

# Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Convective Storms (CIRCS)

## BYLAWS

A National Science Foundation Industry/University Cooperative Research Center

Lead Site: Northern Illinois University (NIU)

Partner Site: University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW–Madison)

Approved: [Month, Year]



### Article I – Introduction

1.1 These Bylaws govern the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Convective Storms (CIRCS), a National Science Foundation (NSF) Industry/University Cooperative Research Center (IUCRC) dedicated to advancing the understanding, prediction, and societal resilience to convective storms through interdisciplinary collaboration among academia, industry, and government partners.

1.2 CIRCS operates under the IUCRC framework in accordance with NSF solicitation 20-570, ensuring transparent governance, shared intellectual property rights, and sustained collaboration across institutions. The Bylaws are designed to complement, but not supersede, the Membership Agreement. In cases of conflict, the Membership Agreement takes precedence.

1.3 CIRCS will review these Bylaws biennially to ensure compliance with NSF guidelines and evolving member needs. Amendments require approval from the Academic Leadership Team and a two-thirds majority of the Industrial Advisory Board (IAB).

1.4 CIRCS is initially comprised of two university sites: Northern Illinois University (NIU) as the Lead Site and the University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW–Madison) as the Partner Site. Additional university or government partners may join following NSF approval and unanimous consent of existing sites.



## Article II – Purpose and Mission

2.1 Mission: CIRCS seeks to advance interdisciplinary research, innovation, and workforce development to improve understanding, prediction, and resilience related to convective storms and their impacts. The Center brings together atmospheric scientists, engineers, social scientists, data analysts, and practitioners to build holistic solutions that benefit both science and society.

2.2 Vision: CIRCS envisions a future where people, industries, and communities are empowered with predictive tools, data systems, and actionable intelligence to anticipate, mitigate, and adapt to severe weather hazards in a changing climate.

2.3 Objectives:

- Advance fundamental research in convective storm prediction and impact mitigation.
- Strengthen academia–industry–government collaboration.
- Enhance forecasting tools and data assimilation methodologies.
- Train a diverse workforce through integrated research experiences.
- Promote the translation of research to operational and societal applications.

## Article III – Definitions

- Center: The CIRCS IUCRC as governed by these Bylaws.
- Lead Site: Northern Illinois University (NIU), responsible for overall management.
- Partner Site: University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW–Madison), supporting Center operations.
- Center Director: Principal Investigator for the Lead Site (currently Dr. Vittorio [Victor] Gensini, NIU).
- Site Director: Principal Investigator at a Partner Site (currently Dr. Daniel Wright, UW–Madison).
- Industry Liaison Officer: Operational lead for member engagement and recruitment (currently Mr. Luke Sebby, NIU).
- Member: An organization that has executed the CIRCS Membership Agreement and paid annual dues.



- Full Member: Organization contributing \$80,000 annually, receiving full benefits and one vote.
- Associate Member: Organization contributing \$40,000 annually, receiving partial benefits and half a vote.
- Affiliate Member: Entity providing in-kind contributions; non-voting, no IP rights.
- Government Partner: Public agency participating under cooperative agreement; non-voting.
- Industrial Advisory Board (IAB): Body of Member representatives providing research and funding guidance.
- Academic Policy Committee: Administrative oversight body of senior university representatives.

## Article IV – Organization and Governance

4.1 CIRCS is governed through a structured collaboration between the academic sites, industry members, and NSF. Its key entities are:

- (a) Center Director
- (b) Site Director(s)
- (c) Industry Liaison Officer
- (d) Industrial Advisory Board (IAB)
- (e) Academic Policy Committee
- (f) NSF Evaluator

4.2 The Center Director provides scientific and operational leadership, ensuring adherence to NSF expectations and Center objectives. The Director coordinates activities between sites, manages finances, and communicates with NSF and the IAB.

4.3 The Site Director manages Partner Site activities, coordinates research proposals, and supports graduate and undergraduate engagement.

4.4 The Industry Liaison Officer fosters relationships with Members, supports new recruitment, coordinates semiannual IAB meetings, and facilitates project tracking and communication across sites.



4.5 The IAB provides collective oversight and project selection, ensuring research relevance and funding transparency. Officers (Chair, Vice Chair) are elected by the IAB for renewable two-year terms.

4.6 The Academic Policy Committee ensures university compliance with NSF regulations, manages conflict of interest issues, and supports recognition of Center participation in faculty promotion and tenure evaluations.

## **Article V – Membership**

5.1 CIRCS membership is open to all organizations supporting the Center’s mission. Membership requires execution of the Membership Agreement and timely payment of annual dues.

5.2 Membership categories:

- Full Member – \$80,000/year, full benefits, one vote.
- Associate Member – \$40,000/year, partial benefits, 0.5 vote.
- Affiliate Member – In-kind, non-voting.
- Government Partner – No dues, non-voting, collaborative role.

5.3 Membership dues are payable annually at the start of the membership year and are non-refundable.

5.4 Members joining mid-cycle will have their dues applied to the next project period; no prorated memberships will be offered.

## **Article VI – Meetings and Operations**

6.1 CIRCS will hold two IAB meetings each year. The Fall meeting focuses on project selection and funding allocation; the Spring meeting emphasizes project progress and outcomes. The Fall meeting will be held in an in-person or hybrid format on either the campus of NIU or UW-Madison. The Spring meeting will be held virtually (or hybrid at an IAB and CIRCS leadership agreed upon location).



6.2 A quorum requires two-thirds of voting Members. Votes may be conducted electronically, in person, or hybrid, provided proper notice is given.

6.3 Mentor meetings between project PIs and IAB mentors facilitate progress tracking. The Industry Liaison Officer ensures consistency across all site activities.

## **Article VII – Research Project Lifecycle**

7.1 CIRCS projects follow a 12–18-month cycle, renewable upon IAB approval. Proposals begin with abstracts, followed by white papers, full proposals, and IAB voting.

7.2 Faculty PIs collaborate with industry mentors to define project goals and deliverables. Projects undergo reviews and formal evaluation at semiannual meetings.

7.3 No single Member may independently fund a project to maintain the precompetitive research nature of the Center.

## **Article VIII – Intellectual Property and Publications**

8.1 CIRCS follows NSF IUCRC IP policies as outlined in the membership agreement. Ownership of intellectual property rests with the performing institution(s).

8.2 Full Members in good standing during invention disclosure are granted non-exclusive, royalty-free (NERF) licenses for CIRCS-funded IP.

8.3 Publications and presentations will be reviewed by Members prior to release to ensure protection of proprietary information. Publications may be delayed for up to 90 days for IP filing.

## **Article IX – Amendments**

9.1 These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the IAB following recommendation by the Academic Leadership Team.



## Appendix A – Membership Levels and Benefits

Class	Dues	Voting	Benefits
Full	\$80,000	1	Full access, IP rights, IAB seat, student mentoring.
Associate	\$40,000	0.5	Access to research results, IAB participation.
Affiliate	In-kind	None	Collaborative involvement, no voting or IP rights.
Government Partner	N/A	None	Non-voting partner role in research and data sharing.

## Appendix B – IAB Leadership Rotation

The IAB maintains leadership continuity through rotation: Vice Chair → Chair. Each serves a two-year term, renewable once. Elections occur during Fall meetings.



## Appendix C – Amendment Log

Date Approved

Article Revised

Summary of Change

