Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Platform Technologies
Terms of Reference

Functions

The ad hoc Advisory Group (AG) on Platform Technologies will review the ideas for potential platforms to support development and production of health technologies for priority infectious diseases with epidemic potential, and advise the WHO Secretariat for the WHO R&D Blueprint Work stream 2 (hereafter “WHO WS2 Secretariat”) on their strengths and weaknesses.

The review will also address the likelihood of meaningful participation by entities in low-middle income countries (LMICs), and the strengths of the proposed organizational and management structures.

Experts selected for the ad hoc group will be requested to:

• Attend at least two technical meetings to be convened by WHO (4/6 April 2016 and July 2016 (dates TBC);
• Review proposals presented at the first technical meeting (decisions on the groups that will be invited to submit detailed plans for a second round of review will be made by WHO);
• Review the detailed plans at the second technical meeting that will also be attended by potential funders;

In addition, information calls upon group members will be occasionally made, as the need arises.

Membership

The ad hoc AG comprises up to 15 independent experts, who shall serve in their personal capacity and represent a broad range of affiliations and a broad range of disciplines encompassing many aspects of vaccines and health products. Members should refrain from promoting the policies and views and products of the institution for which they work.

Members will be selected as acknowledged experts from around the world in the fields of epidemiology, public health, vaccinology, paediatrics, internal medicine, infectious diseases, immunology, drug regulation, programme management, immunization delivery, health-care administration, health economics, and vaccine safety.

The membership of the ad hoc AG shall seek to reflect a representation of:

1. professional affiliation (e.g., academia, medical profession, clinical practice, research institutes, for profit companies, non-for-profit organizations and/or foundations, and governmental bodies, public health departments and regulatory authorities);

2. major areas of expertise (e.g., vaccine and health product research, translational research, health product regulation, disease control strategies, impact monitoring); and

3. the strategic focus areas of the WHO’s R&D Blueprint work including health product norms and standards, health product regulation, and health product research & development.

The Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson are appointed by the WHO WS2 Secretariat.
Consideration will be given to ensuring appropriate geographic representation and gender balance.

Prior to being considered for AG membership, nominees shall be required to complete a WHO Declaration of Interests form as per the attached form (Annex 1).

All ideas presented to the AG, which may include pre-publication copies of research reports or documents of commercial significance, shall be treated as confidential.

AG deliberations are confidential and may not be publicly disclosed by AG members. Therefore, prior to confirmation by WHO of their appointment as AG members, experts shall be required to sign a Confidentiality Undertaking (Annex 2).

A register of members’ interests and signed confidentiality agreements shall be maintained by WHO.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Members of AG have a responsibility to provide the WHO WS2 Secretariat with high quality, well considered advice on the strengths and weaknesses of the submitted proposals.

The ad hoc AG has no executive or regulatory function. Its role is solely to provide advice to the WHO WS2 Secretariat.

AG members will not be remunerated for their participation in AG; however, reasonable expenses such as travel expenses incurred by attendance at the two planned technical meetings will be compensated by WHO.

AG members are expected to endeavour to attend the two technical meetings to be convened by the WHO WS2 Secretariat in April (4/6 April 2016) and July (dates TBC). Further active participation will be expected from all AG members, including participation in video and telephone conferences as well as frequent interactions via e-mail, as the need arises.

The secretariat of AG is ensured by the Essential Medicines and Health Products (EMP) Department of the Health Systems and Innovation (HIS) Cluster. The function of Executive Secretary is ensured by the Coordinator, Technologies, Standards and Norms in this Department.

**Management of Conflict of Interest**

Reported interests are assessed and managed according to WHO procedures. Summarized Declarations of Interest are publicly posted on the “Public consultation on ideas for potential platforms to support development and production of health technologies for priority infectious diseases with epidemic potential” website in conjunction with the Advisory Group’s TORs and composition (http://www.who.int/medicines/ebola-treatment/public_consult_platform-tech/en/). Members are expected to proactively inform WHO WS2 Secretariat on any change in relevant interests. The posted summary will then be updated accordingly.