Copernicus Academy Hub for Knowledge, Innovation and Outreach

Published conditions for Academy membership [Deliverable 2.2]

Deliverable [M9]

Del 2.2 ("Published conditions for Academy membership") [v2, m9]

Lead beneficiary and contributing partners

UNIBAS [5], SPASE [2], PLUS [1], UMA [3], CLIMATE-KIC [6], KU MRI [11], CUT [10].

	Name(s)	Date
Author(s):	Valerio Tramutoli Valeria Satriano Emanuele Ciancia Nicola Felice Capece	17.06.2019
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Rationale

This deliverable collects Cophub.AC recommendations on the conditions for joining the Academy network and the criteria for the extension of the network beyond European border which should be incorporated in its long-term sustainability strategic plan.

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Executive summary

The Copernicus Academy is striving to increase the exchange of ideas and best practices across borders and disciplines while contributing to the development of the use of EO data in general and Copernicus data and information in particular, in various public or private user organisations or industries. In doing so, the Academy fosters collaboration between all actors along the innovation pipeline to reach the market and benefit the citizens of Europe and the future of our Planet.

This deliverable (Del 2.2) suggests some adaptations of the current membership procedures and conditions of the Copernicus Academy network. In order to increase the overall level of activity and interaction within the network, a few critical measures are suggested, including a peer system of senior members seconding the onboarding process, and the differentiation of groups of members and the primary roles they may play in their involvement. Both the benefits and the expectations of a partnership should be clearly communicated upfront in the application process via the Gateway.

Aims & scope of CopHub.AC

The Horizon 2020 Coordination and Support Action aims to establish a long-term Copernicus hub to consolidate and sustain the Copernicus Academy as a knowledge and innovation platform. To fulfil this several nodes will be created, including interactive web elements showing the distribution and dynamics of Copernicus related expertise and capacities. The project will link ongoing R&D activities in Copernicus-relevant academic fields and sustain the innovation process from academia to business on a high scientific and technical level. We have a clear commitment to a full thematic and geographic coverage for a Europe-wide boost in demand-driven uptake of space technology and geospatial information.

General considerations (role of the Academy)

As an integral part of the Copernicus User Uptake activities and the strengthening of the Copernicus ecosystem in the spirit of the European Space Strategy, , the European Commission has launched the Copernicus Academy. The Copernicus Academy connects European universities, research institutions, business schools, both private and non-profit organisations, in the Participating Countries of the Programme and beyond. The goal of the network is to link research & academic institutions with authorities & service providers, facilitating collaborative research, develop lectures, training sessions, traineeships as well as educational and VET material to empower the next generation of researchers, scientists, and entrepreneurs with suitable skill sets to use Copernicus data and information services to their full potential.

The Copernicus Academy emerged from its precursor the GMES Academy as a legacy of the FP-7 projects GRAAL and DORIS.Net and the Salzburg Declaration, back in 2012. With the ambition to develop new tools, foster exchange of knowledge as well as cross-border and cross-sectoral collaboration, the Academy contributes to unleashing the vast potential of Copernicus Sentinel data and information. In order to be recognized as an authoritative organization in its field of action, the conditions for joining the Academy network and the criteria for the extension of the network beyond European borders shall be based on declared principles and incorporated in its long-term sustainability strategic plan (T6.4). We explore different kinds of adhesion to different actor groups within the Academy like the Thematic Working Groups.

The Copernicus Academy strives to increase the exchange of ideas and best practices across borders and disciplines while contributing to an increased use of EO data in general and Copernicus data and information in particular, in various public or private user organisations and industries. In doing so, the Academy fosters collaboration between all actors along the Innovation Pipeline to reach the market and benefit the citizens within and outside Europe.

Present procedure of membership application

Partnership applications are currently moderated by the CSO (pre-check) and then handed over to DG GROW. The Commission will engage Member States representatives at the Copernicus User Forum (CUF), who would approve the application. New members from outside Europe have to provide recommendation letters from a public authority in their country of origin. The advantage of this procedure is the direct involvement of the Member States in this process and their agreement. What is missing is to guarantee to the Academy plays a recognized role in proactively shaping the network composition.

