



**International Commission on Occupational Health - ICOH**  
**Commission Internationale de la Santé au Travail - CIST**

*Founded in 1906 as Permanent Commission*



## **Guidelines for Scientific Committees**

**Adopted by ICOH Board on March 21, 2009**

**Amended by ICOH Board on April 27, 2024**

ICOH members are encouraged to seek membership in ICOH Scientific Committees corresponding to their special areas of interest. These guidelines are based on ICOH Constitution and Bye-laws. They state the principles and practices for setting up and management of Scientific Committees. Relevant sections of the Constitution and the Bye-Laws are appended to this document.

### **Art.1 General Qualifications of Membership on Scientific Committees**

ICOH members in good standing are invited to seek membership in a minimum of one and a maximum of three Scientific Committees. The selection of a Scientific Committee should reflect the member's professional interests and competencies. Members should have time and capability to participate in the activities of the Scientific Committee. ICOH seeks balanced international participation.

### **Art.2 Appointment of Officers of the Scientific Committee**

As stated in the Bye-Law 11 Section 4: "Each Scientific Committee shall establish rules for its management. In addition to what is stated in the Constitution and Bye-Laws, the rules should define the scope of the Committee, its mode of action, whether it will have other officers than the Chairperson and the Secretary, the mechanism by which new Chairperson and Secretaries are proposed to the President, the procedure for deciding future conference venues, the mechanism for changing the rules, and other administrative matters." (See Appendix 2 for relevant Bye-Laws.)

So according to this Bye-Law, the management of the SC has been left to the regulation of each SC. Each SC can decide any question concerning the management.

However, the Secretary might be in charge of the following competencies:

- (a) have charge of the general correspondence;
- (b) prepare for the election of the Officers;
- (c) prepare the agenda of the SC;
- (d) prepare the minutes of the meetings.

## **Scientific Committee Officer Election and/or Appointment**

### **Eligibility and Nomination**

Scientific Committee members should be alerted by the SC Officers when elections will occur and asking if there are any nominations for the position of chairperson. Candidates who intend to be nominated for Chairperson of a Scientific Committee must be ICOH members in good standing and confirmed by the Secretary General, as such. The Transparency Declaration Form must be completed and transmitted privately to the Secretary General at the time of announcing candidacy. Each candidate shall provide to the Secretary of the SC support by at least three members in good standing of the Scientific Committee, a written agreement from the candidate that he or she is willing to serve if elected, and a curriculum vitae of no more than 150 words. The candidates must be eligible under Bye-law 11 and art.2 of these Guidelines.

### **Voting and Election**

Only ICOH Scientific Committee members in good standing confirmed by the Secretary General may vote. If there is more than one nominee for the Chairperson position, the election takes place by secret ballot, organized by the officers of the Scientific Committee. The election may take place at a business meeting of the Scientific Committee. Alternatively, the Secretary of the Scientific Committee sends the names and accompanying public materials of the candidates for the position of Chairperson by email to the Scientific Committee members in good standing at least six months before the first day of ICOH International Congress.

The voting procedures will be proposed to the Vice President in charge of Scientific Committees by the Chairperson of the Scientific Committee and after approval, election will take place under the responsibility of the Secretary of the Scientific Committee. The Chairperson transmits a report of the voting procedure, the list of voting members, and the voting results to the to ICOH Vice President in charge of Scientific Committees, who transmits results to the ICOH President for appointment. In case of equality of votes between two or more candidates for the Chairperson position, priority is given to the contestant with seniority as an active ICOH member.

### **Appointment of Scientific Committee Chairperson and Secretary**

The proposed Chairperson chooses the Secretary of the SC, who is willing to hold the position and is an ICOH member in good standing confirmed by the Secretary General . The proposed Secretary must submit privately to the Secretary General a Transparency Declaration Form , prior to being proposed to the President.

If in agreement with the proposal, the ICOH President, in conformance with article 5, section 3 and art.7, sect. 3 of the Constitution and sect.1 and 2 of Bye-law11, appoints the Chairperson and accepts the Secretary presented for a three year period between two International Congresses. The same process may reappoint Chairperson and Secretary for no more than one additional three-year term. If no candidates have been nominated to the position of Chairperson and Secretary of a Scientific Committee, or if special reasons so require, the ICOH President can appoint a Chairperson and a Secretary. For example, if the Scientific Committee Officers fail to provide required reports as requested by the Vice President in charge of Scientific Committees (see Article 12) and fail to communicate to the Vice President the reasons for delay, these officers will be notified that the President may appoint new officers. Some Scientific Committees elect the Chairperson and Secretary at a Scientific Meeting that is asynchronous with the ICOH triennia. The ICOH President can approve the asynchronous three year term of the Chairperson and Secretary of these Scientific Committees.

