

The Programme Operator sets up the Programme Committee (PC) in accordance with the provisions of *Guideline for Research Programmes – Rules for the establishment and implementation of programmes falling under the Programme Area “Research”* of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2014-2021.

The Programme Committee supports and advises the Programme Operator in all matters concerning the programme, in accordance with the provisions of the *Guideline for Research Programmes*.

The Programme Committee consists of five members, representatives from the research community. The Programme Operator appoints three members from Romania and the Donor Programme Partners appoint two members from the Donor States: one from Norway and one from Iceland. The Programme Operator appoints one vice-member from Romania and the Donor Programme Partner from Norway appoints one vice-member from Norway.

The members of the Programme Committee carry out the activities starting with 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2018 until the Research Programme completion (December 2024).

The vice-members may attend the PC meetings together with PC members (in this case they will have a statute of observers without voting) or they may attend the PC meetings by replacing the PC members in cases when the last cannot attend the meetings or when a case of conflict of interest occurs.

At the first meeting, the Programme Committee selects a Chair from among its members, and a vice-chair.

The Programme Operator drafts the Rules of Procedures for the Programme Committee which will be adopted by the Programme Committee in its first meeting by a two-thirds majority vote.

## **Rules of Procedure of the Programme Committee of the Romanian Research Programme**

### **§ 1**

#### **Tasks of the Programme Committee**

1. The mode of action of the Programme Committee of the Romanian Research Programme, hereinafter referred to as the “Programme Committee” is specified in the Rules of Procedure as described hereinafter.
2. The Programme Committee is an advisory body to the Romanian Research Programme, hereinafter referred to as the “Research Programme”.
3. The Programme Committee tasks include:
  - a) Providing input to the strategic direction of the programme;
  - b) Reviewing and approving the guideline for evaluators in English, the guide for applicants in English and the implementation guide for Project Promoters and partners in English;
  - c) Approving the selection criteria and the texts for the calls for proposals;

- d) Overseeing and approving the procedures for selection of projects;
- e) Recommending to the Programme Operator which proposals to select for funding and final awarding of grants;
- f) Reviewing progress made towards achieving the objective(s) of the Research Programme;
- g) Monitoring of the implementation of the Research Programme by Programme Operator;
- h) Reviewing annual and final project and programme reports;
- i) Proposing revisions of the Research Programme likely to facilitate the achievement of the programme's objective(s) to the Beneficiary State and Donor States;
- j) Liaising with the Programme Operator and, where relevant, any Programme Partners; and
- k) Liaising with the Programme Committees in Research Programmes in other Beneficiary States.

## **§ 2**

### **Mode of appointment of the Programme Committee members/vice-members and Chair/vice-Chair**

1. The Programme Committee consists of 5 members and 2 vice-members.
2. The Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI) - as Programme Operator (hereinafter referred to as the "Program Operator") - is responsible for appointing of 3 Romanian Programme Committee members and one vice-member; the Research Council of Norway (RCN) - as Donor Programme Partner - is responsible for appointing one Programme Committee member and one vice-member; the Icelandic Centre for Research (RANNIS) - as Donor Programme Partner - is responsible for appointing one Programme Committee member.
3. Only the Programme Committee members have the right to vote. A Programme Committee vice-member has the right to vote only when replacing a Programme Committee member.
4. The Chair and vice-Chair of the Programme Committee are selected by the Programme Committee from among its members, during the first meeting.

## **§ 3**

### **Tasks of the Programme Committee Chair/vice-Chair**

1. The Chair chairs the Programme Committee. In his absence, the Programme Committee is chaired by the vice-chair.
2. The Chair/vice-Chair:
  - a) Proposes the agenda and dates of meetings, after consultation with the Program Operator;
  - b) Ensures that the principles of impartiality and confidentiality are respected by the Programme Committee members/vice-members.

## § 4

### Participation in the work of the Programme Committee

1. The Programme Committee members/vice-members shall perform their functions in person and cannot appoint proxies.
2. The Programme Committee membership shall terminate on the recall, resignation or death of a Programme Committee member/vice-member.
3. The Programme Committee members/vice-members are obliged to:
  - a) conscientious, honest and impartial fulfillment of their responsibilities related to the work of the Programme Committee;
  - b) maintaining the confidentiality of information obtained related to the work of the Programme Committee;
  - c) updating the Program Operator on their contact details.
4. Representatives of the Programme Operator and the Donor Programme Partners take part in the PC meetings without voting rights. Representatives from Financial Mechanism Committee (FMC) and/or Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA), the National Focal Point (NFP) and relevant ministries of the Beneficiary and Donor States participate as observers.

## § 5

### Mode of operation of the Programme Committee

1. The Programme Committee shall meet at least once a year. The meetings of the Programme Committee shall be called by the Programme Operator in consultation with the Programme Committee Chair.
2. Meetings are held on the Programme Operator's premises or in other venue accepted by the Programme Operator. In urgent cases, the Programme Committee may prepare a meeting remotely, in accordance with §7.
3. The Programme Committee convenes at meetings, according to the adopted agenda. All documents of the Programme Committee shall be in the English language and all meetings shall be conducted in English.
4. The Programme Committee members and other participants of the meeting are provided with an invitation for a Programme Committee meeting, an agenda and supporting documents for consideration no later than 10 working days before the meeting. In order to prepare the meeting, the Programme Committee members/vice-members shall have access to the Programme Operator's electronic system by using personal credentials (projects, evaluation sheets, etc.)
5. For the validity of decisions taken by the Programme Committee, the presence of at least 3 members of the Programme Committee, including at least one from the Donor States is necessary.

6. In justified cases, the meeting of the Programme Committee may be held via audio-visual equipment.
7. For the validity of decisions taken by the Programme Committee at a meeting held via audiovisual equipment, a quorum referred to in point 5(§5) is required.
8. The Programme Committee takes decisions at the meetings or remotely, as referred to in §7.
9. The Programme Committee members/vice-members attending the meeting will sign the attendance list. Participation in the meeting via audio-visual equipment is confirmed by the Programme Committee Chair.
10. The Programme Committee members/vice-members confirm their presence at the meeting within 5 days of receipt of the invitation email. The Programme Committee member who cannot attend the meeting shall inform the Chair.
11. The Programme Committee decisions are adopted by consensus, with guaranteed quorum referred to in point 5(§5). Decisions made through voting are made by absolute majority. With equal number of votes, the Chair's vote shall be decisive.
12. When there is a potential conflict of interest, as defined at §8, the person in question does not take part in deliberations and voting in the Programme Committee.
13. The Programme Operator shall draft the agreed minutes of the meeting, including in particular:
  - a) the date and place of the meeting;
  - b) the attendance list of the meeting (signed by participants);
  - c) the agenda;
  - d) central elements of the discussion and the decisions taken at the PC meeting (information on the decisions adopted or rejected with the record of voting results).
14. The agreed minutes referred to in point 13 shall be sent by the Programme Operator to the PC members for approval no later than 10 working days after the meeting.

## **§ 6**

### **Tasks of the Programme Operator in relation to the Programme Committee meetings**

1. The Implementing Unit for EEA and NO Financial Mechanisms of the Programme Operator provides support to the PC meetings.
2. The Programme Operator tasks include a proper preparation and efficient meeting support that is:
  - a) convening the Programme Committee meetings in consultation with Programme Committee Chair;
  - b) drawing up and sending to the Programme Committee members/vice-members a draft agenda and materials for consideration;

- c) allowing the access of the Programme Committee members/vice-members to the documents needed to be discussed in the meetings, which exist in the Programme Operator electronic system;
- d) preparing minutes of the PC meetings and other documents related to the work of the Programme Committee;
- e) storing and archiving the documentation on the Programme Committee work.

## **§ 7**

### **Remote mode of operation of the Programme Committee**

1. In urgent cases, on the initiative of the Chair, the Programme Committee may take decisions remotely.
2. The Programme Operator shall send electronically or give access to its electronic system to the Programme Committee members/ vice-members to the documents necessary to prepare their opinion, setting a deadline for the submission of individual opinions.
3. The Programme Committee members/vice-members shall communicate their opinions to the Program Operator, which draws up a draft opinion of the Programme Committee on the matter in question.
4. The Program Operator sends the draft opinion, referred to in point 3 (§7), to the Programme Committee members/vice-members.
5. The decision shall be reached as soon as the Programme Committee members/vice-members have sent electronically their opinion but not later than 5 days. Within 5 days of sending electronically the draft opinion referred to in point 3 (§7), the Programme Committee members/vice-members must respond.
6. At the next meeting the Programme Committee Chair communicates the adoption of the final opinion.

## **§ 8**

### **Conflict of interest**

1. The Programme Committee members/vice-members shall disclose any conflict of interest that may prevent an impartial execution of their tasks.
2. A conflict of interest referred to in point 1 occurs automatically in the case when a Programme Committee member/vice-member:
  - a. Is in a close relationship (married or blood related to the second degree) with an applicant;

- b. Is employed by one of the Beneficiaries of the Programme in a proposal (is in a legal relationship with the beneficiary) so that the outcome of the matter dealt with by the Committee could affect his/her rights or obligations;
  - c. Has been in the past 3 years in direct business relation or any other form of direct cooperation with an applicant.
3. When preparing for a Programme Committee meeting, the members shall disclose any conflict of interest referred to in points 1 and 2 (§8), in writing to the Programme Committee Chair. When disclosing a conflict of interest during the meeting, the member in question shall not take part in the meeting under the relevant item.
  4. After the consideration of the information referred to in point 3 (§8), the Chair excludes a Programme Committee member/vice-member from any work related to the disclosed conflict of interest.
  5. The Programme Committee member/vice-member, who did not disclose a conflict of interest, may be recalled upon request of the Chair, a Programme Committee member or the Programme Operator.
  6. When the Chair discloses a conflict of interest concerning herself/himself, the Programme Committee Vice-Chair shall exclude the Programme Committee Chair from any work related to the disclosed conflict of interest.

## **§ 9**

### **Remuneration of the Programme Committee members**

The Chair and Programme Committee members/vice-members are entitled to remuneration, a daily allowance, and reimbursement of travel costs for the participation in the work of the Programme Committee, on terms and conditions specified by the Programme Operator in the Contractual Agreement.

## **§ 10**

### **Amendments in the Rules of Procedure**

The Rules of Procedure may be amended by the Programme Committee on its own initiative. The Programme Operator may request amendments.