

OpenWallet Foundation Governmental Advisory Council (GAC) Operational Procedures

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1. GAC Purpose and Role

The Governmental Advisory Council (GAC) represents the voice of governments and intergovernmental organizations in the OpenWallet Foundation (OWF) structure and advises the Governing Board.

The GAC was established by the OWF Charter.

The GAC role includes but is not limited to:

1. Advise the OWF Governing Board on a broad range of public policy issues impacting digital wallet matters regarding the functions of OWF, including:
 - a. Identify and advise on public policy issues, especially where there may be an interaction between OWF's activities and national laws or international agreements.
 - a. Communicate issues and views to the OWF Governing Board.
 - b. Ensure the GAC outputs will assist the OWF Governing Board make well-informed decisions.
2. Operate as a forum for discussing government and other public policy interests and concerns, including:
 - a. Facilitate dialogue and information-sharing among the participants.
 - b. Explore how to promote Public Interest considerations within OWF activities.
 - c. Contribute to the commitment of the OWF to strengthen the security and interoperability of digital wallets.
3. Maintain a constructive dialogue with the OWF private sector members, including:
 - a. Explore ways to better bridge the private sector's innovation with the expectations and requirements of the government.
 - b. Learn from the private sector on the state-of-the-art and seek educational opportunities in the ongoing dialogue.

2. GAC Composition

Participation is open to governments, public authorities, and intergovernmental organizations, meeting the requirements below. There are no fees or charges.

The interested party must fulfill the criteria specified in section 2.1 to become a GAC participant.

The requests for participation must be evaluated and approved as specified in section 2.2.

2.1. Participant Categories

2.1.1. GAC Government Representative

2.1.1.1 Eligibility and Appointment

- a. Government and other public authorities representatives apply to this category.
- b. The eligible candidates must be representatives appointed by a government of a sovereign state (a member state of the United Nations), whose primary function includes developing or influencing governmental or public policies in the areas of Telecommunications, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), Cybersecurity, digital economy and society, digital agenda, science and technology innovation, Internet policy, among others.
- c. Only government ministries, departments, or agencies can appoint a representative.
- d. The appointed representative, alternate, and advisers must hold a formal official position with the public administration, including a holder of an elected governmental office or a person employed by such government.
- e. Provincial, State, Regional, and Municipal governments can appoint representatives to the GAC.
- f. Several ministries, departments, and agencies from the same country can appoint representatives to the GAC.
- g. If a country has representatives from more than one ministry, agency, province, or local government, there is only one vote per country.
- h. If the country's representatives are not all in agreement for a vote, the GAC Chair must convey the full range of views expressed by all those representatives.
- i. The appointed representatives can share their country's or agency/ministry's interests and views.

2.1.1.2. Procedure to appoint a GAC Government Representative

- a. A government minister or senior official sends a signed official letter to the GAC Chair, informing the details of the representative, alternate representative, and advisors.
- b. Once the request has been approved, the person or persons designated as representatives will be added to the GAC e-mail list and the directory of participants on the OWF website.

2.1.2 GAC Intergovernmental Organization Representative

2.1.2.1 Eligibility and Appointment

- a. The eligible candidates must be representatives appointed by international organizations, including organizations from the United Nations System and its Specialized Agencies, Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), regional and multinational governmental organizations, and treaty organizations.

- b. Other organizations may be admitted, subject to administrative due diligence and at OWF Governing Board's sole discretion, which must represent a government (s) and its interests.

2.1.2.3 Procedure to Appoint a GAC Intergovernmental Organization Representative

- a. The authorized office of the intergovernmental organization sends a signed official letter to the GAC Chair, stating the representative's and alternate representative's details.
- b. Once the request has been approved, the representative will be added to the GAC e-mail list and the directory of participants on the OWF website.

2.1.3 Interim procedure

The following procedure may apply to facilitate participation in the interim the candidates get the official appointment as government or intergovernmental organization representatives.

A GAC Government Representative or GAC Intergovernmental Organization Representative candidate can participate in the GAC with an interim status while they obtain the official appointment. They are not official representatives during this temporary status.

2.1.3.2 Procedure

The candidate must complete a form to request the interim procedure, which is evaluated as specified in Section 2.2.

2.1.3.3 Grace period

The interim procedure is valid for three months, which may be extended subject to evaluation and conditions determined by the GAC Leadership and OWF Governing Board, with the support of the GAC Secretariat.

During the grace period, the candidates have no voting rights and cannot take Leadership or Liaison positions. During discussions, they must clarify that their statements are their personal views, not as official representatives.

2.2. Request for participation evaluation and approval

A participation request gets approved after completing the following process:

- 1) The GAC Secretariat conducts an administrative completeness check and due diligence procedure to ensure that the candidate fulfills the eligibility criteria and that all the required documentation has been provided.
- 2) After confirming completeness, the GAC Leadership evaluates the request and recommends whether to accept it or not to the OWF Governing Board.

