



**9<sup>th</sup> Joint Call EuroQol Working Groups**  
**March 2020**

Prepared by Elly Stolk Scientific Team Leader EuroQol Research Foundation in collaboration  
with the WGs



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## 1. Introduction

The EuroQol Research Foundation (henceforth “Foundation”) is inviting applications for funding by its competitive research funding programs. The Foundation aims to serve the public interest by supporting scientific research and development of instruments which describe and value health without an aim for profit.

The Foundation intends to fund high quality research that is of scientific and strategic interest to the EuroQol Group and its members. WGs have been set up to support the research agenda outlined by the Executive Committee (“Exec) that primarily focuses on the measurement and valuation of health. The WGs are appointed by the Exec to foster research within their remit, which can be found in the Working Groups document (Appendix 1). Proposals that seek to address one or more specific aims of the WGs will be considered for funding, but strategic priorities will influence decisions.

For this update, the WGs have reviewed coverage of their aims by the current research portfolio and identified priority areas. The targeted calls below result from that priority check. Addressing these topics will help the WGs to make progress towards their stated aims. However, submissions beyond the listed themes are also welcome. The Exec continues to give high priority to the development of the EQ-5D-Y value sets. Beyond this topic, this round of EuroQol foundation research grants will operate on a 'bottom-up' basis without predetermined priorities. If you have an excellent idea for a research project, we invite you to seek funding for it through the current call. In the same spirit, it was decided that also non-members can submit research ideas under the current call, albeit with a requirement that at least one EQ members also needs to be part of the project team.

The deadline for submissions is **April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020** at 23:59 CET.

## 2. Scope of this call

### 2.1. Descriptive systems

For this round of funding, the Descriptive System Working Group is calling for proposals contributing to 2 broad research themes:

1. Testing the coverage and validity of the EQ-5D instruments in different populations. All types of validity e.g. face, content, construct is of interest. Examples of populations include, but are not limited to, different cultural, demographic and disease groups. Proposals using both qualitative and quantitative methods are welcome.
2. Testing the impact of time and recall period on the EQ-5D descriptive system performance. Research teams are encouraged to suggest the methodological approaches to use for these studies.

Further information is provided below:

#### **2.1.1 Testing the coverage and validity of EQ-5D Instruments**

##### *Instrument Coverage*

There has been a significant amount of DSWG research focused on testing the coverage of EQ-5D instruments internationally, by both focusing on the relevance of the five items themselves as well as investigating the areas of QoL that are important to people. There is also work in this area conducted outside of the EuroQol Research Foundation.

We are therefore calling for proposals conducting syntheses or reviews of current findings from the studies investigating item coverage, to draw conclusions and establish where further development is required. This will include EuroQol funded work, and wider publications. Projects in this area will involve close collaboration with the DSWG to identify studies, and provide syntheses of findings to inform future research calls.

##### *Instrument Validity*

The DSWG is also calling for research proposals investigating the validity and appropriateness of EQ-5D instruments. This includes, but is not limited to, research on different cultural, demographic and disease groups. We call for proposals:

- Assessing the cultural appropriateness of the EQ-5D and its validity for use as a common measure across demographic and disease groups. This work could involve primary or secondary data collection and could employ quantitative and/or qualitative methods.
- Conducting further primary research to assess the validity and psychometric performance of the EQ-5D across populations and disease specific groups in comparison to other measures. This includes assessing the performance of the instruments in measuring multi-morbidities. Projects using both quantitative and/or qualitative methods are welcome. See note below for further proposal requirements

Note: In the proposals submitted it is essential to delineate whether the objective is to assess domains, items, or attributes. A domain refers to the concept that you wish to measure or describe. An item is a measure of a domain (e.g., a question, a cognitive task). An attribute is a description of a domain (e.g., adjectival statement, vignette). A domain may be measured using multiple items and described using various attributes; however, each of the five EQ-5D-5L domains has one item and one attribute. Any assessment of domains, items, or attributes must account for context, such the disease, language, and setting. A domain/item/attribute may be appropriate and validated in one setting, but inappropriate and invalid in another.

### ***2.1.2 Testing the impact of time on eq-5d reporting***

Many acute diseases and conditions show variations in health over time. Some conditions, such as infectious diseases e.g. flu, episodic conditions e.g. epilepsy and ‘event’ like conditions e.g. stroke, last for a short time and may have different illness progressions. Even chronic conditions, which may be progressive or stable over time e.g. angina, show substantial fluctuations. This poses challenges for the measurement of quality of life and computation of QALYs. There is limited evidence about the performance of the EQ-5D with regards to duration and fluctuations in conditions, and we welcome research in this area. Possible approaches might experiment with repeated measurements e.g. longitudinal data and qualitative methods investigating how patients experience their illness, how they use EQ-5D and how HRQoL measurements or instructions may be improved. Alternatively, the descriptive system recall period might be modified by changing the instructions using different timeframes than “your health today” e.g. “during your last episode”, “in the last week” etc. Proposals in this area are encouraged.

To discuss potential proposal submissions, or for further information about any of the research areas listed please contact Brendan Mulhern ([Brendan.mulhern@chere.uts.edu.au](mailto:Brendan.mulhern@chere.uts.edu.au)).

## **2.2. Valuation**

The EuroQol Valuation Working Group (VWG) has one of the most challenging and broad remits, reflecting the importance of valuation methodology to all our instruments. The VWG is charged with multiple aims across a variety of areas that include:

- Investigation of how our existing valuation approaches may be further refined;
- Investigation of new approaches to valuing health;
- Examining the basis/rationale for value sets for patient groups; and
- Collaboration with other WGs or approved groups that work on conceptual and practical issues concerned with valuation of EQ-5D technologies. Examples are valuation of bolt-ons or EQ-5D-Y.

Recent developments led to an increased interest in methodological research in valuation, calling for an increased need to progress on all of the 4 main aims of the VWG mentioned above. Therefore, we invite researchers to submit proposals related to the four main aims of the VWG. In addition, we continue to invite you to submit proposals relevant to a range of specific topics, including:

- Quality control methods for data quality in discrete choice experiments. While our current quality control protocol for the collection of cTTO data is extensive and well established, the quality control approach for data collected using discrete choice experiments is very limited. consistency / quality of DCE responses and their external consistency with TTO-elicited values are especially welcome for this call for proposals.
- Approaches to combine cTTO and DCE data from different samples as used in Lite valuation protocols, for the use in hybrid models. Proposals may be related to methods of analysis, as well as designs that are specific for the use in two different samples.
- Qualitative work exploring the reasons why differences exist in the valuation of health states between EQ-5D-Y and EQ-5D states when considered as being experienced by

a child/an adolescent or an adult. This could be either in the context of a common valuation task applied to each instrument, or on the reasons underpinning different valuations under different perspectives.

