



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## The Director-General

DG/Note/11/14

09 May 2011

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Deputy Director-General

Assistant Directors-General

Directors of Bureaux, Offices and Divisions at Headquarters

Directors and Heads of Established Offices and Institutes

away from Headquarters

Subject: **UNESCO Publications Board**

1. UNESCO's publications contribute to accomplishing the Organization's goals. They are an important means of maintaining, advancing and sharing knowledge between and across all regions of the world, and they also represent one of the Organization's main programme implementation mechanisms. While some aim to inform the general public, many provide specialists with expert knowledge drawn from UNESCO's fields of competence.

2. Since the External Auditor's report on UNESCO's publication activities (179 EX/31) in 2008, as well as the follow-up decisions by the Executive Board on this issue, the Organization has implemented measures to improve the quality, dissemination and monitoring of its publications. These include guidelines on all aspects of the publishing process, a management tool and quality control by the Division of Public Information in the Sector for External Relations and Public Information (ERI/DPI) in the framework of ISBN attribution.

3. In order to enhance the quality control aspect, reduce the number of publication and provide a coherent strategic vision for them, I have decided to create a Publications Board that will oversee all UNESCO's publishing activities, both at Headquarters and in the field.

4. The new Publications Board shall:

- review and make final recommendations to me on proposed publications, ensuring relevance to programme priorities, as well as optimizing visibility and multilingualism; and,
- monitor and evaluate the results, effectiveness and impact of all publications.

5. The Board's membership will be as follows:

- the Assistant Director-General (ADG) of ERI will chair the Board on my behalf;
- the Chief of the Publications Unit in ERI will act as Secretary to the Board;

- Programme sector ADGs shall nominate one director and one publication officer or staff member serving in that capacity to represent their sector on the Board. The Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP), the Division of Gender Equality (ODG/GE) and the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs (LA) also will be represented on the Board, as well as two directors representing Field Offices and UNESCO Institutes.

6. Other participants may be invited to the meetings of the Board, depending on the specific issues to be discussed.

7. The Terms of Reference for the Publications Board are annexed to the present Note.

8. This decision takes effect immediately.

Irina Bokova

## **Terms of Reference**

### ***PURPOSE***

The purpose of the Publications Board is to provide governance on UNESCO's publications with a specific focus on the alignment of publications with the Organization's programme priorities, maintaining the highest quality standards and forming an integral part of the strategy for a cost-effective dissemination of knowledge and optimal visibility.

### ***GUIDING PRINCIPLE***

No publication proposal may be submitted to the Director-General or otherwise undertaken without first being reviewed by the Publications Board. For the complete set of rules concerning publications see item 13.5 of the Administrative Manual.

### ***ROLES***

1. To review the biennial Publication and Distribution Plan according to criteria of relevance, programmatic effectiveness and efficiency, language, resources and accessibility, and submit the consolidated Plan and recommendations for a well-focussed and manageable biennial Plan to the Director-General for presentation to the Executive Board in the spring session following each General Conference.
2. To review and approve or decline individual publication proposals, ensuring focus and relevance to programme priorities, visibility and multilingualism and based on specific criteria such as originality, expected results, diversity of authors and quality of peer and gender review.
3. To monitor all UNESCO's information materials (including those in electronic formats) and address instances where the Publications Board is bypassed when producing material that would be appropriately deemed to be publications.
4. To verify that all individual publication proposals are properly resourced and planned to conform to requirements set forth in the UNESCO Publication Guidelines.
5. To identify appropriate indicators and monitor the use of UNESCO's publications with respect to different target populations and organizational stakeholders, and to determine appropriate targets for each.
6. To review results periodically and propose means of improving UNESCO's dissemination of knowledge and visibility.

7. To promote best practices in such associated functions as publishing and dissemination partnerships, sales strategy, copyright management, electronic storage and dissemination including shifting from printed publications to electronic delivery, in line with UN policy.

8. To follow up on all audit and evaluation recommendations regarding UNESCO publications.

**REPORTING**

The Publications Board will report to the Director-General on publications activities at the end of each biennium.

**MEMBERSHIP**

*Chair*

ADG/ERI on behalf of the Director-General

*Members (for a two-year period)*

One Director per programme sector to be appointed by the relevant ADG

Two Directors from field offices and Institutes

*Ex-officio*

The Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP)

The Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs (LA)

The Division of Gender Equality (ODG/GE)

*Secretary*

Chief, Publications Unit, ERI/DPI

*Observers*

Publications Officers from the programme sectors or staff serving in that capacity

**FUNCTIONING AND PROCESSES**

*Meeting schedule*

On a monthly basis. Special sessions may be called in line with specific programming requirements.

*Agenda management*

The agenda will be action-oriented and determined by the Chairperson, in consultation with Board members.

*Meeting preparation*

The agenda and papers will be distributed at least three working days in advance of each meeting.

*Publication proposal evaluation*

Each publication project for submission should be prepared as follows:

- Programme Specialists are responsible for providing a briefing note containing all relevant information<sup>1</sup> on each project;

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<sup>1</sup> This should include the following: title, author(s), language(s), summary, target audience, originality and added value, relevance to programme, partners, peer and

- Publications Officers in each sector should provide support to Programme Specialists and are responsible for ensuring that the files are complete. They also are responsible for transmitting them to the Board in a timely manner;
- Appointed Directors from each sector are responsible for presenting their sectors' projects at each Board meeting;
- The Board Members should read each briefing note in preparation for meetings and provide their comments during the meeting.

*Minutes and follow-up*

A report, including a summary of the key points of discussion, and an action sheet which identifies decisions taken and recommendations made at the meeting, will be prepared within five days for distribution to members.

**EVALUATION OF FUNCTIONING**

The Publications Board will conduct a self-assessment of its performance (alternatively IOS may undertake the assessment) on a bi-annual basis, to be rated against the following criteria:

1. The implementation of the Publication and Distribution Plan, including publications' relevance, adherence to quality standards and dissemination.
2. The timeliness and efficiency of manuscript evaluation.

The conclusions will figure as part of the bi-annual report to the Director-General on publications activities.