Balanced international distribution of Chairpersons is an important goal for ICOH. Normally, the Officers of Scientific Committees shall not be eligible to serve as ICOH Officers, ICOH Board Members or National Secretaries at the same time.

### **Art.3 Criteria for Membership on a Scientific Committee**

There are no specific criteria for membership on Scientific Committee beyond the qualifications in art.1 above. Scientific Committees are encouraged to pursue academic excellence as well as balanced international participation.

### **Art.4 Creation of an Executive Committee**

Scientific Committees may create an Executive Committee, including the Chairperson, Secretary, other Officers, and those members most involved in the activities of the Scientific Committee. The members of the group are appointed by the Chairperson, usually following election by the members at a business meeting or by email, as described in sect. 5 of Bye-Law 11. The Executive Committee contributes to management of the Scientific Committee.

### **Art.5 Creation of Sub-Committees**

Scientific Committees may form Sub-Committees to deal with various scientific topics, conferences, publications, etc.

## **Art.6 Corresponding Fellows**

Two Corresponding Fellows may be appointed by the Chairperson of the Scientific Committee, following approval by ICOH President. The Fellows receive all the benefits of ICOH membership for a triennium between two International ICOH Congresses without paying dues. Criteria for appointment of Corresponding Fellows are financial need and the importance of their scientific contributions to the Scientific Committee.

## **Art.7 Meetings and Symposia**

Scientific Committees are encouraged to hold scientific symposia or conferences at least once between International Congresses with an open invitation to scientists and other interested persons. A minimum of two Scientific Committee business meetings per triennium are encouraged, to which all members are invited: one meeting in conjunction with the ICOH Triennial International Congress, and one between the International Congresses. Scientific Committees are encouraged to collaborate with other Scientific Committees, with National Secretaries and national organisations in the host country, and with WHO, ILO and other professional organizations, in organizing joint meetings and symposia. All meetings should be clearly announced as ICOH activities.

ICOH Scientific Committees are strongly encouraged to organize special meetings and conduct other activities as stated in the Bye-Law 11, Section 8.

Conferences and special meetings can be jointly organized by ICOH Scientific Committees or in collaboration with external organizations, provided there is no conflict with the professional, scientific or ethical principles of the ICOH.

The scientific programme of the conferences and the selection process of the abstracts submitted has to be carried out involving the Scientific Committees and the Chair in compliance with the ICOH Constitution and Bye-Laws, the ICOH Code of Ethics, the Good Association Practice and the General Ethical Principle. Participants must be provided with the abstracts by the beginning of the conference.

The ICOH website shall be the repository for abstracts books and proceedings once any copyright issues have been addressed and reviewed by Chairs of SCs involved and after consultation with ICOH Officers.

For conferences organised on behalf of ICOH, an organising committee may be appointed. Members should be respected professionals perceived as neutral, and the organising committee's leader should be an ICOH member in good standing. The Scientific Committee officers and the organising committee are responsible for content, quality, balance and scientific integrity.

ICOH Scientific Committees can jointly organise activities with scientific organisations, that are impartial and independent. Approval of the use of the ICOH name must be requested to the Secretary General.

Scientific Committees should promote ICOH and implement ICOH programmes.

Guidelines for the Organisation of ICOH triennial Congresses have been developed and can be found in the Core Documents section of the ICOH website at

<https://www.icohweb.org/site/core-documents.asp>. These guidelines may be helpful to Scientific Committees in their organisation of conferences.

## **Art.8 Publications and Websites**

Scientific Committees are encouraged to develop scientific reports, books, and articles for international scientific journals. At least one scientific output is expected during the triennium.

Documents intended to be ICOH publications, such as ‘ICOH Position Paper’, ‘ICOH Guideline’, ‘ICOH Statement’, or ‘ICOH Report’, must be drawn up in compliance with the ICOH Constitution and Bye-Laws, the ICOH Code of Ethics, the Good Association Practice, and the General Ethical Principle. Authors shall fill in the Declaration of Interests Form. The proposal of a scientific publication intended to be an ICOH document may be put forward by one or more Chairs of a Scientific Committee. All proposals shall be examined and approved by ICOH President. The ICOH President appoints one Coordinator and a Publishing Committee in charge of preparing a draft for publication. The draft is approved by the Publishing Committee prior to review by independent experts in the field. The document is subjected to assessment by Working Group on Transparency and Ethics. The document is approved by the Board.

Each Scientific Committee is encouraged to develop a website, using the ICOH template as a tool for communication with scientists in the field of interest. Scientific Committee Officers have reporting requirements, including the work plan of the Scientific Committee, midterm and final triennial reports and business meeting reports, for which the forms and timelines are maintained in the Scientific Committee Virtual Office on the ICOH website.