- Appropriate standardised methods for accounting for heteroscedasticity in the modelling of EQ-5D health states (perhaps also in the context of autocorrelation of valuations between states within individual respondents). This is an issue both for the EQ-VT and the various DCE approaches being considered by different teams in the EuroQoL group and beyond.
- Concerns have been voiced that valuation of health states that are considered worse than dead is problematic. Using cTTO, for instance, we find that the obtained negative scores do not vary much. We seek to understand why this is the case and whether the findings are a product of people's preferences or indicate a limitation of the method. Broader work on valuation of worse than dead is also welcome.

The VWG welcomes research proposals using a variety of different methodological approaches, but the priority is for projects that would provide practical guidance for the EuroQoL Research Foundation in the above areas.

### **2.3. Large Scale Applications**

Large Scale Applications (LSA) cover the use of EQ-5D in large datasets, such as in quality registries (defined by various 'categories': condition, medical specialism, treatment, device, etc.), national health surveys, and large-scale multinational cohort studies. This type of use is coined 'use as PROM' or just 'PROMS'.

Routine data collection is often done with *multiple aims and different users* (e.g., clinicians, researchers, patients, and managers) in mind, each of which have specific perspectives and data requirements. Despite the EQ-5D being part of many national (e.g. Sweden, England) and international clinical registries, no clear strategy exists from registry holders, payers, and the EQ Group on the use of routinely collected EQ-5D data in these settings.

Increasingly stakeholders of registries are aware that 'use' is much more than data collection alone; 'use' implies that the registry holder knows how to extract/aggregate/present EQ-5D

information (with other information) which fits in the working process or quality process of the user; the user in turn must know how to fit these data into the workflow/role the user has. And particular features of EQ-5D are more important in the clinical context: individual reliability, suitable cut-offs, the meaning of difference scores, the obtaining of valid pre-intervention or pre-registry values of EQ-5D.

Over the last few years, outcome-based health care improvement has emerged, resulting in the terms 'PROM' and 'PREM'. *PROM* (patient-reported outcome measure) refers to health measures which provide information on the patient's/client's health as reported by the patient/client. By contrast, *PREM* (patient-reported experience measure) refers to the service quality apart from its outcome impact, i.e. the quality of process of care, including both professional behavior and features like accessibility, thereby complimenting the PROM.

While EQ-5D is not a PREM, decisions on its incorporation in current quality systems are usually made in parallel.

The EQ-5D has proven to be a *good candidate* for routine PROM collection in several large-scale applications, including those in the UK, Sweden and Canada. Many strong features of the EQ-5D are valuable for PROM use, in particular its appealing descriptive system. However, many issues still await solutions and evidence. The science behind this (say 'PROMetrics') appears to be as multidisciplinary and technically demanding as the science behind e.g. various valuation methods. Features, like the individual reliability of a level score, a sum score, or the utility score are important if EQ-5D data are to be used as part of quality control cycles. Similarly, using the EQ-5D for benchmark purposes (hospital, caregiver, region) creates the need for descriptive summary indicators (not necessarily preference driven) and change-over-time indicators, where we need more evidence on how experienced benefit relates to EQ-5D differences (previous work from a.o. I.Buchholz). Designers of automated quality systems using PROMs (including EQ-5D) ask for meaningful thresholds to alert users, or procedures to derived these in their context. Graphically appealing yet informative presentation formats for comparative data ('dashboards') are needed to communicate the results of PROM initiatives. The use of PROM numbers in individual care processes requires protocols/tools to correct for *personal scale distortion* ('response heterogeneity'), and *true background influence* ('case-mix' adjustment); the assumption that individual differences cancel out as is done in economic evaluations and randomized clinical trials is not usable here. Response heterogeneity correction, while not needed in RCTs for validity, still would be very useful to improve power.

One of the key challenges faced by the LSA group, and the EQ group more broadly, is *the 'battle' with competitor instruments*, especially the PROMIS generic instrument, and, potentially, the E-QALY. This challenge will become more evident with the widespread adoption of PROMs in routine practice, either stand-alone - as in many registries - or as part of outcome indicator sets (e.g., ICHOM).

*International authorities* set up report schemes on the health care systems of countries, which increasingly rest on PROMs and PREMs. For example, OECD health ministers have agreed to promote the routine collection of PROMs and PREMs. This international push for greater use of PROMs, together with the emerging field of competitor instruments raises a number of issues: how does the EQ-5D compare with other PROMs in the context of routine outcome measurement in terms of their measurement performance, clinical utility, and usefulness in supporting decision-making at various levels within the system? In the across-country context, new desirable properties emerge like the cross-walk capability to other measures (see APERSU-CIHI report). In data collection, the alignment with a PREM measure is relevant.

How can we develop *business models* which work in these environments (professional societies, hospitals, international governmental bodies) ? In particular now most use is free ? Sofar the EQ-business in financial terms rests for 99% on health economical evaluation of drugs, which is quite different in terms of *research formats* and *research leads*.

The mission of the EuroQol Group is to improve decisions by end-users and stakeholders about health and health care, either using the EQ-5D as part of an outcome measurement framework or as a single measure. The LSA WG regards the use of large-scale datasets, given the aforementioned developments, to be at the core of the mission. And the LSA WG, with the Research Foundation's management, looks into the business model of EQ-5D as PROM.

Given the above, the RFP includes two areas of interest.

### **2.3.1. Routine use of EQ-5D as a PROM in large-scale applications**

Routinely collected EQ-5D data could be held by individual hospitals, clinics, primary care practices, regional or national health bodies, insurance organizations or patient registries. Beyond data collection, the conversion of these data into 'information' for decision-making and quality improvement is a challenge. This implies a shift in scientific attention to user-

defined data-processing and data-presentation. We therefore are especially interested in the following research areas:

*Analysis and reporting of EQ-5D as a PROM.*

Analyzing and interpreting change in EQ-5D as a PROM has not been investigated thoroughly. Multiple questions exist, including: how do EQ-VAS scores relate to EQ-5D dimension scores over time, does response shift affect change data, what is the relationship between the EQ-5D (in a cross-section or as difference scores) and the dominant clinical measure in a particular area, what is the best choice of or updatable method to obtain thresholds for the level or change (e.g. MIDs) in health, and how can we transform day-to-day data or routinely collected data into measures-for-decisions/reflection.

In the analysis and interpretation of EQ-5D data generated in this non-economic context, the index score as a summary score for the five dimensions may not be appropriate, particularly when these data are used to inform clinical decision making. As such, developing new scoring approaches to generate a summary score for the EQ-5D is imperative to advance the use of EQ-5D in these applications.

*Presentation of EQ-5D information for different stakeholders, for different purposes ('dashboards')*

While the EuroQol Group has made progress in the technical possibilities to compare EQ-5D data, the presentational formats that work best for the various user situations (e.g. for clinicians, decision makers, etc.) remain unclear. 'Dashboards' includes dynamic IT-features like the option of pointing to results in graphs or tables, which then are shown in more detail. We need dynamic templates that combine EQ-5D descriptive, utility and EQ-VAS information for distinct modes of PROM use. Empirical evidence on best techniques could translate into an EQ-toolbox for PROM use. Better presentational formats may also help the business case for EQ-5D compared to other competitor instruments, if we create opportunities to capitalize on this added value.

