



Coordinating global research for wheat

Guidelines for Expert Working Groups (updated 15/01/2015)

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Annexes

- Annex 1 – **Topic Proposal template**
- Annex 2 – **Membership Application Form template**
- Annex 3 – **Agenda template**
- Annex 4 – **1st Meeting Minutes template**
- Annex 5 – **Minutes template**
- Annex 6 – **Annual Report template**
- Annex 7 – **Annual Accounts**

Introduction

These guidelines are intended to provide a basis for the management and governance of Expert Working Groups of the Wheat Initiative. They aim to provide guidance only. The Proposers and Chairs of Expert Working Groups are welcome to suggest alternative ways of working for eventual endorsement by the Scientific Board.

General description

Expert Working Groups (EWGs) are established where there would be benefit from bringing together experts with a specific focus on a particular topic of direct relevance to the Wheat Initiative's wider aims and objectives as set out in the Vision Document and Strategic Research Agenda. The Wheat Initiative provides EWGs with a platform for discussion, information sharing and interaction to consider specific challenges, opportunities and the identification of research gaps and priorities.

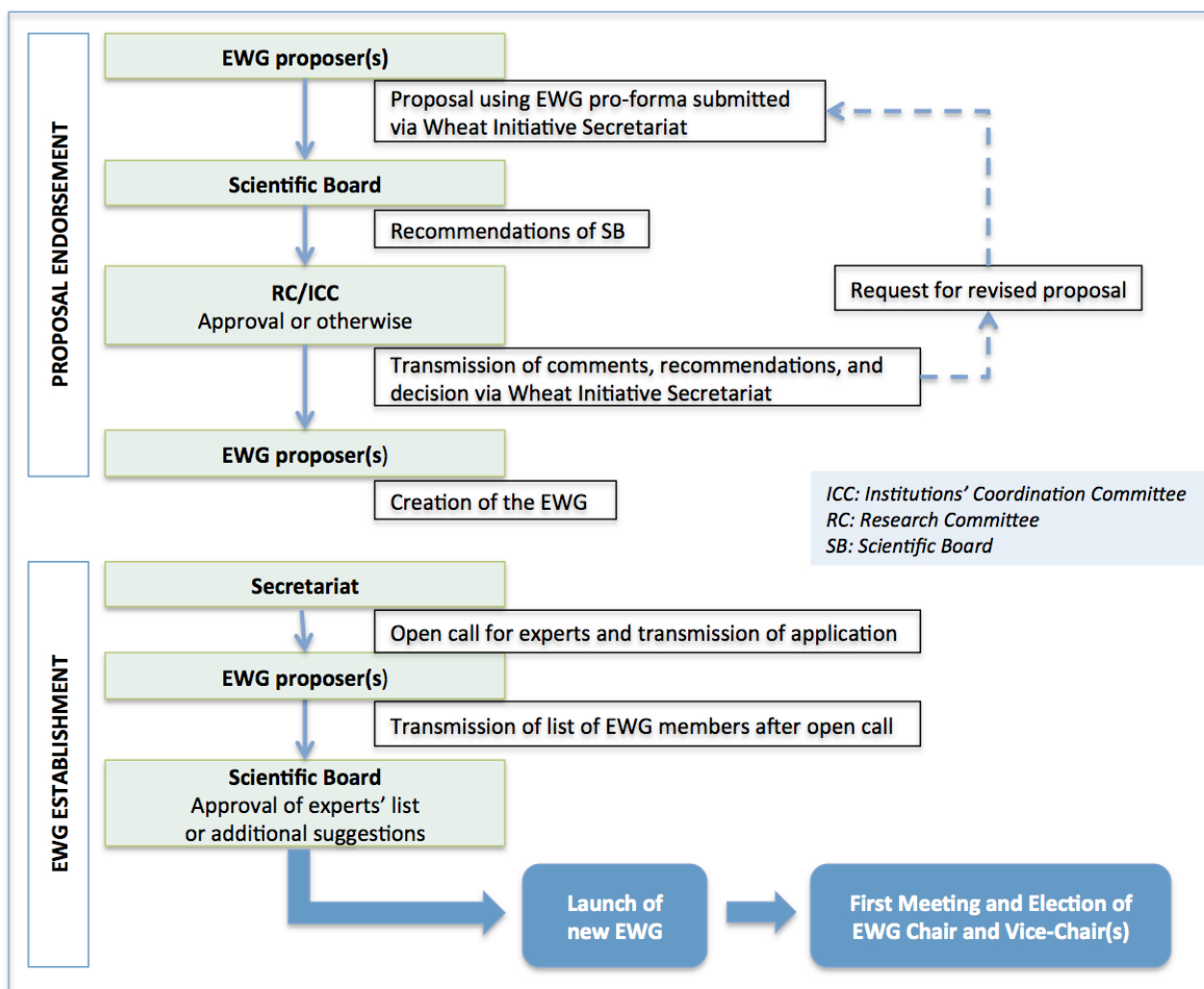
Each EWG is established for a defined initial duration. EWGs should have clear objectives and these could include (but not be limited to) specific activities such as contributing to the development of the Wheat Initiative Strategic Research Agenda through regular gap analysis and recommendations, producing position papers for publication, stimulate and facilitate knowledge sharing within a scientific community or addressing a particular challenge through a research programme. The minimum output should be an annual report for dissemination to the Wheat Initiative Research Committee (RC), Institutions' Coordination Committee (ICC) and the wheat research community through the Wheat Initiative website.