## **Art.9 Sponsorship and Finances**

External financial sponsorship may be invited to improve quality and extension of ICOH activities, and to ensure as wide an audience as possible. Terms, conditions, and purposes of such support must be in accordance with ICOH’s goals, the ICOH Code of Ethics and General Ethical Principles and should be documented by a signed agreement between sponsor and organisers. Conditions for providing financial support shall not include specification by the funder of speakers, guests or other matters relative to the ICOH activity. If large support is obtained from one major stakeholder, then a balance for other stakeholders must be achieved through support or participation.

Exhibitions or advertisement can be considered as a useful way of obtaining external support, while allowing the sponsor to communicate with audience in accordance with ICOH activities’ purpose. A sponsor may offer receptions and other modest social events if there is no interference with scientific or educational programmes.

Conference speakers and participants should be informed of the sponsorship through printed or electronic announcements. Organisers should be prepared to report to ICOH Officers and the Scientific Committee the budgetary details.

Scientific Committees may wish to be listed as sponsors of various conferences, symposia, publications and other public announcements. All sponsorships must be approved by the ICOH President.

Sections 9, 10 and 11 of Bye-law 11 provide guidance regarding the finances of the Scientific Committees and the meetings which they organize. The finances for the organisation and conduct of the meetings organized by the Scientific Committee are the responsibility of the organizers of the meeting. Non-ICOH members may pay a registration fee higher than the members' fee. The organizers shall transfer the difference to the Chairperson of the Scientific Committee or to the designated representative within two months of the end of the meeting. Such monies may either be used by the Scientific Committee or paid to the account of ICOH according to prior agreement with the Secretary General.

On request of the Chairperson of a Scientific Committee, the Secretary-General may be authorised by the President to assist financially a Scientific Committee in the organisation of a meeting.

The Scientific Committees may receive up to two thirds of the fees paid by sustaining members subscribing especially to promote activity in the field covered by the Scientific Committee. A Scientific Committee may be required by agreement to remit to ICOH a proportion of any income deriving from its activities.

## **Art.10 Conflict of interest and transparency**

Scientific Committees must remain scientifically objective. Activities must be in compliance with the ICOH Code of Ethics, the Good Association Practice, and the General Ethical Principle. If a conflict of interest occurs with meetings, sponsorships, publications, financial support, the ICOH Officers will require full disclosure of the conflict and have the authority to properly intervene. The ICOH President will take the necessary action after consultation with the Committee of Ethics.

## **Art.11 Setting up new ICOH Scientific Committee**

ICOH members in good standing who share a field of scientific interest may establish a Working Group to develop a proposal for the new Scientific Committee. The members should submit to ICOH President and ICOH Vice President in charge of Scientific Committees the proposal, including a list of members and the scope of activities. At the next Midterm or Triennial Board Meeting, the ICOH Board will review the proposal to form the new Scientific Committee. The ICOH President, in consultation with the Vice President in charge of the Scientific Committees, appoints the Chairperson and approves the Secretary.

Scientific Committees that share scientific interest areas are encouraged to consider merging together into a single Scientific Committee.

## **Art.12 Links with the Vice President in charge of Scientific Committees and the Secretary General**

Chairpersons and Secretaries of Scientific Committees shall stay in close cooperation with ICOH Vice President in charge of Scientific Committees. During each Triennium, the Scientific Committee Chairpersons and Secretaries must send to the ICOH Vice President a set of reports, including the work plan of the Scientific Committee, mid-term and final reports of activities, business meeting reports, and proposals for the scientific sessions of the ICOH Congresses. Officers of Scientific Committees should build up the membership list and transmit it to the Vice President and the Secretary General.

The ICOH Vice President in charge of Scientific Committees assists the Officers of the Scientific Committees. The Vice President will encourage Officers of Scientific Committees to propose joint meetings and activities with other Scientific Committees. The Vice President reviews election procedures for Chair and Secretary of the Scientific Committees. The ICOH Vice President submits a report describing the Scientific Committee activities to the ICOH Board at the midterm meeting, and to the General Assembly at the International ICOH Congress. The ICOH Vice President serves as Co-Chair of Scientific Program of the ICOH International Congresses and works with the Scientific Committee Officers to organize scientific sessions at the Congresses.

The Chairpersons and Scientific Committee Secretaries shall stay in close collaboration with the ICOH General Secretary and support the ICOH General Secretary in membership campaigns, tracking lost sheep, and communicating members' changes of information. A Transparency Declaration Form must be submitted to the ICOH Secretary General by candidates for positions of Chairperson and Secretary. The rules for sponsorship and for conflict of interest require coordination with the Secretary General. The ICOH Board periodically reviews the activities of the Scientific Committees.

