Atlantic Poultry Research Institute

POLICY MANUAL

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Updated Overhead Policy October 2022

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CEO – Board Communication Policy

With respect to providing information and counsel to the board, it is expected that the CEO will:

- Ensure that the information provided is relevant to the mission, goals and strategic objectives of the Institute.
- Ensure that the board is aware of relevant trends in the industry which affect the assumptions upon which the mission or current strategic objectives of the organization have been founded.
- Advise the board if, in the CEO's opinion, it is not in compliance with its own policies, roles and responsibilities, especially when the board's behaviour may be detrimental to the relationship between the board and the CEO.
- Marshal a diversity of points of view and opinions needed for informed board choices.
- Inform the board of any external complaints or adverse media coverage which may affect the reputation of the organization.
- Inform the board of any internal complaints, grievances or other conflicts which may impact on the organization's performance.
- Deal with the board as a whole except when responding to officers or board committees with specific responsibilities.
- Provide information relevant to the creation and review of board policies (board level operational policies)
- Report in a timely manner any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any policy of the board.

With respect to providing information and counsel to the CEO, it is expected that the board will conduct an annual performance evaluation which serves to enhance the communication between the board and the CEO. It facilitates the board's oversight function while providing the board with a concrete opportunity to support the CEO. The Board will consider the following when preparing for the evaluation:

- The board will determine the appropriate role for the board chair and individual board members in the evaluation and will address how the CEO will participate in the process and what kind of evaluation tool to use.
- The performance evaluation will take into account the CEO's service agreement, annual goals and objectives, and any other relevant factors identified or approved by the board.
- The evaluation will include the CEO's own self-assessment as well as the board's evaluation of his or her performance.
- The evaluation will be conducted annually and documented in writing, particularly where the outcome is adverse and/or could lead to dismissal. In all cases, the assessment will provide a permanent record that can be referred to by both the CEO and the board, greatly increasing clarity and certainty.
- The assessment process will be separate from compensation even if performance is a key element in setting or reviewing the compensation level of the CEO. Compensation should not drive evaluation; it should be discussed independently after coming to a mutual agreement on evaluation results.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Definition

Conflict of interest occurs where a board member or staff person has, or is perceived to have, a divided loyalty. A conflict of interest may arise at any time.

- Direct Conflict of Interest - where the individual stands to benefit directly, more than others, from a decision, the outcome of which they are in a position to influence.
- Indirect Conflict of Interest - where the individual stands to benefit indirectly, more than others, the outcome of which they are in a position to influence.
- Perceived Conflict of Interest - whenever there is some debate about whether a conflict of interest is present.

Procedure

1. If the CEO, staff or board member has a conflict of interest, it must be brought to the attention of the board.
2. When in doubt as to whether or not you have a conflict-of-interest situation, then consider you do have a conflict, and it should be declared to the chair.
3. When a conflict is declared, the chair will put the perceived conflict of interest before the board for a vote.

Fiscal Management Policy

The CEO is accountable to the board for the day-to-day financial management of the Institute.

Financial Controls

The CEO is responsible for ensuring the following:

- A complete and up-to-date set of financial records are maintained in a manner consistent with Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) accounting and bookkeeping standards
- Proper account reconciliation and closing
- Financial statements are presented to the board at least quarterly
- Maintain segregated accounts for tracking of project finances, where required by funders, to enable timely and accurate financial reporting
- All expenditures are within the budget
- Payroll and other taxes are submitted as required by law
- Payroll and other liabilities are settled in a timely manner
- Adequate oversight of signing authority for all financial transactions

Budgeting

The budget is the primary mechanism enabling the board and staff to keep track of and measure financial performance. The CEO is responsible for:

- The preparation and presentation of a draft annual budget for board approval at least one month prior to the beginning of every fiscal year
- Ensuring that the budget is developed with sufficient information to judge the accuracy of the projections of revenues and expenditures
- Ensuring that the basis of the budget in any one year is consistent with previous years

- Identifying, within the budget, revenues and expenditures for different program areas
- Updating the board regularly on the performance of the organization in relation to budget
- Preparing and presenting changes to the budget for amendment by the board

Contracts and Loans

The execution of contracts, deeds, bills of exchange and other instruments and documents on behalf of the Institute can only be done after receiving board approval. Such documents can only be signed by two of the following: the chair, the vice-chair, the treasurer/corporate secretary, board-approved staff of the Institute, or otherwise prescribed by resolution of the board (Bylaw 35).

Board approval is required for the following:

- Providing industry support to research projects
- Purchases over $5000
- Contracts over $5000
- Substantially change the organization's banking arrangements or financial institutions
- Investment strategy of reserve funds
- Enter into a loan agreement with a bank or financial institution.

