

Procedural Rules of Conflict of Interests

Approved at the meeting of the Council of the Estonian Science Foundation on 23 February 2007 (Minutes 23)

This document stipulates the conduct of the experts of the Estonian Science Foundation in the event of a conflict of interests. Expert shall herein mean reviewers of the applications submitted to the Science Foundation, members of the different evaluation boards and members of the Council and expert commissions.

The Estonian Science Foundation presumes that when processing any applications and making decisions, the concerned persons adhere to generally accepted ethical rules and proceed from the Code of Ethics of Estonian Scientists.

- If an expert has a conflict of interests with respect to an item on the agenda, the expert must declare this at the start of the meeting and remove himself or herself from discussions of such an item on the agenda and leave the meeting room for the time of discussion.
- At the beginning of every application evaluation round, experts must submit a list of applications with respect to which they have a conflict of interests.
- In the event an expert can benefit with respect to an application in any manner whatsoever if such an application is satisfied (e.g. as the applicant or main contractor) or rejected, then the expert must remove himself or herself fully from the processing of such an application and leave the meeting room for the time of processing.
- An expert must remove himself or herself from the processing of the application and leave the meeting room during the time of processing if the applicant or a member of the research group of the project applied for is a close colleague of the expert (e.g. joint publications within the last three years, cooperation in the preparation of the application, etc.).
- An expert must remove himself or herself from the processing of an application and leave the meeting room for the time of processing if he or she has had a manager-employee or tutor-tutee relationship with the applicant or a member of the research group of the project applied for.
- An expert must remove himself or herself from the processing of an application and leave the meeting room for the time of processing if the applicant or a member of the research group of the project applied for is a close person of the expert. Close persons are:
 - ✓ a family member of the expert (spouse, partner, child, grandchild, sister, brother, mother, father, grandmother, grandfather) or the spouse/partner of a family member
 - ✓ uncle, aunt, cousin of the expert or their spouse/partner
 - ✓ any other person closely related to the expert (e.g. friend, former spouse/partner)
 - ✓ the child, grandchild, sister, brother, mother, father, grandmother, grandfather of the expert's spouse/partner or their spouse/partner

If an expert breaches the requirements stipulated in this document and fails to declare their conflict of interests, the Science Foundation shall have the right to annul the opinion(s) given by the expert to the application(s) and refer the funding decision for a new review.