The international prioritisation of topics in the area of each EWG, together with research priorities from other EWGs, will constitute a portfolio that will be used by the Wheat Initiative ICC to inform its approach to tackling priorities by coordination of efforts and alignment of Wheat Initiative members' research strategies, and in some cases by launching international research calls.

Establishment process

An EWG is established as per the flow diagram below. Organised consortia addressing wheat research challenges may also be endorsed as EWGs of the Wheat Initiative following this process. An EWG is set up following the approval of a proposal covering a particular area of expertise by the RC (for scientific and research topics) or the ICC (for funding and policy topics). An open call for experts to participate in the EWG is managed by the Wheat Initiative Secretariat via the Wheat Initiative website.

Process of establishment for a new Wheat Initiative Expert Working Group



Proposals

An individual wishing to establish an EWG is asked to do so by completing a proposal (which may be done in collaboration with colleagues). The template for EWG proposals is provided at **Annex 1**. The proposal is to be sent to the Wheat Initiative Secretariat who submits it to the Scientific Board for consideration. Upon the Scientific Board's recommendations, the EWG is provided to the RC or ICC (depending on the focus of the EWG), which may approve the creation of the EWG.

The relevant committee may ask the Proposer(s) to revise their proposal before it approves it. This may involve changing the scope of the proposed EWG as considered appropriate by the committee. The relevant committee will also determine the duration for which the EWG is created.

Call for experts and composition of the EWG

- A. A membership application form (**Annex 2**) is published on the Wheat Initiative website together with the EWG proposal.
- B. EWG Proposers are to specify on the membership application form the areas of expertise that are sought for representation on the EWG. This helps to ensure that applications received are relevant to the topic of the EWG.

- C. The Wheat Initiative Secretariat sends an invitation to apply to the RC, ICC and all registered users of the Wheat Initiative website, who are in turn encouraged to forward the invitation to relevant colleagues.
- D. It is recommended that EWG Proposers send the membership application form directly to colleagues whom they believe are important to be present on the EWG.
- E. The Wheat Initiative Secretariat collects all application forms and makes them available to the EWG Proposers in a private workspace of the Wheat Initiative website.
- F. After allowing at least one month for applications to be received, the Proposers decide on the number of experts to sit in the EWG and select them accordingly. The final decision on the initial composition of the EWG is made by the Wheat Initiative Scientific Board, which may suggest other experts. The final list of EWG members is made available on the website.
- G. In order to be as inclusive as possible, EWGs remain open to new participants during their life cycle. The call for EWG members is therefore left open so that anyone may apply to join during the duration of the EWG. Proposers are expected to interact regularly with the Wheat Initiative Secretariat to update as necessary the composition of the EWG.

