

**RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE GUIDANCE COMMITTEE OF PROJECTS  
RECEIVING RESEARCH GRANTS FROM THE FPS HEALTH, FOOD CHAIN  
SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT**

# **1. Mission and Responsibilities**

## **1.1. Mission**

The Guidance Committee will follow the scientific activities carried out within the framework of the project, and acts as a platform for advice and consultation with the project partners, the FPS Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment and other stakeholders.

## **1.2. Competencies**

The Guidance Committee operates via meetings but also by electronic means if the coordinator or the Contractual Research unit considers it useful.

The specific competencies of the Guidance Committee are the following.

- to follow the actual execution of the project, taking into account the anticipated objectives and schedule;
- to monitor the appropriateness of the methodology;
- to observe the progress of the research and any problems that may arise;
- to provide scientific and/or technical advice, and/or advice in connection with the legal framework;
- to provide an advice on the relevance of any proposed deviations from the original research and the initial planning;
- the committee is not authorised to impose adjustments or modifications to the programme which could lead to a change in the originally defined objectives; it may, however, formulate an advice to that effect, which must be included in the official report of the meeting, or, in case of electronic consultation, in a summary document with the proposed changes and the reasons why. After the necessary internal consultations, the Contractual Research unit will communicate the decision to the promoters;
- if the opinions of the members are divided, the different opinions will be presented in the minutes or the summary document;
- to indicate the potential for policy preparation and/or industrial and/or social valorisation of the project results. In this context, the members can make proposals to increase the feasibility and the governmental, industrial and/or social value for the valorisation, without prejudice to the objectives defined beforehand.

## **2. Composition and Amendments**

- The proposed composition of the Guidance Committee is determined by the Evaluation Committee of the Contractual Research unit, and is described in Article 5.1 of Appendix I of the contract, which may be amended as specified below.
- The scientific counselor of the Contractual Research unit responsible for the project is the chairman of the Guidance Committee.
- Following the agreement of or at the request of the scientific counselor who is managing the project, the coordinator may invite additional external persons to attend who have a particular expertise in the research field concerned. In addition, the coordinator may request the permission of the scientific counselor for the replacement of a member who no longer desires to be a member of the Guidance Committee, for example after a change of position or retirement.
- The Guidance Committee has a scientific nature; consequently, only persons with a scientific-technical training and professional experience relevant for the project will be invited to participate in this committee. Any exception to this rule can only be made by the Contractual Research unit.
- The coordinator will notify the proposed members of the Guidance Committee (Article 5.1 of Appendix I of the contract) one month in advance of the first meeting that their name has been proposed for participation in the Guidance Committee, and provides them with some information about the project (research topic and consortium, project term, objectives). The coordinator asks whether the proposed members are actually willing to be a part of this Guidance Committee (see template in Appendix 3b).
- Members who do not want to participate may report this to the coordinator or the scientific counselor, after which their name will be removed from the Guidance Committee. However, they may make suggestions concerning a substitute with suitable expertise.

## **3. Frequency of and Participation in Meetings**

- The Guidance Committee meets as frequently as and based on the timing specified in the contract (Article 5.3. of Appendix I). Typically, this is annually, i.e. during the 12th, 24th, 36th, etc. month of the project.
- For deviations from the meeting schedule indicated in the contract permission must be asked from the Contractual Research unit and must be justified.
- Additional meetings may be organised at the request of the Evaluation Committee, the Contractual Research unit, the Guidance Committee, or the consortium.
- Members who have agreed to participate in the Guidance Committee are invited to attend each annual meeting at the least. In case additional meetings are organised, these can proceed with the full Guidance Committee or with specific subgroups of the committee in order to discuss specific aspects of the project.

- The scientific counselor is at least invited to each annual meeting, and if deemed useful, he/she will also participate in additional meetings. In case of non-participation in an additional meeting the scientific counselor is at least notified of the conclusions.
- Members who cannot attend a meeting, may be replaced by a colleague from the same institution with appropriate expertise. If a colleague from another research institute that is not yet represented is proposed as a replacement, his/her participation is subject to prior approval by the scientific counselor.

