

Particle Therapy Co-operative Group (PTCOG) Internal Regulations

Version Control

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Prepared by: PTCOG Secretariat (for the Executive Committee)

Approved by : PTCOG Steering Committee

Approved date :

1. Purpose & Scope

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of these Internal Regulations is to define PTCOG's internal policies and procedures that support the official Statutes of the association and which guide day-to-day operations such as membership, meetings, committees, finance etc). It is a living document, updates may be issued by the Executive Committee and approved by the Steering Committee per the governance rules set out below.

1.2 Scope

This manual applies to all PTCOG bodies and members. Where there is any conflict, the Statutes and Swiss law prevail. Internal Regulations may be updated without amending the Statutes, following the approval process in Section 9.

1.3 Questions and Comments

Any questions, comments or suggestions for these Internal Regulations should be directed to the PTCOG Secretary who will review the suggestions and take these to the Executive Committee for discussion if needed.

2. Governance

Governance is a system that provides a framework for managing organisations. It identifies who can make decisions, who has the authority to act on behalf of the organisation and who is

accountable for how an organisation and its people behave and perform. Governance enables leadership to run an organisation legally, ethically, sustainably, and successfully, for the benefit of stakeholders, including members, employees and volunteers, and for the good of the wider public.

PTCOG is a non profit association registered in Geneva, Switzerland and governed by the Swiss Civil Code and its Statutes.

The registered address of the association is Rue Francois Versonnex 7, Geneva, 1211

The latest version of the PTCOG Statutes can be found [here](#).

2.1 Steering Committee (General Assembly)

The PTCOG Steering Committee is the supreme body of the Association and is composed of all Institutional Members.

2.1.1 Composition

Each Institutional Member designates one representative to serve on the Steering Committee. Representatives should have an appropriate level of decision-making authority for their institution and must be an officer, director or employee of the institution.

All Executive Committee members are also members of the Steering Committee.

Individual Members (known as Corresponding Members), are able to attend the Steering Committee but do not have voting rights.

Application

The application to join the Steering Committee is as per the institutional membership application defined below. During application the proposed representative is put forward and approved as part of the membership application.

Resignation/Termination

If a designated representative resigns during his or her term of office, he or she can be substituted by a new representative to be appointed by the institutional member.

2.1.2 Duties & powers

The Steering Committee has the duties and powers outlined in the statutes. They may also vote on other matters as proposed by the Executive Committee.

2.1.3 Meetings

The Steering Committee meets at least once per year, in person, during or around each Annual PTCOG Meeting. Extraordinary meetings of the Steering Committee may be called by the Executive Committee or at the request of at least 20 percent of all Members, such meetings may be held in person or electronically.

Agenda

Invitations to the Steering Committee meeting must be sent with at least 20 days notice along with the agenda. In practice the meeting date and time is communicated by inclusion on the program for the Annual meeting, with a formal invitation, including the agenda sent at least 20 days in advance.

Any Institutional Member may submit items to include on the Steering Committee agenda at least 30 days prior, including motions or requests to mandate the competent body. The Secretary prepares the agenda.

At the meeting, matters not on the agenda may be discussed but not voted.

Voting

Each representative and all Executive Committee members have one vote.

Members can send a substitute for representing their institution, if they cannot attend. This substitute has the same right to vote. This substitution should be notified to the secretariat with 10 days notice.

Individual members and other people are able to attend the meeting as observers but do not have voting rights.

Voting takes place by a show of hands or through an electronic voting process. Upon request of at least 20% of the Members, voting may take place by secret ballot.

A representative cannot vote for decisions relating to a matter where he or she, his or her spouse, parents or relatives in direct line are a party to the matter

Quorum

The Steering Committee is valid if 30% of voting representatives are present or represented, unless the statutes require a different majority.

Resolutions pass by simple majority of votes cast. In case of a tie, the Chairperson casts a vote.

Attendance tracking

The Steering Committee will keep track of representative attendance.

2.1.4 Decisions by Circular Letter

Proposals circulated in writing (including email) are considered to be decisions taken by the Steering Committee.

2.1.5 Minutes

The meetings of the Steering Committee and its decisions are recorded in formal minutes. The draft minutes should be prepared within 4 weeks of the meeting and shared with the Chair and Secretary for review before sharing with the Steering Committee by email.

2.2 Executive Committee (Board)

The PTCOG Executive Committee is the executive body of the Association. It manages the affairs of the Association and represents it in accordance with the Statutes. The Executive Committee is responsible for day-to-day management of PTCOG, implementing Steering Committee decisions and overseeing subcommittees and operations.

2.2.1 Composition

As per the statutes the Executive Committee is formed of between 3 and 15 members, roles include:

- Chair (see section 2.27 for more detail)
- Two Vice-Chairs (Deputy Chairs)
- The Past Chair
- The Secretary
- The Treasurer
- The Co-Chairs of the Educational Subcommittee
- The Co-Chairs of the Scientific Subcommittee
- The Co-Chairs of the Publication Subcommittee
- Additional member(s) proposed by the Chair and approved by the Steering Committee

The positions of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same or by different individuals. The Vice-Chairs of the association may hold the positions of Secretary or Treasurer.

As the Association is registering with the Commercial Registry on a voluntary basis, there is no need to have a member of the board who is domiciled in Switzerland. Should the association meet the requirements for compulsory registration then at least one member of the Board with individual signatory powers, or two members of the Board with collective signatory powers, must be domiciled in Switzerland and have access to the list of members.

2.2.2 Duties & powers

The Executive Committee meet virtually or in person at least 3 times per year.

In addition to the duties outlined in the Statutes, the Executive Committee is responsible for:

- Setting the strategic direction to ensure advancement of the mission.
- Governing all matters unless stated otherwise in the statutes.
- Ensure the smooth functioning of the association and resolving any important matters that may arise.
- Propose sub committees to the Steering Committee, oversee the work of the sub committees, ensuring they have clear terms of references
- Propose Chairs and Co Chairs of the sub committees

- Ensuring good governance practices including adherence to policies and practices and meeting obligations associated with being registered in Switzerland as a non profit association.

