

**FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
3RD FLOOR, FOOD AND DRUG AUTHORITY BHAWAN
KOTLA ROAD, NEAR BAL BHAWAN,
NEW DELHI-110002**

**INTERNAL PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF
THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE, SCIENTIFIC PANELS AND EXTERNAL
EXPERTS FOR WORKING GROUPS OF THE
SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND SCIENTIFIC PANELS**

CHAPTER I

Article 1: Definitions: - In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (i) “Act” means the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006;
- (ii) “Food Authority” means Food Safety and Standards Authority of India established under section 4 of the Act;
- (iii) “Chief Executive Officer” means the Chief Executive Officer of the Food Authority appointed under section 9 (1) of the Act;
- (iv) “Scientific Committee” means the Scientific Committee constituted by the Food Authority under section 14 of the Act;
- (v) “Scientific Panel” means Scientific Panel established by the Food Authority under section 13 of the Act;
- (vi) Words and expressions used in these Regulations and not defined but defined in the Act shall have the same meaning respectively assigned to them in the Act.

**SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND
SCIENTIFIC PANELS**

Article 2. Call for Expression of Interest : - (i) Chief Executive Officer shall make a call for Expression of Interest for the selection of Members of the Scientific Committee

and Scientific Panels which may be published in the relevant leading scientific publications / News dailies and on the Food Authority's website as appropriate.

(ii) Chief Executive Officer may write to well known institutions, academia and other entities, with the request to give the call the widest dissemination possible.

(iii) The call for Expressions of Interest shall include eligibility criteria, brief details of the selection procedure and deadline for the submission of application.

Article 3. Food Authority's Evaluation Team: - (i) Chief Executive Officer in consultation with Chairperson shall establish an Evaluation Team for selection of the Members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels.

(ii) Evaluation Team shall be assisted by the Secretariat of the Food Authority and if required consult any Independent Expert for this purpose.

Article 4. Verification of validity and eligibility of applicants:- (i) The validity and eligibility of each applicant shall be verified by the Evaluation Team.

(ii) For the purpose of Article 3 (i) above, Food Authority may ask the candidates to submit their credentials for verification.

(iii) Applications shall be considered valid only if sent by the deadline specified in the call and in accordance with the requirements set out therein.

Article 5: Evaluation of eligible candidates : - (i) The eligible candidates will be further evaluated on the basis of the following selection criteria. The maximum marks for each criterion is as under:

Selection criteria	Max. Marks
a) Experience in carrying out scientific risk assessment and/or providing scientific advice in fields related to food safety in general and, in particular in the areas of competence.	15

b) Proven scientific excellence in one, or preferably several fields linked to the area covered by the Scientific Committee or the Scientific Panel preferred.	15
c) Experience in peer reviewing scientific work and publications, preferably in fields related to the area covered by the Scientific Committee or the Scientific Panel preferred.	15
d) The ability to analyze complex information and dossiers, often from a wide range of scientific disciplines and sources and to prepare draft scientific opinions and reports.	15
e) Professional experience in a multidisciplinary environment including direct industry experience, preferably in an international context.	15
f) Experience in project management related to scientific matters.	15
g) Proven communication skills, based on teaching experience, public presentations, active participation in meetings, publications.	10

(ii) For each Scientific Panel, as well as for the Scientific Committee, evaluators shall discuss and evaluate each application and scores shall be given according to the above mentioned criteria.

Article 6: Shortlist of the best candidates :- (i) The selection shall be done by setting a cut-off score above which all candidates shall be considered suitable as members of a Scientific Panel or the Scientific Committee. As a general rule the cut-off score will not be less than 60% of the maximum score.

(ii) All candidates with score above the agreed cut-off shall be included in the shortlist.

(iii) The position of the candidates on the shortlist shall be based on the score given to their respective applications in the evaluation phase.

(iv) Evaluation Team shall recommend the names and positions of the shortlisted candidates for the Scientific Committee and each of the Scientific Panels.

(v) The shortlisted candidates are required to submit an Annual Declaration of Interests (ADoI) (Annex 2) indicating either the presence of any direct or indirect interests or absence of any interests which might be considered prejudicial to their independence. These declarations shall be reviewed by the Food Authority and after consulting Chief Executive Officer, names of the candidates proposed / shortlisted for further appointment shall be decided.

Article 7: Selection of candidates from the shortlist: - (i) The Evaluation Team shall submit to the Chief Executive Officer, a report with names of candidates proposed for appointment. In doing so, they shall consider the following factors:

- a. the position of the candidate on the shortlist;
- b. the expertise required for the relevant Scientific Panel or for the Scientific Committee;
- c. the candidate's potential contribution to a broad diversity in the Scientific Committee or Scientific Panel of scientific expertise and experience, disciplines of work and points of view which are required to be heard to ensure a balanced approach; and

(ii) The candidates on the shortlist who were not selected shall be proposed to be included on a reserve list. The candidates on the reserve list shall be contacted and requested to agree for inclusion in the Database of External Experts.