## **Art.13 Dissolving a Scientific Committee**

As stated in Article 7 of the Constitution, the President may dissolve a Scientific Committee after consultation with the Vice President in charge of the Scientific Committees. This action may be taken at the request of the Chairpersons of Scientific Committees seeking to merge together. This action may also be taken because of failure of the Scientific Committee to carry out its obligations.

## **Appendix 1 Relevant Articles from the ICOH Constitution**

### **ARTICLE 7 - Scientific Committees**

#### **Section 1**

In order to facilitate the purpose of the ICOH, Scientific Committees operate to provide a forum for ICOH members and associated experts to meet in order to promote, share and discuss progress relating to the speciality of the Committee, and to publish documentation relating to the Committee's speciality.

A Scientific Committee can only be established with the approval of the President.

ICOH members and associated experts may join a Scientific Committee in which they have an active interest.

#### **Section 2**

Each Scientific Committee shall be managed by a Chairperson and a Secretary, and, if required by the members of a Scientific Committee, a Treasurer and other officers, in accordance with the Bye-laws.

#### **Section 3**

The president decides on the terms of reference of Scientific Committees, appoints the Chairpersons and approves the Secretaries thereof (Article 5, Section 3). The functions of the Scientific Committees are defined in the Bye-laws.

#### **Section 4**

The activities and progress of each Scientific Committee shall be subject to periodic review by the Board. One of the Vice-presidents shall be responsible for that review. The President may dissolve a Scientific Committee after consultation with the appropriate Vice-president and the Board.

## **Appendix 2 Relevant Bye-Laws**

### **BYE-LAW 11 – Scientific Committees**

#### **Section 1**

The President appoints the Chairpersons of the Scientific Committees, after consultation with the appropriate Vice-President, for a period of three years. The Committee members may officially propose the Chairperson to the President. The Chairpersons must be active members in good standing of ICOH. They may be appointed for no more than one additional three-year period.

#### **Section 2**

The Chairperson of a Scientific Committee appoints the secretary in consultation with the Committee members. The appointment must be approved by the President. The Chairperson also appoints the members of the Committee and he may appoint no more than two corresponding fellows (Article 2, section 4 of the Constitution, Bye-Law 1).

### **Section 3**

Chairpersons of Scientific Committees shall liaise with the appropriate Vice-President as per Bye-Law 5 as soon as practicable in each triennium regarding a programme of work, its periodic review and the membership of the Committee (Article 5, section 4 and Article 7, section 1 of the Constitution).

### **Section 4**

Each Scientific Committee shall establish rules for its management. In addition to what is stated in the Constitution and Bye-Laws, the rules should define the scope of the Committee, its mode of action, whether it will have other officers than the Chairperson and the Secretary, the mechanism by which new Chairpersons and Secretaries are proposed to the President, the procedure for deciding future conference venues, the mechanism for changing the rules, and other administrative matters.

### **Section 5**

A Scientific Committee may entrust its administration to a Management group comprising, in addition to the Chairperson and the Secretary, other officers and associated experts elected by registered members of the Committee, either by postal ballot or at a business meeting organised in connection with a conference.

### **Section 6**

The Scientific Committees shall conduct an active membership policy by admitting as many members as is considered administratively efficient. All members of a Scientific Committee shall be active in the field of the Committee. Should a member's active interest cease, the Chairperson shall encourage the member to resign from the Committee.

### **Section 7**

A member of ICOH can belong to no more than three Scientific Committees. Members of Scientific Committees are not required to pay any additional fee. The Officers and the immediate Past President are ex officio members of every Scientific Committee.

### **Section 8**

A Scientific Committee shall organise special meetings and conduct other activities. The Scientific Committees shall plan their programme of work for each triennium. The Management Group shall keep the Editor of the Quarterly Newsletter informed of the Committee's activities, and at the end of each triennium they shall submit a written report on the activities and the accomplishments of the Scientific Committee to the appropriate Vice President.

### **Section 9**

The finances for the organisation and conduct of the meetings mentioned in Section 8 shall be the responsibility of the organisers of the meeting. Non-ICOH members may pay a registration fee higher than the members' fee. The organisers shall transfer the difference to the Chairperson of the Scientific Committee in question or his representative within two months of the end of the meeting. Such monies may either be

used by the Scientific Committee or paid to the account of ICOH according to prior agreement with the Secretary-General.

**Section 10**

On request of the Chairperson of a Scientific Committee, the Secretary-General may be authorised by the President to assist financially a Scientific Committee in the organisation of a meeting.

**Section 11**

Scientific Committees may receive up to two thirds of the fees paid by sustaining members subscribing especially to promote activity in the field covered by the Scientific Committee concerned. A Scientific Committee may be required by agreement to remit to ICOH a proportion of any income deriving from its activities.