

Project Proposal and Management Policy

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 24 November 2025

Approved By: IQN Path Board of Directors

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 Purpose

This policy establishes comprehensive guidelines for the evaluation, approval, management, and oversight of research projects and funding proposals submitted by members and non-members to IQN Path, including solicited projects from key opinion leaders that expand the association's portfolio of activities.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all project proposals, research initiatives, educational programs, and collaborative activities proposed by both members and non-members seeking funding, endorsement, or partnership with IQN Path.

1.3 Definitions

- **Member:** Individual or organization holding current IQN Path membership
- **Non-Member:** Individual or organization not holding current IQN Path membership
- **Key Opinion Leader:** Recognized expert in pathology or related fields with demonstrated expertise
- **Project:** Any research, educational, or professional development initiative requiring organizational resources
- **Principal Investigator (PI):** Lead researcher responsible for project conduct and compliance

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2.1 Strategic Alignment

- All projects must align with IQN Path's mission, vision, and strategic objectives
- Projects should enhance the organization's reputation and advance pathology practice

2.2 Member Priority

- Competitive projects proposed by members will take precedence over equivalent non-member proposals

2.3 Scientific Excellence

- All projects must meet rigorous scientific and professional standards

2.4 Ethical Responsibility

- Compliance with all applicable research ethics guidelines and regulations

2.5 Financial Stewardship

- Responsible management of organizational resources with transparent oversight
- Cost-effectiveness and value for investment considerations

3. ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Eligibility Criteria

Non-members are eligible to submit proposals if they:

- Demonstrate recognized expertise in pathology or related fields
- Agree to comply with all IQN Path policies and procedures

3.2 Proposal Requirements

All proposals must include:

- Project proposal template (Annex I)
- Detailed budget with justification of all expenditures (Annex II)
- Principal Investigator curriculum vitae and publication list
- Ad hoc project description may be required after Board approval

4. SCIENTIFIC REVIEW AND EVALUATION

4.1 Initial Screening

Administrative Review by Executive Director:

- Completeness of application materials
- Eligibility verification
- Alignment with organizational priorities
- Budget reasonableness assessment

4.2 Board Review and Approval

Board responsibilities:

- Assess strategic fit and organizational capacity
- Determine scientific terms and conditions
- If necessary, ask for external review within IQN Path Members
- Approve/reject the project proposal, budget and funding (if applicable)
- Consider for potential conflict of interest

General Evaluation Criteria:

- Scientific merits and innovation
- Alignment with organizational goals
- Feasibility and methodology
- Investigator qualifications and track record
- Budget appropriateness and value

5. RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

5.1 Research Integrity Standards

Publication and Dissemination:

- Acknowledgment of IQN Path support in all publications

- Pre-publication review by organization
- Open access publication preferred when feasible
- Authorship guidelines following international standards

5.2 Scientific Misconduct

- Mandatory reporting of suspected misconduct to organizational leadership
- Appropriate sanctions including project termination and funding recovery

6. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT

6.1 Financial Reporting

- Financial reports are regulated by project agreements
- Budget modifications need prior written approval by the board, if extra costs need to be covered by IQN Path

Allowable Expenses and Documentation Requirements:

- Direct research costs including personnel, supplies, and equipment
- Travel for research purposes with pre-approval
- Publication and dissemination costs
- Administrative costs not exceeding 10% of direct costs
- Any other expense indicated in the budget and approved by the Board
- Receipts and invoices for all expenditure must be exhibited before the payments

6.2 Project Progress Monitoring

Reporting Schedule:

- Project reports are regulated by project agreements
- Ad hoc reporting for significant developments or issues may be requested

7. LEGAL AND CONTRACTUAL FRAMEWORK

7.1 Legal Agreements

Required Documentation:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining general relationship and/or
- Project Agreement detailing specific project terms

7.2 Standard Contract Terms

Essential Provisions:

- Project scope, timeline, and deliverables
- Budget and payment schedule
- Intellectual property rights and obligations
- Confidentiality and non-disclosure requirements
- Termination clauses and dispute resolution procedures

7.3 Compliance Requirements

Regulatory Compliance:

- Adherence to all applicable laws and regulations
- Institutional policy compliance verification

Document Control:

- **Version:** 1.0
- **Last Updated:** 24 November 2025
- **Approval Authority:** IQN Path Board of Directors
- **Distribution:** All Board Members

This policy supersedes all previous versions and takes precedence over conflicting organizational policies.