Several options exist on case-mix adjustment (table-wise, regression-wise), where one ongoing study addresses case-mix adjustment on other EQ-outcomes than the utility score.

*The conversion of EQ-5D (and other) registry data into clinical decision tools.*

Such tools are a.o. used to support shared decision-making whereby patients who consider receiving a specific treatment A are presented with information on their relative position now

(in EQ-5D terms) and on their expected future health based on their personal characteristics (which may include response style, and decision style). These developments capitalize on routine data collected in large-scale applications. While studies have created pilot tools, real world implementation studies are still lacking.

#### *Comparative performance*

Comparative performance of the EQ-5D as a PROM compared to other leading instruments being used in routine outcome measurement (e.g., PROMIS). This may include research into conversion/cross-walking which can result in asymmetrical feasibility (A can be projected on B, but B not easy on A). An initial study is present, but there is scope for extensions.

#### *Reporting behaviour, or 'response heterogeneity' or response style (RS).*

This is a systematic response tendency of a person, in terms of the scale used, unrelated to the 'true' health level. A commonly known tendency in elderly respondents is to avoid extremes. In various applications of EQ-5D in the context routine PROM measurement and in the assessment of population health, the detection and adjustment of response heterogeneity is vital. One study has been funded to investigate the presence of RS, but research is also needed to develop methods for reduction/correction of RS.

### **2.3.2. Use of EQ-5D in studying inequalities in health at the clinical and population level**

We are interested in studies that measure inequalities in health and health care, using the EQ-5D, including the relationship of inequalities to social and individual determinants of health, and specific policies (local, national, international). If the EQ-5D is contrasted with other measures of morbidity, properties of the EQ-5D might be explored in this context.

Another area of interest is population health, including changes in population health status, population risk factor models and population norms. We are interested in factors that determine population health status defined in EQ-5D terms, including demographic, cultural, epidemiological geographical and temporal factors, and disease impact/burden of disease initiatives.

Preferably research applications relate to the Agenda of the Health Inequalities Special Interest Group (info: Prof Erika Lubetkin). Currently at least one study explores the application of a large set of epidemiological and economic inequality measures with more to come.

### **2.3.3. Other**

This list does not exclude other research questions that may have specific merits, and can be proposed, bearing in mind the rationale of the LSA. For advice or guidance on developing your research proposal, please feel free to contact the co-chairs of the LSA WG (info listed at the end of this document).

## **2.4. EQ-5D in Children**

### **2.4.1. Validation of the EQ-5D-Y-5L**

As in earlier calls, the Younger Populations Working Group (YPWG) calls again for proposals to carry out validation studies for the newly developed, extended version of the EQ-5D-Y in non-English speaking countries. Over recent years, a YPWG study team has developed an extended 5L version of the EQ-5D-Y. There are currently a few validation studies underway, mainly using the English version, but we are interested in receiving further proposals to test the measurement properties of the extended version (e.g. its sensitivity, validity, feasibility) in populations of children and adolescents in non-English speaking countries. We would particularly welcome proposals that aim to:

- Test the psychometric properties and performance of the extended EQ-5D-Y-5L in disease areas that cover the whole range of possible health impairments
- Compare the EQ-5D-Y-3L to the extended EQ-5D-Y-5L and therefore help to show whether instrument validity and sensitivity are improved in the extended version

Further, it will be relevant to conduct reviews, secondary data analysis and – if needed and not too expensive – studies that aim for primary data collection (also in English-speaking countries) that compare the EQ-5D-Y instruments (-3L and/or -5L) with other child-specific instruments to gain information on the psychometric performance of the EQ-5D-Y instruments. Especially, comparisons of EQ-5D-Y and CHU9D are very welcome.

*Note: Please be aware that the Office needs some time (at least 6-9 months) to produce a new language version of EQ-5D-Y-5L (where that version is not already available) to support*

*research. This should be considered when planning a project. Further, currently all EQ-5D-Y-5L versions are beta versions. If the English source version changes, amendments to the language versions might be necessary as well.*

#### **2.4.2. Valuation of EQ-5D-Y-3L**

A valuation protocol for the EQ-5D-Y has been agreed. The YPWG welcomes proposals for EQ-5D-Y-3L valuation studies. If EuroQol members are interested in conducting a national valuation study for the EQ-5D-Y-3L, they should contact Elly Stolk at the Office (stolk@euroqol.org). If a large number of applications are received, the YPWG and the Office will prioritise the requests. Requests for funding for valuation studies should also include a further (explorative) research question, in addition to the standard protocol. Candidate topics for consideration as research questions include:

- Framing/Wording of the valuation tasks which require respondents to take a ‘child health perspective’ (e.g. descriptor term, “a hypothetical child”, “a child you know”, “you as a child”, etc.)
- Whether and how the age of the child/adolescent described within the task affects valuations
- Impact of respondent background characteristics on the valuation of younger people’s health
- Impact of time/duration on the valuation of child health states
- Whether people’s valuation of child health states (vs. adult health states) reflects their wider views about how health care resources should be prioritized
- People’s priorities for children vs. adults
- Whether and how adult preferences for children and adolescent preferences differ
- Feasibility of TTO to obtain adolescent preferences

#### *Conceptual work on youth valuation*

The YPWG would like to invite proposals for conceptual work about the implications of the common finding of the first valuation studies that the value range of EQ-5D-Y is narrower than the value range of EQ-5D (adult version). These findings likely reflect that for adult and children, people calibrate their time trade-offs differently (i.e. for the same quality of life improvement, they would sacrifice greater proportion of remaining lifespan in adults than in

children). What does this mean for the comparability of TTO values of adult and child health states? If a child and an adult both report a health state that has been valued at 0.7, do they have the same quality of life? What are the consequences for cost-effectiveness analysis? Is it possible to compare or aggregate QALY gains incurred in different age groups?

#### *Assessing the appropriateness of the descriptive system*

There is some debate about whether the EQ-5D-Y covers the appropriate domains for assessing the health status of younger populations. Therefore, proposals for research on the relevance of the descriptive system would be welcome, including the relevance of the current dimensions and the wording of dimension headers.

#### *Application of EQ-5D-Y (Y-3L/Y-5L)*

Based on PubMed data, EQ-5D-Y seems to be used relatively rarely. The YPWG would like to encourage expanded use. It would be important to learn more about the usefulness and usability of EQ-5D-Y (Y-3L and/or Y-5L) in specific clinical areas/conditions. Studies of the most prevalent conditions are likely to be prioritised, however, studies of other relevant conditions would also be welcomed.

Further, in line with the research initiatives for adults, the use of the youth instruments in routine clinical practice should also be a focus for research. Therefore, the YPWG calls for research on the usefulness and usability of EQ-5D-Y (Y-3L &/or Y-5L) as an outcome measure in routine clinical practice.

