



## **12<sup>th</sup> Joint Call EuroQol Working Groups September 2021**

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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.

As always, 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 call, 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.

Please note:

- that there has been a name change: the large scale application group has been renamed to Populations and Health Systems (PHS) Working Group.
- The Executive Committee and PHS WG & DSWG have agreed on updated remits for these WGs. See appendix 1.
- The provisional budget for this year is 6 million euros and more than half of it can be spent in the current funding round. Therefore, the Exec is willing to consider a wide range of funding opportunities of benefit to the Group. This includes research funding; travel grants; support for going abroad for a temporary stay or research period; organising academic conventions or attending conferences.
- The Exec continues to invite PhD projects on EuroQol topics. The intention is to fund 5-10 PHD proposals this year in a competitive scheme.
- To handle the growing numbers of research proposals, the Exec has amended the procedure for low cost proposals, see appendix 2. The Exec will invite reviews of low cost proposals from the WGs. The decisions will no longer be fast tracked, but made alongside decisions on other proposals in quarterly decision making meetings.
- Any time sensitive funding proposals can still be fast tracked using an offline procedure. If you plan to submit a time sensitive proposal, please contact Kim (krand@krand.no) or Elly Stolk ([stolk@euroqol.org](mailto:stolk@euroqol.org)).

Submissions beyond the listed themes are also welcome. If you have an excellent idea for a research project, we invite you to seek funding for it is through the current call. If you are

interested to undertake other activities that have merit to the EuroQol Group, but you are uncertain whether this is in scope, you are invited to concisely pitch your idea in a mail to the chair of the Executive Committee Kim Rand. Please contact Kim ([krand@krand.no](mailto:krand@krand.no)) or Elly Stolk ([stolk@euroqol.org](mailto:stolk@euroqol.org)) if you have any other questions.

The deadline for submissions is **October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 at 23:59 CET**. Good luck with your applications!

## 2. Scope of this call

### 2.1. Descriptive System Working Group

For this round of funding, the Descriptive System Working Group is calling for proposals contributing to five research themes. The remit of the working group has recently been updated (see Appendix 1), and these research themes fit within the new aims of the DSWG:

1. Psychometric assessment and further development of psychometric knowledge
2. Production of evidence to assess the IP status of bolt-ons
3. Conceptual work to understand what EuroQol instruments are measuring and describing
4. Investigation of the EQ-5D ceiling effect
5. Member driven descriptive system related projects.

Research teams are encouraged to suggest the methodological approaches to use for these studies. Further information is provided below:

#### ***2.1.1. Psychometric assessment and further development of psychometric knowledge***

##### *EQ-5D in rare diseases*

There is a growing body of literature investigating the empirical validity and responsiveness of the EQ-5D in different disease areas, conditions and populations, and a growing number of studies summarizing this evidence in reviews and overviews of the literature. Yet, there is a paucity of evidence regarding the performance of the EQ-5D as a measure of the health impacts of rare diseases. The DS WG invites proposals investigating the validity and responsiveness of EQ-5D in rare diseases.

##### *Further development of psychometric knowledge with a focus on issues relevant to preference-based instruments*

There are a wealth of psychometric methods available for testing preference-based instruments. These include, but are not limited to, classical test theory, factor analysis, structural equation modelling, and various forms of item response theory, and the majority of evidence produced is based on classical test theory.

It is unclear which psychometric methods are most appropriate for the EQ family of instruments, or the extent to which different psychometric methods are appropriate to assess the particular characteristics of the EQ family of preference-based instruments. However,

little research is available on the way these methods can and should be used to develop and assess preference-based measures.

The DSWG invites proposals to investigate the use of psychometric methods with a focus on issues relevant to preference-based measures. The aim of this area of work is to further develop a psychometric evidence knowledge base to inform the broader work of the providing support for the further generation of a psychometric protocol. This is important given the need to generate evidence to support the further development of the family of EQ instruments e.g. EQ-HWB, EQ-5D-Y, bolt-ons.

Examples of proposals relating to this theme include, but are not limited to, reviews of methods for conducting psychometric studies, and the use of primary and secondary data sources to explore psychometric methods, and/or develop and test new approaches. We are also interested in comparing psychometric methods across EuroQol and other preference and non preference based instruments. Instruments of strategic interest include the PROMIS, EQ-HWB and other generic preference based measures.