Application. Presently, in order to become a Copernicus Academy member, an application has to be submitted by filling in an online Application Form on the Copernicus website (https://www.copernicus.eu/en/opportunities/education/copernicus-academy). The required information is described in Fig. 1.

Copernicus Academy - application form

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Disclaimer
The European Commission is not responsible for the content of questionnaires created using the EUSurvey service - it re
form creator and manager. The use of EUSurvey service does not imply a recommendation or endorsement, by the Europ
expressed within them.

☑ Save a backup on your local computer (disable if yo

*1 Name of organisation(s)

*2 Address

*3 Country

*4 Website of the organisation

*5 Social media profile(s) including hashtags (#) and handles (@)

*6 Date of creation
📅 DD/MM/YYYY

*7 Mission

*8 Is your organisation a non-for-profit one?

*9 Number of staff

*10 Annual budget

[   ] EUR

*11 Governance structure

12 Main person responsible for implementation

	Name	Phone	E-Mail
*1			

13 Further person(s) responsible for implementation

	Name	Phone	E-Mail
1			
2			
3			
4			

14 Name and contact details to be displayed on the copernicus.eu member listing

	Name	Phone	E-Mail
*1			

*15 Describe your organisation and its objectives

*16 Describe your experience/motivation for being involved and develop education/outreach/network activities

*17 Describe how you plan to develop your role of member. Any idea or initiative?

*18 Give your view on key success factors for a cooperative multilateral partnership to fill skills gaps in the space data applications sector in EU

*19 Are you an applicant from a non-Copernicus Participating country? If that is the case, you will be contacted to provide a letter of recommendation from a national authority.
  ○ Yes
  ○ No

Figure 1: Screenshot from Copernicus Academy application form [EU Survey] (https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/CopernicusAcademyApplication)

Recommendations for amended procedure

With respect to membership procedures to the Copernicus Academy network, there is currently no specific academic , i.e. peer-to-peer , mechanism installed that would ensure a network-driven control/facilitation of the onboarding of new partners or the cancellation of membership in case of

non-activities.