(iii) In case where, shortlisted or selected candidates are less than the maximum membership of a Scientific Panel or Scientific Committee, the Evaluation Team may suggest to the Chief Executive Officer to shortlist candidates from reserve list and if the reserve list does not include candidates with the required scientific profile, Chief Executive Officer may launch a second call for Expression of Interest for the respective

Scientific Panel and/or Scientific Committee, in order to be able to have a number of successful candidates at least equal to the posts available.

Article 8: Adoption of the list by Food Authority and appointment of candidates :-

(i) The Chief Executive Officer shall submit to the Food Authority an evaluation and analysis report including a proposal listing the most suitable candidates to be appointed as members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels and the reserve list.

(ii) Upon approval of the proposal by the Food Authority, the Secretariat supporting the relevant Panels or the Scientific Committee will contact the experts to notify their appointment and invite them for the first plenary meeting of the relevant body.

(iii) Secretariat shall notify the candidates on the reserve list and the unsuccessful applicants of the outcome of the selection procedure.

SELECTION OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS

Article 9: Inclusion of External Experts: - (i) When Food Authority or Scientific Panels or the Scientific Committee, or a Working Group identifies the need to appoint one or more External Scientific Experts in order to address specific scientific issues, the reasons justifying such a need for External Scientific Experts shall be recorded and such External Scientific Experts having the required expertise may be invited on:

- an *ad hoc* basis for a single meeting or for the duration of the work on a specific mandate or project, or
- on a longer term when the required expertise is needed for more than one mandate or project.

Article 10: Database of External Experts : - (i) The Food Authority shall create a database of External Experts to achieve the following:

- enhance the transparency of the process through which experts are invited to participate in the scientific activities;
- enhance the Food Authority's competence to conduct risk assessments;
- respond more effectively and flexibly to the evolving issues of food safety, particularly in cases where very specialized, unexpected or urgent work may be required.

(ii) The database will contain data on:

- a) Experts who have applied to join Scientific Committee or any of the Scientific Panel or their Working Groups and found eligible for such appointment and candidates included in the reserve list.
- b) Experts identified by the Food Authority, Scientific Committee or Scientific Panel on the basis of need for specific skills and competence.

Article 11: Invitation of External Experts other than those included in the database:- (i) In case, where appropriate candidate is not found, Chairperson of relevant body or the Secretariat concerned may suggest to the Chief Executive Officer to launch a call for Expression of Interest in order to be able to have required competence.

(ii) Chairperson of relevant body or the Secretariat concerned may identify other Experts considering the following possible sources of information:

- a literature search on the subject on which expertise is sought to identify Experts with proven expertise;
- a web search for Experts/expertise sought;

- a written request to research institutions for suggestions for names of best Experts in the required field;
- a survey among members of the Scientific Panel, Scientific Committee seeking appropriate External Experts;
- a survey among Food Authority's Scientific Staff.

(iii) These candidate Experts shall be contacted by the Secretariat supporting the concerned body to find out about their interest and availability to assist Food Safety and Standards Authority. In case of a positive answer these Experts will be requested to submit an application via the database of External Experts and may subsequently be chosen following the procedure as laid down in Article 4.

Article 12: Evaluation of Experts- (i) A list of potential Experts shall be based on the scientific profiles needed for the tasks at hand. The Chairperson of the concerned body (working Group, Scientific Panel, or Scientific Committee), following consultation with the Food Authority, shall recommend the scientific profiles required, following discussion at the relevant Scientific Panel and/or the Scientific Committee.

(ii) The Evaluation Team shall consult the database of External Experts with a view to find an adequate number of External Experts possessing the relevant scientific profile.

(iii) The potential candidates who closely match the requested profile will be contacted by the Food Authority to find out about their interest to carry out the task at hand and their potential availability. The individuals who express such an interest will be requested to update the Annual Declaration of Interests; unless a current one is already available that has been completed less than one year ago. This Annual Declaration of Interests is reviewed by the Food Authority and only candidates without a conflict of interest will be retained for further evaluation.

(iv) For Experts who are invited to join the Scientific Committee, a Scientific Panel or a Working Group for a prolonged term or on *ad hoc* basis, an evaluation such as described under Article 5 will be conducted.

Article 13: Selection of External Experts:- (i) Consistent with Article 6 of the Procedure for establishment and the operations of Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels, the decision on the preferred Expert(s) is made either by the Chairperson of the relevant body (Working Group or Scientific Panel) in consultation with the Food Authority.

(ii) The selected Expert(s) shall then be contacted by the Secretariat to confirm his/her acceptance to assist Food Safety and Standards Authority. If that is confirmed, the selected Expert(s) shall then be invited to attend the first meeting of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panel or Working Group for which they have been selected. The Experts will be requested to submit a Specific Declaration of Interest (SDoI) (Annex.3) and sign the Food Authority's agreements on confidentiality (Annex. 4) and commitment (Annex. 1).

Article 14: Personal Data Protection :- (i) All personal information on candidates / External Experts / Members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels shall be processed by Food Authority and its privacy ensured unless otherwise requested under the provisions of RTI (Right to Information).