#### **4. Practical Organisation of the Meetings**

- In principle, the meeting always takes place at the premises of the FPS Health in Brussels.
- The coordinator proposes a date in consultation with the Contractual Research unit, and sends invitations to members at least one month before the proposed meeting.
- Besides the scientific counselor of the Contractual Research unit, at least five external members of the Guidance Committee must confirm their availability on the proposed date before it can be finally set. If this minimum number of five is not reached, a new meeting date is sought.
- At least one week before the meeting the coordinator provides the scientific counselor and the members with
  - the agenda,
  - the summary report of the past research year, drafted according to the template in Appendix 6a,
  - as well as these rules of procedure.

#### **5. Meeting Procedure**

##### **5.1. Meetings Provided in the Contract**

- Welcome statement by the scientific counselor (chairman), or deputy chairman;
- if required: presentation round of the attendees;
- introduction of the project by the consortium. To this end, the context of the problem, the objectives of the project and the contents of the different work packages are briefly explained;
- presentation of the results of the past year, while briefly referring to the results of previous periods;
- planning: using the template “Overview of Results Achieved” in appendix 5
  - for an interim meeting: discussion of the status of the research, indicating the tasks which still require completion and the timeline envisaged
  - for a final meeting: discussion of the current state of affairs of the research, compared with the schedule as shown in the project proposal, and suggestions for further research;
- sufficient time for discussion is provided during the meeting. The participants agree as to whether this happens after each presentation, after the last presentation or during the presentation.

## **5.2. Additional (“Ad Hoc”) Meetings**

- The Evaluation Committee, the Guidance Committee or the Contractual Research unit may provide specific instructions for additional meetings if necessary.
- In the absence of specific instructions, the conditions are determined by the coordinator.

## **6. Minutes of the Meeting**

- The minutes of each meeting of the Guidance Committee are drafted by the coordinator (template in Annex 6b), including those of the additional meetings and the meetings of subgroups.
- The minimum items required in the minutes are:
  - the attendances,
  - for meetings provided for in the contract:
    - an overview of the questions asked and the answers given, and
    - the conclusions and any recommendations;
    - in the case of the final meeting, suggestions for further research can also be incorporated in the minutes;
    - in case deviations from the original research programme and planning are recommended, this opinion and the supporting arguments are presented in the minutes of the meeting;
  - for additional (“ad-hoc”) meetings: the conclusions.
- No later than one month after the meeting date the coordinator sends a preliminary version of the minutes via email to the scientific counselor and all the members present at the meeting with the request to provide any changes within a week.
- The final version of the minutes is then sent to the scientific counselor and to all the members of the Guidance Committee.

## **7. Language Use**

- The presentations and questions take place in one of the national languages or in English.
- The summary of the results for the Guidance Committee as well as the minutes of the meeting shall be drafted in one of the national languages, or entirely in English.

## **8. Confidentiality**

- All documents made available by the coordinator, such as the summary of results, interim scientific reports, the hand-outs of the presentations, tables, the minutes and the like are confidential, and should be treated as such.
- As stipulated in Article 4.2., Paragraph 2, of the host contract, the coordinator may conclude an internal agreement with the consortium partners and taking into account optimal management of intellectual property rights, may conclude a nondisclosure agreement with the members of the Guidance Committee who are not members of the FPS Health, the FASFC nor the FAMHP, based on a template of his/her choosing. Officials, being representatives of the Government, are however exempted from signing such a declaration.
- Any dissemination of information of whatever nature by a member of the Guidance Committee who does not belong to the Federal Government, must take place in consultation with the coordinator and the Contractual Research unit.

## **9. Compensations**

The members are not entitled to compensation for administrative, travel or accommodation expenses.