

STATUTES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE CHARLESTON PROGRAMME

Preamble

The Charleston Programme is a Charles University (hereinafter referred to as the "University") initiative focused on funding postdoctoral projects conducted at faculties and other parts of the university. The programme is based on three key pillars:

- Focus of the supported projects on sustainability,
- Career development of the supported researchers,
- Cross-sectoral collaboration through mandatory internships of supported postdoctoral researchers in non-academic institutions.

The programme is co-financed by the European Union.

The Steering Committee of the Charleston Programme, a collective body composed of experts with complementary expertise, has been established to oversee key processes of the programme. Its tasks include supervision of external scientific evaluation, intellectual property rights in supported projects, and compliance with ethical principles. The Committee will also be responsible for the continuous monitoring of the projects and, at the end of the programme, will carry out a comprehensive impact evaluation.

1. Composition of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (hereinafter "SC") of the Charleston Programme consists of nine members:

- Scientific Director of the Programme
- Member representing Natural Sciences
- Member representing Medical Sciences
- Member representing Social Sciences
- Member representing Humanities
- Member representing Intellectual Property Rights
- Member representing Research Ethics
- Member representing non-academic programme partners
- Member – Programme Administrator – non-voting

This composition is determined by the Grant Agreement for the Charleston Project and can only be changed following a formally approved project amendment by the European Commission.

2. Appointment of Members

SC members are nominated by the Rector's Board and appointed by the Rector. Efforts will be made to ensure gender balance in the SC's composition. The SC is established on the date of the launch of the first call for grant applications under the Charleston Programme.

3. Chair of the Steering Committee

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

4. Termination of SC Activities, Member Resignation

The SC's activity ends on the date the Charleston Programme ends, i.e., 31 December 2029. If a member wishes to resign before that, they must notify the Chair in writing.

Membership is terminated by written delivery of resignation to the Chair. A successor is subsequently nominated by the Rector's Board. Membership of a member of the SC may also be terminated by the Chair in the event of three absences of the member of the SC. A successor is subsequently nominated by the Charles University Rector's Board.

Membership ends upon delivery of the written resignation to the Chair. A successor is appointed by the Rector's Board. A member's term can also be terminated by the Chair after three absences. A successor is again appointed by the Rector's Board.

5. Activities of the Steering Committee

The SC's activities include:

- a. Oversight of the scientific evaluation process of submitted grant applications,
- b. Compliance with ethical principles in applications and supported projects,
- c. Intellectual property rights (IPR) of supported projects, and equal opportunities,
- d. Monitoring of supported projects and final evaluation of the Charleston Programme.

5.1 Scientific Evaluation of Grant Applications

In this area, the SC shall:

5.1.1. Provide comments on and approve the assignment of reviewers to grant applications. These comments should focus on discipline match, gender balance among reviewers, and fulfilling the 30% quota for reviewers from outside academia. Decisions are made per rollam.

5.1.2. Approve the results of the individual evaluations by two independent reviewers. Done per rollam.

5.1.3. Participate in the selection panel for interviews with applicants (second part of the evaluation). Two SC members participate.

5.1.4. Approve interview evaluation results. The SC may also propose project modifications as conditions for awarding grants. This is done at an in-person SC meeting.

5.1.5. Address appeals regarding the evaluation process. If the majority votes in favor of the appeal's validity, the application is re-evaluated. Done per rollam.

5.1.6. Approve the final list of successful applicants and the reserve list. Done per rollam.

5.2 Ethical Principles

The SC will comply with national and institutional ethical frameworks, as well as those of the European Union.

5.3 Intellectual Property Rights

The SC is responsible for oversight of the management of intellectual property rights (IPR) related to research results from the postdoctoral grants. Proper management of IPR is key to ensuring that the results of funded projects are protected, appropriately used and shared in accordance with legal regulations and contractual arrangements, for the benefit of both the researchers themselves and the partner institutions.

The SC will approve the programme's IPR strategy, prepared by the IPR-responsible member.

5.4 Equal Opportunities

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

5.5 Monitoring of Supported Projects

SC members will monitor supported projects after 12 months of implementation and upon completion. Project assignments are decided by the SC.

5.6 Final Evaluation Meeting

At the end of the programme, the SC will convene a final meeting to assess outcomes and impact. Materials for the meeting are prepared by the Programme Administrator.

6. Decision-Making Process

The SC makes decisions in person or per rollam. Two members also participate in the interview stage of project evaluations. The participating SC members are selected by SC vote.

6.1 In-Person Meetings

Meetings take place after each call's evaluation stages (individual reviews and interviews), and a final evaluation meeting is held at the programme's end. Meetings are convened by the Chair at least three weeks in advance. A quorum is six voting members (present in person or online). The Chair leads the meetings or delegates a substitute in advance. A resolution passes with a majority of votes; in case of a tie, the Chair casts the deciding vote. Minutes are taken by the Administrator, approved by the Chair, and shared with all members. Experts may be invited to attend meetings.

6.2 Participation in the Interview Panel

SC members' participation follows the interview evaluation rules published on the programme website.

6.3 Per Rollam (Correspondence Form)

Voting is done by email to the Chair and copied to the Programme Administrator. A vote is valid with participation of at least seven voting members. Resolutions require a majority of votes. In case of a tie, the Chair casts the deciding vote. Upon majority agreement, per rollam voting on a specific issue may be changed to an in-person or online meeting, following the same rules as physical meetings.

7. Programme Updates to the SC

The Programme Administrator updates the SC every six months on the programme's status.

8. Conflict of Interest

The SC is committed to maintaining a transparent, fair, and impartial process. All members must disclose any potential conflicts of interest and follow strict rules for their resolution.

8.1 Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict arises when an SC member has a personal, professional, or financial interest that could compromise—or appear to compromise—their impartiality.

Examples include:

- 8.1.1. Direct or indirect financial interest (e.g., affiliation with the applicant's institution or competing projects),
- 8.1.2. Personal relationship with an applicant (e.g., family, spouse, partner, close friend),
- 8.1.3. Professional collaboration within the past five years (e.g., co-authorship, joint research, mentorship, shared institutional affiliation).

8.2 Disclosure of Conflict

Before any formal discussions or votes, SC members must review the list of applicants and reviewers and disclose any potential conflicts in writing. These disclosures are maintained by the Programme Administrator. New conflicts arising during the programme must also be reported.

8.3 Managing Conflicts of Interest

In the event of a conflict of interest being declared, a member of the SC is obliged to abstain from participating in discussions and voting regarding a specific candidate or proposal. In the absence of a member of the SC due to a conflict of interest, the quorum for the quorum of the SC and individual forms of voting is reduced proportionately.

8.4 Consequences of Non-Disclosure

If a member fails to disclose a known conflict and it results in biased decisions, corrective measures may include reconsideration of decisions and potential removal or disciplinary action under institutional rules.

9. Remuneration of SC Members

All SC members (except the Programme Administrator) are entitled to CZK 10,000 per call. Members monitoring supported projects receive CZK 5,000 per report. Members who are also part of the Rector's Board are not eligible for this remuneration.

Confidentiality

Applicant names, grant amounts, reviewer identities, and evaluation results are confidential until officially published on the programme's website.

Amendments to the Statutes

Amendments may be made upon approval by a majority of voting members. New versions become valid after discussion by the Rector's Board and approval by the Rector.

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