

Call for Experts

Technical Advisory Group on the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP)

Issued on: *4 January 2021*

Deadline: *1 February 2021*

The World Health Organization (WHO) is seeking experts to serve as members of the Technical Advisory Group on the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP). This “Call for Experts” provides information about the advisory group in question, the expert profiles being sought, the process to express interest, and the process of selection.

Background

On 29 May 2020 WHO Director-General and H.E. President of Costa Rica launched a Solidarity Call to Action¹ for the establishment of a WHO-led C-TAP. C-TAP is meant to facilitate and support a transparent and open source global mechanism for sharing and pooling knowledge, intellectual property and data related to existing or new COVID-19 related health technologies in order to scale up their production, supply, availability and affordability in all countries of the world.² The Technical Advisory Group will advise and make recommendations to the WHO C-TAP Secretariat regarding implementing partners’ proposed or signed license or technology transfer agreements in relation to the principles set forth in the Solidarity Call to Action within the overall context of global initiatives aimed at realizing equitable global access to COVID-19 health technologies. The Group will advise the WHO C-TAP Secretariat on priority health products to be considered as C-TAP candidates and provide other independent advice on the scientific, technical and strategic matters related to C-TAP as outlined in its functions below. The Advisory Group will act as an advisory body to WHO in this field.

Functions of the Technical Advisory Group on the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool

In its capacity as an advisory body to WHO, the Technical Advisory Group shall have the following functions:

1. To provide independent advice on the scientific, technical and strategic matters related to the WHO COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP).

¹ <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/global-research-on-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov/covid-19-technology-access-pool/solidarity-call-to-action#:~:text=Now%20more%20than%20ever%2C%20international,data%20necessary%20for%20COVID%2D19>

² <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/c-tap-a-concept-paper>

2. To advise the WHO C-TAP Secretariat on relevant information and know-how packages on C-TAP candidate health products to be made available in the C-TAP database and disseminated.
3. To advise and make recommendations to the WHO C-TAP Secretariat regarding license negotiations and other technology transfer agreements taking into account C-TAP partners' existing mechanisms for negotiations.
4. To advise on how C-TAP could promote transparent and access-oriented licensing or technology transfer agreements.
5. To review and advise on best practices to facilitate technology transfer and local production for needed COVID-19 technologies and how to work with the implementing partners and other stakeholders to implement them.

Operations of the Technical Advisory Group on the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool

The Technical Advisory Group shall normally meet at least twice each year. However, WHO may convene additional interim meetings, if needed. Due to the current circumstances, Technical Advisory Group meetings will be held virtually as determined by WHO. A yearly report shall be submitted by the Technical Advisory Group to the WHO Assistant Director-General for Access to Medicines & Health Products. All recommendations from the Technical Advisory Group are advisory to WHO, who retains full control over any subsequent decisions or actions regarding any proposals, policy issues or other matters considered by the group. Active participation is expected from all members, including in working groups, teleconferences, and interaction over email. Technical Advisory Group members may, in advance of meetings, be requested to review meeting documentation and to provide their views for consideration by other members of the Technical Advisory Group. The working language of the group will be English.

Who can express interest?

The Technical Advisory Group on C-TAP will be multidisciplinary, with members who have a range of technical knowledge, skills and experience, preferably relevant to COVID-19 health technologies in the fields of therapeutics, diagnostics, vaccines or other medical devices. Approximately 6-10 members may be selected.

WHO welcomes expressions of interest from professionals with proven expertise on:

- Clinicians and researchers working on COVID-19 health products;
- Access to medicines, diagnostics, vaccines and other health products;
- Public health-oriented intellectual property;
- Technology transfer;
- Business development;
- Pricing, procurement, needs estimation and/or regulation of medicines.

Submitting your expression of interest

To register your interest in being considered for the Technical Advisory Group on C-TAP, please submit the following documents by 1 February 2021 at 24:00h Geneva time to CallToAction@who.int using the subject line “Expression of interest for the Technical Advisory Group on C-TAP:”

- A cover letter, indicating your motivation to apply and how you satisfy the selection criteria. Please note that, if selected, membership will be in a personal capacity. Therefore, do not use the letterhead or other identification of your employer);
- Your curriculum vitae; and
- A signed and completed Declaration of Interests (DOI) form for WHO Experts, available at <https://www.who.int/about/ethics/declarations-of-interest>

After submission, your expression of interest will be reviewed by WHO. Due to an expected high volume of interest, only selected individuals will be informed.

Important information about the selection processes and conditions of appointment

Members of WHO advisory groups must be free of any real, potential or apparent conflicts of interest. To this end, applicants are required to complete the WHO Declaration of Interests for WHO Experts, and the selection as a member of an advisory group is, amongst other things, dependent on WHO determining that there is no conflict of interest or that any identified conflicts could be appropriately managed (in addition to WHO’s evaluation of an applicant’s experience, expertise and motivation and other criteria).

All advisory group members will serve in their individual expert capacity and shall not represent any governments, any commercial industries or entities, any research, academic or civil society organizations, or any other bodies, entities, institutions or organizations. They are expected to fully comply with the Code of Conduct for WHO Experts (<https://www.who.int/about/ethics/declarations-of-interest>). Advisory group members will be expected to sign and return a completed confidentiality undertaking prior to the beginning of the first meeting.

At any point during the selection process, telephone interviews may be scheduled between an applicant and the WHO Secretariat to enable WHO to ask questions relating to the applicant’s experience and expertise and/or to assess whether the applicant meets the criteria for membership in the relevant advisory group.

The selection of members of the advisory groups will be made by WHO in its sole discretion, taking into account the following (non-exclusive) criteria: relevant technical expertise; experience in international and country policy work; communication skills; and ability to work constructively with people from different cultural backgrounds and orientations. The selection of advisory group members will also take account of the need for diverse perspectives from different regions, especially from low- and middle-income countries, and for gender balance.

If selected by WHO, proposed members will be sent an invitation letter and a Memorandum of Agreement. Appointment as a member of the advisory group will be subject to the proposed member returning to WHO the countersigned copy of these two documents.

WHO reserves the right to accept or reject any expression of interest, to annul the open call process and reject all expressions of interest at any time without incurring any liability to the affected applicant or applicants and without any obligation to inform the affected applicant or applicants of the grounds for WHO's action. WHO may also decide, at any time, not to proceed with the establishment of the advisory group, disband an existing technical advisory group or modify the work of the advisory group.

WHO shall not in any way be obliged to reveal, or discuss with any applicant, how an expression of interest was assessed, or to provide any other information relating to the evaluation/selection process or to state the reasons for not choosing a member.

WHO may publish the names and a short biography of the selected individuals on the WHO internet.

Advisory group members will not be remunerated for their services in relation to the advisory group or otherwise. Travel and accommodation expenses of advisory group members to participate in advisory group meetings will be covered by WHO in accordance with its applicable policies, rules and procedures.

The appointment will be limited in time as indicated in the letter of appointment.

If you have any questions about this “Call for Experts,” please write to CallToAction@who.int well before the applicable deadline.