

TC Chair and Member Feedback received from NSF/GEC July 16, 2025 Feedback Session

Chairs

- Chairs were praised for their facilitation skills. They were complimented on their ability to keep the discussion flowing, switching to the next agenda item or a related topic as it came up.
- Chairs were also complimented on their skill at receiving and handling discussions offline.

Expert Ad-Hoc Groups and Task Groups

- One member remarked that the expert ad hoc groups provided a nice balance of inviting experts/colleagues to speak to topics that might otherwise be discussed for too long at the TC level. Suggestion that participants in expert ad-hoc groups be invited to provide insight to the TC when appropriate.

Observer Participation

- A chair asked the group to provide their opinion on the observer process, noting that they felt there was room for improvement where observers could provide a greater technical contribution to the meeting. The chair also stated that they see the concern in observers talking for too long or dominating the conversation away from voting members.
- An observer from the Imaging Equipment Consumables TC provided their experience, stating they understood why observer guidelines were in place but also found that it “constrained the free flow of dialogue.” They noted that not all observers are manufacturers, and non-manufacturers can play a pivotal role as observers.
- Another chair suggested the language around observers is harsh, and this language discourages the participation of experts.
- One member asked the question, “what actually is the role of observers [if not to simply listen to the meeting]?” They stated their interpretation of this role is to help colleagues with notetaking and returning information back to company/organizational stakeholders. They suggested that if an observer has technical expertise, shouldn’t they be invited as an invited expert to avoid any dominance in the conversation? NSF provided the perspective that observers allow for transparency and monitoring of the voluntary consensus process.
- Additional suggestions to increase/enable observer participation are to provide time slots for observers to weigh in, request to have the floor, or a way to provide secretariat/chair their comments during the meeting.
- A third chair provided the perspective that as a chair, they are trying to build rapport and bring members to consensus, developing a flow to meetings that becomes predictable. Utilizing methods to increase observer participation creates more of an “improv” atmosphere, which may hinder the TC’s ability to come to conclusions or give enough time to process information. This chair preferred the method of allowing observers to provide fact sheets or presentations to facilitators in advance.

Weighting of TCs and Selection Process

- Concerns from multiple stakeholder groups – a sustainability expert would like to ensure strict balance is maintained to avoid dominance in TC conversations and voting, whereas a manufacturer noted that while balance may be 20 individuals across 4 stakeholder categories, manufacturers have more invested in the overall EPEAT registry and marketplace, indicating that this is not balanced.
- Suggestion that manufacturers may have a market advantage by being a part of the TC process, highlighting that this may be especially true if the same company or individual is a member of multiple committees. Balance across companies participating in EPEAT should be considered in the selection process, especially because participation can allow manufacturers to direct the criteria process.
- Overall sentiment to have more transparency in the TC recruitment and selection process.
- GEC explained that as product categories advance, broader representation is needed, and a balance across all stakeholder categories is necessary. Expanded to say that the expert ad hoc process allows an opportunity to draft criteria prior to moving to technical committee discussions.

In-Person Meetings

- Members would like the opportunity to participate at least once in person.
- Members find in-person meetings important.
- Members are concerned about budget related to travel. While future budgets may sponsor TC member travel, members are concerned that if the onus of funding falls on the individual, stakeholder categories will be unfairly represented (for example, individuals from small organizations may not be able to attend if they must self-fund).
- Members would like to always have the online meeting option available, even if an in-person meeting is organized.

Policies

- Question, “What is the process to update the development criteria, including P74?” GEC and NSF intend to brainstorm methods to incorporate the feedback we received from the surveys to increase observer and SME participation. After a pilot period, P74 and NSF policies will be updated to reflect the successful changes.

Technical Expertise

- Appreciation of ability to take information back to technical experts within their organization and invite these experts to expert ad-hoc groups.

Other Remarks

- Voting periods were too short. Voting occurring over European holidays made participation more difficult.
- More clarity was requested in understanding the role of being an observer on the committee during the early stages of committee formation.