2.2.3 Terms

All board members including the Chair and Co-Chair have a 3-year term, renewable once (max two terms i.e. 6 years).

2.2.4 Meetings

Agenda

Invitations to the Executive Committee meeting must be sent with at least 10 days notice along with the agenda (unless there is an urgent need to call a meeting in which case only 3 days notice is required).

The agenda is set by the Chair, but any Executive Committee member may submit items to include on the agenda.

The Chair is the chair of the Executive Committee.

Voting

Each Executive Committee member has one vote during meetings of the Executive Committee.

Other people are able to attend the meeting as observers but do not have voting rights. The Executive Committee may request a closed meeting, excluding non voting members.

Voting takes place by a show of hands or through an electronic voting process. Upon request, voting may take place by secret ballot.

A Executive Committee member cannot vote for decisions relating to a matter where he or she, his or her spouse, parents or relatives in direct line are a party to the matter

Quorum

The Executive Committee is valid if 30% of members are present or represented.

Resolutions pass by simple majority of votes cast. In case of a tie, the Chair casts an additional vote.

2.2.5 Decisions by Circular Letter

Proposals circulated in writing (including email) are considered to be decisions taken by the Executive Committee.

2.2.6 Minutes

The meetings of the Executive Committee and its decisions are recorded in formal minutes. The draft minutes should be prepared within 4 weeks of the meeting and shared with the Chair and Secretary for review before sharing with the Executive Committee.

2.2.7 Chairperson Term, Duties and Powers

The Chair of the Executive Committee is composed of a Chairperson and two Co-Chairpersons, representing three Continents.

Duties and Powers

The Chairperson has the following powers and duties:

- Organization and preparation of agendas for the meetings of the Executive Committee;
- Representing the Association internally and externally;
- Presiding over the meetings of the Steering Committee and of the Executive Committee;
- All powers and duties delegated to him or her by the Steering Committee and by the Executive Committee;

The Chairperson shall be authorized to delegate part of his/her powers and duties to the Co-Chairs.

In urgent cases, the Chairperson shall take all necessary decisions on behalf of the Steering Committee and of the Executive Committee. The Chairperson is to notify the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee immediately of such decisions. These must be ratified by the Steering Committee or by the Executive Committee at their subsequent meetings.

Term

The term of office for the Chair and for the two Co-Chairs shall be 3 years. Re-appointment for another 3 years shall be possible. The maximum term of the Chairperson and the two Co-Chairpersons shall be limited to 2 terms total. If a Chairperson or a Co-Chairperson resigns during his or her term of office, a new Chairperson or Co-Chairperson shall be elected by the Steering Committee.

2.3 Subcommittees & Working Groups

Subcommittees shall be implemented for special activities and tasks, which are of special and continued interest. In particular to support the key objectives of the Association. Therefore, the following core Subcommittees will be formed to further these goals:

- Scientific Program Subcommittee,
- Educational Subcommittee,
- Publication Subcommittee and

Various other Subcommittees for exchanging experience in clinical and technical issues with the purpose of promoting dissemination of particle therapy knowledge may be formed.

2.3.1 Formation

Subcommittees can be proposed by Members by written application to the Executive Committee. If appropriate, the implementation of a Subcommittee is brought forward by the Executive Committee to be approved by the Steering Committee.

2.3.2 Composition

Subcommittees shall consist of clinical and technical scientific experts in the field of particle radiation therapy. Members of a Subcommittee have to be Members of the Association. They are chaired and co-chaired by Members proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by the Steering Committee. All Members of the Association can apply to the Chairperson of the Subcommittee to join.

Each Subcommittee shall be chaired by 2 or 3 Members of the Association, proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by the Steering Committee.

A member may only be Chair or Co-chair of one Subcommittee at a time.

2.3.3 Terms

The term of office for Chair and for Co-Chair of the Subcommittees shall be 3 years. One Re-approval for another 3 years shall be possible. If a Chair or a Co-Chair of a Subcommittee resigns during his or her term of office, he or she can be substituted temporarily by a new person appointed by the Subcommittee Chair or the Executive Committee. Approval of the Chair or Co-Chair of a Subcommittee shall be held at the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

2.3.4 Duties and powers

The Subcommittees shall have the duties and the powers to coordinate and manage special topics dedicated to the individual Subcommittee by the Executive Committee.

Subcommittees have the following responsibilities:

- Organize and execute programs allocated by the Steering Committee. There will be formal charges for each Subcommittee proposed by the Executive Committee and brought for approval by the Steering Committee. The Subcommittees will be reviewed annually to determine if they are on track regarding fulfilling their charges.
- Elaborate special tasks allocated by and if appropriate, in coordination with, the Executive Committee including the Subcommittee charges and other tasks as may become appropriate.;
- Report annually to the Executive Committee and Steering Committee.

In all cases of Subcommittees and Working Groups, it is the responsibility of the Chairs to convene meetings and/or maintain communication among the Subcommittee members in order to achieve the aims and charges of the Subcommittee. If in person meetings are to be held at the Annual Meeting, it is the Chair's responsibility to coordinate with the meeting organizers to obtain appropriate meeting space.

2.3.5 Duration

Subcommittees shall be dissolved on recommendation of the Executive Committee following a simple majority vote of the Steering Committee.

2.3.6 Topical Groups (Working Groups)

It shall also be possible to implement Topical Groups for exchanging experience in clinical and technical issues. The difference between a Subcommittee and a Topical Group is that the Topical Group may not have a charge. The Topical Group is simply a group of individuals wishing to exchange ideas on a topic with no predetermined goal. The commitment of the Association to support the Topical Groups may be less, in terms of oversight and expectation, but will endeavor to provide meeting space at meetings of the Association.

