

# SIGNATORY EXPERT GROUP

## Terms of Reference

The Signatory Expert Group was established by WADA's Executive Committee in September 2020 to independently assess applicants to become signatories to the World Anti-Doping Code under the Policy for Acceptance of New World Anti-Doping Code Signatories (the "Policy").

*These Terms of Reference (ToR) were approved by the WADA Executive Committee at its 11-12 September 2020 virtual meeting. Changes to harmonize the formatting and language of the ToR with other WADA documents were approved by the WADA Director General on 25 June 2025.*

### **Purpose**

To provide expert advice, recommendations and guidance to WADA management in the review of applications by potential Signatories as set out in the Policy.

### **Objectives/Key Activities**

- 1) Upon referral by WADA Management, review applications by potential Signatories as per the Policy;
- 2) Assess independently whether the criteria for acceptance of new Signatories as defined in the Policy are met;
- 3) Provide written reasons for any determination that the relevant criteria are not met;
- 4) In case of disagreement with WADA Management, provide an opinion to the WADA Executive Committee to assist it in determining whether the relevant criteria are met;
- 5) Assist WADA Management with any other specific queries it may have.

### **Reporting Structure**

The Signatory Expert Group, through its Chair, reports as and when necessary to the WADA Executive Committee.

### **Membership/Composition**

The Signatory Expert Group will be composed of three members (including a Chair).

### **Chair**

WADA Management will propose a Chair of the Signatory Expert Group to the WADA Executive Committee for appointment. The candidate shall be vetted by the Nominations Committee. Their

appointment is for a period of three years, which can be renewed once. The Chair must meet the Operational and Personal criteria of Independence, as defined in WADA's Governance Regulations on Independence, and have extensive expertise in sports administration.

In addition, WADA Management will propose for appointment by the WADA Executive Committee a substitute Chair to chair the Signatory Expert Group in case the Chair has a conflict of interest (see below). The substitute Chair shall be vetted by the Nominations Committee. The substitute Chair's term shall be for a renewable period of three years and they shall be subject to the same requirements as the Chair.

## **Members**

The two other members of the Signatory Expert Group shall be appointed by each of the WADA constituents (*viz.* the Olympic Movement and Public Authorities) on a case-by-case basis. For that purpose, upon receiving a new application, WADA Management will inform the two constituents accordingly and both shall indicate the name of their member/representative for a given application within 30 calendar days from information by WADA Management. The same member may be appointed by each constituency on multiple applications without any limitations, provided, however, that this member may not be appointed on any new application six years after his first appointment. It will be each member's role to ensure that the perspectives of the constituency that they are nominated by are properly understood and taken into account in the Signatory Expert Group's deliberations. However, these members must meet the Operational and Personal criteria of Independence, as defined in WADA's Governance Regulations on Independence, and must base their position on their assessment of what is in the best interest of clean sport and the fight against doping.

## **Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Media**

Upon their appointment, and again annually, as applicable, all members of the Signatory Expert Group are required to sign a document pursuant to which they undertake (i) to comply with the Code of Ethics adopted by the WADA Foundation Board (as amended from time to time); (ii) to comply with the Conflict of Interest policy adopted by the WADA Foundation Board (as amended from time to time); (iii) to keep all matters related to WADA confidential; and (iv) to comply with the WADA Media Relations policy issued by the Agency (as amended from time to time).

### **A) Code of Ethics**

The purpose of the WADA Code of Ethics is to establish clear ethical standards over the activities of WADA Officials (as defined in Section 2 of the Code of Ethics) to allow WADA to achieve its mission and protect its core values. WADA and all its Officials undertake to foster a culture of ethics, loyalty, and integrity within their respective areas of competence.

### **B) Conflict of Interest**

Signatory Expert Group members will be bound by the WADA Conflict of Interest policy. They will be required to annually complete and sign a Statement of Absence of Conflict of Interest in accordance with the policy, and to update such statement if and as necessary during the year.

