

Steering Group Terms of Reference

1. PURPOSE

1.1. The EViR Funders' Forum offers an international community of shared practice and facilitated learning to increase the value of health-related research. The objectives of the EViR Funders' Forum are to share, collaborate, learn and promote knowledge exchange to achieve the following:

- Set justifiable research priorities.
- Ensure robust research design, conduct and analysis.
- Ensure regulation and management of research conduct is proportionate to risks.
- Make all information on research methods and findings accessible and all reports complete and usable.

EViR has set out [10 Guiding Principles](#) that underpin this ambition.

1.2. The goal of the EViR Funder's Forum is to maximise the probability of benefits to society from health-related research by advancing the practices of research and research funding.

1.3. The purpose of the EViR Steering Group is to consider strategic and major operational issues for the Funders' Forum.

2. ROLE OF THE STEERING GROUP

2.1. The responsibilities of the EViR Funders' Forum Steering Group are:

- Setting the strategic agenda.
- Consider major operational issues for the Funders' Forum, including supporting the development and delivery of the agenda for the Forums' meetings.
- Develop and oversee the EViR Programme.
- Ensure that opportunities are addressed that could impact on:
 - The collaboration and development of the Forum,
 - Finance, infrastructure and reputation.
- Approve any tools, resources or discussion papers that are to be published under the banner of EViR.
- Oversee the work of the Secretariat through the annual review.
- Receive financial reports and oversee the Forum finances.
- Consider new membership requests.
- Ensure that the Group works according to the EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) principles.
- The Steering Group will almost always act via consensus.
- To review and update EViR documentation including this document annually.

3. COMPOSITION OF THE STEERING GROUP

- Chair.
- Initial current members are expected to be the co-convenors whilst the group develops.
- The Steering Group at a minimum includes representatives of four full member organisations at any time.
- Representatives are drawn from the membership and invited by existing Steering Group members including but not limited to the organisation which host the EViR meetings.

- Efforts will be made to ensure that membership of the Steering Group is representative of the range– by type, size and geography – of EViR members.

4. STEERING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

- The EViR Steering Group will approve new members for the EViR Steering Group.
- Steering Group membership will be a term of three years with the possibility of renewing once.
- The Steering Group membership of Hosting organisations will be held for a year.

5. CHAIR OF THE STEERING GROUP

5.1. Role of the Chair

The Chair will play a key role in supporting the Secretariat and the Steering Group, and will provide direction when a decision is required at short notice. The scope of the role is:

- Support the Secretariat on behalf of the Steering Group of the day to day management of the SG.
- Chair and set an agenda for the steering group meetings.
- In the event consensus within the SG cannot be achieved, the Chair will implement the majority decision.
- In the absence of a majority decision the Chair will have the casting vote.
- Act as ambassador of the Forum.
- Be a visible leader of the EViR Forum on behalf of the SG, e.g. chairing round table meetings or presenting the annual report on Forum
- Membership support:
 - Agree with the Secretariat strategies for recruiting new members and their organisations.
 - Discuss with the Secretariat the resolution of sensitive membership issues. For example, poor conduct or unhealthy disagreement among members.

5.2. Chair selection and tenure

- The Chair will be nominated from the Steering Group (SG) or by the Steering Group. The SG's nomination should be seconded by a non-steering group member of the Forum and agreed, by consensus, at a Membership meeting.
- Tenure of the Chair is for three years with a possibility of extensions for a further two years.

6. SUPPORT AND ARRANGEMENTS

6.1. Support: The Steering Group will be supported by the EViR Secretariat which is accountable to the SG and the University of Southampton as the employer.

The activities of the Secretariat will be overseen by the Steering Group and are:

- Oversee and provide support to the Forums' activities by measuring and managing performance, identifying risks and taking action when necessary.
- Manage EViR budget.
- Steering Group support:
 - Plan, deliver, chair and minute Steering Group meetings.
 - Support the Steering Group to develop and refine the strategic direction of the EViR Funders' Forum.
 - Work with the Steering Group to plan, develop, attend and run two round table meetings per year, webinars and a conference every two years.

- Serve as editor for Forum related outputs (papers, reports, communications, abstracts, presentations etc), the Steering Group will provide overall editorial leadership.
- Forum workstream support:
 - Communications:
 - Create, maintain and oversee website/online/social media presence.
 - Collaboration support:
 - Create an oversee the members' online collaboration spaces (for the Steering Group and wider membership).
 - Develop and maintain a new virtual community of practice mechanism for engaging widely with members and the staff of member organisations. Facilitate connections between members to build the community and enhance coordination and efficiency.
 - Membership support:
 - Monitor outside developments and initiatives that may impact or be of interest to Forum members.
 - Respond to queries of members or those interested in becoming members.

7. FREQUENCY, TIMINGS AND LOCATION OF THE MEETINGS

7.1 The SG meets regularly, normally monthly via video conference with the option for more frequent meetings leading up to a face-to-face EViR meeting.

8. QUORUM ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 Members are expected to attend every EViR teleconference. The group will be considered quorate with attendance of two thirds and above at each meeting. Quoracy does not apply to each agenda item but only to overall attendance.

9. APPROVAL OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

9.1 These Terms of Reference were agreed by the EViR Steering Group on 19 July 2021.