2.3.7 Scientific Program Subcommittee, Composition, Duties and Powers

The Scientific Program Subcommittee shall promote the science in the Association and shall be responsible for the scientific program of the Annual Scientific Meeting in collaboration with the Executive Committee and with input of the Host Institution. It shall consist of scientific experts in the field of particle radiation therapy. The term promotion can have several meanings including:

- Enhance the relevance of the work output of the Association for global consumption
- Help to establish scientific standards and statements and directions that help promote the adoption of Particle therapy consistent with the mission and objectives of the Association.

Composition

The Scientific Program Subcommittee shall have three Co-Chairs who are members of the Association. They are proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by the Steering Committee. If workable, the three Co-Chairs should reflect the three disciplines of Biology, Medicine and Physics as well as being geographically diverse. The Scientific Program Subcommittee is also co-chaired, ex officio, by the Chair of the Association. For the organization of the Annual Scientific Meeting at least one delegate of the Host Institution of the upcoming Meeting shall be part of this Scientific Program Subcommittee.

Duties and Powers

The Scientific Program Subcommittee shall have the duties and the powers to:

- Define the layout and the main focuses of the scientific meetings of the Association in close cooperation with the Host Institution of the Meeting
- Organize the evaluation of the scientific abstracts and decide about oral and poster presentations for the scientific meetings
- Decide who will be invited speakers for the Scientific Meetings
- Decide who will be the scientific meeting session Chairs;

2.3.8 Educational Subcommittee, Composition, Duties and Powers

The Educational Subcommittee shall be responsible for the educational program of the Annual Meeting. It shall consist of scientific experts in the field of particle radiation therapy.

Composition

The Educational Subcommittee shall be chaired by 2 members of the Association, proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by the Steering Committee. For the organization of the educational session at least one delegate of the Host Institution of the upcoming Meeting should be included in the Educational Subcommittee.

Duties and Powers

The Educational Subcommittee shall have the duties and the powers to:

- Define and develop a curriculum of topics necessary for the education in the field of particle therapy
- Define the layout and the main focuses of the educational sessions of the Association in close cooperation with the Host Institution of the Meeting
- Identify the educational faculty. It is intended to choose experts in the field who are excellent teachers able to deliver a clear, understandable didactic presentation without institutional bias. While it is desirable to have geographic and institutional diversity, it is recognized that this will not always be possible in order to develop a very high quality educational experience
- Define and coordinate educational activities in the field of particle therapy with other institutions active in the field

2.3.9 Publication Subcommittee, Composition, Duties and Powers

The Publication Subcommittee shall be responsible for managing the publication activities of the Association. It shall consist of scientific experts in the field of particle radiation therapy.

Composition

The Publication Subcommittee shall be chaired by 2 Members of the Association, proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by the Steering Committee. One of the chairs shall be the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Particle Therapy.

Duties and Powers

The Publication Subcommittee shall have the duties and the powers to coordinate and manage the publication activities of the Association. Such activities may include, but not be limited to:

- The International Journal of Particle Therapy (IJPT)
- Special topic Particle Therapy reports.
- Consensus Statements from Subcommittees
- Bibliography of Particle Therapy publications
- Registry of clinical Trials
- Other publications that would further the mission and objectives of the Association

3. Membership

Members of the Association can be institutions or individuals who have an interest in the purpose and the activities of the Association and wish to support them. There shall be two categories of membership as follows:

- Institutional Members are particle radiation therapy facilities (either operating or under construction), universities or research centres with interest in particle therapy. Representatives from each institutional member form the Steering Committee and have voting rights.
- Corresponding Members are individual persons interested in particle radiation therapy who have registered for membership. They do not have voting rights

3.1 Admission

Members may join the Association by submitting an application to the Association.

By such submission, it is understood that the prospective member agrees to:

- Accept the Statutes of the Association.
- Support the objectives and policies of the Association

3.1.1. Institutional Members

Application is made online. The applying institution needs to provide all relevant information regarding the qualifications of their institution and proposed representative. The application is reviewed and approved by the Secretary or a person nominated by the Executive Committee, who submit to the Steering Committee for vote on acceptance. Membership shall become effective when approved by the Steering Committee.

3.1.2. Individual Members

Application is made online. The application is reviewed and approved by the Secretary or a nominated individual. Membership shall become effective, on a probational basis, upon the application.

3.2 Fees

The PTCOG Executive Committee can submit a proposal for initiating an amount of annual membership fees, membership categories and other membership matters to the PTCOG Steering Committee. The PTCOG Steering Committee will vote on the proposal(s).

3.3 Termination

A Member may withdraw voluntarily from the Association anytime, provided written notice of withdrawal by letter or by e-mail is given to the Secretary of the Association.

The Steering Committee may terminate the membership of any Member, if the Steering Committee decides in its sole discretion, but after careful consideration of all the circumstances, that such measure is in the best interests of the Association. The Steering Committee shall

comply with the principle of due process with respect to the termination and suspension processes.

Termination of membership may be affected in the following instances:

- Material violation of these Statutes
- Material changes in the nature, structure or purpose of the Member so that the requirements for membership are no longer met.
- Violation of the code of conduct as detailed in the internal regulations.

Any fee for the current year remains due by the exiting Member. There will be no refund in any membership fees paid.

3.4 Rights and Privileges

A member in good standing has the following privileges:

3.4.1. Institutional Members

- Have a representative attend Steering Committee Meetings
- Vote on all matters brought to the Steering Committee for vote
- Submit a proposal to Steering Committee
- Propose the formation of a Subcommittee or working group
- Propose to host the Annual Scientific meeting (even whilst membership application is under consideration)
- Apply to be a member of the Executive Committee
- Apply to chair or co-chair a Subcommittee
- Apply to be a member of a Subcommittee
- Free access to all materials published on the PTCOG website

3.4.2. Individual Members

- Apply to be a member of the Executive Committee
- Apply to chair or co-chair a Subcommittee
- Apply to be a member of a Subcommittee
- Free access to all materials published on the PTCOG website

4. Scientific Meeting

The Association shall hold Meetings (including scientific meetings and educational sessions) at a date and place (Host Institution) decided by the Steering Committee, and generally once a year.

