



Call for Expressions of Interest for Membership of the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee of EFSA 2023 (EFSA/E/2023/01)

Frequently Asked Questions



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What do EFSA's Scientific Panels and Scientific Committee do?

The Scientific Committee and each Scientific Panel have specific mandates that influence the nature of their work. The description of mandates and expertise required can be found in [ANNEX I](#).

How many experts can be appointed to a Scientific Panel or the Scientific Committee?

Each Scientific Panel consists of a minimum of 11 and a maximum of 21 scientific experts, depending on planned workload and required expertise for the relevant term of office. The Scientific Committee is composed of the Chairs of the 10 Scientific Panels and 6 other scientific experts who do not belong to any of the Scientific Panels.

What is the duration of the mandates?

Members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels of EFSA are appointed for a 5-year term.

When does the new term start?

The start of the next term of EFSA's Scientific Panels/Committee is on 1 July 2024, and will last for five years, i.e., until 30 June 2029.

Can experts contribute to and attend meetings remotely?

Yes. In fact, around two thirds of the plenary meetings are organised online while around one third are held in person at EFSA's premises in Parma, Italy.

What tasks does an expert carry out?

Members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels are responsible for reviewing and adopting scientific opinions, guidance documents and statements of the Scientific Panel(s) and/or the Scientific Committee and related activities of working groups. The Scientific Committee is also ensuring consistency of EFSA's scientific assessment approaches.

Working Groups are established to draft scientific opinions. Panel members can be invited to become a member/chair of a Working Group and assist in drafting a scientific opinion.

How does EFSA compensate experts for their work?

EFSA compensates experts for their work by providing indemnities, designed to cover preparation of and participation to meetings (both physical and online meetings). EFSA also bears travel costs, accommodation and daily allowance



of experts when they travel to EFSA premises. Detailed information is provided in the [EFSA Expert compensation guide](#).

What is the expected time commitment required from an expert?

Around 6 to 10 plenary meetings per year (with the flexibility of remote contribution), which equates to a total of between approximately 10 to 20 meeting days per year. Preparatory work for the meetings is estimated and reimbursed at 1 working day for 1 meeting day.

Experts may volunteer for or be invited to take part in one or more Working Groups of the Scientific Committee/Panels. This would increase their time commitment in terms of meeting attendance and preparatory work. Working Group experts are compensated in the same way as Panel experts – see question on expert compensation above.

What is the working language of EFSA?

The working language of EFSA is English. Meetings are held in English and working documents are produced in English.

How can I apply to become member of a Scientific Panel or the Scientific Committee?

Candidates are requested to fill in and submit their application online using the EFSA Careers site at <https://careers.efsa.europa.eu/Expert>

In order to apply, candidates need to create an account on the EFSA Careers site, unless they already have an account, in which case, they can use their existing access credentials. Candidates should fill in their application form in English and should give careful consideration to the criteria and expertise required when preparing their applications.

Can I read the text of the call in my own language?

The text of this call is available in all EU official languages and can be found in the Official Journal of the European Union [here](#).

Which documents do I need to apply?

Candidates are requested to fill in an [application form online](#), paying attention to all information requested in the form. This includes, for example, full details of scientific publications and scientific assessments to which candidates have contributed in the recent past. Candidates are not required to send EFSA any document at the application stage.



Is a cover letter required to apply?

A cover letter is not requested at the application stage.

Can I change the information I inserted in my application after I submitted it?

Yes, you can modify your application by entering your candidate account details and editing the application until the closing deadline.

I am an expert already working for EFSA. Can I retrieve my application form/profile that I have previously submitted?

Experts already working for EFSA should use their existing EFSA account credentials to apply. By using their existing account, they will find their recruitment profile and any previously submitted application form. Their new applications will be pre-filled with already existing information in their profile, which should then be edited for the specific call.

I am a citizen of a country outside the EU, EFTA or an EU candidate country. Can I still apply?

Experts from other countries may also apply and will be considered for membership of the Scientific Panels/Committee if the required level of expertise cannot be found among nationals of EU Member States, EFTA or EU Candidate countries.

What are the specific requirements for a professional to be part of EFSA Panels or Committee?

