



PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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1. Terms of reference

The Proposal Review Committee ("PRC") is an independent, impartial team of experts tasked with providing scientific, public health, economics expertise to UNITAID on proposals and related projects (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Proposals") submitted to UNITAID for funding.

1.1 Specifically, the PRC advises UNITAID on:

- 1.1.1 the review of Proposals submitted to UNITAID for funding, taking into account the criteria and indicators established by the UNITAID Board (hereinafter referred to as the "Board");
- 1.1.2 recommendations for funding of Proposals made by the Board; and
- 1.1.3 interim and/or mid-term review of Proposal implementation.

1.2 The PRC is an advisory body that does not have decision-making authority.

2. Membership

The PRC is broadly constituted, comprising of Members with expertise in the public health aspects of UNITAID's areas of work, health economics and market dynamics.

2.1. Types of Members

The PRC has both Core and Ad hoc Members:

Core and Ad hoc Members are selected from a pool of potential experts to advise on specific topics related to UNITAID Projects. They are appointed as individuals on the basis of their individual expertise, and serve on the PRC as knowledgeable individuals in their personal capacities only. They do not represent their governments, organizations or affiliations.

Core Members are called upon by the Board to regularly review Proposals and provide advice relating thereto throughout the implementation cycle.

Ad hoc Members are tasked with providing advice on a time-limited basis on specific subjects focusing on matters that require specialized expertise that Core Member do not necessarily possess and that relate to Proposals.

2.2 Size of the PRC

The number of Core Members will not exceed 20.

2.3 PRC Nominations Sub-Committee

The PRC Nominations Sub-Committee shall be a sub-committee of the Policy and Strategy Committee (PSC) of the Board and shall be comprised of:

- between two (2) and four (4) Board Members;
- between one (1) and two (2) representatives of the Secretariat; and
- the PRC Chair

2.4 PRC Chair and Vice-Chair

The PRC Nominations Sub-Committee, selects and appoints a PRC Chair from among the existing Core Members. The Vice Chair will be nominated by the Chair in consultation with the other PRC Members. The PRC Chair and the Vice Chair (once appointed) will also sit on the PRC Nominations Sub-Committee.

In the absence of the Chair, or in any other circumstance where the Chair cannot effectively perform his/her duties, the Vice Chair will lead the PRC.

The PRC Chair will attend Board meetings and represent the PRC as an observer with privilege of the floor. If unable to attend the Board meetings, the PRC Chair may appoint a representative to attend with the same privilege.

2.5 Selection of Members

Potential Core and Ad hoc Members are identified through an open call for expressions of interest and through nominations from suitably qualified and interested individuals. The Board shall confirm, by written consultation, the selection of Core and Ad hoc Members recommended by the PRC Nominations Sub-Committee. The membership of the PRC should reflect an appropriate balance of regional, ethnic, gender and language representation, assuring representation from vulnerable countries in particular.

The Board reserves the right to re-select existing members and or change the numbers of people on the PRC to ensure all required expertise is represented. The Board will give due consideration to succession balanced with the need for continuity and effectiveness of the PRC.

2.6 Expertise of PRC Members

Members of the PRC are high level experts with academic or major organizational experience in their field of work. Members have significant expertise, demonstrated leadership, and appropriate experience in the areas of UNITAIDS focus.

In order to provide the best possible depth and breadth of knowledge and experience related to UNITAID's field of work, the PRC should include:

- At least one Member with expertise in the public health aspects of each of the key areas (HIV, TB, Malaria);
- At least one Member with experience in the market dynamics of commodities within each of the three areas (HIV, TB, Malaria);
- Members with extensive health economics experience;
- Members with developing country program experience;
- Members with supply chain management experience;
- Members with experience in intellectual property issues.

2.7 Term of Office

PRC Core Members will normally be appointed for an initial term of office of three years that is renewable. However, a number of initial appointments may be made for a lesser term by the PRC Nominations Sub-Committee.