4.1 Host Selection

The Executive Committee will accept proposals for hosting a meeting and will determine, based upon appropriate considerations which proposals shall be forwarded to the Steering Committee.

Applications should be submitted in line with the [PTCOG Bidding Procedure](#).

The host centre applying should be a PTCOG Institutional Member (or having submitted application to become a member) and the proposed local conference chair a PTCOG Individual Member. The local conference chair of the bidding destination must hold a medical or scientific position within the discipline of particle therapy.

Consideration will be given to the capability of the host to hold the meeting and suitability of the location (vis-à-vis, travel, lodging, meeting spaces) to hold the meeting along with other requirements as outlined in the bidding procedure.

Applications must be submitted to the secretary in accordance with the timeline outlined in the bidding procedure. Applicants will be invited to give a presentation to the Steering Committee.

4.2 Organization & responsibilities

The host is to work as an advisory and provide support in co-operation with the PTCOG Conference Organising Committee and PTCOG Subcommittees.

The organization of the meeting may be delegated to a Professional Congress Organizer (PCO). The relationship between PTCOG and the PCO shall be governed by a separate contract. The PCO will act in full coordination with the PTCOG Executive Committee and the Host Institution.

The financial responsibility and final decisions on conference budgeting and inclusions is the responsibility of the PTCOG Conference Organising Committee which comprises of PTCOG Executive Members and PCO Partner of PTCOG.

4.3 Program

The program of both the educational session as well as scientific meeting shall be organized by the Educational Subcommittee and the Scientific Program Subcommittee, respectively, with the assistance of the Host Institution and reflecting the uniqueness of the Host Institution, and approved by the Executive Committee.

4.4. Registration Fees

The registration fee for the Meeting (scientific meeting and educational session) shall be agreed by the Executive Committee.

5. Secretariat

The association may appoint a Secretariat.

The Secretariat shall have the duties and powers vested by the Steering Committee and by the Executive Committee.

The Secretariat shall be managed by the Secretary.

The Steering Committee can decide to transfer the Secretariat and duties to another location, which is appropriate to fulfill the duties and power of the Association.

6. Financial Management & Controls

6.1 Fiscal year

January 1 to December 31, unless otherwise decided by the Steering Committee.

6.2 Budgeting & reporting

The Treasurer prepares annual financial statements (income statement, balance sheet) and budget plan. The Treasurer may delegate this responsibility to the secretariat or external accounting firm.

The Chair compiles an Annual Report covering activities and decisions.

6.3 Review of accounts

PTCOG will maintain commercial accounting records as required for registered associations, overseen by the Treasurer.

Where an audit is not mandated, PTCOG will implement an annual financial review (internal or external), the process will be overseen by the Treasurer.

If the Association chooses to appoint an auditor, they shall produce a report on the audit to the Steering Committee. In addition, the auditor shall provide a management letter to the Steering Committee with a detailed discussion of its findings, if any.

6.4 Expenditure approvals

The Executive Committee approves special expenditures exceeding 50,000 CHF (or equivalent amount in other currency); standard operating expenses are approved by the Treasurer and / or Chair.

7. Publications

The Association can publish clinical and technical reports and scientific manuscripts as well as other publications as far as the Steering Committee may authorize.

The costs of the publications shall be covered by fees for the publications or by dedicated sponsorships. The Association can support publications by start-up financing. The decision is taken by the Steering Committee.

The Association shall maintain a dedicated Website.

8. Partnerships with External Stakeholders

PTCOG may support inception of Particle therapy societies and Associations that serve local or regional interest. Approval or extent of support for a particular entity is to be decided by the Steering Committee. Coordination of activities and programs or meetings between PTCOG and any new entity should be agreed upon to avoid conflicts and enhance Particle therapy scientific exchange and promotion of Particle therapy research and practice.

PTCOG may support individual initiatives, grant proposals if such support is deemed to be beneficial to the Particle Therapy field and does not represent any degree of favoritism or is detrimental to other activities. Such determination will be the responsibility of the Executive Committee.

9. Policies

9.1 PTCOG Code of Conduct

Purpose and Principles

The Particle Therapy Co-operative Group (PTCOG) is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct, scientific integrity, transparency, and professionalism in all its activities.

This Code of Conduct sets out the ethical principles, expected behaviours, and standards of conduct for all individuals who act on behalf of, or participate in, PTCOG activities. Its purpose is to foster a culture of trust, independence, respect, inclusivity, and accountability, and to protect the reputation, credibility, and mission of PTCOG.

This Code complements the PTCOG Statutes and Internal Regulations. Where there is any conflict, the Statutes, Internal Regulations, and applicable law prevail.

Scope of Application

This Code of Conduct applies to all PTCOG representatives, including but not limited to:

- Members (Institutional and Corresponding);
- Steering Committee (General Assembly) representatives;
- Executive Committee members;
- Officers, Subcommittee members, Working Group members, and Chairs;
- Secretariat staff, consultants, and contractors;
- Any individual representing PTCOG in meetings, publications, events, or external relations.

All PTCOG representatives are expected to be familiar with, and comply with, this Code.

Mission Alignment and Scientific Integrity

All PTCOG activities shall support the Association's purpose of advancing particle radiation therapy for the benefit of patients, science, and education.

PTCOG is committed to:

- High scientific and ethical standards;
- Evidence-based and unbiased scientific exchange;
- Independence of educational content and scientific decision-making;
- Transparent and fair processes for abstract review, speaker selection, publications, and endorsements.

Misrepresentation of data, plagiarism, undisclosed conflicts of interest, or any form of scientific misconduct will not be tolerated.

