
Directive S2022-06

June 24, 2022

Ethical Proxy

Article 1

Definition of the role and activities of Ethical Proxies

- 1) Ethical Proxy (EP) is a person independent of the Institute's management who provides advice and mediation in the event of various conflicts at work (e.g. scientific integrity, ethics of scientific work, labor relations, etc.). They consider all cases impartially and confidentially. Any Institute employee may contact the EP for advice or assistance.
- 2) The main task of the EP is to rectify misconduct and to settle differences of opinion in the workplace. This area includes issues of good scientific practice such as authorship disputes, conflicts in the use of data, conflicts between a supervisor and a student or postdoctoral fellow, inappropriate behavior among staff, etc.
- 3) The EP seeks to correct poor scientific practices or behavior. EP's recommendations are not binding, but in serious cases, the EP may refer the complaint to the IOCB Director, even with the option of preserving the anonymity of the person making the complaint. If necessary, the EP may seek advice from another person (in which case the anonymity of the person filing the complaint is preserved).
- 4) The aim of the procedure is to resolve the problem and reach an agreement. The success of the process is primarily dependent on the willingness of all parties to cooperate, so there is no maximum time limit for the procedure.
- 5) The EP does not consider cases based on a major data controversy. Serious scientific misconduct (plagiarism, fabrication and falsification of data, etc.) will be referred to the Institute Director who will consult with the Ethics Committee. The working procedure of the Ethics Committee shall be laid down in a specific regulation.
- 6) EP does not provide legal advice. If any of the parties to the dispute calls a lawyer or law enforcement authorities into the matter, the negotiations with the EP are automatically terminated. The EP also does not handle any cases pending in court.

Article 2

Nomination and election of the Ethical Proxy

- 1) The Director shall nominate 2 staff IOCB members for the role of EP based on the results of the election.
- 2) Candidates for the EP may be nominated (with their consent) by any employee or group of IOCB employees.
- 3) Only researchers (not PhD students or postdoctoral fellows) who are employed at least 50% of the time at IOCB may be nominated, excluding the Director and Vice-directors.

- 4) The election date shall be announced by notice on IntraWeb.
- 5) All IOCB employees regardless of job title with a minimum of 50% time have the right to vote for EP.
- 6) Each eligible voter shall have as many votes in each election as the number of EP's being selected.
- 7) The candidate who receives the highest number of votes in the election shall be appointed by the Institute Director (in the case of an election of both proxies, the two candidates with the highest number of votes). The Director shall also have veto power in the EP appointment.
- 8) The term of office of the EP is limited to 5 years.
- 9) The results of the EP election, along with the contact details of the EP, will be published on IntraWeb.

Article 3 **Referral to the Ethics Commissioner**

- 1) The complainant contacts the specific EP in person or by email.
- 2) Anonymous submission of a complaint is possible but may make it harder to find a solution.
- 3) Supplying all relevant documents may facilitate the procedure.

Article 4 **Progress of the procedure**

- 1) The EP receives the complaint from the complainant.
- 2) The EP decides whether the matter falls within its competence and proposes a solution.
- 3) The EP may request additional documents or information. They may also contact the other party to the dispute to ascertain its position. Communication at this stage may be in writing.
- 4) The complainant may ask the EP for advice or assistance even if he/she does not wish to contact the other party.
- 5) The EP will make recommendations to both parties to the dispute based on the information provided by both parties to the dispute. The EP shall act in accordance with the principle of impartiality.



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