

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) by Governments

The IEEE Government Engagement Program on Standards (GEPS)

This FAQ document is intended to address questions that prospective or current government program participants in the IEEE Government Engagement Program on Standards ([GEPS](#)) may have. It will evolve as this program evolves, and will be updated with additional questions, as relevant.

Q*1: What is the IEEE GEPS program?

A**1: The IEEE (pronounced “Eye-Triple E”) Government Engagement Program on Standards (GEPS) is a tailored program for government officials from around the world where they gain strategic insights into IEEE standardization and contribute to discussions at the intersection of technology, standards and policy. The Program is under the purview of the IEEE Standards Association (IEEE SA), which is a globally recognized standards-setting body within IEEE. The program provides information and resources tailored to each member’s needs and interests, including bespoke webinars, and bi-lateral consultations with technical and standards experts.

Q2: Why did the IEEE Standards Association (SA) create the GEPS program?

A2: IEEE SA collaborates with stakeholders to advance global technologies, and interested stakeholders (including academia, civil society, governments and industry) are actively engaged in IEEE SA’s standards development activities/processes, which are coordinated and overseen by the IEEE SA Standards Board (SASB).

Since global standards are critical instruments in innovation, trade and public policy areas, IEEE SA created GEPS to provide a platform for governments from around the world to help increase their understanding of IEEE’s standards process, and to facilitate input regarding government priorities into IEEE’s standardization ecosystem.

Q3: What will government entities gain by participating in the program?

A3: Appointed representatives help shape IEEE SA activities, leading to mutual benefits for government entities participating in IEEE GEPS and IEEE SA.

Other opportunities for government entities include:

- First-hand, timely information from IEEE SA about its activities and plans (when attending meetings of the IEEE SA Standards Board (SASB) and the Board of Governors (BOG));
- Inform the direction and priorities of IEEE SA;
- Interact and share views with technology thought leaders;
- Direct interaction with IEEE SA volunteer leadership, experts and staff (locally and globally);
- A dedicated IEEE SA staff contact to answer questions and assist with program participation;
- Public recognition as a program participant on the [IEEE GEPS website](#) and the [IEEE SA website](#).

Q*4: Is there a financial commitment involved to joining GEPS?

A**4: No. There are no fees involved in joining the GEPS program.

Q5: What will the role of the appointed representative(s) be?

A5: Through GEPS, government entities, via their appointed representative(s), have an easy entry point into IEEE SA and its activities where they will learn about IEEE's standardization activities, including its WTO-adherent process and the technical areas of standards work, and have opportunity to be connected with technical, industry and process experts in the IEEE SA. Participation in GEPS programming is voluntary and GEPS participants are encouraged to attend IEEE SA governance meetings and participate in GEPS information sharing sessions.

Appointed GEPS representatives, if they choose, have the following opportunities to engage in:

- Specific webinars on IEEE initiatives and topics of interest,
- Participate in IEEE GEPS meetings to meet fellow IEEE GEPS representatives and exchange on mutual topics of interests,
- Have opportunity to present and discuss national standardization initiatives with IEEE SA and its Standards Board, when relevant,
- Have direct dialog with IEEE SA experts on topics of interest (facilitated by the IEEE SA staff contact),
- Attend IEEE SA Standards Board ([SASB](#)) meeting series (four times per year) and the IEEE Board of Governors ([BOG](#)) meetings. Additionally, when in attendance,

IEEE SA will aim to familiarize appointed representatives with IEEE SA, the Standards Board, standardization activities, and answer questions.

Q*6: How many appointed GEPS nominees from one ministry will be required?

A**6: Although IEEE accepts one GEPS nominee per government ministry, interested government entities have the opportunity to appoint a primary (official) GEPS nominee and an alternate (operational) GEPS nominee from the same ministry entity.

Q7: What is the role of the ‘primary’ and the ‘alternate’ representative in GEPS?

A7: Government bodies have the option to nominate one or two representatives from the same organization to serve in GEPS. In case of the latter, the primary (official) representative tends to be more senior than the alternate (operational) representative who supports the primary representative in fulfilling their responsibility in GEPS. Although both representatives will be listed on the GEPS site and the SASB page, the alternate (operational) representative tends to be the one coordinating with the IEEE GEPS Team on operational issues.

Q8: What level should the appointed representative(s) hold in their ministry department to qualify for participation in the program?

A8: As the Standards Board (SASB) focuses on oversight of the standardization process and ongoing standardization work, and since the Board of Governors directs the SASB, an appointed representative at the level of Director or Head of Unit is expected to gain the most benefit from engaging in the program. However, at times, it may be appropriate for a Director or Head of Unit to delegate to a subordinate. We aim to invite one appointed representative who will regularly participate in the program and build knowledge of IEEE's standardization and technical activities.

Q9: How long will a GEPS representative(s) be nominated for?

A9: Each participating entity will typically appoint one or two representatives until otherwise communicated. Appointments are renewable. Typically, the GEPS representative(s) remain(s) the participating entity's representative in GEPS until further notice.

Q*10: Is there an option to nominate a government staff person to participate on behalf of a government official who does not have the time to attend?

A**10: We understand that it is not always possible for a government ministry/agency to directly participate in GEPS. In that case, it is possible for the government agency/ministry to authorize another representative, e.g., somebody who may already be active in IEEE's work, to join the GEPS program as the government ministry/agency nominee.

Q11: What happens if there is interest from multiple ministries within a country?