Responsibilities of PTCOG and Its Representatives

PTCOG undertakes to conduct its affairs in a transparent, democratic, and ethical manner, ensuring openness towards its members while safeguarding confidentiality where required.

PTCOG representatives shall:

- Act honestly, diligently, and in good faith in the best interests of PTCOG;
- Exercise good judgment and avoid actions that could damage PTCOG's reputation;
- Comply with applicable laws, regulations, and internal policies;
- Refrain from using their role within PTCOG for personal, professional, or institutional gain.

Service to PTCOG is based primarily on voluntary commitment and shall not be motivated by financial or commercial considerations.

Conflicts of Interest and Declarations

PTCOG recognises that conflicts of interest may arise and must be managed transparently.

A conflict of interest exists where personal, professional, institutional, or financial interests could improperly influence, or be perceived to influence, an individual's responsibilities toward PTCOG.

All PTCOG representatives must:

- Disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest in a timely and complete manner;
- Update declarations as required and at least annually where applicable;
- Conduct themselves in accordance with the PTCOG Conflict of Interest Policy, which sets out detailed requirements for disclosure, assessment, management, and mitigation of conflicts;

- Recuse themselves from discussions or decisions where a conflict exists, in accordance with PTCOG procedures.

Failure to disclose conflicts of interest, or failure to comply with the Conflict of Interest Policy, may lead to sanctions, including removal from roles or PTCOG activities.

Relations with Industry and External Partners

PTCOG acknowledges the value of collaboration with industry, foundations, and other external partners, while safeguarding its independence and integrity.

In all external relationships:

- Scientific, educational, and governance activities must remain independent, objective, and unbiased;
- Sponsorship or support must not influence scientific content, decision-making, or endorsements;
- Endorsements of activities, statements, or products must follow formal PTCOG processes;
- No PTCOG representative may accept inducements that could compromise professional independence.

Gifts, Hospitality, and Expenses

PTCOG representatives must not give or receive gifts, benefits, or hospitality that could influence, or appear to influence decisions or actions.

- Cash or cash-equivalent gifts are strictly prohibited;
- Gifts and invitations must be modest, appropriate, and infrequent;
- All reimbursable expenses must be reasonable, justified, and in line with PTCOG reimbursement rules;
- Improper or excessive hospitality is not permitted.

Intellectual Property and Representation of PTCOG

The name, logo, branding, and intellectual property of PTCOG belong to the Association.

- Use of PTCOG intellectual property requires prior authorisation;
- Individuals speaking on behalf of PTCOG must accurately represent PTCOG positions;
- Personal opinions must be clearly identified as such and not presented as official PTCOG positions;
- PTCOG intellectual property must not be used for personal or institutional promotion without permission.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

PTCOG representatives may have access to confidential or sensitive information, including personal data and internal deliberations.

All representatives must:

- Protect confidential information and not disclose it without authorisation;
- Respect data protection and privacy principles and applicable data protection laws;
- Use PTCOG data only for legitimate Association purposes;
- Maintain confidentiality obligations even after the end of their role with PTCOG.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

PTCOG is committed to an inclusive, respectful, and collaborative environment that values diversity across:

- Gender, age, nationality, professional role, discipline, and geographic region;
- Institutional backgrounds and perspectives.

PTCOG does not tolerate discrimination, exclusion, or unequal treatment on any grounds protected by law or professional ethics.

Diversity and inclusivity shall be actively promoted in leadership, committees, scientific programmes, education, and communications.

Respectful Behaviour and Zero Tolerance for Harassment

PTCOG is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and professional environment.

Harassment, bullying, intimidation, discrimination, or offensive behaviour—including sexual harassment—will not be tolerated in any PTCOG context, including meetings, events, online platforms, and communications.

All PTCOG representatives are expected to:

- Treat others with respect and professionalism;
- Refrain from abusive, hostile, or inappropriate conduct;
- Support a culture in which concerns can be raised without fear of retaliation.

Political Activity, Lobbying, Bribery, and Corruption

PTCOG does not engage in partisan political activity.

Any advocacy or interaction with public authorities must be:

- Consistent with PTCOG's mission;
- Transparent and lawful;
- Free from improper influence.

PTCOG strictly prohibits bribery, corruption, and facilitation payments, whether direct or indirect.

Reporting Concerns and Enforcement

PTCOG encourages the reporting of concerns, suspected misconduct, or breaches of this Code.

- Concerns may be raised confidentially in accordance with PTCOG procedures;
- Reports will be handled fairly, promptly, and discreetly;
- Retaliation against individuals raising concerns in good faith is prohibited.

Breaches of this Code may result in corrective action or sanctions, including removal from roles, suspension of participation, or termination of membership, in accordance with PTCOG rules.

Commitment to the Code of Conduct

All PTCOG representatives are expected to:

- Familiarise themselves with this Code of Conduct;
- Act in accordance with its principles and standards;
- Uphold the integrity and reputation of PTCOG at all times.

This Code of Conduct may be amended as PTCOG evolves, in accordance with its Internal Regulations.

9.2 PTCOG Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy

Purpose and Principles

The Particle Therapy Co-operative Group (PTCOG) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of scientific integrity, independence, transparency, and public trust.

This Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy sets out the principles and requirements for identifying, disclosing, assessing, and managing conflicts of interest in order to ensure that PTCOG decisions, activities, and outputs are carried out solely in the best interests of the Association and its mission.

This Policy puts into practice to the PTCOG Code of Conduct and must be read in conjunction with the PTCOG Statutes and Internal Regulations. In the event of any inconsistency, the Statutes and applicable law shall prevail.