### ***2.1.2. Production of evidence to examine the IP status of bolt-ons***

The DSWG has recently been involved in the development of a EuroQol document to outline the process required to assess the current IP status of EuroQol Instruments (i.e. experimental, beta and approved instruments), and generate further evidence to support the transition of instruments between IP stages.

One set of experimental instruments are bolt-ons, and the DSWG is currently overseeing a program of research aimed at developing bolt-on dimensions and items in health and quality of life areas where there is a case for doing so (e.g. vision, cognition and hearing).

We call for work assessing existing bolt-ons, with a view to informing their current IP status. Work will focus on highlighting deficits in the existing evidence for a particular bolt-on(s), and using this to generate further qualitative and/or quantitative evidence to support the group in decision making about the status of bolt-ons. Further qualitative evidence could include international face validity work to understand the extent to which candidate bolt-ons are relevant in different cultures and contexts, and whether the way bolt-ons are phrased and translated (for example in the wording used and the examples provided) are applicable around the world. Quantitative evidence could include examining the psychometric properties of the selected bolt-on(s) internationally and comparatively between each other, and the performance of bolt-ons in different settings in relation to the five dimensions, the dimensions included in other instruments, and other bolt-ons

There is also interest in the conceptual basis for bolt-ons, including understanding when and how we would expect bolt-ons to be used, and developing a conceptual basis for establishing the need for current and future bolt-ons. We also call for work in this area.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss the contents of the IP document and work relating to understanding bolt-on IP status with the chair of the DSWG, Brendan Mulhern ([Brendan.mulhern@chere.uts.edu.au](mailto:Brendan.mulhern@chere.uts.edu.au)). Given the focus of this research, applicants could consider building collaborations with other members internationally to allow for comparisons between countries and languages. The DSWG can help facilitate this.

### ***2.1.3. Conceptual work to understand what EQ instruments are measuring and describing***

The DSWG is interested in mapping out and defining the concepts and terminologies used in the measurement and description of health and quality of life, and understanding the appropriateness of EuroQol instruments to measure and describe these. This will help understand what EQ instruments measure, inform where other instruments may play a role, and support the further development and assessment of EQ instruments. We call for proposals in this area. Potential methodological approaches include, but are not limited to, use of systematic literature reviews, the development of conceptual frameworks, and use of consensus based techniques.

### ***2.1.4. Investigation of the EQ-5D ceiling effect***

Research investigating response patterns to the EQ-5D has established that the 3L, and to a lesser extent the 5L, display evidence of a ‘ceiling effect’ (defined as a high proportion of respondents reporting no problems on all dimensions, or 11111). This can limit the sensitivity of the descriptive system as well as the index score to mild health problems, and change in mild health problems over time. We invite research examining the ceiling effect phenomenon. In particular we are interested in reasons why it occurs across different populations, and also how response patterns to EQ-5D that result in a ceiling effect compare to responses to other generic preference and non-preference based instruments that don’t exhibit a ceiling effect. Proposals could use primary or secondary data analysis to map between response patterns across instruments or use qualitative methods to explore the possible reasons behind this phenomenon.

### ***2.1.5. Member driven descriptive system related projects***

We encourage members to discuss their ideas for innovative descriptive system related research with the chair of the working group (contact details below). Ideas should be

considered within the updated aims of the DSWG (see Appendix 1). Members of the working group are available to provide advice on your ideas for research and support the development of proposals.

**General information**

Please contact Brendan Mulhern ([Brendan.mulhern@chere.uts.edu.au](mailto:Brendan.mulhern@chere.uts.edu.au)) to discuss the updated remit of the DSWG, potential proposal submissions and/or for further information about any of the research areas described.

## 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

We invite researchers to submit proposals related to these four main aims of the VWG. Additionally for this call, the members of the VWG have identified three priority areas.

First, we are interested in projects that consider how to conduct valuation studies where bolt-ons may be relevant in the particular patient population. In particular, how do we ensure that the value set for the EQ-5D with bolt-ons is comparable with a more conventional value set? Projects should, if possible, align with the ongoing bolt-on work being conducted in the Descriptive Systems Working Group. These studies can be either or both empirical or theoretical, but must inform the group how to consider valuation in this evolving content.