A11: Generally speaking, the ministry appointing the representative should be responsible for standardization, or for a range of technologies in the fields of IEEE. Should more than one ministry from the same country be interested, IEEE SA accommodates this to ensure relevant participation.

Q12: Are the appointed representatives able to attend meetings of the IEEE SA Standards Board (SASB) and the IEEE Board of Governors (BOG)?

A12: Appointed representatives are encouraged to attend any and all [IEEE SA Standards Board \(SASB\)](#) and [IEEE Board of Governors \(BOG\)](#) meetings, virtually or in-person, especially when in their country, to build knowledge of the process, share information, and engage with the global standardization community. The SASB meets three times per year and the BOG meets at least four times per year; the IEEE SA Governance meetings schedule is available [here](#).

Q13: Does IEEE SA provide funding support for appointed representatives to attend in-person SASB and/or BOG meetings?

A13: IEEE SA does not provide funding support for members of the SASB, BOG, other liaisons, or appointed government representatives to attend meetings of the SASB and/or the BOG.

Q14: What are the responsibilities of the SASB and its committees?

A14: The IEEE SA Standards Board (SASB) is responsible for the following:

- Encouraging and coordinating the development and revision of IEEE standards,
- Approving the initiation of IEEE standards projects,
- Reviewing standards projects for consensus, due process, openness, and balance,

- Giving final approval to IEEE standards prior to publication,
- Processing all necessary appeals.

SASB has established committees to do some of this work:

- [Audit Committee \(AudCom\)](#): This committee reviews policies and procedures of the technical standards working groups with the goal that all IEEE standards committees follow fair and open processes and procedures, and that they comply with them.
- [New Standards Committee \(NesCom\)](#): This committee reviews Project Authorization Requests (PARs) before a new standards activity can start to ensure the activity is within the scope and purpose of IEEE, and that it is assigned to an appropriate technical standards committee.
- [Standards Review Committee \(RevCom\)](#): This committee reviews the process documentation (votes on a standard, comment resolution, etc.) for the development of a proposed standard. Committee recommendations to approve a standard for publication are based on an assessment that all procedural requirements have been satisfied.
- [Patent Committee \(PatCom\)](#): This committee recommends updates to the IEEE SA patent policy, provides educational material related to the patent policy, and reviews conformity with the patent policy procedures.
- [Procedures Committee \(ProCom\)](#): This committee is responsible for recommending to the SASB improvements and changes in procedures to promote efficient discharge of responsibilities by the SASB, its committees, and other IEEE committees engaged in standards activities.

We encourage appointed representatives to monitor all of the meetings that are of interest to them.

Q*15: What are the responsibilities of the IEEE Board of Governors (BOG)?

A**15: The IEEE Board of Governors (BOG) directs the IEEE Standards Association (SA) - establishing policy, providing financial oversight, and conducting standards-related activities within IEEE technological fields. It may also establish and appoint boards, committees, and other organizational units as needed to carry on the work of the IEEE SA.

To carry out its basic responsibilities, the IEEE SA BOG fulfills the following:

- Maintain a current [IEEE Standards Association Operations Manual](#)
- Approve [IEEE SA Standards Board Bylaws](#)
- Approve policy additions/changes with significant financial/strategic implications
- Establish and disband committees, as appropriate
- Establish and maintain that IEEE SA members represent a wide range of basic interests
 - Technical societies, industry, government, general public
- Provide financial oversight and decisions for IEEE SA operations as well as major program additions and/or changes
- Recommend IEEE SA BOG member candidates which are elected annually
- Approve IEEE SA Standards Board membership
- Hold and attend meetings to accomplish the work of the BOG
- Approve award nominees in recognition of exceptional service

Q16: Do GEPS participants need to be IEEE or IEEE SA members to participate in the program?

A16: There are no IEEE or IEEE SA membership requirements. If GEPS participants engage in IEEE standards development activities, there may be requirements to become an IEEE SA member, for instance to serve as a standards working group chair or to vote/ballot on an IEEE standards project in development.

Please note, GEPS participants are not considered IEEE members.

Q17: Do GEPS participants gain additional access to IEEE journals or IEEE standards?

A17: Not at this time. GEPS participants have access to the following programs where they can access select IEEE standards at no charge:

The subsidized sponsorship of standards via [IEEE GET Program](#) helps expand the global reach of technical knowledge developed by industry, accelerates adoption of IEEE standards, contributes to an open knowledge community, promulgates open information exchange to foster innovation, and connects the IEEE brand with the development of world changing technologies for the benefit of humanity.

The [IEEE Reading Room](#) contains standards typically incorporated by reference into legislation and are available at no charge for [reading-only access](#).

There is also the ability for IEEE standards to be adopted by a GEPS participant's country. Through an **Adoption Process and Agreement**, IEEE allows for the adoption of its standards through the adopting organization, which is typically the country's National Standards Body, via its standards process and who takes full responsibility for the resulting National Standard.

Q*18: Who can be contacted for more information?

A**18: Please sign up [here](#) for more information (scroll down). For information about SASB, the BOG and their meetings, please contact David Ringle (d.ringle@ieee.org), Director, IEEE SA Governance.

Q19: How can my organization join GEPS?

A19: Ministry entities interested in joining GEPS are invited to send an email to Constance Weise (constance.weise@ieee.org) by providing the full contact name, professional title, and email address that the official IEEE GEPS invitation letter should be sent to.

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