

Appendix 3.4 for the ECW Operational Manual

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EXTERNAL REVIEW PANEL (ERP)

Updated September 2020

A. Purpose

The External Review Panel (ERP) supports the decision making of the Executive Committee and HLSG by conducting independent, technical reviews of proposals and making recommendations on funding. The independent nature of the Panel helps to mitigate potential conflicts of interest in the grant-making process. The Panel reviews applications for Acceleration Facility (AF) grants exceeding US\$500,000 and all applications for the Multi-Year Resilience Programme (MYRP) grants.

B. Composition

The ERP roster will ideally consist of 4-6 members but may have additional members to ensure that all competencies are represented. A member of the ECW Secretariat will provide support to and facilitate the functioning of the ERP. The ECW Secretariat will select a minimum of two reviewers from the roster to review a given proposal. The selection of the reviewers will be made based on expertise requirements stipulated by the ECW Secretariat for the given review. The selected members will be referred to as 'serving members.'

All members serve in a personal capacity and do not represent their employers or governments.

ERP members will individually and collectively have the relevant expertise to make technically sound funding recommendations and will encompass a range of backgrounds to reflect the diversity of ECW's funding priorities. This ensures that the Panel is capable of making funding recommendations with a broad perspective and minimal bias. The Panel's membership will include, but will not be limited to:

- A wide range of relevant expertise (operational and programmatic) applicable to the types of programmes, countries and organizations supported by ECW, as well as the various windows of the Fund;
- Geographically diverse experiences, including individuals with field experience in emergency contexts;
- Experts from both the humanitarian and development sectors;
- A balance of expertise in relevant areas, such as education, different emergency contexts (such as conflicts, natural disasters and disease outbreaks), human rights, gender, refugees, and migration;
- Ethnic and gender diversity;
- At least two to three members who are fluent in French and one member who is fluent in Spanish.

The reviewers will not be current or former members of the HLSG or Executive Committee; or be current members of the ECW Secretariat, Task Teams, or delegates from HLSG or Executive Committee meetings.

C. Selection of members

The recruitment process for the ERP roster will be open and transparent, with publicly available selection criteria and follow the UNICEF procurement process for individual consultants. The ECW Secretariat and Director are responsible for conducting the recruitment process.

Members are appointed for one year. At the end of one year, a new cohort of members will be recruited. The members finishing the year term are eligible to apply for the cohort of the subsequent year for a maximum of six consecutive years. Members who have served the ERP for six consecutive years are ineligible to apply for the Panel for the following three years.

If an ERP member resigns from the Panel, the Director may nominate a new member outside of the normal cycle.

D. Functions and decision rights

Functions of the External Review Panel

- Review proposals for Acceleration Facility (AF) grants exceeding US\$500,000 and all Multi-Year Resilience Programme (MYRP) grants (following the ECW Secretariat's review for completeness and compliance with agreed guidelines);
- Make recommendations to the Executive Committee or HLSG on funding of proposals based on technical soundness and review criteria set forth by the ECW Secretariat.

Functions of the ECW Secretariat in relation to the External Review Panel

- Set the agenda and review schedule for the ERP;
- Facilitate the review process of the Panel;
- Determine the subset of the ERP members to be serving members based on the proposed next round of reviews;
- Allocate proposals and quality assurance templates to individual serving members for comprehensive review and scoring;
- Lead the preparation and drafting process of funding recommendations to be submitted to the Executive Committee and HLSG;
- If deemed necessary, request the serving members to attend the Executive Committee (ExCom) meetings and respond to questions of ExCom members about proposals submitted for funding and requests for clarification;
- Provide other services, as needed.

E. Review process

1. The ECW Secretariat conducts the initial screening of a proposal for completeness and compliance with the proposal guidelines. Once the proposal is successfully cleared by the ECW Secretariat's screening, the ERP is notified and provided with the proposal.
 - a. For MYRP, the ECW Secretariat also provides support to potential grantees on an as-needed basis to help potential grantees write a proposal that meets standards for ECW funding (e.g., pre-grant application coordination and technical support).
 - b. For AF, depending upon the number of applications and size of the grants, the ECW Secretariat may conduct an initial screen of applications, to narrow the quantity reviewed by the ERP. This will be determined by the Director of the ECW Secretariat.
2. Each proposal will be evaluated and scored by a minimum of two serving ERP members for both AF and MYRP windows. The evaluation and scoring will be conducted using standard quality assurance templates, which are aligned with the criteria set in the ECW Operation Manual.
3. Each serving member responsible for the evaluation and scoring shares their comments and score card to the other member(s).
4. The ERP will recommend whether to fund the proposal, and whether it should be funded in whole or in part.
5. In rare cases, if the serving members decide that further information or clarification from the ECW Secretariat or grantee is necessary, they can delay a proposal recommendation and allow for another round of review in order to gather the necessary information. The proposal recommendation can only be delayed by the serving members once.
6. The proposal recommendation is presented to the ExCom at their next meeting for investment decisions. For investment decisions in the MYRP window made by the HLSG, the ERP 's recommendations are presented to the HLSG for final decision.

F. Operations

The ERP will be requested for a review for up to four times a year, depending upon the review needs assessed by the ECW Secretariat. The schedule will be determined by the ECW Secretariat, considering the meetings of the ExCom and HLSG, as well as the timeline for ECW's grant and proposal processes. At the end of each review, the reviewers will produce a report on each proposal reviewed, specifying whether or not the proposal is recommended for funding (including whether it is for full, partial, or no funding), whether there are any major outstanding issues that need to be addressed prior to disbursement, as well as any additional recommendations for the ECW Secretariat and ExCom's attention.

If deemed necessary by the ECW Secretariat, a meeting among the serving members may be called either via teleconference or face-to-face. The meeting is closed to the public; only approved attendees can be present. The ERP reserves the right to invite ECW Secretariat staff or other individuals whose expertise would be relevant. Any deliberation or discussion on the ERP's recommendation for funding must be conducted with only serving members present. After

the meeting, the ERP will produce a report of their recommendation to be submitted to the ExCom. Reports from the ERP will be maintained by the ECW Secretariat, and may be made publicly available on ECW's website.

The ECW Secretariat shall remain disposable to facilitate the effective functioning of the ERP and its activities coordinate communication with other parties and manage logistics in a manner that supports the ERP's independence, confidentiality of internal deliberations and the anonymity of members for specific funding requests.

G. Conflicts of interest

ERP members must uphold the integrity and independence of the Panel.

All members must disclose any potential conflicts of interest prior to their appointment onto the panel. In addition, ERP members are required to inform the ECW Secretariat immediately upon learning of any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest during their term and resolve such issues before participating in any ERP activities or reviews. The ECW Secretariat will advise the member on measures to be taken to mitigate such actual or potential conflicts of interest, which may include, among other measures, recusal from any action or resignation from the Panel. If there is a conflict of interest with a specific proposal, the ERP member must declare any perceived potential conflict of interest prior to a meeting and must recuse themselves from the discussion on that proposal immediately.

ERP members will not take part in any discussion or action for proposals:

- In which they took part in the preparation process;
- That would directly benefit an organization or entity in which they are affiliated;
- That are from countries or crises from which they are a national or where they have strong personal or professional ties.

H. Remuneration

ERP members will receive an honorarium for actual services provided on a per proposal basis, as well as reimbursement for travel expenses so long as the member abides by ECW's travel guidelines. The honorarium amount will be determined in accordance with ECW policies and budgets. ERP members are not required to accept the honorarium and may agree to serve in a voluntary capacity.