Candidates first need to comply with specific eligibility criteria, including level of education, knowledge of English, professional experience and active scientific production.

Eligible candidates are then further assessed in relation to their preferred Panel of choice against selection criteria, such as experience in scientific assessment, scientific excellence, and experience in reviewing scientific work.

Candidates who pass the minimum threshold at the selection criteria stage are placed on a draft list of suitable candidates. Experts are then further mapped in relation to the expertise required in the specific Scientific Panel/Committee they applied to join and in relation to certain competencies considered by EFSA as important for the role.



How does EFSA take into account professional experience for the purpose of assessing applications?

Professional experience and time spent in education are considered separately for the purposes of the application and the two cannot overlap. This means that any given period of professional experience or time spent in education may only be counted once. A candidate's professional experience is calculated after they have fulfilled the minimum time in education.

Professional activities carried out part-time will be calculated pro-rata on the basis of the certified percentage of full-time hours worked. Paid traineeships are counted as working experience. Ongoing/completed PhDs in a field relevant to EFSA's remit can be counted as professional experience.

I have only 2 publications in the last 5 years, can I still apply?

Candidates need to prove active scientific production in the last 5 years by authorship/contribution to at least 5 of the following types of scientific documents:

- scientific publications (authorship) in peer-reviewed international journals published in English, on area(s) relevant to the remit of any EFSA Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee, documented through a list of scientific publications; AND/OR
- scientific assessments (authorship/contribution) at national/international level, on area(s) relevant to the remit of any EFSA Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee, documented through a list of performed assessments/related scientific reports.

What does EFSA mean by scientific assessment?

Scientific assessment is considered as scientific advice, risk assessment, assessment of dossiers for approval of products, or development of scientific guidance, carried out at international/national level upon request of public authorities and/or reference centres.

I am a risk assessor working in a national risk assessment body. I do not regularly publish papers in scientific journals, however I regularly provide scientific advice and risk assessment to regional/national competent authorities. Is my experience relevant?

If you are carrying out scientific assessments in fields related to safety of the food chain, your experience is relevant, and will be assessed against the specific selection criteria. Within the application form, where requested, you should provide complete information on the scientific assessments you authored or



contributed to, including the following details: 1) topic, 2) your role and contribution to the assessment and related report, 3) to which body the scientific assessment was directed, 4) the year in which the assessment was completed.

How does EFSA ensure members of Scientific Panels/Committee are independent?

Candidates placed on the draft list of suitable candidates and having the most appropriate mix of competencies and expertise in relation to a given Scientific Panel or to the Scientific Committee will be asked to submit a Declaration of Interests, which will be screened by EFSA in accordance with [EFSA's Independence policy](#).

Once appointed as members, EFSA periodically and systematically screens the information provided by experts in their Declaration of Interests to assess whether a declared interest constitutes a conflict.

How long does the selection procedure last?

EFSA aims to complete the selection procedure by May 2024.

Will I be notified if my application is unsuccessful?

All candidates will be informed of the outcome of the selection procedure by May 2024.

What are the possible outcomes I can expect as a result of my application?

The possible outcomes are (1) appointment as member of a Scientific Panel/Committee; (2) placement on the reserve list for future appointment needs; or (3) rejection of the application.

What is a reserve list?

Following the selection procedure, the EFSA Management Board will draw up a reserve list consisting of candidates from the draft list of suitable candidates who have not been appointed to the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels. The reserve list shall serve for future appointment needs for members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels, and can be used for future appointment of members of EFSA's Working Groups. It shall remain valid until the end of the term of office of the appointed members.



I have been/am currently a member of a Scientific Panel/Committee. Can I apply?

An expert that has previously served as a member of EFSA's Scientific Committee or an EFSA Scientific Panel is considered eligible to be appointed for a new term in the same scientific body as long as at the time of the start of the new term the expert's past membership has not reached ten (10) years. As a consequence:

- Experts who at the time of renewal have served less than ten (10) years as a member of a given scientific body are eligible for appointment for the same or a different scientific body;
- Experts who at the time of renewal have served ten (10) years or more as a member of a given scientific body are only eligible for appointment for a different scientific body.