In case of a conflict of interest in relation to a specific application, the member shall disclose it immediately. If the conflict concerns the Chair, they shall thereafter not take part, and be replaced by the substitute Chair, in any discussions and/or deliberations related to that application. In case the substitute Chair is also conflicted, WADA Management will promptly propose for appointment by the WADA Executive Committee a specific Chair to handle the application at stake. This person shall be subject to all the same requirements of the Chair in terms of independence and conflicts of interest.

If the conflict concerns another member of the Signatory Expert Group, that member shall be replaced by the constituency who appointed them within 30 calendar days from disclosure by the member of their conflict of interest.

### **C) Confidentiality**

All Signatory Expert Group members are required to sign a Confidentiality Declaration upon appointment and again annually. This ensures all members reflect on the confidential nature of their WADA work and confirm their adherence to such confidentiality rules.

### **D) Communications and Media**

All Signatory Expert Group 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 in the fight against doping in sport, they should first consult with the WADA's Head of Media Relations or (if absent), with the WADA Communications Director.

### **Meetings and Working Norms**

Upon receipt of an application from WADA Management, the Signatory Expert Group shall review it promptly and provide its opinion as to whether the relevant criteria are met within 30 calendar days from receipt, save in exceptional circumstances and subject to the paragraphs below. If it disagrees with WADA Management, the Signatory Expert Group shall provide written reasons within the same timeframe.

Meetings of the Signatory Expert Group shall be either in person or via teleconference, videoconference, or other electronic means that permit all members to communicate properly with each other as determined by WADA.

Where an application is submitted to the Signatory Expert Group for a second consideration after consultation of an applicant under Section 3 of the Policy, the Signatory Expert Group shall again review the matter promptly and, in case it maintains its disagreement with WADA Management, shall promptly provide brief reasons in writing for the benefit of the WADA Executive Committee.

Exceptionally, the Chair, upon consultation with WADA Management, may seek assistance from other third-party experts where needed. At any point, the Signatory Expert Group may also consult WADA Management before providing its opinion.

The Signatory Expert Group will seek to operate on the basis of consensus. If, however, a consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be taken by majority. In such case, the opinion of the Signatory Expert Group will in principle follow the majority.

However, in truly exceptional circumstances, the member in minority – if they do not agree that one or more of the criteria is met – may decide to refer the matter to the WADA Executive Committee for a decision. The member in minority shall have five calendar days from the vote of the Signatory Expert Group to announce to WADA Management that the matter will be referred to the WADA Executive Committee, failing which this right will be deemed waived. They shall then provide detailed written explanations to the WADA Executive Committee for why the criterion/criteria is/are not met in their view within thirty days from the announcement in principle. The other members of the Signatory Expert Group, as well as WADA Management, shall be given an opportunity to provide their comments on the written explanations before the WADA Executive Committee makes a decision on whether the relevant criterion/criteria is/are met. The member in minority and the other members of the Signatory Expert Group may be asked to appear before the WADA Executive Committee to further explain their positions.

The decision of the WADA Executive Committee shall be binding on the Signatory Expert Group. For the avoidance of doubt, where the matter is referred to the WADA Executive Committee following second consideration of the Signatory Expert Group and the WADA Executive Committee considers that the relevant criterion/criteria is/are not met, the application shall be considered rejected by the WADA Executive Committee without any need to refer the matter to the WADA Executive Committee again as per Section 3 of the Policy.

### **Financial Support**

WADA shall provide the necessary administrative and operational resources for meetings. WADA will cover certain expenses and compensate members for meetings in accordance with its applicable indemnity policy.

### **Effective Date and Future Review of ToR**

These ToR came in effect on 12 September 2020. Administrative updates to the ToR were made in June 2025.

Whilst the ToR for all WADA Expert Advisory Groups (EAGs) are reviewed annually, the procedures for creating, supporting, and managing the EAGs will be reviewed at least every three years to ensure they remain appropriate and applicable.

These ToR are published on the WADA website.