EUROPEAN COMMISSION
JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE

Directorate F – Health and Food
Unit F1 Disease Prevention

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION INITIATIVE ON BREAST CANCER

VICE-CHAIR OF THE GUIDELINES DEVELOPMENT GROUP

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1. ECIBC - The European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer

In 2008, the European Parliament Resolution[1] called on the European Commission (EC) to develop European accreditation/certification programmes for cancer screening, diagnosis, and follow-up care based on European evidence based guidelines. In response, the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (ECIBC) was launched by the EC and started the activities in 2015.

The key pillars of the ECIBC are the development of the European Guidelines on Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnosis and a European Quality Assurance (QA) scheme covering the entire care pathway. For each pillar, a working group was set-up: the Guidelines Development Group (GDG) and the Quality Assurance Scheme Development Group (QASDG). Each of the group has had their own chairs.

The members of both working groups were selected *via* an open call. The developed guidelines and requirements for breast cancer services are publicly accessible from the Healthcare Quality website of the EC Joint Research Centre (JRC)[2].

1.2. Rationale for this call

The years 2024-2025 will see the transition of the breast cancer initiative towards a new methodological framework that foresees the integrated development of guidelines and quality assurance scheme[3,4] by one working group of experts. In preparation, the European Commission intends to reshape the board of chairs. Through an open call advertised from 22 December 2022 to 12 March 2023, a new Chair was appointed.

The objective for this call is to select one Vice-Chair equipped with primarily clinical expertise, and possibly methodological knowledge on guidelines development and/or other methods on consensus finding, such as Delphi rounds. The Vice-Chair selected by this call will initially be appointed for the Guidelines Development Group (GDG). However, experience in quality assurance for cancer services would constitute an advantage considering the transition of the breast cancer initiative towards an integrated development model. The Vice-Chair will collaborate with the Chair to prepare and steer the working group meetings leading to the development of guidelines during 2024 and addressing quality requirements as well to be

[1]European Parliament Resolution on combating cancer in the enlarged European Union http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2008-0121+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

[2]EC JRC Healthcare Quality website https://healthcare-quality.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

[3]Guideline-based quality assurance: a conceptual framework for the definition of key elements https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-021-06148-2

[4]Bringing two worlds closer together: a critical analysis of an integrated approach to guideline development and quality assurance schemes https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-020-05819-w

expected from 2025 onwards. As necessary, and in agreement with the EC-JRC and the Chair, the Vice-Chair might be requested to also chair meetings.

The expert appointed as Vice-Chair shall fill in a Declaration of Interests (DoI) form, which is also part of the application form for this call. Information on how to fill in the form can be found in Annex I of this call document. The appointed expert will also be requested to sign declarations of confidentiality and commitment (see Annex II).

2. OPERATION OF THE ECIBC GUIDELINES DEVELOPMENT GROUP

2.1. Remuneration

In case of on-site meetings, travel and subsistence expenses of the members participating in the activities will be reimbursed by the Commission. Reimbursement will be made in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission.

As a rule, the Commission may decide to pay to a maximum of 12 days per year (€450 per day, as of December 2022). The Vice-Chair may furthermore be remunerated for activities that fall under the remit of this position.

2.2. Transparency

The GDG Vice-Chair of the EC breast cancer initiative will carry out activities by observing principles of transparency. All relevant documents will be published by the JRC on the Healthcare Quality public website[2]. In particular, the following data will be made available to the public:

a) Full name of the persons appointed as GDG Vice-Chair, and the brief CV,
b) Rules of procedure,
c) Declarations of interests, confidentiality, and commitment,
d) Draft agendas and or agendas of meetings,
e) Minutes of meetings, and
f) Stakeholder's dialogue activities.

Exceptions to publication will be considered where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001[5].

2.3. Confidentiality

The Vice-Chair, initially appointed for the GDG, is subject to the obligation of professional secrecy, which by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them applies to all members.