Onboarding process

Figure 1 shows the current procedure in three stages with six elements. In stage 1 and 3 amendments are suggested. These refer to (i) the specification of a more detailed profile of new members in the application phase (Gateway) and (ii) a network facilitating procedure in stage 1. In stage 3 we suggest to have (iii) a strong role of the Thematic Working Groups as academic supervisors. These new elements are described in more detail below..
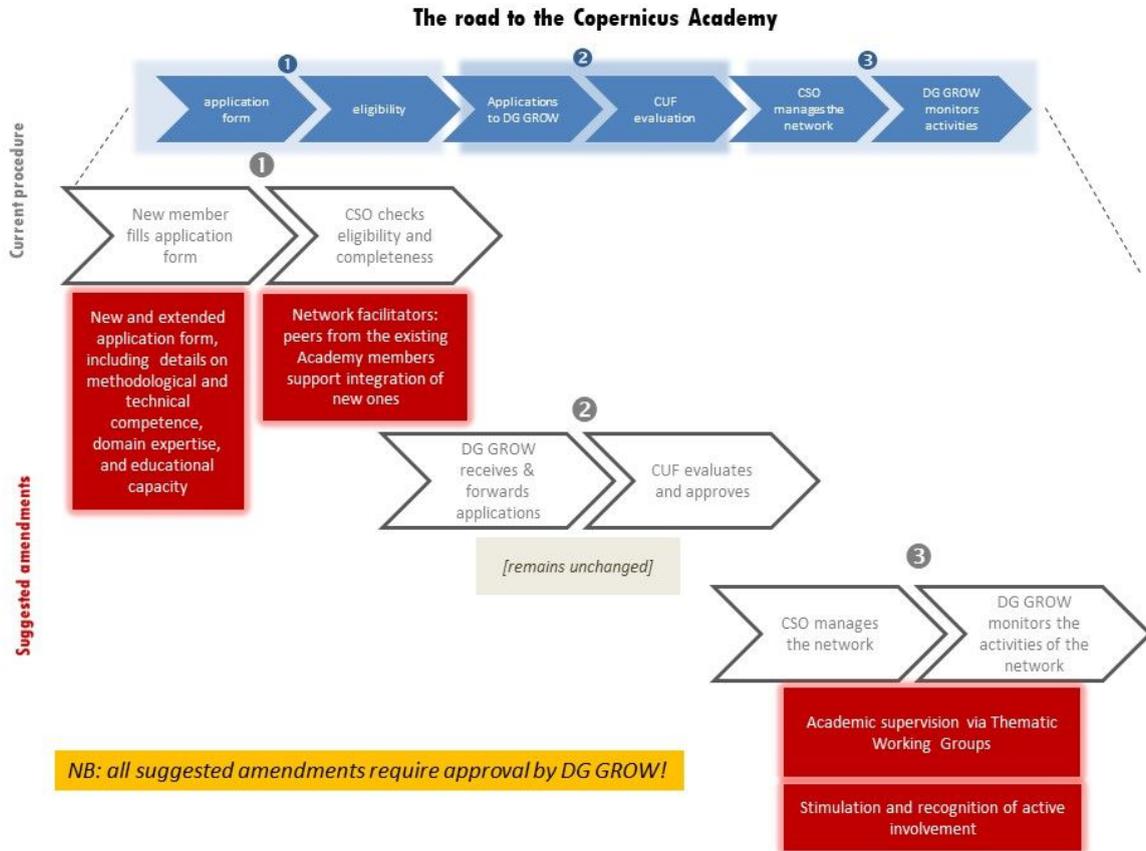

Fig.1 Procedure to join the Copernicus Academy; the current procedure is shown on top. Below, red boxes indicate suggested additional elements .

Types of members

In order to better define the **expectations** of members and their involvement in the network, we suggest the differentiation of members' types . The prime aspect to become a member of the Copernicus Academy is a keen interest and active contributions in research & development & innovation, as being relevant to the EO and GI sector. But this does not restrict membership to academia or dedicated R&D institutions. In order to make the Innovation Pipeline work properly, there should not be a gap between a (purely) academic network and the remainder of the Copernicus ecosystem. Just like in a real ecosystem, there should be functional ties and interactions. This means, organisations from other sectors (industry, private organisations, public institutions,

etc.) are also invited to join the Academy network, so they perform (or stimulate) R&D activities or have a strong role as early adopters or promoters of new technologies.

The **types of members** depicted in Fig. 2 resembling coarse groups without strictly defined boundaries. Also, some members might be difficult to assign (e.g. active individuals). Still, for the more dedicated networking activities and exchange, it is valuable to distinguish between the following broader group.

★ **Academia & research**. University or research institutes providing original research contributions and/or officially recognized higher education titles in the Copernicus related fields

★ **Training & innovation transfer**. Private and non-profit organisations such as VET providers, business schools, innovation transfer institutes, business broker, startup accelerators, etc. in the Copernicus related fields.

★ **Early adopters**. Public authorities using (or interested to use) Copernicus data and information layers for improved decision support, workflow automation, and the like.

