

**FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
NEW DELHI-110002**

**INTERNAL PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE
SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND SCIENTIFIC PANELS**

Article 1. Definitions

In this procedure, unless the context otherwise requires:

- 1.1 “Act” means the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006;
- 1.2 “Food Authority” means Food Safety and Standards Authority of India established under Section 4 of the Act;
- 1.3 “Chief Executive Officer” means the Chief Executive Officer of the Food Authority appointed under Section 9 (1) of the Act;
- 1.4 “Scientific Committee” means the Scientific Committee constituted by the Food Authority under Section 14 of the Act;
- 1.5 “Scientific Panel” means Scientific Panel established by the Food Authority under Section 13 of the Act;
- 1.6 “Secretariat” means a committee constituted by Advisor (Science & Standards) with the officers which may contain one Joint Director/Deputy Director (Technical), one Assistant Director (Technical) and two Technical Officers with the approval of Chief Executive Officer.
- 1.7 Words and expressions used in this Procedure and not defined but defined in the Act shall have the same meaning respectively assigned to them in the Act.

Article 2. Call for Expression of Interest (EOI)

- 2.1 The Food Authority shall make a call for EOI for selection of members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels through advertisement. In order for the call to be given the widest dissemination possible, FSSAI shall launch the call in:
 - 2.1.1 The website of FSSAI & other Scientific Organizations and FSSAI Newsletter;
 - 2.1.2 Through relevant leading scientific journals such as:
 - a) Journal of Food Science and Technology,
 - b) Indian Food Industry,
 - c) Food and Beverage News,
 - d) Current Science,
 - e) Indian Journal of Medical Research,
 - f) Indian Food Packer,



- g) Food Authority's Newsletter,
- h) Indian Journal of Experimental Biology.

2.2 The call for expressions of interest shall include:

- a) A short summary of FSSAI and its functioning;
- b) Eligibility criteria;
- c) Selection criteria;
- d) Expected role as member of Committee/ Panels;
- e) How to apply;
- f) Sitting fee and travel expenditure;
- g) Conflict of Interest, if any;
- h) Link to website, and
- i) Deadline for submission of EOI.

2.3 The Authority may write to Heads of national institutions, academia and other entities, with the request to give the call the widest possible dissemination.

2.4 General Eligibility criteria for members of Committee/Panels;

- a) The existing members shall not be permitted for more than two terms except in cases with extra meritorious grounds (with recorded reasons) and subject to approval of Chief Executive Officer. In any case no member shall be permitted for more than three terms irrespective of the panels.
- b) Members can apply for more than one panel or committee, but shall be considered for only one panel/committee.
- c) SSC can also co-opt non-members and may also constitute sub committees for screening/scrutiny/processing of applications.

2.5 Conflict of Interest: The candidates applying for the membership of Scientific Panels, Scientific Committee and Expert Committees should not be "holding a position or having a membership or associated with direct or indirect pecuniary or material benefit with any associations, private institutions/organization, Consultancy agencies, professional bodies, NGOs running through private stakeholders or representing communities, who are involved in Food businesses or facilitator of food businesses".

Article 3. Selection cum Search Committee

3.1 The Food Authority shall establish a Selection cum Search Committee (hereafter called Committee) for selection of the Members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels. This Committee may comprise of DG (ICMR), DG (CSIR), DG(ICAR) etc. or their representative not below the rank of a DDG (Level-14). An officer of FSSAI not below the rank of Director (preferably Head of Science & Standards division) shall be the Member Secretary of this Committee.

3.2 The term of the Committee will be for a period of three years.

- 3.3 Committee 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

- 4.1 The validity and eligibility check of each application shall be carried out by the Secretariat of Committee.
- 4.2 The application 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

- 5.1 The eligible candidates will be further evaluated on the basis of the following selection criteria and maximum marks for each criterion:

Sl. No	Selection Criteria	Max. Marks	Points system
1.	Research / Teaching experience/ Food analysis/ Laboratory management and assessment/ and or relevant with food safety (years)	15	0.5/year
2.	List of Publications in scientific journals for respective Scientific Panel as Lead author (Numbers)	10	0.5/publication as Senior/Lead author
3.	Science Managerial experience (Numbers)	10	1/year
4.	List of extramural projects and grants received (as Principal Investigator) and completed (Numbers)	10	2/project completed as Principal Investigator
5.	List of Membership of any Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels (Numbers)	5	1/committee, panel
6.	List of dossiers /manuals/guidelines/regulations prepared (Numbers)	5	1/dossier
7.	List of dossiers /manuals/guidelines/regulations analyzed (Numbers)	5	1/dossier
8.	List of documents peer reviewed (Numbers)	5	0.5/review
9.	Experience in carrying out risk assessment	5	
10.	Training in area related to Food Safety and Health (Numbers)	5	0.5/ training
11.	List of Workshops/meeting conducted or attended abroad (Numbers)	5	1/ workshop meeting
12.	Awards and Fellowship (Regional/ National and International) (numbers)	5	2.5 per award
13.	Overall assessment by the Committee	15	