Ad hoc Members will be appointed for specific meetings or for specific subjects in which they have specialized expertise, as required by the needs of the PRC in relation to work on Proposals. Invitations to Ad hoc Members shall be issued in writing by the PRC Chair.

2.8. Remuneration and Reimbursement of Expenses

PRC Members shall receive an honorarium for their services as well as travel expenses and per diems, as approved by the UNITAID Secretariat and in accordance with WHO established rules and procedures.

2.9 Resignation or Withdrawal from the PRC

A PRC Member may withdraw from the PRC at any time upon written notification to the UNITAID Executive Secretary. Membership may be terminated at any time upon written notification by the UNITAID Executive Secretary in consultation with the Board Chair.

3. Working procedures

3.1 PRC Members review Proposals and related information made available to them by the Secretariat and provide advice on specific issues raised by the UNITAID Board through the Secretariat. Members may be asked, in relation to Proposals, to identify key issues, conduct further investigation, or to seek counsel from others as required, with due regard for the confidentiality of the information. From time to time, Members may be asked to comment on written drafts pertaining to the subjects within the mandate of the PRC.

3.2 PRC Meetings

The PRC shall meet on an as needed basis, but not more than twice annually in person, in order to provide advice and input to the UNITAID Board

meetings. The PRC may meet face to face, or by telephone conference, as is most appropriate for the work of the PRC at that time. Where meetings are held by conference call, PRC Members should make every effort to ensure that a secure line is used and that persons not approved by the PRC Chair do not listen to the proceedings.

The specific proposals, questions and issues for PRC discussion are framed by the UNITAID Secretariat in conjunction with the PRC Chair and may be based on requests from the Board. The agenda for PRC meetings is developed by the Secretariat in collaboration with the PRC Chair.

3.4 Minutes

Minutes of the PRC meetings will be compiled and maintained by the UNITAID Secretariat and submitted as part of the PRC agenda papers.

4. Transparency and Confidentiality

- 4.1 The membership, terms of reference and operating procedures of PRC are published on the UNITAID website.
- 4.2 PRC members shall sign a confidentiality statement prepared by the UNITIAD Secretariat upon their appointment.
- 4.3 PRC meetings are not open to the public. Members of the Secretariat attend the meetings as observers, but may be asked to recuse themselves from any part of the discussion by the PRC Chair.
- 4.4 The PRC may with the approval of the PRC Chair and the UNITAID Secretariat, invite proponents of projects or interested parties to make representations to the PRC in writing or in person. The Chair may grant observer status, for all or part of the PRC deliberations, to selected individuals including Secretariat staff whose attendance would benefit UNITAID or the deliberations of the PRC.
- 4.5 The PRC will have a clear and comprehensive policy on Conflict of Interest, agreed with the Board and in line with the "Policy on Ethics and UNITAID" endorsed by the Board on March 9, 2007. Any PRC Member who is active as a paid employee, or as an advisor, consultant, trustee - whether paid or unpaid – of an organisation, company, business, government agency, or international agency working with, or supplying to UNITAID, must declare such activity, involvement, and interests in writing to the Chairperson of the PRC.
- 4.6 PRC Members will recuse themselves from any part of the discussions of the PRC in which they may have a potential conflict of interest.

5. PRC Proposal Review Processes

5.1 Scope and Call for Proposals:

The UNITAID proposal process utilises two steps:

Concept Note:

A Concept Note is a synopsis of a project which could later form the foundation for a fully developed Project Proposal. It is developed using the UNITAID Guidelines for Submission of Concept Notes.

Project Proposal:

A Project Proposal is a proposal developed using the UNITAID Guidelines for Submission of Project Proposals, designed to facilitate the applicant's proposal preparation, expedite the Secretariat's review, and harmonize proposal preparation with the final project agreement between UNITAID and the partner.

UNITAID may call for proposals for projects in a number of ways, including, but not limited to:

5.1.1 Solicitation of Concept Note from an identified partner:

UNITAID may ask for a proposal from an existing partner, or a key stakeholder in a field of interest. Such a proposal would follow the UNITAID approach of an initial submission of a Concept Note for review by the PRC. The PRC will provide their review to Board. Board review may be undertaken through written consultation to expedite the decision-making and enable timely transformation of Concept Notes into full Project Proposals. If the Board approves, the proponent will be invited to submit a full Project Proposal. After review of the full proposal by the PRC it is submitted to the Board for decision

5.1.2 Request for Concept Notes on a specific area of work:

The Board may decide on priority areas of work, as determined by the strategy decisions of the Board, and issue a specific "Request for Proposals" (RFP). Such a call will be widely publicized in appropriate media, including on the UNITAID web site, with a specified closing date. Proponents will be asked to submit Concept Notes, following UNITAID's agreed format, for review by the PRC. The PRC provides their review to Board and, if the Board approves, the proponent is invited to submit a full Project Proposal. After review of the full Project Proposal by the PRC, it is submitted to the Board for decision. These RFP processes are limited to two per year.

5.1.3 Open call for Concept Notes:

Given UNITAID's unique position in the field, and commitment to innovative approaches, there is a risk that an exclusively RFP process could miss some very original and potentially useful approaches. To cover this, UNITAID maintains an additional, separate mechanism for unsolicited concepts, which will only go to full review based on screening by the Secretariat and PRC. This process will be detailed on the UNITAID website and it will be clearly indicated to potential applicants, that only screened and selected Concept Notes will be reviewed. Should a proponent be invited to submit a full Project Proposal following decision by the Board based on the PRC review of the eligible Concept Note, and the proponent accept, this Project Proposal will be subjected to PRC assessment and Board review for final decision.

5.2 Submission of proposals

The two phase submission process (Concept Note and full Project Proposal) assists both applicants and the Secretariat to ensure the most efficient review of submissions. The Secretariat provides a standardized template for Concept Notes and Project Proposals, including specific questions on aspects of market impact (please see paragraph 5.3 below), to be completed by proponents.

Clear timelines for the necessary steps in the submission and review process are established by the PRC and the Secretariat, to ensure that sufficient time is provided between approval of a concept note and submission of a full proposal.

These timelines are available to applicants and the Board.

5.3 Review Process

One key area of review and assessment of both Concept Notes and full Project Proposals, beyond those of technical feasibility and appropriateness, is that of "market impact". Proponents are asked to respond specifically to a number of issues related to this, and the PRC assessment includes review and advice on the PRC's analysis of their confidence in the credibility of the proponent's market impact targets.

The following process of review is used by the PRC:

5.3.1 The UNITAID Secretariat undertakes an initial screening of proposals for completeness of the required financial and technical information, and reports this on standardised forms.

5.3.2 The PRC Chair allocates proposals for review by PRC members

- 5.3.3 Each proposal is reviewed by at least three PRC members, with a spread of expertise to encompass review of the economic, technical and public health aspects of the proposal.
- 5.3.4 Reviewers undertake a comprehensive assessment against a standardised evaluation template used for this purpose.
- 5.3.5 A summary score card is completed by reviewers for key issues, including the reviewer's assessment of fit with UNITAID's mission, and the capacity of the proponent to undertake the project and contribute to UNITAID's market impact goals.
- 5.3.6 The PRC meets, in person or by conference call to discuss the proposals. Each reviewer presents their comments, and other PRC members contribute to the discussion to reach consensus on the proposal outcome.
- 5.3.7 The PRC ranks their recommendations according to an established scale and agrees on a consensus statement justifying/ presenting the principal rationale for the recommendation.
- 5.3.8 The PRC may ask for clarifications from the proponents either before the PRC meeting, as representations to the meeting, or as a condition of further approval before presentation to the Board.
- 5.3.9 The PRC recommendations are presented to the UNITAID Board for final decision on the financial and policy strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.