Scope – Who Must Comply

This Policy applies to all individuals who influence, contribute to, or represent PTCOG, including:

- Steering Committee representatives and attendees involved in decisions
- Executive Committee members
- Subcommittee and Working Group Chairs, Co-Chairs, members, and reviewers
- Abstract reviewers, programme committee members, editors, and authors acting in an official PTCOG capacity
- Speakers, faculty, moderators, and session chairs at PTCOG-controlled activities
- Secretariat staff, consultants, contractors, and advisors

- Any individual representing PTCOG externally, including in endorsements, collaborations, or partnerships

Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when an individual's personal, professional, institutional, or financial interests could improperly influence, or reasonably be perceived to influence, their judgement, decisions, or actions on behalf of PTCOG.

Conflicts of interest may be:

- **Actual** – currently influencing a decision
- **Potential** – reasonably expected to arise
- **Perceived** (apparent) – could undermine trust or confidence even if no actual bias exists

Both financial and non-financial interests are relevant and must be declared when they could affect PTCOG activities.

Duty to Disclose

Individuals within the scope of this Policy must disclose relevant interests:

- On appointment or engagement with PTCOG
- At least annually
- Prior to participating in activities where conflicts commonly arise (e.g. abstract review, programme selection, procurement, endorsements)
- Immediately if circumstances change

Disclosures must be complete, accurate, and made in good faith.

What Must Be Disclosed

At a minimum, disclosures must include, where relevant (personal and/or institutional):

1. Employment and leadership roles, including advisory or board roles
2. Consulting arrangements or paid advisory services
3. Honoraria, speaker fees, or paid educational activity
4. Research funding or grants (personal or institutional)
5. Equity interests or ownership interests
6. Intellectual property (patents, licences, royalties)
7. Gifts, hospitality, or travel support beyond modest or nominal value
8. Close personal relationships relevant to PTCOG decisions
9. Institutional interests that may benefit from PTCOG decisions (e.g. host bids, endorsements, contracts)

Where no relevant interests exist, a declaration of “Nil to declare” must be made.

High-Risk Situations

The following situations require particular care and usually require recusal and/or other management actions:

- Procurement, contracting, sponsorship, or commercial decisions
- Selection of hosts for PTCOG meetings or events
- Abstract review, programme development, or speaker selection
- Editorial or publication decisions
- Endorsements, official statements, or PTCOG-branded outputs

Oversight and Management

COI Officer

The PTCOG Secretary acts as the COI Officer and is responsible for:

- Receiving and reviewing COI disclosures
- Maintaining the COI Register
- Assessing relevance and risk of declared interests
- Recommending appropriate management actions
- Advising PTCOG bodies on conflict mitigation and recusal

Where the Secretary has a conflict in a specific matter, the Executive Committee shall designate an alternative COI Officer for that matter (e.g. the Chair or another Officer), and this shall be documented.

Management Actions

Depending on the nature and severity of a conflict, the Secretary may recommend one or more of the following measures:

- Disclosure only (for transparency)
- Recusal from discussion and/or voting
- Restriction from specific roles or activities
- Independent review or reassignment of tasks
- Removal from a committee or decision-making role
- Termination of appointment or engagement where conflicts cannot be adequately managed

All management decisions shall be proportionate, documented, and, where appropriate, recorded in meeting minutes.

Recusal Obligations

Where a conflict exists, the individual concerned must:

- Declare the conflict before discussion begins
- Comply with any recusal requirement determined under this Policy

- Not seek to influence the outcome indirectly or informally

Failure to recuse when required constitutes a breach of this Policy.

Transparency to Members and Audiences

- Speakers, chairs, and authors must disclose relevant interests clearly to audiences at PTCOG meetings, publications, or educational activities.
- A clear “Nil to declare” statement must be used where applicable.
- PTCOG reserves the right to require additional or activity-specific disclosures.

COI Register and Confidentiality

COI Register

A confidential COI Register shall be maintained by the Secretary, recording disclosures, assessments, and management actions. Access is limited to those responsible for PTCOG governance and compliance.

Confidentiality

COI information shall be treated as confidential governance information, except where disclosure is required for transparency, good governance, or by law.

Non-Compliance and Sanctions

Failure to comply with this Policy—including failure to disclose, incomplete or misleading declarations, or non-compliance with recusal requirements—may result in corrective action or sanctions, including:

- Removal from specific roles or activities
- Suspension of participation
- Termination of appointment or membership

Actions shall be taken in accordance with PTCOG governance procedures and principles of due process.

Review and Updates

This Policy is a living document and shall be reviewed periodically, at least every two years, or sooner if required by changes in PTCOG activities, governance, or legal requirements.

Annex A – PTCOG Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form

1. Personal Details

Full name:

Institution/organisation:

PTCOG role(s):

Email:

Date of submission:

2. Declaration Period

This disclosure covers interests from the past **12 months** and any known future commitments.

3. Disclosures

For each category, tick Yes or No and provide details where applicable.

A. Employment or leadership roles (incl. boards/advisory roles): Yes No

Details:

B. Consulting or advisory services: Yes No

Details:

C. Honoraria or speaking fees: Yes No

Details:

D. Research funding or grants (personal or institutional): Yes No

Details:

E. Equity interests or ownership: Yes No

Details:

F. Intellectual property (patents, licences, royalties): Yes No

Details:

G. Gifts, hospitality, or travel support beyond modest value: Yes No

Details:

H. Close personal relationships relevant to PTCOG decisions: Yes No

Details:

I. Institutional interests relevant to PTCOG decisions: Yes No

Details:

J. Other interests that could create an actual, potential, or perceived conflict: Yes No

Details:

4. Nil to Declare

I confirm that I have no relevant interests to declare.

5. Acknowledgement and Undertaking

I confirm that the information provided is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I undertake to update this disclosure if my circumstances change and to comply with any conflict management measures, including recusal, as determined under the PTCOG COI Policy.

Name (typed signature):

Date:

9.3 Data Protection & Privacy Policy

Introduction

Welcome to the Particle Therapy Co-operative Group (hereinafter referred to as PTCOG or the Association) privacy policy.

