) was founded in 2021 by a group of national and multi-national RSE Associations to establish a formal mechanism to facilitate international collaboration. The creation of a regular forum to communicate and formally meet to ensure cohesion between associations will provide a platform for open discussion around international issues and affairs, including international RSE conferences. This enables collective decision making, collaboration among national associations as well as peer support.

This document describes the purpose, function, membership criteria, and governance of the International Council of RSE Associations.

Purpose and Function

1. Communication and Coordination

Coordination of participation in other interest groups: Member associations may coordinate participation in related groups such as the *Research Software Alliance (ReSA)* and the *Research Data Alliance (RDA)*.

Coordination of advocacy: Member associations have the opportunity to develop a common baseline for advocating for the implementation of Research Software Engineering at the institutions as well as national policy makers, funders, etc.

Event Coordination: As member associations plan events, they will be expected to bring the dates along with an overview of the activities to the Council

in a timely manner. This will minimize the likelihood that associations schedule conflicting events. At this time, events will be considered to be anything spanning two or more half-days.

International RSE Event Branding: Member associations are welcome to use the “International RSE” branding, however, in order to secure endorsement by the associations represented in the Council, the event should first be brought to the Council for approval.

International RSE Conference Planning: The Council will be the main point of contact/initiation for large internationally coordinated RSE events, including future international conferences. An International RSE Conference could be rotated around societies/associations for each instance with agreement from the international committee. Each association could then replace their national conference with an international one for a single year and everyone is therefore involved. This would avoid the issue of having to set up new structures/associations to manage finance, etc. This would also foster closer connections of RSEs in different countries and improve the profile of the entire RSE community. The conferences could be in-person and broadcast to attendees unable to travel due to time or budget constraints.

2. Discussion Forum

Organizational Discussion: The member associations will be given the opportunity to raise questions and set the agenda for discussion on topics pertaining to the organization and operation of a national association. It is the intent of this Council to provide a general forum to share knowledge, experiences, and best practices surrounding the formation and growth of national RSE associations. By providing a regular forum of the leadership of each association knowledge sharing will be possible not just for those that have pre-existing relationships, but also for new associations.

3. Conflict resolution between Associations

Questions: Without the Council, questions about motives could be left unasked, leading to conflict or ill will. It is our intent to establish the regular Council meeting to provide a formal and public opportunity to ask questions to other associations. It is anticipated that other associations will be interested in the answers.

Conflict resolution: Should a substantive conflict between associations arise, the Council will provide a formal path to resolution. Member associations can bring the issue to the Council meeting and request the Council work together to resolve the issue.

4. Development of new national associations

The Council is mandated to help and to encourage the initiatives to develop new national RSE associations. The Council can delegate this responsibility to well-established national associations in closer geographical proximity and / or with better language and culture ties to support such initiatives.

The new establishing associations can be present at the Council as observing participants. Once matured, the new associations can be accepted as full members of the Council. The acceptance criteria will be determined and updated by all existing members of the Council. See membership eligibility below.

Membership Eligibility

The Council will begin with the formal membership of the founding associations:

1. be-RSE
2. de-RSE
3. NL-RSE
4. Nordic RSE
5. RSE-AUNZ
6. The Society of RSE (UK)
7. US-RSE

The addition of future association members will be voted on by the existing Council membership. For the purposes of this document, we anticipate initial membership criteria to require an association reach a certain level of maturity before joining. This criteria will be well publicized and aspiring associations will be provided with resources and support in forming. It is not our intention to hinder membership of new associations.

Membership will be open to any national or larger (e.g. multi-national or continental) association of research software engineers/engineering that have achieved the following:

- Created an identifiable and branded web presence
- Agree to participate in the International RSE survey
- Created a unique and branded forum (persistent chat (channel), mailing list, etc.) consisting of 20 or more individuals with active participation from members
- Uniquely represents the RSE community in one or more countries
- Has had at least one (documented) group activity in the 12 months before joining the Council, such as a community event, community call, annual general meeting, or similar

There is no membership fee.

Observing Participants

The Council welcomes representatives of nascent communities (i.e., those that do not yet meet the requirements for membership) to join Council meetings as observers. At the end of Council meetings, observing participants will be offered the opportunity to ask questions to the Council or offer items for discussion. Non-member participation is intended to give the leaders of burgeoning communities an opportunity to listen and learn from Council associations to further support the growth of their communities. The ability to participate as an observer will be advertised and open to those who register in advance.

Requirements of Member Associations

Each member association is expected to appoint two (2) representatives to the Council. Representatives should be members of the association's leadership group, well versed in current RSE events and capable of speaking on behalf of the association.

Virtual meetings will be held at a minimum of 2-4 times per year. At least one (1) representative from each member association will be expected to regularly attend these Council meetings.

Internal Organization of the Council

The only named role within the Council will be a rotating meeting chair. Each meeting will have a new meeting chair responsible for setting the agenda and hosting the meeting. Chairs will rotate through the member associations (not representatives). The next rotating chair will be decided at the conclusion of the previous Council meeting.

Decision making

Any decision may be taken either:

1. At a meeting of the Council members; or
2. By resolution in writing or electronic form agreed by a majority of all of the Council member associations.
3. If a decision cannot be reached through consensus, decisions are reached by vote where each association represented in the Council has a single vote, and votes need the majority of all associations represented in the Council to pass. Decisions requiring a vote will be brought forward as a motion to vote. A vote of member associations shall close no earlier than 1 week after the motion to vote has been brought forward and when a majority has been reached, or votes from all associations have been collected.

Charter approval/modification

Proposed changes to this charter can be passed by obtaining a consensus vote from each member organisation, or by a greater-than-two-thirds majority of votes following the procedure outlined above.

Code of Conduct

The Council Code of Conduct is published on the Council website. All Council meetings and interactions will adhere to the Council Code of Conduct.