

## **Invitation to Tender for the Position of TSO Management Organisation**

Date of issue: 3rd July 2014

Closing date for response: 31st August 2014

Tenders are invited from organisations willing to act as Management Organisation for the ToxML Standard Organisation (TSO). A description of the responsibilities of the Management Organisation is attached as an appendix to this invitation. Further information about the TSO is available from the TSO website, [www.toxml.org](http://www.toxml.org), including the TSO constitution and the ToxML standard itself. Tenderers requiring further information should contact the TSO via the website in the first instance.

The appointment of the Management Organisation will be for a five year period. Tenderers wishing to be funded for all or part of the work should describe clearly how their charges would be determined and should propose how funding might be raised on fair terms from TSO members and other users of the standard.

Tenders should be submitted by email via the contact address provided on the TSO website or in writing to:

Management Organisation Tender  
ToxML Standards Organisation  
c/o Lhasa Limited  
Granary Wharf House,  
2 Canal Wharf,  
Leeds  
LS11 5PS  
United Kingdom



## **Description of the Responsibilities for a Management Organisation for the ToxML Standards Organisation**

### **Background**

The ToxML Standards Organisation (TSO) is a not-for-profit organisation set up to promote and develop a data exchange standard for toxicological and associated chemical data, ToxML. An honorary Advisory Board, elected by users of the standard, oversees the activities of TSO but day-to-day operations are managed by a suitable, non-governmental company or organisation appointed by the Advisory Board.

Currently the Management Organisation, Lhasa Limited, does the work free of charge. However, the constitution of the TSO would allow the Management Organisation to be paid provided that the work is done on a not-for-profit basis (and subject, of course, to TSO being able to raise funding for it). The most likely kind of organisation to take on the role of Management Organisation is thus one that is itself not-for-profit, but the role is open to any non-governmental organisation willing to do the work on a not-for-profit basis.

The basic terms applying to the Management Organisation are set out in the TSO Constitution – in particular in clause 5 and parts of clause 6.

### **Scope of authority and responsibilities**

The constitution of TSO states that the Advisory Board should normally appoint a Management Organisation for a five year period, thereafter renewing the contract or engaging a new Management Organisation for a further five years, and so on. Full decision-making authority is delegated to the Management Organisation in technical, administrative and related promotional activities for the five year period. A team leader appointed by the Management Organisation is automatically a member of the Advisory Board. There is some flexibility in how far non-technical aspects of management should be delegated to the Management Organisation. In the event of disagreement about specific actions between the Advisory Board and the Management Organisation, the Management Organisation has the over-riding authority, but the Management Organisation is expected to use its best endeavours to meet the expectations of the Advisory Board. In extreme circumstances, the constitution allows the Advisory Board to terminate the management contract early and to engage a different Management Organisation.

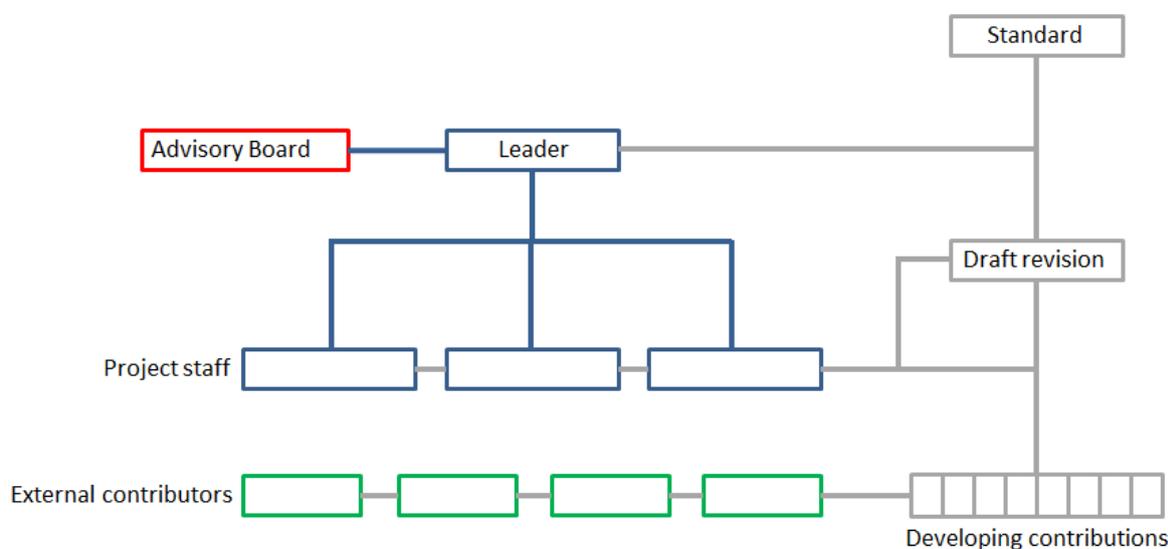
The primary responsibilities of the Management Organisation are to maintain the ToxML website and to oversee curation of the standard. Users who register on the TSO website can submit proposals for changes or additions to the standard. It is the job of the curators, appointed by and reporting to the Management Organisation, to review these proposals, taking into consideration related or conflicting proposals from other contributors, and to modify the formal ToxML standard appropriately. It is a requirement that these actions be carried out promptly, since a primary aim of the wiki site approach to the development of the standard is to ensure that it responds quickly to new needs.