PTCOG respects your privacy and is committed to protecting your personal data. This Privacy Policy explains how we collect, use, and protect your personal data when you:

- visit or use PTCOG websites or digital platforms (regardless of where you access them from), or
- interact with registration forms, membership systems, abstract submission platforms, event portals, surveys, or other digital activities carried out by or on behalf of PTCOG (“Activities”).

This Privacy Policy also describes your choices regarding the use, access, and correction of your personal data and explains your privacy rights and how the law protects you.

Important Information and Who We Are

Purpose of this Privacy Policy

This Privacy Policy aims to provide information on how PTCOG collects and processes your personal data through your use of PTCOG websites and Activities, including any data you may provide when:

- applying for or renewing membership,
- registering for meetings, congresses, or educational activities,
- submitting abstracts or manuscripts,
- applying for grants, awards, or elected roles,
- subscribing to newsletters or communications, or
- otherwise engaging with PTCOG.

PTCOG websites and systems are not intended for children under the age of 18, and PTCOG does not knowingly collect personal data relating to children.

This Privacy Policy should be read together with any other privacy notices or information provided at specific points where personal data is collected, so that you are fully aware of how and why your data is used. This Privacy Policy supplements those notices and does not override them.

Controller

PTCOG is the controller and responsible for your personal data within the meaning of applicable data protection laws. Throughout this Privacy Policy, PTCOG may be referred to as “the Association”, “we”, “us”, or “our”.

Changes to the Privacy Policy and Your Duty to Inform Us of Changes

It is important that the personal data we hold about you is accurate and up to date. Please inform us if your personal data changes during your relationship with PTCOG. Where applicable, you may update your personal data directly through PTCOG membership or event platforms.

Third-Party Links

PTCOG websites may include links to third-party websites, plug-ins, or applications. Clicking on those links or enabling those connections may allow third parties to collect or share data about you. PTCOG does not control those third-party websites and is not responsible for their privacy notices. When you leave PTCOG websites, we encourage you to read the privacy notice of each website you visit.

The Data We Collect About You

Personal data means any information about an individual from which that person can be identified.

PTCOG may collect, use, store, and transfer different categories of personal data, including:

- **Identity Data:** first name, last name, title, professional role, institutional affiliation.
- **Contact Data:** postal address (personal or institutional), email address, telephone number.
- **Membership and Profile Data:** membership status, committee roles, professional interests, preferences, survey responses.
- **Financial Transaction Data:** details of payments to and from you (e.g. membership fees, registration fees, reimbursements).
- **Technical Data:** IP address, browser type and version, login data, time zone setting, operating system, and platform.
- **Usage Data:** information about how you use PTCOG websites, platforms, and services.

- **Marketing and Communications Data:** your preferences in receiving communications from PTCOG and your communication preferences.

We also collect and use aggregated data, such as statistical or demographic data, for any purpose. Aggregated data does not directly or indirectly identify you and is therefore not considered personal data under applicable law.

PTCOG does not intentionally collect special categories of personal data (such as health data, racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or biometric data), nor data relating to criminal convictions, unless required for a specific lawful purpose and with appropriate safeguards.

Purpose of Collection

The personal data collected by PTCOG is used to enable the provision and administration of PTCOG services, activities, and governance functions.

If You Fail to Provide Personal Data

Where PTCOG needs to collect personal data by law or under the terms of a contract with you and you fail to provide that data when requested, PTCOG may be unable to perform that contract or provide the relevant service (for example, membership or event participation). In such cases, PTCOG will inform you if this prevents participation.

How Is Your Personal Data Collected?

PTCOG collects data from and about you through:

- **Direct interactions:** when you complete forms, correspond with PTCOG by email, submit applications, register for events, or provide feedback.
- **Automated technologies:** as you interact with PTCOG websites, through cookies and similar technologies.
- **Third parties:** service providers supporting PTCOG activities (including IT, payment, registration, and abstract-handling service providers), where permitted by law.

How We Use Your Personal Data

PTCOG processes personal data where necessary for:

- the performance of contracts with you,
- compliance with legal obligations,
- PTCOG's legitimate interests in operating efficiently, securely, and in accordance with its mission,
- consent, where required.

Personal data may be used to:

- administer membership and governance activities;
- organise and deliver meetings, educational activities, and scientific programmes;
- manage abstract submissions, reviews, publications, and evaluations;
- communicate with members and participants;
- manage payments, accounting, and reimbursements;
- improve PTCOG services, communications, and digital platforms;
- detect fraud, investigate misuse, and maintain system security.

Personal data will not be kept longer than necessary for the purposes for which it was collected, unless retention is required by law or for legitimate governance or archival purposes.

Opting Out

You may opt out of receiving non-essential communications at any time by adjusting your preferences through PTCOG platforms, following unsubscribe links, or contacting the PTCOG Secretariat. Please note that opting out of certain communications may affect PTCOG's ability to contact you regarding membership or participation.

Cookies

You can set your browser to refuse all or some cookies or to alert you when cookies are used. If cookies are disabled, some parts of PTCOG websites may not function properly.

Disclosure of Your Personal Data

PTCOG does not sell personal data.

Personal data may be disclosed:

- to service providers acting on PTCOG's behalf and bound by confidentiality obligations;
- where disclosure is required by law, regulation, or legal process;
- where disclosure is necessary to protect PTCOG's rights, property, users, or safety.

International Transfers

PTCOG operates internationally and may transfer personal data outside Switzerland or the European Economic Area (EEA).

Where personal data is transferred internationally, PTCOG ensures that appropriate safeguards are in place to provide an adequate level of protection, in accordance with applicable data protection laws.

Data Security

PTCOG has implemented appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect personal data against accidental loss, unauthorised use, access, alteration, or disclosure.

Access to personal data is limited to individuals who have a legitimate need to know for PTCOG purposes.

Data Retention

PTCOG retains personal data only for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it was collected, including legal, accounting, and governance requirements.