Governance

- A. At its launch meeting, the EWG elects a Chair and one or several Vice-Chair(s). It is suggested that they are elected for a period of two years. There is no limit to the number of terms held by a Chair or Vice-Chair(s).
- B. The Chair and Vice-Chair(s) are expected to lead the group and be responsible for communication within the EWG as well as with the broader community through the Wheat Initiative Secretariat.
- C. The Chair and Vice-Chair(s) take primary responsibility for the quality, scope, timeliness, and usefulness of the work in progress. They will ensure that there is an effective organisational structure in place for the EWG and that there are individuals, groups, and processes that enable work to progress, development and editing of policy and written documents to take place, and for other tangible outcomes to be delivered.
- D. The size of an EWG may differ according to the EWG and its particular aims. In order to be functional and inclusive at the same time, large EWGs (e.g. 30 or more members) may constitute a community network and nominate an Executive Committee to have a more active role in advancing the EWG's objectives. The EWG is to decide, guided by its Scientific Board Liaisons (see below), on a governance plan that will define the role of the Executive Committee and that of the community network as appropriate.
- E. EWG subgroups may be established to work on specific elements of the EWG's focus, upon decision of the EWG. The subgroups should report regularly to the full EWG on their activities.
- F. The EWG should take its decisions consensually and it is expected that dissenting opinions be properly addressed and reported.

- G. The Chair should make every effort to include the views and expertise of each EWG member in the discussions and work of the EWG. The Chair also reserves the right to moderate discussions in order to include the diversity of views of the EWG.

Election Process

Nomination phase

- A. To open the nominations, the Wheat Initiative Secretariat sends an email to the EWG member's list with the subject line "Nomination for Chair and Vice-Chair(s) of the EWG [NAME OF THE EWG]"
- B. Any EWG member may nominate himself or herself to stand for election as either Chair or Vice-Chair. A nomination for both positions is not possible.
- C. To submit a nomination, the EWG member must hit "reply to all" when replying to the original nomination email, stating his/her interest to stand for the election as Chair or Vice-Chair. The EWG member must attach his/her EWG application form or any other relevant document.
- D. The length of the nomination phase is of 15 days, starting as soon as the nomination email is sent.

Election phase

- E. Elections are expected to be organised at the first EWG meeting through secret ballots.
- F. The election will be considered valid only if more than 50% of the EWG members cast their votes.
- G. EWG members who are not able to participate in the meeting where the elections are held will be allowed to designate proxies to represent them.
- H. Each EWG member will have to vote twice, once to elect the Chair and once to elect the Vice-Chair(s).
- I. Election of Chair:
- The candidate obtaining a simple majority (highest number of votes) is elected.
 - If two or more candidates obtain the same number of votes, subsequent votes are organised until one candidate obtains the majority
- J. Election of Vice-Chair(s)
- The number of vice-chair(s) is established prior to the election by the EWG proposers.
 - Candidates obtaining the highest number of votes are elected.
 - In case two or more candidates obtain the same number of votes for one Vice-Chair seat, subsequent votes will be organized until one candidate obtains the majority.
- K. The results of the voting process, including number of voters and number of ballots for each candidate will be sent to the Wheat Initiative Secretariat.
- L. If the election process cannot be organised during the first EWG meeting, the Wheat Initiative Secretariat will organise a vote by email after the meeting.

Support from the Scientific Board and the Secretariat

- A. Following the approval of the EWG by the relevant committee, the Scientific Board designates two of its members as liaisons for the EWG to provide guidance to the EWG on an ongoing basis. The two Scientific Board Liaisons are invited to each EWG meeting.
- B. The Wheat Initiative Secretariat is able to assist with the organisation of all meetings should the Chair and Vice-Chair(s) desire the Secretariat's support.

