

RULES AND REGULATIONS

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMISSIONS

ADOPTED BY THE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE F.R.S.-FNRS

Reference: *FRS-FNRS_REGL_CS_INTL_EN_2023.12.12_1_Final*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS2

Article 1: Role and mission of international Scientific Commissions3

Article 2: Number of international Scientific Commissions and their area of expertise3

Article 3: Composition of international Scientific Commissions.....3

Article 4: Appointment of members4

Article 5: terms of office4

Article 6: Confidentiality.....5

Article 7: Functioning of international Scientific Commissions.....5

Article 8: Convening members and meetings organisation5

ARTICLE 1: ROLE AND MISSION OF INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMISSIONS

According to Article 21 of the statutes, the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS entrusts its evaluation missions to Scientific Commissions, of which it determines the number and composition.

The mission of the F.R.S.-FNRS international Scientific Commissions (INTL) is to examine applications, which are submitted to it as part of the "Grants & Fellowships" call (except at doctoral level)¹ and the "Credits and Projects" call.

ARTICLE 2: NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMISSIONS AND THEIR AREA OF EXPERTISE

Fourteen Scientific Commissions have been formed by the F.R.S.-FNRS and their respective areas of expertise are identified by the [descriptor fields](#) listed on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.

These Scientific Commissions are divided into 13 thematic Scientific Commissions, which are essentially based on the fields of research covered by the ERC (European Research Council): 4 in Exact and Natural Sciences (SEN-1 to SEN-4), 4 in Life and Health Sciences (SVS-1 to SVS-4) and 5 in Human and Social Sciences (SHS-1 to SHS-5).

A fourteenth Scientific Commission applies its expertise in the strategic field of sustainability through interdisciplinarity (SUSTAINABILITY).

ARTICLE 3: COMPOSITION OF INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMISSIONS

The INTL Scientific Commissions SEN-1, SEN-3, SEN-4, SHS-2, SHS-4, SHS-5, SVS-1, SVS-2, SVS-3, SVS-4 and SUSTAINABILITY consist of 15 members from outside the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB), including the president. Due to the heavy workload of the INTL Scientific Commissions SEN-2, SHS-1 and SHS-3, these Commissions consist of 17 members from outside the CFB, including the president.

Three to five observers (1 for each major university and 0 or 1 per medium-sized university, depending on their scientific activity in the fields of the relevant Scientific Commission) may attend meetings according to the rules and regulations set out in the document defining the [role of observers](#).

All members of the F.R.S.-FNRS INTL Scientific Commissions are identified and appointed according to a procedure defined by the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

The General Secretary will report to the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS on the functioning of INTL Scientific Commissions.

¹ Doctoral level applications are evaluated by the corresponding Scientific Commissions F.R.S.-FNRS PhD.

ARTICLE 4: APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

- 4.1** The [Guidance Committee](#) considers suggestions formulated by the F.R.S.-FNRS about members (from outside the CFB) and proposes the composition of INTL Scientific Commissions, including their presidents, to the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

This composition aims to guarantee that the members have a minimum level of experience (from outside the CFB) (10 years after the doctorate thesis), scientific quality and complementarity of expertise in terms of scientific disciplines², while aiming for a gender balance as far as possible.

Any members (from outside the CFB) that have benefited, during their careers, from a permanent post at a university of the CFB or a permanent fellowship of the F.R.S.-FNRS are not eligible.

The Guidance Committee will also take special care, as far as possible, to maintain a gender balance among the CFB observers.

- 4.2** In its proposals, the Guidance Committee will take account of the rules and regulations relating to potential conflicts of interest, both for members³ and for observers⁴.
- 4.3** The annual composition of the INTL Scientific Commissions approved by the Guidance Committee is submitted to the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS for approval.

ARTICLE 5: TERMS OF OFFICE

- 5.1** The mandate of each member (from outside the CFB) is awarded on personal basis and begins on the 1st of January of the relevant year.

- 5.2** Members (from outside the CFB):

⇒ The duration of the mandate for any member is 2 years and can be renewed twice. It can be extended by 1 or 2 years (according to the proposal of the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS and the wishes of the relevant member).

⇒ Several mandates are authorised during the person's career on the condition that they do not exceed 8 years per decade and the renewal of the compositions of INTL Scientific Commissions is in line with the international standards in this field.

² In exceptional cases, the Guidance Committee may be required to propose the replacement of a member who would be absent during a call, in order to cover all the descriptor fields of the relevant INTL Scientific Commission.

³ A proposed member who is the applicant submitting an application as part of a call within the financial year cannot serve on the Commission for the entire instrument relating to the application (the instrument determines the type of credits-projects).

⁴ A proposed observer who is the promoter or applicant submitting an application as part of a call within the financial year cannot serve on the commission for the call.

The replacement of an observer due to a potential conflict of interest or absence may affect a call.

For promotion applications and 5-year activity reports:

- Permanent researchers of the F.R.S.-FNRS cannot serve as observers on the INTL Scientific Commission in the year of their promotion application or the year in which their 5-year activity report is evaluated.
- A Research Associate or Senior Research Associate of the F.R.S.-FNRS can be an observer on an INTL Scientific Commission but cannot serve in this capacity during the evaluation of promotion applications and 5-year activity reports.

ARTICLE 6: CONFIDENTIALITY

Under penalty of exclusion, members from outside the CFB and CFB observers on INTL Scientific Commissions are required to respect the confidentiality of discussions and applications.

ARTICLE 7: FUNCTIONING OF INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMISSIONS

The president of the Scientific Commission approves the allocation of stage 1 experts to submitted applications by the F.R.S.-FNRS administration.

For each application, the president and the F.R.S.-FNRS appoint a reviewer and co-reviewer from the members (from outside the CFB) who will be responsible for examining the applications and first stage expert evaluations.

The reviewer is also responsible for preparing a draft consolidated evaluation report.

Reviewers and co-reviewers cannot be responsible for an application submitted by their institution.

The Scientific Commissions take their decisions according to the "consensus" procedure; if this procedure fails, the application is subject to a vote of the members (from outside the CFB).

ARTICLE 8: CONVENING MEMBERS AND MEETINGS ORGANISATION

The F.R.S.-FNRS organises meetings, for which it also provides the secretariat.