(ii) Chief Executive Officer of Food Authority shall be appointed as controller for the processing of personal data related to the selection procedures laid down in this decision.

ANNEX 1: DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

Name: _____

Position:

- Member of the Food Authority
- Member of the Central Advisory Committee
- Member of the Scientific Committee
- Member of a Scientific Panel on _____
- Member of a Working Group on _____
- Expert (external) on _____

Pursuant to Section 4 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 establishing the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, I hereby undertake to make all reasonable efforts to attend and participate in the meetings of the Food Authority and to act independently and in public interest, without being influenced by any external influence.

Done at: _____ on _____

Signature: _____

ANNEX 2: ANNUAL DECLARATION OF INTEREST(ADoI)

(Please note that high quality of scientific expertise is by nature based on prior experience and that therefore having an interest does not necessarily mean having a conflict of interest)

Name: _____

Position:

- Member of the Food Authority
- Member of the Central Advisory Committee
- Member of the Scientific Committee
- Member of a Panel on _____
- Member of a Working Group on _____
- other expert (external) on _____

Information on direct or indirect interests of relevance to the mandate of the

Authority:-

(1) Direct interests (financial benefits arising from, for example, employment, contract work, investments, fees etc.)

(2) Indirect interests (indirect financial, e.g., grants, sponsorships, or other kind of benefits):

(3) Interests deriving from the professional activities of the Member and his/her close family Members:

(4) Any membership role or affiliation in organizations/bodies/club with an interest in the working of the Authority:

(5) Other interests or facts that the undersigned considers pertinent:

Declaration: I declare that the information provided above is true and complete.

Done at: _____ on: _____ Signature: _____

(Please attach additional sheets whenever required)

Guidelines for Annual Declaration of Interest(s)

- Any financial interests or benefits, including holding of stocks and shares, equity, bonds, partnership or property interests relevant to the Authority's mandate. Financial interests connected with a pension or investment scheme contracted prior to membership and/or interests in unit trusts or similar arrangements would not, in principle, be of particular interest, providing that the Member has no influence on financial management.
- Professional experience in the last five years in a field relevant to the Authority's mandate. This should include all work, irrespective of whether the activities have been subject to regular or occasional remuneration (Board membership, executive or non-executive directorship, employment, consultancy, contractual interests, and traineeship).
- Interests the member may have had in the past or ongoing legal proceedings relevant to the Authority's mandate, with an indication of their implications, are to be declared.
- All assistance and support received by private and public undertakings or bodies are to be declared, where they are associated with direct or indirect pecuniary or material benefit and which have a bearing on the topic of the Panel/Committee. These include grants for study or research, fellowships or sponsorships for the last 5 years.
- Participation in public interest groups, professional societies, clubs and organizations which may have an agenda relevant to the Authority's mandate is to be declared. The role and position held is to be set out clearly.
- Close family member includes spouse or partner and dependent children living in the same household.

- When declaring interests, member should consider statements of personal opinion on issues relevant to the questions addressed by the Food Authority (e.g. Publications, public statements); employment or family (e.g. the possibility of any indirect advantage or any likelihood of pressure could arise from the member's employer, business associates or immediate family members).
- The Food Authority recognizes that scientific expertise underpins the fulfillment of its mandate and tasks and that the quality of such expertise is inherently based on prior experience. An “interest” declared is not automatically considered to be a conflict of interest. Interests of an intellectual nature are considered as indispensable to safeguard the quality and overall balanced objectivity of the scientific work.
- The details of interests declared may be kept confidential by the Food Authority unless its disclosure is necessary to establish objectivity and independence of the Member involved.

ANNEX 3: SPECIFIC DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (SDoI)

(Please note that high quality of scientific expertise is by nature based on prior experience and that therefore having an interest does not necessarily mean having a conflict of interest)

Name: _____

Profession: _____

Meeting of the Food Authority

Meeting of the Central Advisory committee

Meeting of the Scientific Committee

Meeting of Panel on _____

Meeting of the Working Group on _____

Meeting dates	
Venue	

S. No.	Agenda Items	Whether the member has a conflict of interest. (YES/ No) If yes, please provide details to enable the chair to take a decision.

Declaration: I declare that the information provided above is true and complete.

Done at: _____ on _____

Signature: _____

ANNEX 4: DECLARATION CONCERNING CONFIDENTIALITY

Name: _____

Position:

Member of the Food Authority

Member of the Central Advisory Committee

Member of the Scientific Committee

Member of a Panel on _____

Member of a Working Group on _____

other expert (external) on _____

I hereby declare that I am aware of my obligation to respect confidentiality. I know that I am obliged not to divulge information acquired as a result of my activities in Food Safety and Standards Authority, if the information is subject to a request for confidentiality and I hereby undertake not to divulge any such confidential information. I shall also respect the confidential nature of the opinions expressed by other Members of the bodies indicated above or other experts during discussions in meetings or provided in written form.

Done at: _____ on _____

Signature _____