Financial Reporting

The CEO is responsible for:

- Reporting financial results to the board including actual performance to budget
- Reporting extraordinary changes to assets and liabilities
- Reporting on any other financial issues that jeopardize the ability of the organization to meet its short- and long-term financial obligations
- Presenting financial reports as requested by the board from time-to-time

Purchasing and the Protection of Assets

The CEO is responsible for:

- Ensuring that where an expense for goods or services purchased is over $5,000 that there is an assessment of the quality and price offered by different vendors
- Not purchasing or entering contracts in situations where he/she, members of board or staff have an undeclared conflict of interest
- Operating with adequate liability insurance
- Operating with effective procedures for the safekeeping of key legal and contractual documents
- Operating with procedures for backing up financial and other key computer records

Research Proposal Approval Policy

Research Proposal Approval Policy

1. All research projects requesting industry support through APRI must address one or more of industry's identified priorities.

2. Researchers looking for industry support must present a summary of the project to the board using the Letter of Intent and budget templates.

3. APRI will accept Letters of Intent once per year, no later than September 15th. All Letters of Intent will have an initial review at the fall APRI board meeting. Researchers will be invited to that meeting to present their research proposal and address questions.

4. The Letter of Intent will clearly define what is being asked of the reviewing bodies, specifically, is the researcher requesting a letter of support or a letter of support and funds. Each project will be evaluated on its industry impact - Does it address an industry concern and if so, why is the research important?

5. If approved at the initial review stage, the LOI, along with an evaluation form, will then go to the respective commodity board(s) for consideration, with a request that each sector coordinate their review and response with their respective Atlantic counterparts.

6. The deadline to receive reviewed LOIs back from industry is December 31st. The industry evaluations will be reviewed by the board at the first meeting of the new year.

7. APRI staff will notify those researchers who have received industry support. We will then continue to work with the researchers to seek additional funding and move the project forward.

8. Researchers must provide APRI with copies of applications that are submitted to other funding partners to access matching funds for any on-going projects that are also receiving financial support from APRI.

9. Once approved projects find matching funds, any major changes in the budget from outside sources must be communicated to APRI.

10. Researchers are required to meet all deadlines for claims and reports as implemented by APRI to maintain their support.

11. Project results will be translated into a factsheet which will be shared with industry and made available on the APRI website. Factsheets will be prepared by APRI staff in cooperation with the researcher(s).

Private Sector Research Support Policy

APRI can accept industry funds secured from the private sector to conduct research under the following terms:

- The research project must address one or more of the industry's identified priorities. These funds can be used to seek matching dollars through government programs.
- Such projects require board approval before support is granted.
- Private sector businesses must commit to sharing research results with APRI and industry if APRI is involved. If not, they must work directly with the researcher and Dalhousie to secure an agreement and APRI is not involved.
- Industry funds must be paid as per the contribution agreement.

Process to Identify Industry Research Priorities

- Directors are to poll their respective industry sector annually to update research priorities, and

- The annual request for funding is to include the list of current priorities and a request to update them.
- When new research priorities have been submitted, they will be shared with their respective commodity associations within the region, i.e. Atlantic chicken farmers or Atlantic egg farmers etc., to ensure that the priorities identified for that commodity are representative of the research concerns for each of the Atlantic Provinces.
- When the Board is satisfied that each sector has been given ample opportunity to provide input, the final research priority list will be updated on the website and shared with industry.

Recognition on Publications

All research reports, publications and factsheets resulting from projects that have received funds from industry through APRI must identify the industry partner.

Overhead Policy

While APRI supports or helps to leverage funding to support research APRI does not pay overhead for such research projects at Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, as stated on our website https://www.dal.ca/sites/apri/projects/support.html, and agreed upon in the MOU signed with the University (dated: April 27, 2017).

As per the MOU with Dalhousie effective April 1, 2022, the current overhead policy is as follows: While APRI supports and/or helps Dalhousie to leverage funding to support research, APRI supported projects will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine appropriate overhead (indirect) costs. APRI and Dal AC will collaborate early in the LOI or application process to determine overhead requirements of both Parties, however any overhead charge implemented by DalAC shall not exceed 15% of the total project costs.

Travel Policy

This policy is designed to assist staff and board members in reporting expenses incurred while conducting Institute business activities.

Board member's costs to participate in meetings are covered by their respective commodity associations or businesses. The Institute expects Individuals to act responsibly and professionally when incurring and submitting costs. The organization will reimburse staff and/or board members for reasonable expenses on pre-approved business. This includes, for example, travel fares, accommodations, meals, tips, telephone and fax charges, and purchases made on behalf of the organization.

The Institute does not pay for local travel to and from the office. If Individuals use their vehicles for business travel, mileage will be reimbursed as per the Government of Canada Travel Policy and for appropriate parking fees and tolls. The Institute will not be responsible for fuel, maintenance, traffic or parking violations.

Travel claims for Individuals are to be reviewed and signed off by alternate staff before issuing cheques for payment.

