

ERA SCIENTIFIC WORKING GROUPS

I. Introduction.

Working Groups are expected to encourage research, communication of knowledge, teaching and contribute to education.

Working Groups should cover/refer to areas of large interest for nephrology.

They are created for the following reasons:

1. To improve the outcomes of renal patients and/or to promote and facilitate research in specific fields;
2. To foster communication among specialists with similar interests, with various other ERA Working Groups and/or Committees, as well as with other Scientific Societies, and with other bodies;
3. To collaborate in the organisation of educational and scientific activities of the ERA.

An ERA Working Group (WG) must follow the rules outlined in this document.

II. Creation of a WG.

The creation of a WG must be approved by the ERA Council.

For the creation of a Working Group, the Council must receive a list of at least 50 ERA members supporting the creation of the Working Group and the Board members.

The "Candidate WG" should present its proposals to the ERA Renal Science Chair, who is the official representative of the WGs within the Council, who must then submit it to the Council for final approval.

There should be a maximum number of ERA WGs. Normally this number should be 10.

III. Composition and terms.

The Working Group consists of ordinary members and a Board (Chair, Vice-Chair and Board members).

1. Ordinary members.

Ordinary members must be ERA members and be persons with a proven interest in the research area covered by the WG. Exceptions are possible only for non-nephrologists.

2. Board members.

a. Chair.

The Working Group is directed by the Chair. The Chair is proposed by the WG Board among the WG Board members and nominated by the Council. He/she serves for 3 years and represents the Working Group within the Council. The Chair can be re-elected only for another 3-year mandate. The time served as Chair is added to the one eventually served as Board member, provided that it does not exceed 9 years.

During elections/voting held within the Board, in case of an equal number of votes, the Chair has the casting vote.

b. Vice-Chair.

The Chair will propose the name of the Vice-Chair, who should be a Board member, and is elected by the Board. The Vice-Chair will assist the Chair in his/her duties and will also act as the Chair if the Chair cannot be present. Similar to the Chair, the term of the Vice-Chair is 3 years and he/she can be re-elected only for another 3-year mandate. The time served as Vice-Chair is added to the one eventually served as Board member, provided that it does not exceed 9 years.

c. Board.

i. Composition.

The Board is composed by up to 10 members including the Chair and Vice-Chair.

All WG Board members must be ERA Full members, exceptions are possible only for non-nephrologists; in this last case, however, the country of residence must be within Europe, Countries bordering Europe as well as the Mediterranean Sea.

To be eligible for the Board a member must have a proven track record of relevant scientific expertise that would justify his/her being part of the board.

IMPORTANT: at least one Board member should be a YNP member, if none is elected, then the YNP Board will nominate one YNP member to act as an observer. YNP observers will attend all WG meetings with voice but not vote.

A balanced geographical representation of the Board members should also be taken into consideration when the members are appointed.

All WGs are strongly encouraged to include women in their respective Boards.

Industry, or industry representatives/employees, cannot be a WG Board member - please see the relevant section in these rules: "[General Rules ERA Committees](#)".

ii. Election.

From the fourth year of the existence of the WG onwards, new Board members will be elected by the current Board members. Elections will be held during a WG Board meeting, whether in person, teleconference or email.

The election process must be managed by an open call. Candidates for Board membership must send their application, as well as supporting letters from two WG members (ordinary or Board). A specific [template](#) must be used to submit candidatures.

If a person is already a Board member of a current WG, he/she cannot send his/her candidature to become a Board member in another WG, unless his/her term is ending in the prior WG;

All Board members must be confirmed by the Council.

iii. Terms.

The term of Board Members is 3 years that can be renewed for a second 3-year term only once.

Once a Board member has ended his/her second term, they can only re-apply for a position in the Board after observing a minimum break of three years.

No member can remain on the Board for more than 9 consecutive years.

iv. Transitional norm regarding the terms of the board.

Only for the first elections, in order to make sure that not all the WG Board members leave at the same time, 1/3 of the originally elected Board members must leave after the completion of their first term (3rd year); another 1/3 after their 4th year and, the remaining 1/3 after their 5th year of service on the Board (this rule does not apply to the Chair or the Vice-Chair). After this period the normal rotation of the Board members will be applied.

The decision on who should leave the Board should preferably be done by the Board members who wish to leave, however, in case there are no Board members who wish to leave, the Board will vote on who will have to leave the Board upon a proposal with a list of names prepared by the Chair and Vice-Chair.

IV. Financial support.

a. Financial support from ERA

The ERA will provide secretarial and technical support to all its WGs, furthermore, it will cover the expenses linked to at least one face-to-face meeting a year in which all the Board members are invited. The expenses will include: travel, accommodation (specific details regarding travel/accommodation can be found in the "[General Rules ERA Committees](#)"), meeting room, AV equipment and catering. There will be a maximum budget for the organization of this meeting.

The ERA will cover the expenses linked to the eventual CME activity of the WGs that is part of the programme of the SEID (if any such meeting is organised).

The ERA will also provide funds for specific initiatives (i.e. fellowships) linked to proposals submitted by the WGs. The ERA's SAB (Scientific Advisory Board) will be in charge of the evaluation process of the proposals. Proposals done in collaboration with other WGs and/or ERA bodies will receive higher scores. The decision regarding which WG will receive the funds will be decided by the Council.

b. Financial support from third parties

Any other kind of activity that has not been planned/budgeted by the Association must be funded through other means (i.e. unrestricted grants). In any case even the external funding raised by the WG must be used for scientific and educational activities evaluated by the SAB and approved by the ERA Council.

If and when WGs receive support for their initiatives through external supporters, the funds should be transferred to ERA. The ERA will then earmark the amount so that it can be used by the WG for its activities.

Funds can be transferred to future years (if not spent in the year in which it is granted) however, provided that the supported project is closed, it must be spent within max. 3 years from when it is received, if not it will be automatically transferred to ERA (if applicable).

V. Official WG Scientific and educational output.

Any project/output of the Working Groups must be notified (at their very early stage) to the Renal Science Chair and evaluated by the ERA's SAB (Scientific Advisory Board).

1. Minimum output.

Working Groups are expected to contribute to the reputation of the ERA and deliver state of the art science and education for the benefit of the scientific community and are therefore asked to meet minimum requirements in terms of output:

- i. Deliver high quality e-seminars – at least **one a year**;
- ii. Joint e-seminars or face-to-face educational meetings (involving more than one Working Groups and/or ERA Bodies) – at least **one every 2 years**;
- iii. Submit **one research or fellowship project every 3 years**;

- iv. Produce **consensus or controversy statements/opinion reports** to be submitted preferably to **NDT & CKJ** – at **least one every 3 years**.

2. Publications.

It is recommended that the output of the Working Groups be submitted for publication in ERA journals, subject to the usual peer review process and the Editor's final decision.

Any publication or report of the Working Groups must clearly mention the fact that the Working Group is a body of ERA. The sentence approved by Council related to this matter is: *"This article (to be adapted accordingly) was written by (to be adapted accordingly) on behalf of the ERA WG (to be adapted accordingly) which is an official body of the ERA (European Renal Association)."*

The Renal Science Chair must be informed in advance about the intention of writing a paper. With regard to consensus/controversy statements the Renal Science Chair must involve the Council for formal approval before the WG can proceed. Any draft of the proposal of said activity must be circulated to all Board members and the Renal Science Chair before the official submission for publication on behalf of the WG.

IMPORTANT: At least one current Working Group Board member must be one of the authors of the paper. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Working Group must also endorse the manuscript.

3. Scientific and educational activities.

Scientific activities will be evaluated taking into consideration the parameters included in the [General rules for evaluation of projects by internal ERA Committees.](#)

The Educational activities will be evaluated taking into consideration the following aspects:

- Scientific programme, relevance of the topic and educational value;
- Faculty composition: at least 25% of the speakers must be women (also applicable to e-seminars); it is highly advisable to include young speakers in the programme, furthermore, regarding nephrological topics, it is recommended to invite speakers who are ERA members;
- Number of Working Groups and ERA Bodies involved in its organisation;
- Detailed budget and third party's support;
- Visibility of the ERA Bodies and the Association.

All WGs can present their work at other national/international meetings, they must however clearly always highlight that they are an ERA WG for visibility reasons. In case they wish to be part of an official ERA session, held at an event that is NOT organised by ERA, then they must send their request directly to the ERA Council via the President for approval before submitting their proposal.

VI. Various.

1. A Board member who does not actively participate in the WG activities can be asked to resign from the Board: a vote of the WG Board must however be done for this to become effective;
2. The Chair, together with the Vice-Chair, are responsible for the scientific, educational and financial output of the Working Group. They are also responsible for information included in all reports that are regularly shown at the ERA Council meetings, and in all submitted project proposals. They must make sure that the Working Group follows the regulations outlined in this document and supervise the election procedure of the Board members;
3. For all matters (i.e. DoI, travel and accommodation for Board meetings, diplomas) that are not mentioned in the present document, please see the relevant sections of the "[*General Rules for ERA Committees*](#)".

Last up-date: October 2021