★ **Value-adding users**. Companies, start-ups, etc. in the Copernicus downstream application domain using (or interested to use) Copernicus data and information layers for business development..
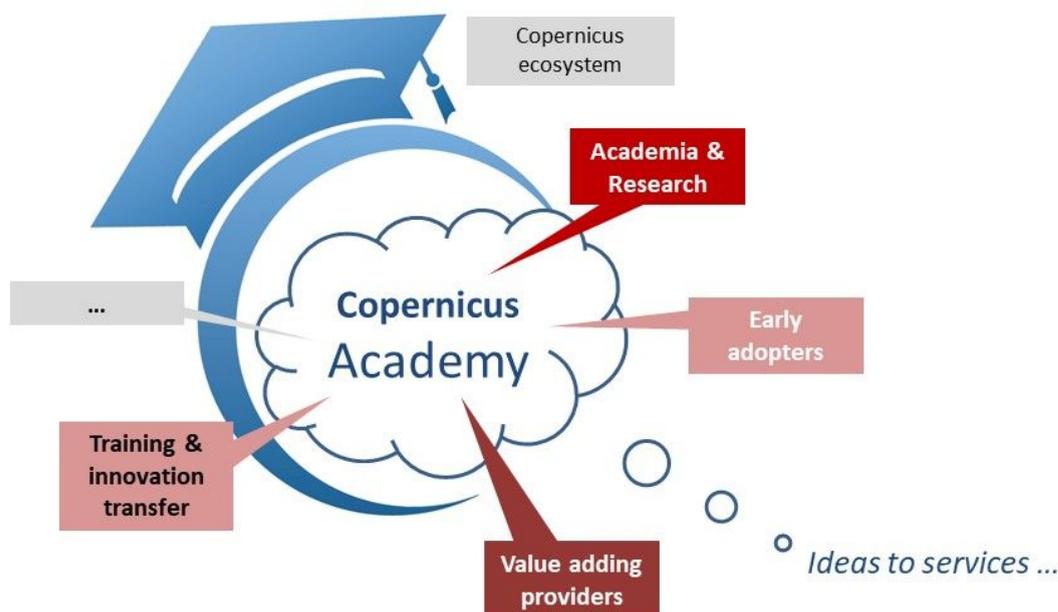

Fig. 2. Types of members in the Copernicus Academy network.

Network facilitators (Academy peers)

The CopHub.AC consortium suggests to include a network facilitator mechanisms to ascertain the academic quality of the applications and to support new members in the onboarding process and early engagement. In this context, "academic quality" means in the 'spirit' and the self-understanding of the Academy and in line with the published membership conditions (see

below). While this might sound like a peer-review mechanism in an academic publication procedure, its intention is not to exclude any of the applications, but rather to stimulate and support new applicants. The aim is to make new members familiar with the network and assign them an active role or position as vividly as possible. As with any other peer system, established members of the network will act as facilitators. They help in identifying the **relevance** and possible **contribution** of an applicant's organisation to the network.

In practical terms this would mean that - according to the **thematic focus** of the applicant and the **type of organisation** -, a panel of 2-3 peers will be identified, preferably from the respective TWG. Based on a standardised form the CSO and DG GROW will receive a supporting statement from the panel. For existing members the suggested procedure may be implemented ex-post, in order to make the role of member organisations more explicit within the network.

Membership categories (standard vs. full)

The Academy network envisages active engagement and mutual exchange of their members. On the other hand, some of the members may face restrictions or reluctance in contributing actively to the network activities, but they have a general interest in the information sharing and update function. Full membership would entail active contributions to the Thematic Working Groups, publication of Research Briefs or presentations in the monthly Academy teleconferences, dissemination activities, etc. **Full membership** can be assigned after a certain period of active participation and reporting, e.g. after three years of activity or based on special achievements.

Published membership conditions

At the stage of application of new members via the Gateway, the **terms and conditions of the membership** should be clearly visible. This defines the 'spirit' of the Copernicus Academy network. Membership to the network should adhere to these principles and new applicants are supposed to actively read and accept these conditions. The published membership conditions should have the following sections:

> I.   **Preamble** (function and objectives of the Copernicus Academy, brief history)
> II.   **Getting involved - benefits and expectations** (what is the benefit of being part of the network, what is expected from members in terms of active contributions, etc.)
> III. **Types of members,** (explaining four groups of members, the organisation of the Thematic Working Groups, and the differentiation of standard vs. full membership)
> IV.   **General procedures** (onboarding, network facilitation , etc.)