#### *Testing an interviewer-administered version of the EQ-5D-Y for children aged about 5 to 7 years old*

Lastly, the YPWG is interested in a specific topic: an interviewer-administered version of the EQ-5D-Y is available which can be used in children who are able to report their health state by themselves but are unable or unwilling to self-complete the EQ-5D-Y, e.g. children aged 5-7 years. This version contains some guidance/information for an interviewer (how to use the version, how to ask, etc.). The YPWG calls for proposals to test the use of the interviewer-administered EQ-5D-Y version and the appropriate lower cut-off age. Further, a comparison to the self-report version will be interesting. The aim of this version would be to enable self-report by children at age 7 and maybe below.

## 2.5. Education and outreach

The EuroQol Education and Outreach Working Group has a mandate that supports part of the EuroQol mission unrelated to Research & Development but is vital in sustaining the EuroQol membership and its goal: education and outreach.

EuroQol members may submit plans related to any topic relevant to the EuroQol mission, those activities may be:

- organizing educational meetings
- design of courses (face to face or online) or educational materials aimed to improve EuroQol use and dissemination.
- Support to present a workshop or short course at a conference.

To receive funding for meetings or collaboration efforts, a deliverable should be clearly defined, such as a research proposal or a publication. Funding applications received for education and outreach initiatives will be prioritized based on the strategic relevance of reaching out to the targeted population, the suggested topic, and the overall efficiency of the recommended educational or outreach approach.

### 3. Submission Guidelines

#### 3.1. Who can submit?

In this round, the EuroQol research foundation accepts proposals that are submitted by research teams or individual researchers affiliated to different institutions/organisations (Universities, NGOs, companies, etc.). The Principle investigator does not need to be a member, but at least one EuroQol member has to be involved in the project (at least) as co-investigator.

All researchers are strongly encouraged to contact the WG Chair to discuss plans for proposals, to ensure alignment with ongoing and planned research, and alignment with the research objectives of the WG. If you would like input or have questions about the preparation of your proposal, please email the relevant WG contact below, or for general questions, contact Elly Stolk at [stolk@euroqol.org](mailto:stolk@euroqol.org).

#### 3.2. Submission procedure

Henceforth, all proposals and final reports will need to be submitted via the EuroQol Projects Submission Portal: <https://euroqol-proposals.grantplatform.com/>. You will first need to register to create a personal account. Then you can start working on your submission. Progress will be saved, and you can update your proposal right until the submission deadline (even if you have submitted it already). **The deadline for submissions is April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 23:59 CET.**

At registration, please make sure to accept receiving broadcast emails, and notifications from the system in order to facilitate communication.

#### 3.3. Timelines

After the deadline,

- the Scientific team leader will check whether your proposal meets the call's eligibility criteria.

- experts will review all the eligible proposals.
- your proposal will be discussed by the Exec in May 2020
- applicants will normally receive further information about the decision of the Exec within three weeks after the Exec meetings.

### **3.4. Budgets**

This call invites all types of applications for funding: fast track proposals for small projects, regular research applications, proposals for educational or regional meetings, and topical research applications for larger projects. Details about fast track proposals and topical research proposals are provided below. The attached budget guidelines specify how the budgets should be presented. Please note that the budget guidelines have recently been updated: the maximum daily rates have been increased.

*Fast track proposals:* The maximum amount for a fast-track proposal is €15K. Fast track proposals qualify for a lighter review procedure.

*Topical research program proposals:* Members are invited to submit proposals for larger projects, possibly of a longer duration (i.e. 2-4 years), either as a coherent series of studies, or one very large study, to an intended maximum of €150K. Such a program could be suitable for a PhD student. Requests for larger budget can be made, but a strong motivation would be needed and it is recommend to look for co-funding from another organization instead. Interested members are encouraged to contact the relevant WG Chair to ensure alignment with ongoing- and planned research.

### **3.5. Review procedure**

The Exec will follow its standard procedures and criteria to make decisions about funding, except for fast track proposals. Fast track proposals will be added to the batch of proposals received for the call and will be discussed at the review meeting of the Executive Committee in May, 2020 (i.e. no 48-hr review process).

WGs will support the decision making process by reviewing applications. The obtained review reports may be used to decide on the order in which proposals will be discussed and the

amount of time allotted to each proposal at the review meeting of the Executive Committee. Funding applications will be judged by their overall strategic relevance, alignment with current research priorities and scientific quality.

### 3.6. Further information

For further information, you can contact Elly Stolk (EuroQol Scientific Team Leader) the relevant working group chairs and Office scientist who support that WG, or any other members of that WG. The primary contacts of each WG for questions about this call are:

Descriptive system	Brendan Mulhern	<a href="mailto:Brendan.Mulhern@chere.uts.edu.au">Brendan.Mulhern@chere.uts.edu.au</a>
	John Brazier	<a href="mailto:j.e.brazier@sheffield.ac.uk">j.e.brazier@sheffield.ac.uk</a>
	Aureliano Finch	<a href="mailto:Finch@euroqol.org">Finch@euroqol.org</a>
Valuation	Richard Norman	<a href="mailto:richard.norman@curtin.edu.au">richard.norman@curtin.edu.au</a>
	Elly Stolk	<a href="mailto:stolk@euroqol.org">stolk@euroqol.org</a>
Large Scale Applications	Gouke Bonsel	<a href="mailto:bonsel@euroqol.org">bonsel@euroqol.org</a>
	Bas Janssen	<a href="mailto:janssen@euroqol.org">janssen@euroqol.org</a>
EQ-5D in Children	Wolfgang Greiner	<a href="mailto:wolfgang.greiner@uni-bielefeld.de">wolfgang.greiner@uni-bielefeld.de</a>
	Elly Stolk	<a href="mailto:stolk@euroqol.org">stolk@euroqol.org</a>
Education and Outreach	Elly Stolk	<a href="mailto:stolk@euroqol.org">stolk@euroqol.org</a>

If you are interested to seek collaboration and/or get access to the data which may become available as part of the agreements with researchers/authorities in Sweden and Alberta, Canada, please contact the local contact persons (copying the WG chair):

Emelie Heintz (Sweden)	<a href="mailto:emeliejanssen@euroqol.org">emeliejanssen@euroqol.org</a>
Jeffrey Johnson (Alberta)	<a href="mailto:jeffreyj@ualberta.ca">jeffreyj@ualberta.ca</a>
Arto Ohinmaa (Alberta)	<a href="mailto:arto.ohinmaa@ualberta.ca">arto.ohinmaa@ualberta.ca</a>

## 4. Appendices

- 4.1. Revised Working Group (WG)s for 2015-17 Guided by Scientific Priorities
- 4.2. Guidance for applicants
- 4.3. Budget guidelines

**Revised Working Group (WG)s for 2015-18**

**Guided by Scientific Priorities**

**2015 Executive Committee**

*Last update: 16-2-2018*

*In this document, informed by the Strategic Research Priorities and WGs Review documents, we describe the current scope of each WG. The purpose of this section is to explain why and how the Working Group (WG) structure has been introduced, what the current objectives are, and how WGs will work. The WGs will be generating Requests for Proposals (RFP), which will be calls for targeted research, to which any EuroQol Group members may respond. These will represent important new opportunities for members of the EuroQol Group to obtain funding for research.*