General Guidelines

- Copies of original receipts are required for reimbursement of all expenses. These expenses include:
  - Boarding passes for airplane / train travel
  - Credit card receipts
  - Detailed merchant receipts

- Receipts must be accompanied by a breakdown which outlines:
  - Date of the expense
  - Name and titles of the individuals involved
  - Purpose for the expense

- All expenses and summaries must be submitted within 40 days of being incurred.

- Individuals are encouraged to fly economy class with the lowest available airfare for non-stop travel.

- If a car rental is required, Individuals are requested to rent mid-sized or compact vehicles. Individuals will be reimbursed for the fuel and insurance costs associated with renting a vehicle.

- Individuals will be reimbursed for reasonable hotel accommodations. Discounted room rates should be requested at the time of room booking.

- Meals will not be reimbursed in situations where other meal arrangements are provided. For example, a luncheon included with an event.

- The following list includes examples of non-reimbursable expenses:

  - Personal travel insurance
  - Personal reading materials
  - Childcare
  - Toiletries, cosmetics, or grooming products
  - Expenses incurred by spouses, children, or relatives
  - In-room movies or video games
  - Sporting activities, shows, etc.

Any questions related to the content of this policy, or its interpretation should be directed to the CEO.

Employee Policy

- Office Manager is a 0.5 – 0.7 full-time position
- Office hours to be negotiated and agreed to between the Office Manager and the CEO
- Holidays paid as per Nova Scotia Labour Laws
- Two weeks of vacation per year
- Yearly performance review with the CEO at a time agreeable to both parties, using a format established by the CEO.

Communications Policy

The CEO or their designee are the only spokespersons authorized to speak for the organization, and the chair is the only spokesperson for the board. None of the spokespersons may represent the organization in any way inconsistent with the Mission and Business Plan.

The following communication protocol outlines the approach for communicating about projects where APRI is involved in one of two ways:

A. Projects where APRI contributes financially to the project, and
B. Projects where APRI is the project applicant & contributes financially

A. Projects where APRI contributes financially:
- Researchers are expected to provide an update of project progress by April 30 annually
- Submit a copy of the final report upon submission to the main project sponsor
- Inform APRI, electronically of any formal communication effort of the project
- Acknowledge APRI's contribution to the project in all communications
- Forward the draft edition to APRI for comment/review two weeks prior to release
- Forward a final copy of the communication piece to APRI at the time of release

B. Projects where APRI is the project applicant and contributes financially:
- Researchers are expected to provide an update of project progress by April 30 annually
- Submit a final project report within 90 days of project completion
- Within 30 days of receiving the final report, the APRI office will develop a fact sheet summarizing the project
- Draft copies of the factsheet are submitted to researchers for edits/review before finalizing
- All communication request to be directed to the APRI office, with the CEO having the final decision
- APRI office will coordinate the communication effort including contacting the necessary researchers or administrators, dealing with any concerns, etc.
- Researchers are expected to cooperate providing project information within two weeks of request,
- Draft communications are to be submitted to the APRI office for review and approval, and
- All communications must be signed off by the APRI office before publishing or printing.

APPENDIX I – RESEARCH LETTER OF INTENT AND BUDGET TEMPLATE

The following is the LOI format to concisely describe your research project. The LOI is not to exceed two pages - single spaced, 12-point font (not including the budget). The budget must be attached (optional budget template provided). The LOI must be received by APRI no later than 11:59 p.m. on September 15th.

Project Title – Should concisely describe the project.

Project Lead and Contact Information – Name, Title, Email and Telephone

Partners/Collaborators – Name, Title, Employer

Project Timeline - Start Date and End Date

Request to Board of Directors – Please specify one of the following options:
- Letter of support from a specific commodity group or industry
- Letter of support plus financial commitment.

Project Description – Briefly describe the project, why the research is needed and how it will address at least one of industry's research priorities as identified on APRI's website.

Return to Industry – What is the issue/concern and how may this research address it, be impactful to industry? Outline the disadvantage imposed by our present state of knowledge and how this research may change it. If there is no economic improvement likely but the information will be beneficial to the industry in other ways, describe these benefits.

Methodology/Procedures – Briefly in layman's terms, describe what you are doing, how you will do it and why these methods are being used.

Budget (Sample template provided) – A total budget for the project is required. Use of the sample budget template is optional. Salaries (for whom), equipment, supplies, lab tests, rental fees, administration fees and items in the 'other' and 'miscellaneous' categories must be detailed. Indicate the items and amounts paid for by funding sources.

Evaluation of LOI by the Industry – The LOI will be assessed on the following parameters, rating each 1-5 with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest ranking:

- Benefit to industry
- Clearly defined project and outcome description
- Appropriateness of 'ask' of industry (does it reflect the value of the research)

Failure to follow the guidelines and time frame may influence the Board's consideration of the proposal.

APPENDIX II – MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING