

ERA-EDTA SCIENTIFIC WORKING GROUPS

I. Introduction.

WGs 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-EDTA WG's and/or Committees;
3. To collaborate in the organisation of educational activities of the ERA-EDTA;
4. To foster communication with other Scientific Societies, and with other bodies that may support research in the field.

An ERA-EDTA 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-EDTA Council.

For the creation of a working group, the Council must receive a list of at least 50 ERA-EDTA members supporting the creation of the working group and the Board members.

The "Candidate WG" should present its proposals to the ERA-EDTA 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-EDTA WGs. The ERA-EDTA Council, according to the financial status of the Society, can decide at any Council meeting – with a majority of 2/3 of the members present – to modify this number. Normally this number

should be 8: only in exceptional cases, and for specific topics that are not covered by other existing WGs, a limited number of additional Working Groups may be created. If and when this happens, the Council must provide a statement regarding this exception that will be then recorded in the Minutes of the Council meeting in which this is officially approved. Council can however decide to close and/or merge WGs at any time.

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 persons with a proven interest in the research area covered by the WG.

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 7 to 10 members including the Chair and Vice-Chair.

All WG Board members must be ERA-EDTA 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.

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

ii. Election and rotation.

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.

All Board members must be confirmed by Council.

If a Board member leaves the Board before ending his/her term, the other Board members will elect his/her replacement. The newly elected Board member will then follow the normal term rotation.

Notice of any Board vacancy must be announced to all WG and ERA-EDTA Members.

It is very important that at least one Board member is a member of YNP, 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 WG are strongly encouraged to include women in their respective Boards.

Candidates for Board membership must send their application to the WG Vice-Chair, as well as supporting letters from two WG members (ordinary or Board). A special template must be used to submit candidatures (www.era-edta.org/2019_01_03_Working_Groups_Template_Candidate_Board.docx).

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 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.

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.

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

If the WG wishes to cover the costs of other guests that are not Board members, this can still be done, but, in this case, the costs will be taken from the eventual budget of the WGs, thus funds coming from sponsors.

The ERA-EDTA will also provide funds for specific initiatives (for example fellowships) linked to proposals submitted by the WGs: the ERA-EDTA Council will be in charge of reviewing/approving these initiatives.

The decision regarding which WG will receive the funds will be decided by the Council. ERA-EDTA's SAB (Scientific Advisory Board) will assist the ERA-EDTA Council in the evaluation process of the proposals. Proposals done in collaboration with other WGs and/or ERA-EDTA bodies will receive higher scores.

It will be the Council's responsibility to decide the amount allocated each year in the Association's budget for the WG activities.

Finally, ERA-EDTA will cover the expenses linked to the CME activity of the WGs that is part of the programme of the SEID (if any such meeting is organised) or educational webinars: in this last case the Renal Science Chair (and possibly the ERA-EDTA Council) will decide the educational programme based on the proposals submitted by the WGs. Proposals that include the collaboration of more WGs and/or ERA-EDTA Committees will receive higher evaluation.

Any other kind of activity must be funded through other means (= sponsors). In any case even the external funding raised by the WG must be used for scientific and educational activities approved by the ERA-EDTA Council.

If and when WGs receive support for their initiatives through sponsors, the money should be transferred to ERA-EDTA. ERA-EDTA will then earmark the amount so that it can be used by the WG for its activities (provided that the Council has approved them).

Sponsorship money 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-EDTA.

V. Official WG Scientific and educational output.

Any publication or report of the Working Group should, preferably, be submitted to one of the ERA-EDTA official journals (acceptance is subject to the peer review process); furthermore, all publications, or scientific/educational events organised by the Working Group must clearly mention the fact that the paper is written 'on behalf of the..... Working Group' using the following sentence:

"This article (to be adapted accordingly) was written by (to be adapted accordingly) on behalf of the ERA-EDTA WG (to be adapted accordingly) which is an official body of the ERA-EDTA (European Renal Association – European Dialysis and Transplant Association).

The Renal Science Chair must be informed in advance about the intention of writing/submitting a paper or the beginning of any scientific and/or educational activity on behalf of the Working Group. With regard to position/consensus 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.

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

Educational meetings shall be preferably organised in collaboration with other ERA-EDTA committees/bodies.

At least 25% of the speakers should be women; it is highly advisable to include young speakers in the programme, furthermore, regarding nephrological topics, it is recommended to invite speakers who are ERA-EDTA members.

The Council will be in charge of evaluating the quality of the CME activity based on the following items:

- a. Scientific programme;
- b. Faculty;
- c. Number of participants, age range and country of practice;
- d. Type (basic, clinical and basic/clinical);
- e. Topic (more general/more specialised);
- f. Relevance of the topic;
- g. Report of conflict of interest (if any);
- h. Educational value.

In order to further assist the Council in this evaluation, the replies of the post-Course survey that the participants will be requested to fill in will be available. The post-course survey should include questions related to the following aspects of the meeting:

- a. Scientific Programme;
- b. Speakers;
- c. Educational value;
- d. Clinical value;
- e. Teaching tools and methods used during the event;
- f. Organisation;
- g. Reports of conflicts of interest (if any).

VI. Various.

1. All WG Board members must fill in the DoI online and keep it regularly up-dated;
2. 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. This rule however is not valid for the creation of the Board of new WGs;
3. 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;
4. 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 the annual reports regularly submitted for review/approval at the ERA-EDTA Council meetings that must include also a working plan and detailed list of costs and, if applicable, budget for future initiatives of the Working Groups, finally, they must make sure that the Working Group follows the regulations outlined in this document and supervise the election procedure of the Board members;
5. If deemed essential for a specific project for the WG, it is possible to have "external consultants" to the Board. A secret vote must be cast by the Board members before this exception can be considered valid. External consultants have no vote within the Board and their support ends with the closure of the said project. "External consultants" however cannot be industry representatives or employees;
6. Diplomas for WG Board Members. For this matter one should refer to the appropriate section in the "[General Rules for ERA-EDTA Committees](#)";
7. WGs can help the Council, upon request, with regard to the "Ambassador Programme" to select speakers/topics experts in the WG field.

Last up-date: February 2021