The curators may be employees of the Management Organisation or any other competent persons willing to work on ToxML and reporting to the Management Organisation. It is hoped that voluntary curators can be found, at least in the short term, but the Advisory Board is empowered to authorise the raising of funds to pay curators for their work (and, indeed for

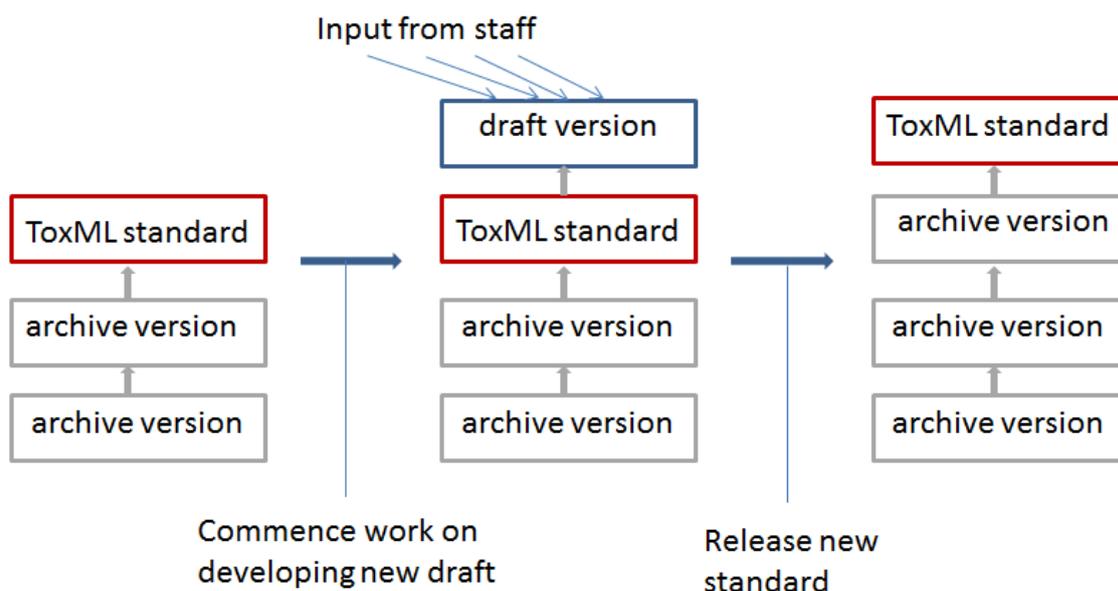
all the activities for which the Management Organisation is responsible) if a case is made for doing so and a fair and appropriate way of raising the funds is agreed.

### Management structure

The section in blue in Figure 1 represents the Management Organisation. The Leader is appointed/employed by the Management Organisation and is automatically a member of the advisory board. Although in the figure three project staff are shown reporting to the Leader this is only for illustration: the total operation might in practice be run by the Leader alone, or might involve more than three staff. Apart from website maintenance, the primary work of the staff is as curators. The curators could be employees of the Management Organisation or external volunteers willing to do the work.



**Figure 1:** Role of Management Organisation during Standard refinement.



**Figure 2:** Standard refinement process.

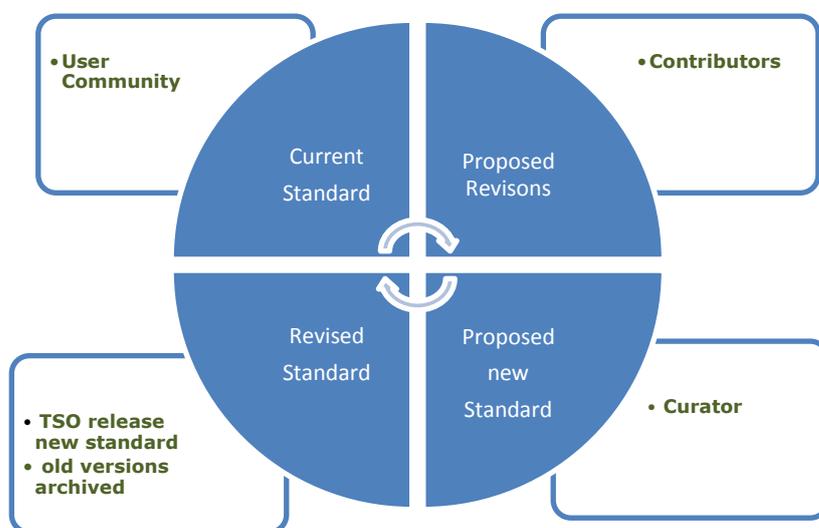
## Practicalities of looking after ToxML

Maintaining and developing the ToxML website would involve the following activities:

- Administering the Wiki component of the site
- Setting up user accounts (Anonymous User, Contributor, Curator etc)
- Providing file downloads and other useful information
- Curation

Curation is a key part of the continued refinement of the Standard and this must be done in cooperation with the contributors.

The wider user community which is composed of external contributors (i.e. individuals registered with the website and making contributions via the wiki) submit proposed additions and changes to the standard. A curator, or curators, look at the proposals, consider and resolve conflicts in them if there are any and incorporate them into a draft new version of the standard. The Leader has the authority to release revised versions whenever appropriate. The Leader will be expected to ensure that the release of revisions to incorporate additions and urgent, essential changes to the standard is quick but subject to maintaining stability in the standard. This should be achievable because changes should mainly take the form of additions of new components to the standard, for example to cover new assays or endpoints, having no impact on components already included in the standard. Figure 3 below illustrates the process.



**Figure 3:** On-going process of Standard refinement.