

SCIENTIFIC PROJECT REVIEW WORKING GROUP

Terms of Reference

The WADA Scientific Project Review Working Group (SPRWG) is a specific Working Group¹ created by WADA Management at the request of the WADA Health, Medical and Research Committee (HMRC).

These Terms of Reference are approved by the WADA Director General, following consultation with the responsible Director in charge of the Group and the Chair of the HMRC.

Purpose

To provide expert advice and recommendations to the HMRC and/or WADA Science & Medicine Department to assist in the selection of scientific research projects submitted to WADA via open competitions for funding.

It is forecast that the SPRWG will be established once per year and will complete its mandate within a ten-month period (i.e. from March to December). It will deliver its main recommendations to WADA by August. The necessary meeting timelines will be framed with this in mind.

Objectives/Key Activities

To assist in the selection of research projects submitted to WADA for funding, including:

- 1) To review submitted scientific research applications, including any associated peer reviews;
- 2) To provide recommendations to the HMRC on which applications to fund, including recommendations on project budgets;
- 3) To provide feedback as part of grant program review, including recommendations for improvement; and
- 4) To support review of revised grant applications as required.

Reporting Structure

The SPRWG reports to WADA Management and the HMRC.

¹ WGs are created on an as-needed basis only, and generally with a defined mandate requiring deliverables within a set timeframe. Where the expected deliverables are not met, an extension of mandate is possible, however it is not expected that WGs continue indefinitely. If it is considered that their work should be ongoing in nature, whether WG should be elevated to an Expert Advisory Group would need to be determined.

Membership/Composition

The composition of the SPRWG shall not exceed a maximum of 8-10 members, however an exception may be applied if deemed necessary.

The WADA Director General, following consultation with the responsible Director in charge of SPRWG, will appoint members to the SPRWG. Given the type of work the SPRWG undertakes, the composition is not publicly disclosed.

Members are selected based on their relevant background and experience (e.g., research and applied science expertise in the areas of anti-doping testing and analyses, clinical chemistry, biochemistry, pharmacokinetics, exercise physiology, hematology, endocrinology, biostatistics and other related sciences).

Member terms reflect the mandate of SPRWG i.e., until August following a project review process. If the work of a SPRWG is not completed within the originally planned timeframe, and is extended, the composition and terms of members are reviewed to ensure their relevance remains.

Chair/Rapporteur

The SPRWG Chair² is selected based on his/her proven record and expertise in anti-doping research.

He/she shall act as the official reporter who is responsible for ensuring appropriate coordination with WADA Management and the HMRC and for providing accurate and timely information on all relevant issues.

WADA Liaison

The WADA Science & Medical Department, and in particular the Deputy Director for Research, will serve as the primary liaison between WADA and the SPRWG.

The Deputy Director for Research will be an observer³ to the SPRWG in the sense that he/she contributes to and brings expertise to support the work of the SP WG but does not have a voting position. Additional WADA Science & Medical staff may also participate in SPR WG meetings as WADA experts on particular subject matter and to provide general support to the group where required.

Meetings and Working Norms

The SPRWG will meet in person, or virtually via video or teleconference (as determined by WADA) usually once and traditionally at the end of August to coincide with the meeting of the HMRC, but it could be as many times as is necessary to complete its mandate.

² There are occasions where WADA staff may chair a WG, e.g. when an external chair is not deemed to be practical.

³ Unless they are appointed as the Chair of the WG.

The SPRWG normally operates based on consensus and maintains as informal a manner as is possible or appropriate for the conduct of business. Consensus will be sought whenever possible. In the event of divergence of opinion or disagreement concerning recommendations, the absolute majority (determined by vote by hand) will rule. In the event of a tie, the Chair has the casting vote. There is presently no formal practice concerning a quorum. The Chair has the responsibility to determine if a quorum is present. Meeting notes will record any dissenting opinion on request.

The Chair may limit discussion of resurfacing issues by referring to previous recommendations or conclusions of previous discussions.

Meeting notes of the SPRWG meetings, reports and correspondence relative to the group's work shall be retained at the WADA Headquarters.

Conflict of Interest

SPRWG members will be bound by the Conflict of Interest policy adopted by the WADA Foundation Board in November 2019⁴, and will be required to annually complete and sign a Statement of Absence of Conflict of Interest in accordance with the policy.

The following specific rules shall apply (in addition to adherence to the Conflict of Interest Policy) regarding the application for WADA research grants by SPRWG or their collaborators:

- i) Members cannot be involved in the assessment and evaluation of other projects in their specific area of expertise in the year they submit a project; and
- ii) Members shall leave the meeting when their submitted project(s) is discussed for approval or rejection.

Confidentiality

All group members are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement upon appointment (and again at the start of each year if their appointment is renewed). This ensures all members reflect on the confidential nature of their WADA work and confirm their adherence to such confidentiality rules. Signing this document each year is a new process as of 2020 (as a result of the governance changes mentioned above); previously members were only required to sign once.

Communications and Media

All SPRWG members must read and comply with WADA's Media Relations policy. If a member should receive a request for an interview in relation to their role in WADA or WADA's work they should first consult with the WADA Media Relations Senior Manager or (if absent), with the WADA Communications Director.

⁴ WADA's Foundation Board approved a set of governance reforms in November 2018 at its meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan. In 2019, WADA's Statutes were modified to reflect these reforms, and a new set of bylaws and operational regulations were created to supplement the formal Statutes. They were approved by WADA's Foundation Board in November 2019 in Katowice, Poland.

Budget and Financial Support

WADA has budgeted for the SPRWG for up to ten months per year. Should an extension of the mandate be required, additional budget will need to be approved prior to final confirmation of the group continuing.

WADA shall provide the necessary administrative and operational resources for meetings. WADA will meet all travel and accommodation costs, as well as most meals onsite. A daily indemnity is provided to cover incidental costs during travel to and from the meeting.

Where meetings are held virtually and meet certain rules such as a minimum duration, a daily indemnity for virtual attendance is disbursed.

It is acknowledged that some experts go above and beyond, including providing extensive advice throughout the year, outside of annual meetings. WADA offers a further daily indemnity to experts for such work carried out. The specific indemnity details are outlined in the “Overview of WADA Working Groups” document.

Effective Date

These ToR first came into effect on 15 March 2021. An administrative update to the ToR was made in January 2022.

These ToR are published on the WADA website.