Financial support

- A. Upon reception and agreement of a detailed annual budget before November 30th of each year (see **Annex 6**), funds may be allocated by the Wheat Initiative Secretariat to support the effective functioning of the EWG, particularly for the organisation of EWG workshops or face-to-face meetings.
- B. The financial period shall be one calendar year.
- C. The Annual Budget shall cover expenditure for the financial period to which they relate, and shall be presented in Euros.
- D. The Annual Budget should in priority allow researchers from less developed countries to participate in EWG workshops or meetings that they would not otherwise be able to attend. Train and flights tickets must be economy class or the least costly fare.
- E. A provisional report on the execution of the Annual Budget will be sent to the Secretariat with the Annual Report on November 30th of each year (**Annex 6**).
- F. The final annual accounts report (using **Annex 7**) will be sent to the Wheat Initiative Secretariat with a copy of all invoices, receipts, tickets and boarding passes, etc., by 15th January of each year.

Meetings and Reporting

First Face-to-Face Meeting

- A. The first face-to-face meeting of the EWG takes place within six months of the EWG's creation (when the EWG is approved by the relevant committee) and should attempt to include all EWG members.
- B. Notice of such meetings should be given at least two months in advance, making reasonable attempts to accommodate members' schedules and distances of travel.
- C. A meeting agenda (**Annex 3**) and any relevant documents for discussion should be circulated well in advance of the meeting to allow reasonable time for members to consider them prior to the meeting.
- D. No later than one month following the EWG's first meeting, the EWG shall provide to the Wheat Initiative Secretariat a report of the proceedings of the meeting, including specific information to be used as the basis of the Wheat Initiative Strategic Research Agenda. The report (**Annex 4**) should cover the following points:
 - A short description of the **topics covered** by the theme of the EWG (half a page).
 - The **research needs** (half to one page), with if necessary a description of the conceptual framework of the theme. This could include a critical analysis of the current research activity/community in the field of the EWG (for instance using a SWOT analysis).

- The **priority actions**, divided into short term, medium term and long term, with a focus on actions that could only or could best be tackled through collaboration and coordination at the international level.
- The **ongoing joint actions**, such as EU collaborative programmes, international networks etc. with a short description of each one.

Subsequent Face-to-Face Meetings

- A. It is expected that at least one face-to-face meeting takes place each year, ideally scheduled alongside a relevant international conference and located in a city that is easy to access internationally.
- B. Face-to-face meetings should attempt to include all EWG members.
- C. Notice of such meetings should be given at least two months in advance, making reasonable attempts to accommodate members' schedules and distances of travel.
- D. A meeting agenda (**Annex 3**) and any relevant documents for discussion should be circulated well in advance of the meeting to allow reasonable time for members to consider them prior to the meeting.
- E. Minutes (**Annex 5**) of face-to-face meetings are to be circulated within one month following the meeting to all EWG members and provided as per the template to the Secretariat for publication on the Wheat Initiative website.

Regular and Additional Meetings

- A. The EWG will meet as required, convened by the Chair, or at any other time when necessary at the request of the majority of its members or at the request of the Committee by which it was created.
- B. In addition to one compulsory face-to-face meeting every 12 months, regular meetings could be held face-to-face, by telephone or using an online communication tool such as Skype or WebEx.
- C. Additional meetings of the EWG or subgroup(s) may not require the presence of all EWG members, however, reasonable attempts should be made to accommodate members' schedules and time zones.
- D. Notice of such meetings should be given at least one month in advance whenever possible to allow as many members as possible to attend.
- E. A meeting agenda (**Annex 3**) and any relevant documents for discussion should be circulated well in advance of the meeting to allow reasonable time for members to consider them prior to the meeting.
- F. Minutes or a suitable meeting summary as per the template (**Annex 5**) are to be produced for each EWG and subgroup meeting and promptly circulated to all EWG members, as well as provided to the Wheat Initiative Secretariat, in order for all members to be kept involved and to be able to provide their expertise and knowledge.

Annual and progress reporting

- A. The EWG is expected to regularly inform the Wheat Initiative Secretariat of its activities as they occur.
- B. A representative of the EWG may be asked to provide a report on its progress to the RC or ICC at one of either committee's meetings.

- C. By 30 November of each year, the EWG shall provide the Wheat Initiative Secretariat with an annual report of the EWG's activities including a provisional annual account table (**Annex 7**) for dissemination to the Research Committee, the Institutions' Coordination Committee and the wheat research community through the Wheat Initiative website. A template for the annual report is provided at **Annex 6**.