## **1. Background to Working Groups as an Initiative**

- The continued success of the EuroQol Group and non-profit status requires that our revenues and the substantial reserves be invested in research and development.
- The Executive Committee has a responsibility for establishing the scientific direction of the EuroQol Group, and in promoting and funding a research programme consistent with the overall scientific strategy.
- A few years ago the Executive Committee decided to introduce a new structure, by introducing WGs, each to be charged with clearly defined, specific objectives relating to the scientific agenda of the EuroQol Group.
- The WGs were set up to represent the principal means by which we channel ideas and proposals to the Executive Committee for consideration for research funding.
- The WG structure matches the research priorities the Executive Committee and the Board have jointly defined in the Strategic Research Priorities.
- WG Chairs will report progress towards the stated aims of a WG annually to the Executive. Informed by progress towards stated aims and strategic priorities, the WG structure or objectives states for WGs can be revised by the Executive Committee.
- The performance of WGs will be reviewed on a periodic basis (e.g., every 2 years).
- Overall, the WG structure has proved to be an effective and productive source of research deliverables for the EuroQol organization.

## **2. Implementation of the WG structure**

- WGs Chairs and members will be selected by the Executive Committee. An appeal for nominations from the membership be made for WG Membership can be part of the selection procedure.
- Although WG Chairs may independently reach out and contact a potential member directly to nominate him/herself for a WG position, EuroQol members are encouraged to nominate themselves. Those EuroQol members who are interested in working on a particular WG should express their interest through the Business Office. Subsequently, the WG Chairs will submit a list

with the proposed WG members from the list of nominees to the Executive Committee for their feedback and to finalize the Work Group teams. Membership in more than one WG is permissible.

- The membership of each WG will be revisited at least annually to ensure a collaborative and productive team-based approach. EuroQol members may express their interest to join a WG at any time to the Business Office.
- Our goal is to engage *all* members of the EuroQol Group in the research activities being coordinated by the WGs. Note that the mandate of each WG is not to conduct research, but to coordinate and facilitate it. The WGs are encouraged, but not required to, establish a Special Interest Group (SIG), which comprises EuroQol Group members with a demonstrable research interest in the relevant area. The SIGs will provide a wider network of researchers with which the WG can liaise, seek input from and keep informed about the RFPs being developed. SIG members will be able to share with the WG any information or topic that has relevance for its research agenda. EuroQol Group members who are interested in being a member of a given SIG should contact the relevant WG Chair, explaining their expertise and research activities in the area of work. For reasons of efficiency, the number of persons participating in a SIG may be limited. A current example of a SIG lies within the Children WG.
- From time to time, a Taskforce of Program Team (PT) will be initiated, charged with a specific aim. The PT differs from the SIG by the fact that it is an ad-hoc team to conduct specific studies that generate evidence on strategically important research questions in a short period of time. If considered necessary to realise their objectives, a WG can propose the need for an PT to the Executive Committee. This approach has proven to be very effective in getting a lot of work done in a short period of time. A taskforce or PT reports to, and works in close cooperation with, the WG. The taskforce or PT will be dissolved once the objectives have been achieved. A WG can send out nomination calls for Taskforce or PT membership. After receiving a proposal by the WG the Executive Committee will formally appoint the members. Recent examples of a Taskforce was the 3L/5L Taskforce charged with investigating the consequences of transitioning from 3L to 5L. An older example was the team that conducted a series of studies to improve the TTO module of EQ-VT, under supervision of the Valuation Methodology WG.
- Lastly, we consider it essential to promote and support novel, innovative research, whether it is covered by the Strategic Research Priorities or not. Proposals for innovative research are welcome and can be submitted at any time. They will be reviewed directly by the Executive Committee.

### **3. How can members of the EuroQol Group find out more about the activities of the WGs?**

Information about the progress of each WG and calls for proposals will be posted on the members' area of the website and updates will be emailed to all EuroQol group members.

EuroQol Group members are encouraged to email the WG chairs if they are wondering which WG would be best aligned with a research idea or proposal. If in doubt, please contact the Scientific Team Leader, Elly Stolk (stolk@euroqol.org), or the Executive Director Bernhard Slaap (slaap@euroqol.org), for guidance or feedback.

#### 4. Summary of WGs for 2015-18

The WG structure currently includes five WGs:

Proposed 2015-2018	Aim
Descriptive Systems WG	This WG focuses on exploring the conceptual basis for generic preference-based HRQL measures.
Valuation WG	Focus on valuation methods. However, the activities have been extended to include international initiatives related to prospective valuation studies and international initiatives using data collected from valuation studies.
EQ-5D for Children WG	Validation and valuation of the EQ-5D-Y versions
Large Scale Applications WG	Charged with the aim to support clinical and population based initiatives
Education and Outreach WG	As part of the broader mission of the EuroQol group, this WG leads initiatives to educate members, and the broader scientific community/ policy maker to promote better understanding of the uses of EQ-5D and its underlying science.

#### 5. WG Principles

- The WGs are intended to be relatively small, **focused** groups, with specific objectives to be agreed with the Executive Committee.
- Unless otherwise stated, the WGs will provide a progress report and future plans on an annual basis, and will under a formal review after 2 years, but the Executive Committee reserves the right to revise the terms, membership, and viability of each WG at any time.
- The WGs vary in terms of scope, timelines and budgets.

- The WGs will be **responsible for leading and driving forward research** and development that falls within scope of their mandate. Through Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and Program Announcements (PAs) developed by the WG with input from the Executive Committee, each WG will **actively create opportunities to involve others with relevant expertise in the EuroQol Group wherever possible**. Members of WGs can also apply, but the WG is not expected to lead the research as a team.
- A PA encourages research on a given topic but is largely generic, such as new methods to value health or the development of apps for the EQ-5D, where the specific aims are composed by the investigator. In contrast, an RFP is directive, eliciting “proposal bids” from members for a proposal on a specific topic where the aim is stated in the RFP, e.g. to develop a EQ-Y instrument for children <5 years of age (this example is strictly illustrative).
- The WGs are **accountable to the Executive Committee**. Each WG Chair will keep the Executive periodically updated regarding the team’s status and progress. Additionally, a EuroQol Office scientist will serve as ‘liaison’ to facilitate communication between the EuroQol office and the WG. The Office scientists are not automatically considered as WG members but can nominate themselves to become a formal WG Member in a manner consistent with other members.
- To further ensure good communication, the Executive Director and Chair of the Executive Committee, or their designee, should in principle have access to WG meetings as needed.
- In the remainder of this document, we provide details on the remit of each WG, provide justification as it relates to the 2015 strategic research priorities, and list ideas about the scope of activities of each WG. These aims may be revised by the WGs over time with approval from the Executive Committee as time progresses.