Personal data may be anonymised for statistical or research purposes, in which case such information may be retained indefinitely.

Your Legal Rights

Subject to applicable law, you have the right to:

- request access to your personal data;
- request correction of inaccurate or incomplete data;
- request deletion of your personal data where appropriate;
- object to or restrict processing in certain circumstances;
- withdraw consent where processing is based on consent;
- request data portability, where applicable.

Requests may be submitted to the PTCOG Secretariat. PTCOG will respond within applicable legal time limits.

Changes to This Privacy Policy

This Privacy Policy is reviewed periodically. PTCOG reserves the right to amend it at any time. Updates will be published on PTCOG's website and take effect from the date of publication.

We encourage you to review this Privacy Policy regularly.

Contact

If you have questions about this Privacy Policy or the way PTCOG processes personal data, please contact:

PTCOG Secretariat

Email: [insert PTCOG contact email]

9.4 Other Policies

PTCOG may implement other policies which will be proposed, reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee. These may include but are not limited to:

9.4.1 Travel and Reimbursement Policy

Detailing travel entitlements and procedures and the policy for reimbursement.

9.4.2 Sponsorship & Partnerships

Policy on Acceptance criteria, scientific independence safeguards, and contract review.

9.4.3 Endorsement Procedure and Policy

Outlining the procedures for applying for endorsement of events, publications and activities.

9.4.4 Communications & Branding

Official name usage (English), logo policy, and website standards.

9.4.5 Complaints & appeals

Channels for submitting complaints; investigation steps; timelines; appeal routes.

10. Representation & Notices

10.1 Legal representation

The Association shall be legally represented by:

- The Chair with joint signatory power with one of the Vice-Chairs:
- The appointed Secretary or Treasurer jointly with the other
- Any such authorized signatories as appointed by the Executive Committee

10.2 Notices

Notices are issued in writing via electronic mail

11. Version Control & Publication

11.1 Update process

Draft updates to these Internal Regulations are prepared by the Secretary/Executive Committee; reviewed by the EC; and communicated to the Steering Committee for approval.

11.2 Change log

Each revision includes a dated change log summarizing amendments and their rationale.

12. Glossary of Terms

For the purposes of these Internal Regulations, the following terms shall have the meanings set out below. Where a term is defined in the PTCOG Statutes, that statutory meaning shall prevail. Terms used in the singular include the plural and vice versa.

Annual PTCOG Meeting

The annual scientific meeting and associated educational sessions organised under the authority of PTCOG, as approved by the Steering Committee.

Association

The Particle Therapy Co-operative Group (PTCOG), a non-profit association constituted under Articles 60–79 of the Swiss Civil Code, governed by its Statutes and Internal Regulations.

Board / Executive Committee

The executive body of PTCOG responsible for the management and representation of the Association, as defined in the Statutes. Within PTCOG, the Board is referred to operationally as the Executive Committee.

Chair / Chairperson

The elected Chair of the Executive Committee, responsible for leading the Executive Committee and representing the Association in accordance with the Statutes and Internal Regulations.

Code of Conduct

The PTCOG Code of Conduct adopted pursuant to the Internal Regulations, setting out ethical principles, expected behaviours, and standards of conduct for all PTCOG representatives.

Conflict of Interest (COI)

A situation in which an individual's personal, professional, institutional, or financial interests could improperly influence, or reasonably be perceived to influence, their duties or decisions on behalf of PTCOG.

Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy

The policy adopted under the Internal Regulations governing the disclosure, assessment, management, and mitigation of conflicts of interest within PTCOG.

Corresponding Members (Individual Members)

Individual persons admitted to PTCOG membership who do not hold voting rights in the General Assembly (Steering Committee), as defined in the Statutes.

General Assembly / Steering Committee

The supreme governing body of the Association as defined by Swiss law and the PTCOG Statutes. Composed of representatives of all Institutional Members. Within PTCOG, the General Assembly is referred to operationally as the Steering Committee.

Host Institution / Host Centre

An Institutional Member approved to host the Annual PTCOG Meeting in accordance with PTCOG procedures. The Host Institution has no governance authority unless separately mandated.

Institutional Members

Particle radiation therapy facilities, universities, or research institutions admitted as PTCOG members and entitled to representation and voting rights in the General Assembly (Steering Committee), as defined in the Statutes.

Internal Regulations

The internal rules adopted pursuant to the Statutes to govern PTCOG's operational, administrative, and procedural matters.

Nil to Declare

A formal statement made by an individual confirming that no relevant conflict of interest exists under the PTCOG Conflict of Interest Policy.

Officer

A descriptive term used in the Internal Regulations to refer to individuals holding designated roles within PTCOG (including Chair, Vice-Chairs, Secretary, and Treasurer). The term does not create a statutory organ.

Professional Congress Organiser (PCO)

An external entity contracted by PTCOG to support the organisation and delivery of meetings and events. A PCO has no governance authority within PTCOG.

Secretary

An officer of PTCOG responsible for administrative governance, management of the Secretariat, preparation of agendas and minutes, and oversight of conflict of interest disclosures and the COI Register.

Secretariat

The administrative support function of PTCOG, operating under the authority of the Executive Committee and managed by the Secretary.

Statutes

The Statutes of the Particle Therapy Co-operative Group, being the foundational legal document of the Association.

Subcommittee

A standing body established by the Executive Committee, and where required approved by the Steering Committee, to oversee specific activities in support of PTCOG's purposes. Subcommittees have no independent legal authority.

Topical Group (Working Group)

An informal, non-statutory group created for discussion or exchange of expertise on specific topics, without decision-making powers or formal mandate.

Treasurer

An officer of PTCOG responsible for oversight of the Association's financial management, accounting, and financial reporting.

Voting Rights

The right to vote on matters brought before the General Assembly or Executive Committee, exercised by authorised representatives in accordance with the Statutes and Internal Regulations.

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