- 3) The final step includes consideration and a vote for approval by the OWF Governing Board.

2.3. GAC Participant's Activities

The GAC participants are expected to participate in GAC work and activities according to their participation category, technical expertise, or interest, including:

- a. Attending meetings.
- b. Sharing their knowledge and expertise in discussions.
- c. Contributing to recommendations and reports.
- d. Contributing to clarification requests from the OWF Governing Board or Technical Advisory Council (TAC).
- e. Contributing to requests for guidance from the OWF Governing Board or TAC.
- f. Contributing to and reviewing documents.
- g. Participate in GAC Working Groups.
- h. Others as identified by the GAC.

2.3. GAC Leadership

- a. The GAC Leadership includes the Chair and Vice-Chairs.
- b. The GAC Leadership should appropriately reflect a balanced representation of the geographic and development diversity of the participants.
- c. The GAC Leadership should identify and follow emerging trends and conversations on critical topics related to the GAC's role and current or planned GAC activities.

2.3.1 GAC Chair

- a. The Chair of the GAC is a volunteer position filled by a GAC Government Representative, elected by the GAC voting participants, and appointed by the OWF Governing Board at the recommendation of the GAC.
- b. The Chair is elected to a two-year term of office, renewable once.
- c. The GAC Chair is responsible for working with other participants of the GAC to suggest priorities and conduct all meetings and gatherings of the GAC.
- d. The GAC Chair may attend meetings of the OWF Governing Board and TAC as non-voting. A designated Vice-Chair can be the interim representative if the GAC Chair cannot attend a Governing Board or TAC meeting.

2.3.2 Vice-Chairs

- a. The Vice-Chair of the GAC is a volunteer position filled by a GAC Government Representative, elected by the GAC voting participants, and appointed by the OWF Governing Board at the recommendation of the GAC.
- b. The GAC should select two Vice-Chairs.

- c. The Vice-Chairs are elected for one year and may be re-elected for up to two consecutive terms.
- d. The Vice-Chairs substitute for the Chair as needed.

2.3.3 GAC Leadership Elections

The GAC Chair and Vice-Chairs are elected by the GAC voting participants and appointed by the OWF Governing Board at the recommendation of the GAC.

The GAC Secretariat will facilitate the nomination and election process.

2.3.3.1. Nomination

- a. At least one month before the end of the current term, the GAC Chair must call for nominations.
- b. The nomination period will take place for two weeks.
- c. A list of candidates will be available to the GAC within one week before the elections.

In the event of a single nominated candidate for the position of Chair, they must be elected by acclamation.

2.3.3.2. Election

- a. If there is more than one candidate for the position of Chair or more than two candidates for the positions of Vice-Chairs, an election will be held.
- b. The candidate or candidates with the most votes must be elected to the position(s) that they have stood for.
- c. The election result is valid if more than one-third of the GAC voting participants participate in the voting.

2.3.3.3 GAC Recommendation

The GAC informs the election results to the OWF Governing Board and recommends the candidates for the GAC Leadership.

2.4 Liaisons

The GAC seeks to maintain and enhance a cooperative relationship across the constituencies within the OWF structure through outward and inward liaisons.

2.4.1. Outward Liaisons

The GAC may appoint liaisons from its participants to the other OWF constituencies, including Councils such as the TAC, committees, and other groups within the OWF structure.

2.4.2 Inward Liaisons

The GAC may accept by consensus inward liaisons from other OWF constituencies, including Councils such as the TAC, committees, and other groups within the OWF structure. Similarly, inward liaisons will learn about the GAC and its activities by participating in the meetings.

Inward liaisons provide information about the OWF community and work and offer insight and context as needed to GAC activities.

3. GAC Reporting

The GAC Leadership must report periodically to the OWF Governing Board on its activities through the GAC Leadership with the support of the GAC Secretariat.

4. GAC outputs

The GAC is entitled to provide expertise and advice contributing to the OWF mission through recommendations, reports, comments, and any guidance requested or identified and proposed by the GAC.

4.1 Request from the OWF Governing Board or other OWF constituency

The OWF Governing Board, Councils, and other constituencies may request that the GAC review a specific topic or issue or provide clarification or guidance. These requests may be an informal request, a formal motion, or a resolution approved by the OWF Governing Board or another constituency. The GAC Secretariat should work with the GAC Chair to present these requests to the GAC and ensure they receive a timely response.

4.2. GAC Documents

GAC may contribute to sharing expertise, views, and advice in creating documents, including reports, recommendations, and any other guidance or informative paper.

4.2.1 Recommendations

An emerging issue that needs GAC advice can be identified internally within the GAC participants or by request from the OWF Governing Board. If a draft recommendation is developed to provide advice on the specific topic, the following steps should be followed.

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1. The GAC Secretariat facilitates the necessary GAC drafting sessions.
2. The draft document is created within the scope of the need identified in the assignment.
3. The GAC Leadership will determine when the initial draft can be circulated for comments.
4. The GAC Secretariat circulates the initial draft to GAC participants via the GAC list for a determined review period.
5. The GAC Secretariat collects and reviews comments from GAC participants and either accommodates them directly or starts a discussion thread to resolve the comment.
6. When the GAC Leadership considered and accommodated all GAC comments, the GAC Secretariat re-circulates the final draft to the GAC via the list.
7. The GAC Secretariat incorporates the final comments and conducts a quality check.
8. If a GAC participant wishes to object to the draft, wishes to offer an alternative view, or asks to withdraw from consideration of the draft for any reason, the GAC Leadership or GAC Secretariat will ask if the participant provides a statement within a reasonable timeframe explaining their dissent, alternative view, or withdrawal.
9. The resolution to approve a recommendation could be made during a GAC meeting if there is a quorum or using an electronic ballot.
10. The consensus on the final draft content is a general agreement by the GAC participants.
11. Once the final document is agreed upon, the GAC Secretariat and GAC Leadership will develop talking points to support the discussion with the OWF Governing Board.

5. Voting Rights

5.1. Voting rights in the GAC

The voting rights are limited to the scope of the GAC.

- a. The GAC Government Representative has voting rights in the GAC.
 - i. If a country has representatives from more than one ministry, agency, province, or local government, there is only one vote per country. If the country's representatives are not all in agreement for a vote, the GAC Chair must convey the full range of views expressed by all those representatives.
- b. The GAC Intergovernmental Organization Representative participates in the GAC as an observer but does not have voting rights.

6. Decisions and Voting

6.1 Quorum

A quorum must only be necessary for any meeting at which a decision must be made. Quorum will require at least fifty percent of the GAC voting participants.

6.2. Decisions are needed in the cases such as when:

- a. GAC needs to deliver advice to the OWF Governing Board.

- b. GAC Leadership election.
- c. Request to revise these Operational Procedures.
- d. Petition the OWF Governing Board to create a working group.
- e. Others as identified by the GAC.

6.3 Voting

The GAC works based on seeking consensus among its participants. Consensus is understood to mean the practice of adopting decisions by general agreement in the absence of any formal objection.

If any decision requires a vote to move forward, the deciding vote must constitute a simple majority¹ of all the GAC voting participants.

The decisions can be made during a meeting or by electronic vote.

7. GAC Working Groups

The working groups focus on particular areas, such as working methods and relevant issues concerning digital wallets.

- a. Once the GAC has agreed to study a selected topic or issue, it should start the procedure to establish a working group.
- b. The GAC should reach a consensus and petition the OWF Governing Board to create it.
- c. Once the GAC gets approval from the OWF Governing Board, the GAC Secretariat will invite the GAC to participate in a working group to study the topic or issue in one of the following roles: leader, contributor, reviewer, or observer.
- d. GAC Participants with particular skills and experience related to the issue are encouraged to participate.
- e. The GAC participants in the working group establish the purpose and goals through a charter or terms of reference, select one or more leaders, and establish the milestones and schedule. The GAC Secretariat supports the working group, assists the participants in developing documentation, and provides regular updates to the GAC.
- f. The GAC Secretariat will also establish a space where the charter and the latest documents and minutes, including attendance, are posted.
- g. The working group participants may evolve and will cease their work when the issue it is formed to address is completed.

8. Resources

¹ Simple majority means more than 50% of all those casting a vote (excluding abstentions).

8.1. GAC Secretariat

A dedicated GAC Secretariat supports the work of the GAC to ensure its success and effectiveness.

The responsibilities of the GAC Secretariat concerning the GAC include the following:

- a. Participation in GAC discussions and meetings.
- b. Process the requests for participation and letters. Conduct the completeness check and due diligence to support the evaluation by the GAC Chair.
- c. Facilitate interaction between the GAC participants and other OWF constituencies.
- d. Support the drafting of contributions on matters under consideration by the GAC.
- e. Support the working groups.
- f. Managing the GAC work plans and activity reports.
- g. Support the GAC Leadership Elections process.
- a. Managing the agenda and priorities of the GAC's activities.
- b. Preparing and posting minutes of all meetings.
- c. Preparing periodic reports for the GAC Chair to send to the OWF Governing Board.
- d. Managing the schedules and logistics of all GAC meetings.
- e. Support to prepare GAC outputs, arrange for submission to the OWF Governing Board, and track work.
- f. Other duties as assigned by the Chair.

The GAC Secretariat's detailed scope of work and list of tasks to support the operations of the GAC is available in Annex B.