Linkage between the Strategic Research Priorities and the new WGs:

	Strategic Research Priorities	New WGs
1.	Explore the conceptual basis for generic preference-based HRQL measures	1. Descriptive Systems WG
2.	Investigate new approaches to valuing health (not necessarily associated with the conventional QALY paradigm).	2. Valuation WG
3.	Examine large scale health systems applications for EQ products (e.g., in Routine Outcome Measurement)	3. EQ-5D Large Scale Applications WG
4.a	Support the development and dissemination of EQ-5D-5L value sets in key regions.	2. Valuation Methodology WG
4.b	Explore valuation research in specific patient groups	2. Valuation Methodology WG
5.	EQ-5D-Y: refine descriptive systems, valuation studies	4. EQ-5D in Children WG
	(Broader Strategic Priority: related to Mission statement)	5. Application Development WG
	(Broader Strategic Priority: related to Mission statement)	6. Education and Outreach WG

## 6. Details of each proposed Working Group.

### A. WG 1: Descriptive Systems Working Group

- i. Aim 1: to explore the conceptual basis for generic preference-based HRQL measures (i.e., descriptive and measurement work)
- ii. Aim 2: Investigate the conceptual basis and develop a framework to rationalize the development of various bolt-ons and bolt-offs

*Rationale:* At the Strategic meeting in March 2014 it was decided by the joint Board and Executive Committee that a top priority for the EuroQol Group is the explore the conceptual basis for generic preference-based HRQL measures. Although the need for another generic preference-based measure of HRQL is not self-evident, the expertise and interest within the group is well-suited to support an initiative guided by scientific frameworks that explores whether a new initiative should be pursued, such as an entirely reconceptualised generic health state classifier system. Much progress has been made in the field in the 25 years since the EuroQol Group was initiated, and there was consensus among the Executive and Board that there was opportunity to explore and evaluate the conceptual basis for generic measures of health, including the EQ-5D. There is also a need for conceptual clarity on future work related to bolt-on initiatives, such as a conceptual basis to guide decision-making related to extensions of the descriptive system. However, it is also conceivable that the EQ-5D is a well-designed and validated measure suited for many different applications and will remain viable and widely used in the far future. This WG will promote research that explores the current and future needs for generic preference-based HRQL measures, and help to evaluate whether alternative descriptive systems should be pursued. The WG will use PAs to encourage EQ members to think about proposing topical research *program* proposals, besides regular research *project* proposals, as their primary objective requires both broader and deeper work, which typically takes more than 1 year.

### B. WG 2: Valuation Working Group

- i. Aim 1: To initiate RFPs and PAs that investigate new approaches to valuing health (including approaches within scope of the QALY framework, as well as methods not necessarily associated with the conventional QALY paradigm).
- ii. Aim 2: Support the development and dissemination of EQ-5D-5L value sets in key countries. To stimulate interest in producing EQ-5D (3L and 5L) value sets in key countries across the world and assist the Executive in prioritising value sets requesting support.
- iii. Aim 3: To support methodological research examining the basis/rationale for value sets for patient groups.
- iv. Aim 4: To provide scientific guidance and support for existing protocols related to valuation studies.

- v. Aim 5: To collaborate with other WGs or approved groups that work on conceptual and practical issues concerned with valuation of EQ-5D technologies.
- vi. Aim 6: To appraise the methodological reporting rigor of published value sets for approval by the Executive that the Business Office can post as guidance for users/user support.
- vii. Aim 7: To provide scientific guidance and support for valuation of bolt-on studies.

*Rationale:* This WG has one of the most challenging and broad remits, reflecting the importance of valuation methodology to all our instruments. As a consequence, clear communication lines are needed with the other WGs involved in valuation particularly the Descriptive Systems WG. We would expect this team to work closely with the **EQ-5D in Children WG**. Work on this team also continues on improving our standard valuation protocol EQ-VT.

It is possible that a wide range of countries will be interested in developing value sets for the EQ-5D-5L (and also the 3L) in the future. One task of this WG is to identify countries where HTA systems are sufficiently allowed and/or where there may be a need for a 5L value set in the foreseeable future. The WG should aim to get value set studies started in these countries. This could be done by RFP, initially among EQ members.

With a series of 5L value sets conducted, the focus for this WG has been extended. Reporting standards of 5L value set studies have been developed through the EuroQol Research Group (Checklist for Reporting Valuation Studies of the EQ-5D: CREATE) and this WG will appraise the quality of reports of valuation studies using that checklist and indicate whether the EQ-VT protocol was followed. This appraisal will help the Executive Committee provide guidance to the Business Office on how help users and provide user support. Another aim of this WG is to promote secondary analyses of pooled data across different 5L value set studies that facilitate insights into the protocol and methods used in those studies, such as generalizability of issues across countries.

Lastly, we want to encourage the use of our 3L and 5L valuation protocols and EQ-VT, with associated technical, IT and translation issues. This WG will also promote research and collaboration on (pooled) secondary data from international value sets that could inform study design and methods related to future valuation EQ-5D studies. As an aside, undertaking value set studies is complex and costly. Coordinating these studies across different countries requires considerable logistical and technical skills. The Office EQ-VT Support Team conducts this more operational side of value set studies.

### C. WG 3: Large Scale Applications Working Group

- i. Aim 1: To initiate RFPs and PAs that promote and examine large-scale health systems applications for EQ products (e.g., in Routine Outcome Measurement)
- ii. Aim 2: To stimulate methodological and applied research relating to the use of EQ-5D in measuring provider/health care system performance.
  1. Methodological research in health care system applications that include, but not limited to, measurement properties, data collection, presentation formats, communication strategies, etc.
  2. Applied research in health care system would include, but not limited to, evaluation of specific interventions or programs, case-mix adjustment, relationship etc.
- iii. Aim 3: To focus on beyond health care applications (i.e, not to just focus on health applications like PROMS)
- iv. Aim 4: To stimulate methodological and applied research relating to the use of EQ-5D in assessing populations.
  1. Methodological research in population health applications would include, but not limited to, measurement properties, data collection, presentation formats, etc.
  2. Applied research in population health applications would include, but not limited to, evaluation of population health interventions, assessing disparities in health status across jurisdictions or sub-populations, etc.
- v. Aim 5: To explore the development and use of new and existing EQ-5D products for large-scale health applications in conjunction with the Business Office and Application Development WG.

*Rationale:* Recent years have seen the introduction of routine collection of EQ-5D data across the whole health care systems, via ‘PROMs’-type programmes (eg. the English NHS; Alberta Health Services) and in large patient registries (eg in Sweden). In terms of sheer numbers of observations, these sorts of uses of EQ-5D probably now dominate the use of the instrument.

We need to ensure that these uses of our instrument are supported by the appropriate business practices, relevant scientific developments and ensure we capitalize on the opportunities these uses of the instrument present as ‘laboratories’ for research. Interested EuroQol Group members can send a request for invitation to participate in the SIG to the WG Chair.

Additionally, the EuroQol WG will investigate how a generic instrument could be used in beyond health care applications.