[5] Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001. OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43–48
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001R1049&from=en

Consequently, and in line with the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1396[6], the chairs, working group and subgroup members will not divulge information, including commercially sensitive or personal data, acquired as a result of the group's work, even after they have ceased to be members. They will sign a declaration of confidentiality to this effect. In line with the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1396, the GDG Chair and Vice-Chair will comply with the Commission's security rules on the protection of EU classified and sensitive non-classified information, as set out in the Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443[7] and 2015/444[8].

Should the newly appointed Vice-Chair fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

The Vice-Chair will be appointed in the personal capacity acting independently and in the public interest, not representing any private, commercial or national interests.

3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested persons are invited to submit their application using the appropriate online application form available on the Healthcare Quality website[9]. Applications must be completed in English.

Supporting documents:
An application is only valid if sent by the indicated deadline and all the documents listed hereafter are included:

- A completed on-line application form;
- A *Curriculum Vitae* in electronic Europass format[10], not exceeding 4 pages in length;
- A list of publications – including scientific publications or technical reports most relevant to the field in this call and the applicant published or was involved with during the last ten years (the applicant may also additionally provide a list of other types of publications, e.g. book chapters);
- A filled in and signed DoI form (the DoI form is embedded to the application form);
- A read, understood and accepted privacy statement (the statement is embedded to the application form).

[6]Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1396. OJ L 234, 11.9.2019, p. 23–30
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019D1396&rid=17
[7]Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443. OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41–52
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32015D0443&from=EN
[8]Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/444. OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53–88
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32015D0444&from=GA
[9]Healthcare Quality website:
https://healthcare-quality.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ecibc/open-calls/call-for-expression-of-interest
[10]CV Europass format
https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/doccuments/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions

Note:

Applicants must disclose any circumstances that could give rise to a conflict of interest (CoI) by submitting a DoI. Submission of a DoI form filled in in all its parts is necessary in order to be eligible for appointments.
Additional supporting documents may be requested at a later stage.
All documents submitted by applicants must be duly completed, legible, signed (bearing a wet signature when relevant) and numbered sequentially.

4. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The selection procedure consists of two steps: verification of the eligibility requirements and selection.

4.1. Eligibility requirements

To be considered eligible, the applicants must satisfy the following criteria:

1. Must have a minimum of 10 years of relevant professional experience[11] in the field of breast cancer screening or cancer screening and/or follow-up care;
2. Must have a university degree at postgraduate level (bachelor's + 2 years), in a medicine, health, public health or related field;
3. Must have an active employment or involvement in at least one of the fields listed in point 2;
4. Must have good knowledge of the English language, allowing professional interacting in English[12] (including active participation in deliberations and writing reports in English);
5. Must not be an ECIBC National Contact.

4.2. Selection criteria

To select suitable candidates, applications that meet all eligibility requirements will be evaluated considering the following aspects:

1. Relevant professional, scientific and technical expertise in the field;
2. Experience in chairing internationally-composed working groups;

[11]To confirm the eligibility requirement of 10 years of professional experience (years are counted only if they are in a relevant field to the call): years of study included in eligibility criterion 2 (post-graduate education) are NOT counted as professional experience; each additional post-graduate course of study can be counted as working experience up to a maximum of ONE year; doctoral studies can be counted as working experience up to a maximum of THREE years; a medical specialisation can be counted as working experience up to a maximum of FIVE years.

[12]As a guide, 'Ability to work in English' corresponds to level B2 or above, as set out in the Council of Europe reference document for the European Language Portfolio ('Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment'). For more information, please refer to: http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/resources/european-language-levels-cefr

3. Work experience;
4. Postgraduate education;
5. Knowledge of European context and policies in the field;
6. Prior experience/knowledge in guideline development and/or quality assurance activities would constitute an advantage.

European nationality will constitute an advantage. Evaluations will be based on the evidence provided by the applicant.

4.3. Evaluation of the DoI forms

The filled in DoI forms[13] will be evaluated by the CoI Management Panel of the Commission's Joint Research Centre. Applicants who are deemed to have non-manageable CoIs will be excluded. For more information related to CoIs and their management, please consult the dedicated webpage of the Healthcare Quality Website[13].