- 5.2 Candidates who have expressed their interest for more than one Scientific Panels and/or the Scientific Committee shall be assessed separately for each chosen Scientific Panel or Scientific Committee but would be considered for only one panel or committee best suited for, subject to fulfilling all the required eligibility criteria.
- 5.3 Each member of Committee shall provide one overall score which shall then be averaged for the Scientific Committee or each Scientific Panel for which he/she has applied for.

Article 6. Short list of the best candidates

- 6.1 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 be not less than 60% of the maximum score. All candidates with score above the agreed cut-off shall be included in the shortlist. The final list shall be prepared for each Panel in the order of merit of marks obtained. The Committee shall recommend the names and positions of the shortlisted candidates for the Scientific Committee and each of the Scientific Panels.
- 6.2 Committee may also recommend names of eminent scientists/experts inclusion of which the Committee feel are necessary in the best interest of food safety subject to fulfilling the provisions of these guidelines.

Article 7. Selection of candidates from the shortlist and adoption of the list by Food Authority and appointment of candidates

- 7.1 The Committee shall submit to the Chief Executive Officer, a report with names of candidates proposed for appointment by the Food Authority.
- 7.2 The short listed candidates are required to submit an “Annual Declaration of Interests” (ADoI) (Annex 1) indicating any direct or indirect 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.
- 7.3 The candidates on the shortlist who are not selected shall be kept in reserve list. The candidates on the reserve list shall be contacted and requested to agree for inclusion in the Data base of External Experts.
- 7.4 In case where short listed or selected candidates are less than the maximum membership of a Scientific Panel or Scientific Committee, the Committee 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.

- 7.5 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.
- 7.6 Secretariat shall also notify the candidates on the reserve list and the unsuccessful applicants of the outcome of the selection procedure.

Article 8. Selection of External Experts

- 8.1 The Scientific Committee or Scientific Panels may appoint one or more External Scientific Experts in order to address specific scientific issues, on reasons recorded in writing on:
 - 8.1.1 An *ad hoc* basis for a single meeting or for the duration of the work on a specific mandate or project, or
 - 8.1.2 On a longer term when the required expertise is needed for more than one mandate or project.
- 8.2 The Food Authority shall create a Panel of External Experts which may also include the candidate from the reserved list as given in Article 7.3 to enhance the transparency of the process through which experts are invited to participate in the scientific activities;
- 8.3 The expert panel may include the reserved list of experts, and/or as identified by the Food Authority, Scientific panel and Scientific Committee based on the specific skill and competence.
- 8.4 In case, where appropriate candidate is not found, Chairperson of relevant body or the Secretariat concerned may identify other Experts considering the following possible sources of information:
 - 8.4.1 A literature search on the subject on which expertise is sought to identify Experts with proven expertise;
 - 8.4.2 A web search for Experts/expertise sought;
 - 8.4.3 A written request to research/ academic institutions for suggestions for names of Experts in the required field;
 - 8.4.4 A survey among members of the Scientific Panel, Scientific Committee seeking appropriate External Experts.
- 8.5 External experts cannot be considered members of the Scientific Committee or a Scientific Panel without undergoing the full selection procedures envisaged for

members of the Scientific Committee or Panels or be chosen as Chair of a Working Group of the Scientific Committee or Panels. These candidates may subsequently be chosen following the procedure as laid down in Article 4 and 5.

- 8.6 Consistent with Article 5 of the Procedure of the 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.
- 8.7 The selected Expert(s) shall then be contacted by the Secretariat to confirm his/her acceptance to assist FSSAI. If that is confirmed, the selected Expert(s) shall then be invited to attend the meeting of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panel, Expert Committee or Working Group for which they have been selected. The Experts will be requested to submit a Specific Declaration of Interest (SDoI) (Annex.2) and sign the Food Authority's agreements on confidentiality (Annex.3) and commitment (Annex.4).

Article 9. Personal Data Protection

- 9.1 All personal information on candidates/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 Right to Information (RTI) Act.
- 9.2 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 procedure.



ANNEX 1: 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 likely hood of pressure could arise from the member's employer, business associates or immediate family members).
- The Food Authority recognizes that scientific expertise underpins the fulfilment 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 over all 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 2: 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 3: 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, 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 this day _____ of _____.

Signature _____



ANNEX 4: 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 _____

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: _____