#### **D. WG 4: EQ-5D in Children Working Group**

- i. Aim 1: To develop EQ-5D instruments suitable for use in children of various age ranges. This includes the validation of the EQ-5D-Y in younger age groups (using the proxy version).
- ii. Aim 2: To promote research to explore the validity of the EQ-5D-Y as a measure of health status in children.
- iii. Aim 3: To work closely with WG on Valuation Methodology in developing a work programme for the valuation of EQ-5D-Y states.
- iv. Aim 4: To promote research in the field of application studies. This might include studies comparing EQ-5D-Y to other instruments as well as doing some basic research in paediatric disease areas in need.
- v. Aim 5: To update the user guide for the 5-level Youth version.

*Rationale:* While we now have an EQ-5D-Y, there remains important work to be done to further develop and establish an evidence base to support the use of EQ-5D-Y as a measure of health status in children of various ages; and to develop a 5L version of the EQ-5D-Y. We would also expect this WG to liaise closely with the **Valuation Methodology WG** regarding the valuation of EQ-5D-Y. Interested EuroQol Group members can send a request for invitation to participate in the SIG to the WG Chair.

#### **E. WG 6: Education and Outreach Working Group**

- i. Aim 1: Organize semi-annual meetings that would educate interested EuroQol members on specific topics related to research and application of EQ-5D and other elements of the EuroQol Research Foundation Mission.
- ii. Aim 2: Organize and promote regional meetings of researchers, decision makers and users interested in EQ-5D outside Europe and North America.
- iii. Aim 3: Propose additional educational and uptake initiatives to the Executive Committee that could be supported by the Foundation.

This new WG will have a mandate that supports part of the EuroQol mission unrelated to R&D but is vital sustaining the membership and its goal: i.e education and outreach. Two initiatives are proposed: for members, a second meeting with an educational focus would be initiated, perhaps staggered 6 months from the scientific plenary. The focus would be on providing educational sessions and workshops that help members gain a greater understanding of the EQ Group's ongoing research agenda and encourage involvement in research initiatives.

A second initiative, related to outreach, would be to set up regional meetings of researchers and others interested in EQ-5D outside Europe and North America. There appears to be an increasing mass of researchers using EQ-5D in Asia, and to a lesser extent in South America. Given the costs involved and the limited access to the yearly Plenary Meeting, there would appear to be a justification for setting up regional meetings to facilitate exchange of ideas, experiences and results

between researchers and those with an interest in using the instrument (government, insurers, etc) from the same region. Involvement of core EQ members from that region would be encouraged.

Finally, educational and outreach initiatives could be proposed by the WG for consideration by the Executive Committee.

**If you would like more information on any aspect of the WGs, please contact:**

**Bernhard Slaap, Executive Director: [slaap@euroqol.org](mailto:slaap@euroqol.org)**

**Elly Stolk, Scientific Team Leader: [stolk@euroqol.org](mailto:stolk@euroqol.org)**

**Jan Busschbach, Chair of the Executive Committee: [j.vanbusschbach@erasmusmc.nl](mailto:j.vanbusschbach@erasmusmc.nl)**

## Guidance for applicants: Procedures for research funding applications

1. The EuroQol Research Foundation will fund high quality research that is of scientific and strategic interest to the EuroQol Group and its members.
2. Proposals should be submitted to the EQ Office using the Research Proposal Application Form provided on the members' area of the website. If you want to apply for funding of a workshop, a symposium or a presentation please use the Workshop and Symposium Application Form. Please review the Proposal Budget Guidelines before submitting a proposal. Please download the latest forms from the website, as these forms are updated periodically.
3. For clarity, applicants should ensure that when they refer to EuroQol instruments they use the correct terms – see <http://www.euroqol.org/about-eq-5d/eq-5d-nomenclature.html>
4. Unless stated otherwise in a Request for Proposals, the lead applicant must be a member of the EuroQol Group, in principle.
5. Applications for funding can be submitted at any time. Any proposal targeting one of the specified aims for the WGs is consistent with the overall scientific strategy and thus will be considered for funding.
6. Twice a year the Executive Committee (Exec) issues a Request For Proposals, highlighting the current research priorities. These will be circulated by email and posted on the members' area on the website. Funding will be awarded on a competitive basis.
7. The proposal scope extends beyond research projects: applicants can also submit plans for organising educational meetings around topic relevant to the EuroQol mission.
8. To receive funding for meetings or collaboration, a deliverable should be defined, such as a research proposal or a publication. Proposals can range from a request for support to present an EQ-5D related workshop or symposium at a conference, to a stipend for staying at some other institution for a couple of months that will result in a publication or deliverable of scientific or strategic relevance to the Group. Note that regular oral- or poster presentations at conferences are not mention above: the proposed activity should be more outreaching than just an oral- or poster presentation.
9. Proposals are reviewed every quarter in March, June, September and December. Please note that:
  - a. High priority proposals, earmarked as such by the Exec Chair, will be reviewed at the earliest possible Exec meeting.
  - b. Fast track proposals, with a budget of €15,000 or less, see below, will normally be reviewed within two weeks, unless issues are noted during the review. Note that the regular process will be followed for fast track proposals submitted within two weeks before an Exec meeting where proposals will be reviewed.

If you have any questions on the review process or submission deadlines you can send an email to the Executive Director ([slaap@euroqol.org](mailto:slaap@euroqol.org)).

10. The **regular proposal review process** is as follows:

- a. Two Exec reviewers will independently review each proposal.
- b. The relevant Working Group (WG) will also review each proposal. The WG Chair may delegate the reviewing task to a WG member or to a member of the EQ Group with special expertise on the topic. However, the Exec wants to be assured that this review represents the considered view of the WG.
- c. When proposals are received on a topic that falls outside the immediate remit of the WGs (e.g. 'innovative' proposals), The Exec Chair, together with the Scientific Team Leader from the EQ Office, will identify a member of the EQ Group with relevant expertise and invite this member to review the proposal. When submitting a proposal outside the scope of the WG, applicants will be invited to suggest potential reviewers from within or outside the EuroQoL Group, but not directly involved in their proposed research.
- d. All three reviews will be conducted independently, using the Proposal Review Form. Once the EQ Office has received these forms, they will be pre-circulated with the proposal to all members of the Executive Committee.
- e. In case discussion is needed, the Exec members who reviewed the proposal will be asked to summarise the proposal and her/his recommendations.
- f. The WG Chair may be invited to join the Exec meeting when proposals are discussed that are in the WGs remit, to ensure informed decision making by the Exec. If the WG Chair is unable to attend the meeting and the Executive Committee decision conflicts with the recommendation of the WG, then the final decision by the Executive Committee may be postponed until the WG Chair can be consulted.
- g. Any person who has a conflict of interest will be excluded from being involved in any part of the reviewing and decision-making process regarding funding.