5. MEMBERSHIP IN THE ECIBC EXPERT POOL

Applicants who fulfil the eligibility criteria, but will not be selected as GDG Vice-Chair, will be given the possibility to become members of the ECIBC expert pool.

[13] CoIs and their management.
https://healthcare-quality.jrc.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/membership-documents/ecibc-assessment-and-management-of-interests-v4.pdf

6. ANNEXES

Annex I

Guidance for completing the ECIBC Annual Declaration of Interests[14] (DoI) form

I. INTRODUCTION

This guidance relates to the implementation of the provisions on independence and transparency of Commission Decision 2012/C 198/06[15].

It shall give clear indications on how to declare any interest that could affect the ability of the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (ECIBC) working group members and external experts to act in the public interest.

According to Decision 2012/C 198/06, the responsibility for declaring all relevant interests is placed on the individuals completing their declaration. A false or incomplete declaration may have consequences on the acts adopted by the Commission on the basis of the experts' advice, since this could be challenged before the Court of Justice/General Court under the conditions of Article 263 TFUE[16].

Interests are declared as an indication if conflicts of interest (CoIs) could arise. The expert shall not assess whether a CoI is present. The assessment of whether a CoI exists will be performed by the CoI evaluation panel from the JRC.

Note: A declared "interest" is not automatically considered to lead to a conflict of interest. It is well understood that, in general, individuals who are involved in a particular process have an inherent professional interest in the subject and in being involved in the process as such.

The following information covers the Declaration of Interests (DoI) form (version n. 2) to be filled in by chairs, working group members and external experts.

II. WHAT TO DECLARE?

Experts shall declare past activities (over the last five years). The European Commission recognises that high quality and up-to-date scientific expertise is by nature based on prior

[14] According to European Commission's Decision C(2016) 3301 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups, Articles 2(4) and 11, each member of an expert group has to complete a DoI form.
https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=C(2016)3301&lang=en

[15] Decision 2012/C 198/06. Setting up a multisectoral and independent expert panel to provide advice on effective ways of investing in health.
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32019D0521%2801%29

[16] TFUE, Article 263.
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12008E263:EN:HTML

experience, connection to the scientific world and involvement in current research. Therefore, having an interest does not necessarily mean having a CoI.

1. Investments

Stocks, bonds, stock options, other securities as well as to commercial business interests (e.g., proprietorships, partnerships, joint ventures, board memberships, controlling interests) in a legal entity. Holding any form of equity, bonds, and partnership interests in the capital of a company is included.

The holding of financial interests connected with a pension scheme or other complex investment funds would not be considered a financial interest, provided that the individual has no influence on its financial management.

2. Employment and consulting

All forms of employment and consulting, part-time and full-time, either paid or unpaid, in any legal entity.

3. Research

Any activity as an investigator in research studies related to breast cancer, including the drafting of research programmes or the selection of research projects and current funding of research in relation to matter or work financed by a private or public entity, including grants, rents, sponsorships and fellowships. Non-monetary support (equipment, facilities) and other type of support (i.e. honoraria for being a speaker, holding a training) are included.

4. Memberships

For example,

- Any participation in the internal decision-making body of a company, trade association or other private entity such as a non-profit organisation dealing with issues related to breast cancer (e.g. board membership, directorship).
- Any paid or unpaid, past, present or envisaged activity in which the expert or his depended collaborators provided technical or scientific advice or services in domains of relevance for breast cancer.

5. Other activities

Any interest other than the above which can be perceived as a potential source of conflict.

It should be intended as any membership or affiliation other than the above which can be perceived as an interest.

6. Intellectual property rights (IPR)

Rights granted to creators and owners of works that are the result of human intellectual creativity that bring personal financial benefit to the expert.

Only the IPR falling within the remit of breast cancer need to be declared. These can be copyrights, patents, trademarks as well as proprietary know-how in a substance, technology or process.

7. Interests of immediate family members

Known interests related to breast cancer held by family members and relatives (spouse, parents, children, brothers and sisters, irrespective of whether they live at the same address or not) or other persons under the care of the members of the household of the expert.

