

STATUTES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE CHARLESTON PROGRAMME

The Charleston Programme is a programme of Charles University for financing postdoctoral projects at its faculties and units.

The programme is built on three pillars:

- Focus of supported projects on sustainability
- Career development of supported researchers
- Cross-sectoral cooperation through mandatory internships of supported postdocs in non-academic institutions

The programme is co-funded by the European Union.

The Steering Committee of the Charleston Programme is established to oversee the process of scientific evaluation, intellectual property rights in supported projects, and compliance with ethical principles. The committee is also responsible for monitoring the supported projects. Finally, it will conduct a final evaluation of the programme and its impact.

1. Composition of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (hereinafter referred to as SC) of the Charleston Programme consists of nine members:

- 1) Scientific Director of the Programme
- 2) Member representing Natural Sciences
- 3) Member representing Medical Sciences
- 4) Member representing Social Sciences
- 5) Member representing Humanities
- 6) Member representing the field of Intellectual Property Rights
- 7) Member representing the field of Research Ethics
- 8) Member representing non-academic partners of the programme
- 9) Member – Programme Administrator – without voting rights

This composition is defined by the Grant Agreement of the Charleston Project and can only be changed upon prior approved project modification by the European Commission.

2. Appointment of Members

Members of the SC are nominated by the Rector's Collegium of Charles University. Efforts will be made to ensure gender balance within the SC. The Steering Committee is established on the date the first call for Charleston grant applications opens.

3. Chair of the Steering Committee

The Chair of the SC is the Scientific Director of the project.

4. Termination of SC Activity, Resignation of a Member

The activity of the SC ends on December 31, 2029, the end date of the Charleston Programme.

If a member wishes to resign before the end of the SC's term, they must inform the Chair in writing. Membership ends upon written acceptance of the resignation by the Chair. A successor is nominated by the Rector's Collegium.

Membership may also be terminated by the Chair in the event of three absences or non-voting incidents. A successor is then nominated by the Rector's Collegium.

5. Activities of the Steering Committee

The SC's activities include:

- Oversight of the scientific evaluation process of grant applications
- Adherence to ethical principles in applications and supported projects
- Intellectual property rights of supported projects
- Equal opportunity measures
- Monitoring of supported projects
- Final evaluation of the Charleston Programme

5.1. Scientific Evaluation of Grant Applications

The SC's role in scientific evaluation includes:

- 5.1.1. Comments and approval of reviewer assignments for Charleston grant applications, considering field suitability, gender balance, and a 30% quota of reviewers from non-academic sectors. (Per rollam)
- 5.1.2. Approval of individual reviews by two independent reviewers. (Per rollam)
- 5.1.3. Participation of two SC members in the interview panel (second part of the evaluation process)
- 5.1.4. Approval of interview evaluation results and potential conditional changes to projects as a grant condition. (In-person meeting)
- 5.1.5. Handling appeals related to procedural issues. If the SC votes by majority that an appeal is justified, the application will be re-evaluated. (Per rollam)
- 5.1.6. Approval of final list of awarded applicants and a reserve list. (Per rollam)

5.2. Ethical Principles

The SC will follow institutional, national, and EU ethical frameworks.

5.3. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

The SC is responsible for oversight of IPR management for research results from postdoctoral grants. The SC will approve the IPR strategy, prepared by the member responsible for this area.

5.4. Equal Opportunities

The SC may propose measures to ensure equal opportunities in the evaluation process.

5.5. Monitoring of Supported Projects

SC members will monitor projects 12 months into implementation and after their conclusion. Project assignment for monitoring is decided by the SC.

5.6. Final Evaluation Meeting

At the end of the programme, the SC will meet to evaluate the outcomes and impact of the programme. Supporting documents will be prepared by the Programme Administrator.

6. Decision-Making Format

The SC decides in-person or per rollam. Two SC members also participate in interview evaluations. Interview panel members are selected by SC vote.

6.1. In-Person Meetings

Meetings are held after both stages of evaluation (individual and interview) in each call, as well as the final evaluation meeting. Meetings are convened by the Chair at least three weeks in advance. A quorum is six voting members (physical or online attendance). Meetings are led by the Chair; in their absence, a substitute will be designated. A resolution passes if approved by a majority of present voting members. In the event of a tie, the Chair's vote prevails. Minutes are taken by the Administrator, approved by the Chair, and distributed to members. Experts (e.g., on ethics or IPR) may be invited as guests.

6.2. Interview Panel Participation

Participation follows the programme's published rules for the interview part of grant selection.

6.3. Per Rollam (Correspondence Form)

Voting is done via email to the Chair, with the Administrator in copy. A quorum is seven members. A resolution passes if a majority of voting members approve. In case of a tie, the Chair's vote prevails. With majority approval, per rollam decisions may be changed to in-person or online meetings.

7. Programme Progress Updates

The Programme Administrator informs the members of the SC every six months about the current progress of the programme.

8. Conflict of Interest

The SC commits to a transparent, fair, and impartial selection process. All members must disclose potential conflicts of interest and follow rules for handling them.

8.1. Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when a SC member has a personal, professional, or financial interest that could affect their impartiality or be perceived as such, including:

- Direct/indirect financial stake (e.g., employment at host institution, involvement in a competing project)
- Personal relationships (e.g., family, spouse/partner, close friend) with applicants or team members
- Collaboration with an applicant in the past five years (e.g., co-authorship, shared projects, supervisor-mentee roles, same department)

8.2. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

Before discussions or votes, SC members must review applicants and reviewers and disclose conflicts in writing to the Administrator. Any new conflicts must also be reported promptly.

8.3. Handling Conflicts of Interest

Conflicted members must abstain from discussion and voting on affected applications.

8.4. Consequences of Non-Disclosure

If a member fails to disclose a known conflict and it is later discovered, corrective actions will follow, such as:

- Re-evaluation of decisions by impartial SC members
- Potential exclusion from the SC or other disciplinary measures per institutional rules

9. Compensation for SC Members

All SC members (except the Administrator) receive 10,000 CZK per call. Members involved in monitoring receive 5,000 CZK per monitoring report. The members of the Rector's Collegium do not receive any remuneration for this activity.

10. Confidentiality

Applicant lists, requested funding amounts, reviewer names, and evaluation results are confidential until published on the programme's website.

11. Amendments to the Statutes

Statutes may be amended with a majority vote of members with voting rights.

The revised statutes become valid upon approval by the Rector's Collegium.

These statutes were discussed and approved by the Rector's Collegium on January 13, 2025.