11. The **fast track review process** is as follows:

- a. Applicants should use the regular Application Forms, see point 2.
- b. Where proposals seek budgets less than €15,000, a review will be sought from just one member of the Exec. The Chair, or the Deputy Chair, of the Exec will consider that review and will send a recommended decision via email, along with the proposal and the review, to members of the Exec with request to respond to within 48 hours in case of concerns.
- c. If there are important concerns raised by any member of the Exec about the Chair's recommended decision, the proposal will be deferred for discussion at the next Exec meeting. If not, the applicant will be informed of the Exec decision to fund/ not to fund the proposal.

12. Applicants will normally receive feedback within three weeks after the Executive Committee meetings. Reviewers' comments will be anonymized when fed back to principal investigators by the EQ Office.

13. Executive Committee decisions will be either:

- a. Funding awarded;
  - b. Funding awarded, subject to satisfactory revisions and clarifications (confirmed by Chair's action, on the basis of reviewers' recommendations; and reported to the following Executive Committee meeting);
  - c. Invited to revise and re-submit for consideration by the Executive Committee at its next meeting;
  - d. Funding declined.
14. Abstracts of applications that are awarded funding will be published on the public website.
15. When funding is awarded, the Executive Director will follow-up with a letter confirming Executive Committee approval. Half the budget will be transferred to the applicant(s) at the start of the project, once all signatures are in place on the approval letter. Co-applicants may invoice separately. The Principle Investigator (PI) should be copied in, as the PI is responsible for the study budget.
16. **Once a project is completed**, the process is as follows:
- a. As specified in the Executive Committee approval letter, at the completion of the project, a final report should be submitted to the Executive Director, using the Research Project Final Report Form, together with the original proposal, all deliverables described in the proposal and all reviewer reports, if applicable. All documents should be bundled in one PDF file.
  - b. For symposia and workshops the Workshop and Symposia Report Form should be submitted, together with the original proposal, information on the number of attendees and their evaluation of the presentation/workshop. A Workshop and Symposia Attendee Evaluation Form can be found here. All documents should be bundled in one PDF file.
  - c. The final report will be reviewed by the relevant WG. The WG Chair may delegate the reviewing task to a WG member or to a member of the EQ Group with special expertise on the topic. However, the Exec wants to be assured that this review represents the considered view of the WG.
  - d. In case of a final report on an 'innovative' proposal, or any other proposal outside the scope of the WGs, the Exec Chair, together with the Scientific Team Leader from the EQ Office, will identify a member of the EQ Group with relevant expertise and invite this member to review the report.
  - e. The reviewers should use the Report Review Form. In the accompanying email the reviewer should provide a summary of the review and a recommendation (Sign-off, or Revise and Resubmit).
  - f. The final report and its review will not be discussed at length in the Exec, unless any Exec member wants to discuss it. Once the Exec signs off on the final report the remaining budget will be transferred.
  - g. Final project reports will be published on the members' website and an abstract of the final report will be published on the public website, unless the Exec and the project team agree otherwise.

- h. If the funding applicants fail to deliver output of sufficient quality in a timely way, payment of the second budget instalment may be withheld and, in some circumstances, the first instalment may be required to be repaid. Failure to deliver output will be taken into account in consideration of future applications.

Lastly, the Executive Committee reserves the right to deviate from these guidelines when required by circumstances.

If you have any questions about applying for funding, please contact the Executive Director ([slaap@euroqol.org](mailto:slaap@euroqol.org)).

## Proposal Budget Guidelines (annex to 01 Guidance for applicants.pdf)

Knut Stavem & Bernhard Slaap

The Executive Committee studies budgets in applications in detail. The guidelines below are provided to ensure a smooth review process.

In **section 18, Proposed budget**, in the Research Proposal Application Form, or in the **Budget proposal** section of the Workshop and Symposia Application Form, you are requested to provide a breakdown of the proposed budget.

Please split up your study budget in the following categories:

- Personnel costs
- Data acquisition costs
- Material costs and other preparation costs
- Dissemination costs

If you are **applying for a workshop or a symposium**, please also provide details about:

- Honoraria, including preparation time
- Venue costs and entrances fees
- Travel costs and expected costs for hotel costs and meals

### ***Personnel costs***

Personnel costs are typically the largest cost constituents in proposal budgets. These can be budgeted for the preparation of the study or workshop, data acquisition and data analysis. Try to estimate the numbers of hours/days that will be spent on the project to the best of your knowledge. Please apply appropriate local hourly or daily rates when calculating personnel costs, but note that these should not exceed the EuroQol Group Foundation's 3 categories for **maximum daily rates**, i.e.:

- (1) €110.00 per hour/ €880 per day, including overheads, for **senior researchers**, e.g. for investigators with leadership roles, who are at least associate professor level: experienced researchers with PhDs and a substantial publication list.
- (2) €85.00 per hour/€680 per day, including overheads, for **less experienced researchers**, e.g. post-docs.
- (3) €45.00 per hour/€360 per day for **students and office staff**.

Please note that the Executive Committee expects applicants to use the 3 categories for budgeting personnel costs. Applicants must provide a justification if they choose to budget research staff at higher daily rates that described above. Furthermore, a justification should be provided for any team member budgeted at the maximum daily rate. At the discretion of the Executive Committee, the budget for personnel costs will be approved, or a lower budget proposed.

EQ Office staff members can participate in EQ-funded studies. Please discuss your plans with the Scientific Team Leader or the Executive Director prior to submitting such a proposal.

When EQ Office staff is participating in your project, please insert a line item under Personnel costs titled 'EQ Office Staff' to specify their hours, using €110.00 per hour/ €880 per day. In **section 9, Budget requested from EuroQol**, specify this amount separately. The total amount will determine if the fast-track review process can be followed (requested budget  $\leq$  €15.000).

Under the category of **Data acquisition costs** it is acceptable to have the following costs as line items:

- Respondent's fees and travel costs
- Interviewer costs and their travel costs
- Office/room rent for data acquisition outside the University
- If an agency/ outside company is used, please provide a copy of their invoice/ cost proposal

As a rule, it is not acceptable to request funding for buying computer hardware or software to be used for data acquisition. Renting computer hardware for a study is acceptable.

For EQ-VT studies please add €25.000 for EQ-VT costs (software development, training, support etc.). Upon approval by the Exec this will be provided as in-kind support. In **section 9, Budget requested from EuroQol**, specify this amount separately as in-kind support.

Under the category of **Material costs and other preparation costs** it is acceptable to have the following costs as line items:

- Secretarial support, stationary, telephone costs etc. (usually not more than 5 % of total budget).
- Processing costs for human subject protection/ethics approval, if applicable

It is not acceptable to request funding for computer hardware or software to be used for data analysis or manuscript writing.

Under the category of **Dissemination costs** it is acceptable to budget for one researcher to attend an international congress to present the results of the study. Allowable costs include:

- (1) An economy class airline ticket
- (2) Meeting registration fee.

The applicant is required to seek funding from other sources for other dissemination costs, such as board and living, hours spent away the office, co-presenters of the study results etc. As a rule, costs of publishing e.g. in open access journals, are not reimbursed, although exceptions are possible for strategic important studies.

Please contact [Bernhard Slaap](#) if you have any comments, questions or suggestions on Research Proposal budgeting.