III. PUBLICATION

The DoI of the appointed members will be made public in accordance with the provisions on transparency foreseen by Decision 2012/C 198/06. These will be posted on the website of the Healthcare Quality Group dedicated to the ECIBC.

COMPLIANCE WITH PROVISIONS ON PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

The European Commission processes personal data pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725[17] of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies on the free movement of such data.

The specific processing of data included in the ECIBC DoI form by the JRC's Directorate F, Health and Food, F1 Disease Prevention, Healthcare Quality Group is covered by the notification DPR-EC-00656.1[18], Data Protection Office public register.

[17] Protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1725
[18] Personal data processing including the Declaration of Interests
https://ec.europa.eu/dpo-register/detail/DPR-EC-00656

Annex II

ECIBC Declarations of confidentiality and commitment

NOTE:

The version included hereafter is a draft version for future declarations of confidentiality and commitment that members are expected to submit before being appointed as a working group member or as an external expert.

This version is made available for information only and is not required to be included as supporting documentation when submitting an application to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair of the ECIBC GDG.

European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer
Declaration of confidentiality

For information only – not part of the application process

Name:

I hereby declare that:

1. I am aware of my obligation to respect confidentiality and not to divulge any information acquired as a result of my work in one of the working groups of the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (hereinafter, 'the group'), unless it is made publicly accessible by the JRC (Joint Research Centre). I will respect the confidential nature of the scientific opinions expressed by members of the group or other members during group meetings and discussions. I will not disclose such information even after my participation in the work of the group has ceased.
2. I am aware of the Commission's security rules for protecting European Union classified information and sensitive non-classified information, as laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 and 2015/444. Should I receive confidential information or restricted information in the course and context of my duties for the group, I will treat it as strictly confidential and use it exclusively for the purpose for which it was made available. I will handle the information in accordance with the provided handling instructions and not divulge them to any third party.

The above implies that the undersigned:

- will not divulge, publish, or otherwise make available to any third party, information received from the group without prior written consent of the JRC, even after completion of a specific event or assignment. The duty of confidentiality exists vis-à-vis any third party, including employees, employers, affiliates or the general public;
- will not use information received from the group for personal benefit or the benefit of any third party;
- will ensure safe storage of the confidential or restricted information (in accordance with the corresponding handling instructions), by applying appropriate security measures if the information is managed electronically, and will not retain the information for longer than needed for the completion of an assignment within the group;

Date:
Signature:

European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer
Declaration of commitment

For information only – not part of the application process

Name:

1. Commitment

While contributing to the activities in the working groups of the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (hereinafter, 'the group'), I will:

- act independently in the public interest and make complete declarations of any direct or indirect interests that might be considered prejudicial to my independence;
- inform the JRC Scientific Secretariat if I take part in a working group/activity with interest in the field of breast cancer and/or in relation to the activities of the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer.
- comply with the group's rules on the handling of conflict of interest;
- contribute actively to the work of the group through working remotely and, when necessary, by attending meetings;
- conduct myself in exemplary manner in all activities linked to the group;
- comply with the rules on reimbursement of travel expenses and payment of allowances and indemnities in place in the Commission;
- ensure appropriate use of scientific publications provided by the JRC scientific secretariat and respect copyrights as outlined below;
- always contact the JRC Scientific Secretariat when communicating with the media, stakeholders, or the general public on a matter that falls within the group's remit.

2. Copyrights and library working tools

In case the undersigned is involved in the preparation of scientific outputs, she/he may receive from the JRC scientific publications and journals protected by copyrights as hand-outs or via e-mail.

The undersigned will be allowed to make limited use of journals and scientific publications but shall not, even after the termination of the activities within the group:

- distribute copies of articles and journals to third parties;
- use articles or journals for commercial purposes;
- use the materials for other purposes than the assignment with the group.

Duration: The validity of the present declaration is limited to the mandate of the group (at least five years) from the date of signature, unless the undersigned informs the JRC scientific secretariat on the termination of her/his activities within the group.

Date:
Signature: