

IGS-C Membership & Organisational Accreditation Guide v1.3

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Audience: Regional councils, regulators, public authorities, corporates, audit firms, training providers, civil society, academia

1. Purpose and scope

This guide explains:

- The **membership categories** within IGS-C;
- How organisations can become **accredited members** and what that implies;
- How organisational capability tiers (T3–T0) and conformance levels (L1–L3) interact;
- How governance, voting and independence are protected from vendor or geopolitical capture.

The aim is to make membership and accreditation **transparent and predictable** for external observers, including regulators and the public.

2. Membership categories

IGS-C distinguishes between **membership** (participation in governance and development) and **accreditation** (ability to deliver training, assessments or certified solutions).

2.1 Regional / founding members

Regional or continental standard bodies (e.g. Pan-African Standards Council – PASC) may be recognised as **Regional / Founding Members**.

They typically:

- Maintain regional or sectoral profiles (e.g. OSPCRM);
- Represent local regulatory and industry priorities;
- Participate in Steering and Technical Committees;
- Nominate experts to working groups.

2.2 Regulators and public authorities

Central banks, financial and sector regulators, data protection authorities and supervisory bodies may join as **Regulator / Public Authority Members**.

They typically:

- Provide supervisory and legal perspectives;
- Help align GCR-M/OSPCRM with regulatory expectations;
- May act as observers or active voting members, according to internal rules;
- Do **not** lose any statutory authority by being members; IGS-C remains a technical coordination space.

2.3 Corporate members

Financial institutions, critical-infrastructure operators and large enterprises may join as **Corporate Members**.

They typically:

- Adopt GCR-M/OSPCRM;
- Provide feedback from real-world implementation;
- May seek conformance or certification for their organisations and solutions;
- May nominate experts to technical working groups.

2.4 Auditors and certification bodies

Independent assurance firms, security assessment companies and certification bodies may join as **Assurance / Certification Members**.

They typically:

- Seek accreditation to deliver IGS-C assessments and certifications;
- Commit to independence and conflict-of-interest rules;
- Participate in refining assessment methods and criteria.

2.5 Academic and civil-society members

Universities, research centres, NGOs and advocacy groups may join as **Academic / Civil-Society Members**.

They typically:

- Contribute research, empirical data and critical perspectives;
 - Provide user-centric and societal viewpoints;
 - Help monitor the impact of standards on equity, inclusion and rights.
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3. Organisational accreditation and tiers

3.1 Organisational capability tiers

Organisations may be accredited at **capability tiers** that mirror the individual Tier logic:

- **T3 Organisation:** able to deliver governance-only or technical-only work aligned with GCR-M/OSPCRM;
- **T2 Organisation:** able to deliver integrated governance+technical work;
- **T1 Organisation:** additionally able to design and review architectures;
- **T0 Organisation:** additionally able to design AI/data-driven models and solutions.

An organisation's Tier is constrained by:

1. The **highest Tier of its internal staff** (or permanent associates) in relevant roles; and

2. The **real-world engagements** it can prove at that Tier.

3.2 Relationship with conformance levels

- An organisation may be **Level 1 (Aligned)** without being an accredited member;
- An accredited T2 organisation may deliver Level 2 assessments for others, provided conflict-of-interest rules are respected;
- Only appropriately Tiered and accredited organisations may participate in **Level 3 certification** decisions.

This separation reduces conflicts and makes it clear whether a statement relates to **internal alignment** (L1–L3) or **external capability** (T3–T0).

3.3 Accredited trainers and assessors

Organisations that wish to run official training or certification programmes must:

- Employ or formally mandate sufficient numbers of Tiered assessors and trainers;
- Demonstrate internal quality assurance for training and exams;
- Accept periodic IGS-C review and, where relevant, shadowing of assessments.

4. Governance, voting and independence

4.1 Governance bodies

Key governance bodies include:

- **General Assembly** – all members; approves major policies and standards;
- **Steering Committee** – provides strategic oversight and resolves conflicts;
- **Technical Committees** – develop and maintain GCR-M and profiles;
- **Advisory Council** – composed of regulators, academics and civil society.

4.2 Voting rules and safeguards

To prevent capture:

- No single vendor, region or interest group may hold a blocking minority in key votes;
- Regional members have structured representation but cannot unilaterally impose changes on others;
- Regulators may opt for observer status if statutory constraints limit voting, but their input is still formally recorded.

4.3 Conflict of interest and transparency

- Members must disclose potential conflicts (e.g. ownership in vendors, significant commercial dependencies);
 - When assessing or certifying members, independence rules apply as for any assessment;
 - Minutes of key decisions, including dissenting views, are recorded and summarised publicly.
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5. Fees, sustainability and fairness

5.1 Fee principles

Membership and accreditation fees are designed to:

- Cover operational costs (secretariat, infrastructure, coordination);
- Avoid creating pay-to-play dynamics;
- Allow participation from low-income or resource-constrained institutions.

5.2 Reduced fees and waivers

- Regulators and public authorities may benefit from reduced or waived fees;
- Academic and civil-society members may have lower fees or in-kind contribution options;

- Emerging-market institutions may be offered staggered or capped fees to avoid excluding those most impacted by digital risk.

5.3 Transparency

- Fee structures and any changes are published;
 - Financial statements are available to members;
 - Sponsorship policies ensure that contributions do not translate into undue influence.
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6. Anticipated questions and concerns

6.1 "Is membership required to use GCR-M/OSPCRM?"

No. The standard is **openly available**. Membership is about **governance and collaboration**, not access.

6.2 "Does membership guarantee certification?"

No. Conformance and certification are based on evidence and independent assessment. Being a member **does not exempt** an organisation from scrutiny.

6.3 "Can large vendors dominate decisions?"

By design, voting rules, transparency, and multi-stakeholder representation limit the influence of any single actor or group. Critiques and minority positions are formally documented.