9. Revision to the Operational Procedures

The GAC or the OWF Governing Board may decide to revise these Operational Procedures or any part at any time.

The GAC participants or the OWF Governing Board members may request that these Operational Procedures be open to revision and propose suggested changes.

If the GAC makes the request, the following procedure must apply:

- a. If the GAC moves to update the Operational Procedures, the suggested changes must be reviewed and discussed in 30 days.
- b. Once the review period closes, the GAC Chair must call for a vote to support the changes.
- c. The deciding vote must constitute a simple majority of the GAC voting participants.
- d. The GAC Chair presents the agreed changes to the OWF Governing Board for consideration and vote.

Revision history

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Version	Release Date	Changes
1.2	2023-08-09	Various revisions reflecting feedback from interested governments and intergovernmental organizations
1.0	2023-05-24	New Document

Annex A – GAC Participation Categories benefits and privileges.

Table 1. PARTICIPATION BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES

		GAC Government Representative	GAC Intergovernmental Organization Representative
Voting Rights	GAC Recommendations to Governing Board	√	x
	GAC Governance policies	√	x
GAC Leadership	GAC Chair	√	x
	GAC Vice-Chairs	√	x
GAC Liaisons	Outward Liaisons	√	√
Meeting attendance	GAC general meetings	√	√
	GAC recused meetings	√	x
	GAC Working Groups (WG)	√	√
Decision-making process	Contributions	√	√
	Petition the Governing Board to create Working group (s)	√	x
	Comments on drafts and working documents	√	x
	Consensus building process	√	x

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	Final decision-making	√	x
Working Group leadership roles	Editor	√	√
	WG Chair	√	√
Information access	GAC General Mailing list	√	√
	GAC Government Representative Mailing list	√	x
	Access to draft contributions, working documents and recommendations during development and review	√	√
	Meetings' agenda for general meetings	√	√
	GAC Recommendations	√	√

Annex B – GAC Secretariat support to the operations of the GAC

GAC Secretariat support to the GAC Operations

2. Secretariat (SEC) scope of work and tasks.

The Secretariat of the GAC should undertake such administrative, coordination, liaison, and research activities as necessary for the efficient functioning of the GAC.

1.2. Day-to-day support of GAC work development

- a. Facilitate communications among the GAC Chair, Vice-Chairs, and GAC participants with OWF Governing Board and constituencies.
- b. The Secretariat participates in all GAC meetings.
- c. Follow-up of GAC discussions and its working groups.
- d. Compilation of GAC participants' comments for submissions to the OWF Governing Board in formulating GAC advice or any other contributions.
- e. Maintain the GAC advice registry and all correspondence relating to requests from the OWF Governing Board or another constituency.
- f. Track issues and help with timelines, reminders, and plans.
- g. Help to organize drafting sessions as needed.
- h. Preparing periodic reports for the GAC Chair to send to the OWF Governing Board.
- i. Keep the participants informed with relevant announcements and news.
- j. Follow-up cross-constituency work and timelines in coordination with the Chair, Vice-Chairs, and liaisons.
- k. Website content management, updated documentation, and working groups' spaces.

1.3.GAC Meetings

- a. Set GAC conferences, which should be coordinated with the GAC Chair and Vice-Chairs whenever needed.
- b. Send agenda for the meeting after agreement with the Chair.
- c. Take notes and submit the minutes for GAC Chair's consideration before their circulation.

1.4.Manage the GAC participation process.

- a. Provide the letter templates and forms to the interested parties.

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- b. Conduct the completeness check of the requests for participation and letters of appointment and due diligence procedure to inform the evaluation to be conducted by the GAC Chair.
- c. Follow up on the approval process.
- d. After a participation request is approved, the SEC adds the representative to the GAC public directory and updates the mailing list accordingly.

1.5. Support the Elections of the GAC Leadership

- a. Organize the voting procedure and follow the process specified in the GAC Operational Procedures.

1.6. Support the Chair and Vice-Chairs

- a. Schedule calls to coordinate daily SEC work, provide the agenda, and raise the necessary items and questions to perform the required support.

1.7. Create the GAC Work Plan with the Chair, and Vice-Chairs, considering the GAC action items and timelines to develop the planned work.

1.8. Quality check of the draft documents

- a. Ensure documents are uniquely identified with a number and appropriate acronym, including the final draft date, version number, and editors.
- b. Ensure adequacy of documents before issuance by conducting cycles of technical and editorial reviews for clarity and accuracy.
- c. The SEC should ensure that the review cycles in the GAC address the following:
 - Accuracy, completeness, and factual check.
 - The text is adequate for the specific target audience and consistent with the objectives.
 - Editorial style and grammar are correct.
 - The formatting is proper.
 - The text is clear and has concise readability.

1.9. Other tasks as requested by the Chair.