

## **MIAPPE Organisational Structure**

### **1. Background**

MIAPPE (<http://www.miappe.org>), the standard for Minimum Information about a Plant Phenotyping Experiment, describes the types of information that should be published about experiments of this type. Following the publication of an initial paper in 2015, various groups continue to work on the development of this standard, considering how it should be applied to specific experimental types, and on developing computational tools to support its use. In May 2017, a group of interested parties elected a Steering Committee, to coordinate these activities. In January 2019, the Steering Committee approved the release of MIAPPE v1.1, a new document extending the previously published work.

The future value of MIAPPE depends on its broad acceptance by the community. All development is driven by the commitment of interested parties; but this development should reflect the needs of the broadest possible community, and not just the requirements of specific projects. MIAPPE is now at a sufficient state of maturity that it is important that elections to the Steering Committee are henceforth held at regular intervals, allowing all interested parties a vote on its composition. This document describes a proposed organisational structure for MIAPPE, including the role of the Steering Committee, and proposals for its election.

### **2. The MIAPPE community**

Many researchers are interested in MIAPPE: these include gene bank personnel, plant biologists and breeders, botanists, bioinformaticians, hardware and software engineers, facility/programme managers, and others involved in plant phenotyping and phenomics. Anyone with an interest is encouraged to join the MIAPPE community by subscribing to the mailing list [miappe.org](mailto:miappe.org), and to participate in working groups. All members of the community are entitled to vote on the composition of the Steering Committee. When voting for the Steering Committee, community members are encouraged to consider the desirability of balanced representation across disciplines, projects, and countries.

### **3. Role of the Steering Committee**

The role of the steering committee is as follows:

- (i) Encourage and coordinate development of the MIAPPE standard and a corresponding tool set.
- (ii) Create and scope working groups and the appointment of working group leaders.
- (iii) Release official new versions of the standard.
- (iv) Disseminate the MIAPPE standard to the scientific community.
- (v) Arrange Annual General Meetings and elections of the Steering Committee.

#### 4. Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held, usually at a conference of interest to the MIAPPE community. Where possible, remote access will be provided to those who cannot attend, and minutes will be promptly distributed to all members of the MIAPPE community. Standing items for discussion will include:

- (i) Report of progress made in the previous year.
- (ii) Discussion of future priorities and interests.
- (iii) Consideration of the future membership of the Steering Committee.

#### 5. Composition and Election of the Steering Committee.

- (i) The Steering Committee will have 7 elected members, each serving a 3-year term.
- (ii) Routinely, two or three members of the Steering Committee will be elected each year.
- (iii) If a member of the Committee resigns ahead of the expiry of their allotted term, an election will be held to fill this position after the next AGM, alongside the elections for positions whose term has expired.
- (iv) After the AGM, there will be a period of three weeks within which any member of the MIAPPE community may declare their wish to serve on the Steering Committee. Existing members may submit themselves for re-election.
- (v) Candidates for election may self-describe as experimentalists.
- (v) If there are more candidates than vacancies, there will then be a further period of three weeks within which all members of the community will be able to vote on the candidates.
- (vi) Each member of the community may vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies. Each vote counts equally.
- (vii) Voting will be anonymous and online.

- (viii) The candidates with most votes will be elected, subject to the proviso that a minimum of two experimentalists are present on the committee at all times.
- (ix) In the event of a tie, the outgoing Steering Committee will decide which of tied candidates to appoint. If any of the tied candidates is an existing member of the Steering Committee, they shall recuse themselves from participation in this decision.

## 6. Operation of the Steering Committee

- (i) The Steering Committee may co-opt additional members as it sees fit. Particular care should be taken to ensure good representation of broad areas of expertise (experimentalist, researchers, data scientists, modelers, etc.) on the steering committee.
- (ii) The quorum of the steering committee shall be four.
- (iii) The Steering Committee is expected to operate by consensus, informed where necessary by discussions with the broader community (e.g., via the mailing list, through direct interaction with the community members, or at the Annual General Meeting). If no consensus can be reached, a vote is taken. In the event of the failure to reach a majority, no decision is taken. A vote may occur without all members being present, but a majority of all elected members is required to take an opposed decision. Co-opted members do not have a vote.

## 7. Chair of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee selects its chairperson, and may select other officers with specific duties, as it sees fit. Any such positions should be reconsidered at the first meeting of the Steering Committee following each annual election of Steering Committee members.

## 8. Working Groups

Development of MIAPPE is led by working groups (WG) proposed by the SC, or proposed by the membership and approved by the SC. The formation of the WGs will be announced on [www.miappe.org](http://www.miappe.org) and all community members will be eligible to join them. The SC appoints a coordinator for each WG in consultation with the interested members. The WG has responsibility for developing outputs (which may include, but are not limited to, revisions to the standard, or reports on MIAPPE uses cases) to be submitted to the Steering Committee for approval.

It is expected that draft revisions to the standard proposed by the WGs will be initially published in association with a Request For Comments to be distributed widely across the Scientific Community. The Steering Committee shall advise on the process for gathering feedback, and assess the feedback and the responses to it provided by the working group, before approving the final release of a new version of the standard or associated tools.

## 9. Publication and authorship policy

The MIAPPE standard is governed following the good practices used by open consortia such as W3C. Therefore all contributions to MIAPPE, once accepted, fall under MIAPPE copyright. Proposals to the MIAPPE Steering Committee are considered to have been placed in the public domain and revisions to the standard and associated technical documents will be licensed by the Steering Committee under the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC-BY). It is strongly expected that the working group leaders will normally drive scientific publication of their own work, and that the authors on any such publications will be those who have contributed significantly to that work, in accordance with normal scientific practice.

The Steering Committee may, with the agreement of the leaders of all relevant working groups or after a majority vote at an annual meeting, seek publication of a short “announcement” paper in an appropriate journal, briefly describing a newly released version of the standard.

## 10. Requirements for Updating the Organisational Structure Document

Where suggested updates are not material in nature (e.g., mis-spellings are identified or grammatical errors are detected) updates to this document are freely permitted. Updates that change how the organization is managed or how the organization operates shall be proposed by the membership and/or Steering Committee, distributed to members no less than two weeks in advance of the Annual General Meeting. Such proposals shall be discussed at the AGM, and approved by simple majority vote online thereafter.

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