



Working Group on New TB Vaccines

Early Career Researcher Network Terms of Reference

1. Purpose/Role

The Early Career Research (ECR) Network is an informal network of people who identify as ECRs and/or support the advancement of ECRs. Its purpose is to provide resources, support, and opportunities for networking and engagement to the community of ECRs, and to encourage ECRs to be involved or stay involved in TB vaccine research.

The ECR Network will coordinate activities to advance its purpose, which may include:

- Organizing virtual networking sessions
- Compiling resources to support and benefit ECRs
- Providing an online community platform for ECRs to be able to engage with each other and those who support them
- Organizing workshops on specific topics identified as priorities for ECRs
- Identifying and advocating for opportunities to raise the visibility of ECRs, such as through submitting conference abstracts, co-chairing conference or workshop sessions, opportunities for publications and other means to build ECRs' experience and profile.

This is not an exhaustive list, rather it is intended to be illustrative of the types of activities that the ECR Network will organize to support ECRs. Input from members of the ECR Network will be solicited and will be used to inform activities and work plans.

2. Governance and Leadership

2.1 Governance

The ECR Network is part of the Stop TB Partnership Working Group on New TB Vaccines (WGNV) and reports to the WGNV Core Group.

2.2 Co-Chairs

The ECR Network has two Co-Chairs who are responsible for providing direction and leadership to the ECR Network. The term for the Co-Chairs is two years, with a limit of one term. This schedule may be altered at the discretion of the WGNV Core Group.

Co-Chairs are elected by the ECR Network Membership as described in section 2.5. Nominees for the Co-Chair position must meet the WGNV Core Group member requirements and must have served on the ECR Network Steering Committee, as defined in section 2.3, for at least one year.

The responsibilities and functions of the Co-Chairs, with the support of the WGNV Secretariat, include but are not limited to:

- Serve as the liaison between the ECR Network and the WGNV Core Group and actively participate as members of the WGNV Core Group as per its Terms of Reference

- Develop an annual work plan and budget in consultation with the Steering Committee and the WGNV Secretariat
- Work with the ECR Network Steering Committee and WGNV Secretariat to implement the activities and initiatives within the annual work plan
- Co-Chair Steering Committee meetings
- Promote interaction, engagement, and leadership of Steering Committee members in implementing ECR Network activities
- Promote engagement in the ECR Network among the broader TB vaccine R&D community

Co-Chairs are expected to commit three (3) hours per month to ECR Network activities, although actual time per month will vary based on activities. This time is not compensated.

2.3 Steering Committee

The ECR Network will have a Steering Committee with five members (excluding the Co-Chairs), with a goal of at least two Steering Committee members from High Burden Countries (HBCs). Efforts will also be made to ensure gender balance and that different areas of research are represented on the Steering Committee.

The term for the Steering Committee is two years with a limit of one term. Terms of Steering Committee members will be staggered to support continuity in projects and planning.

The initial Steering Committee was selected by the WGNV Core Group and ECR Chair. Beginning in 2023, Steering Committee members will be elected by the ECR Network Membership as described in section 2.5.

The Steering Committee works with the Co-Chairs to ensure the effectiveness of the ECR Network by setting the strategic direction, identifying priority areas of work, developing the work plan, and implementing activities. Steering Committee members are expected to:

- Actively participate in ECR Steering Committee calls and interim email discussions
- Take a leadership role in at least one ECR Network activity per grant year (May – April)
- Provide substantive contributions to the development of strategic priorities, work plans, and activities for the ECR Network
- Promote the ECR Network and encourage participation of ECRs in ECR Network activities

Steering Committee members are expected to commit two (2) hours per month to ECR Network activities, although actual time per month will vary based on activities. This time is not compensated.

An actively engaged Steering Committee is essential to the success of the ECR Network. If a Steering Committee member is no longer able to fulfill their commitments, they should notify the ECR Network Co-chairs and the WGNV Secretariat of their intent to resign their position. If a Steering Committee member is determined by the Co-Chairs and Secretariat to not be regularly engaging in calls and ECR Network activities, the member may be asked to relinquish their position on the Steering Committee. If a position on the Steering Committee becomes vacant mid-year due to a member's resignation or relinquishment of position, the Co-Chair and WGNV

Core Group will determine whether to attempt to fill the position through a special election or have the position remain vacant until the next election.

2.4 Term Year

The term year runs from January 1 – December 31.

2.5 Election Process

As noted in Sections 2.1 and 2.2, the ECR Network Co-Chairs are elected by the ECR Network Membership. The process for elections is as follows:

- A notice will be sent to the ECR Network Membership by email soliciting applications for open positions on the Steering Committee. A notice will be sent to eligible Steering Committee members soliciting applications for the Co-Chair position. The notice will include the timeline and process for submitting applications and the criteria for the positions. Applicants for open positions must be Members of the ECR Network.
- Applications for Steering Committee members will be reviewed by the ECR Network Co-Chairs and the WGNV Secretariat; applications for the Co-Chairs will be reviewed by the WGNV Chair, designated Core Group representatives and the WGNV Secretariat to confirm eligibility requirements are met.
- The WGNV will distribute a list of the candidates and relevant information from their application to the ECR Network Membership with the timeframe and instructions for voting. Only members of the WGNV ECR Network may vote for Co-Chairs and Steering Committee members.
- In the case of the Co-Chairs, the candidates with the most votes will be elected to the position.
- In the case of the Steering Committee, if there is more than one open position the candidates with the highest number of votes will be elected to those positions.
- If two or more candidates get the same number of votes, the WGNV Core Group will make the decision as to which candidates will fill those positions.
- Once the election results are finalized, the WGNV Secretariat will contact the applicants and inform them of the results. The applicants elected to fill open positions will be given information about the role and the process for transition.
- If there are not enough applications to fill open positions, current Co-Chairs or Steering Committee members may be approached about extending their terms or a new call for applications may be opened, at the discretion of the WGNV Core Group.

3. Membership

Any member of the WGNV can join the ECR Network, although some Network activities will be limited to those who identify as ECRs.

WGNV ECR Network Membership is not required to participate in open events, such as networking sessions, but WGNV ECR Network Members will have access to certain ECR Network activities and opportunities and only WGNV ECR Network members can apply for and vote for ECR Network leadership positions.

4. Administration and Finances

Administrative support for the ECR Network is provided by the WGNV Secretariat, hosted by IAVI. The Secretariat will assist in scheduling meetings and implementing work plan activities, but the Co-Chairs and Steering Committee are expected to lead in the substantive aspects of the Network.

Funding for WGNV activities is provided through a grant from the Stop TB Partnership to IAVI as host of the WGNV. The ECR Network may put in a request through the Co-Chairs to the WGNV Chair and Secretariat for funding to be included in the annual WGNV budget. The WGNV Secretariat will inform the Co-Chairs and the Steering Committee of the timelines, process, and approximate amount available.