Second, the VWG has been developing a stand-alone DCE protocol. In the document presented at the September 2020 Virtual Meeting, a number of areas of specific research are highlighted as requiring further work. These include (but are not limited to) standardized code for (1) analyzing DCE data using a range of linear and non-linear approaches, and (2) updating designs with non-zero priors to conduct non-linear analyses.

Finally, we continue to invite you to submit addressing valuation of health states that are considered worse than dead. 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. Populations and Health Systems (PHS) Working Group**

The Populations and Health Systems (PHS) Working Group (PHS WG) aims to promote and enhance the use of EuroQol instruments in health system applications (e.g. as a patient-reported outcome measure (PROM)), and for the measurement and valuation of population health. The WG is interested in innovative proposals for both methodological and applied research that contributes towards these aims. Applicants are encouraged to review the WG's full stated research interests and priorities as described in the WG aims document (appendix 1) and to contact members of the WG to establish that their proposal is within scope prior to application.

For this round of funding, the PHS WG is particularly interested in submissions that address the following topics:

#### ***2.3.1. The effect of long-COVID on HRQoL***

We are interested in research that demonstrates the usefulness of EuroQol instruments in assessing HRQoL and wellbeing in patients who continue to experience symptoms after SARS-CoV-2 infection (sometimes called 'long-COVID patients' or 'long haulers'). For example, the UK Office for National Statistics has estimated that approximately 1 in 5 patients in the UK have lingering COVID-19 symptoms that persists after 5 weeks of acute infection, and 1 in 10 patients have symptoms lasting for 12 weeks or longer. The Dutch COVID registry reported abnormalities of the heart muscle and neurological sequelae in the brain in a substantial proportion of hospitalized COVID patients after discharge. Long-COVID patients may suffer severe complications that may result in persistent changes to their long-term HRQoL trajectories.

We encourage research to assess HRQoL in long-COVID patients, to illustrate the impact on population health, to assess inequalities in the HRQoL effect across population sub-groups or health systems (taking into account the role of taken measures). Inequalities may arise from unequal access to (chronic) health care and impact on work. Another topic may be the comparative performance of EuroQol instruments against other QoL instruments in this patient population.

### ***2.3.2. Methods to present and report EuroQol data to health system stakeholders***

The use of EuroQol instruments as PROMs in health system applications (e.g. to assess provider performance or to inform shared decision making) is growing rapidly. However, concerns remain about the best ways of summarising and presenting the information collected via EuroQol instruments to different end users such as patients (e.g. to track their own health relative to population norms), clinicians (e.g. in patient management) and policy stakeholders (benchmarking).

We encourage research to measure stakeholders' ability to discern information collected via EuroQol instruments and to establish their preferences over different presentational formats, or to develop new ways of presenting data e.g. in the form of clinical dashboards.

### ***2.3.3. Methods to identify and adjust for response heterogeneity***

Many applications of EuroQol instruments involve comparisons across groups of individuals with different distributions of characteristics (i.e. non-randomised comparisons). It is therefore pertinent to establish whether respondents use the EuroQol instruments in similar ways, or whether there are systematic differences in measuring and reporting ('reporting/response heterogeneity' or response style) that may undermine comparisons.

The PHS WG is interested in an extensive research program investigating these topics through various research methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods approaches. Reporting heterogeneity may result in differences related to features of the respondent such as avoiding extreme answers or interpreting the domain or label descriptions in a specific manner, which could affect the use of numbers on the EQ VAS or the labels in the EQ-5D domains. An example of a qualitative approach could be to perform cognitive debriefing after the respondents fill out the EQ-5D, inquiring what prompted him/her to provide their particular responses: e.g. did they respond in an "age-comparative" manner, did they "adjust" for coping with any present condition or disability (which could be especially relevant for e.g. usual activities).

The PHS WG encourages research that furthers our understanding of reporting heterogeneity in general or in specific population groups. We are also interested to see new methods being developed for capturing the impact of response heterogeneity or methods that permit adjusting existing datasets for systematic response heterogeneity, for example by means of response vignettes or other external reference datasets.

## 2.4. EQ-5D in Children

The YGWP calls for proposals in 3 main areas of research interest: measurement properties and applications, value sets and valuation methods, and use of EuroQol instruments in the youngest populations.

### *2.4.1. Measurement properties, and applications*

Several priorities for research are identified below in relation to the application and assessment of measurement properties of EQ-5D-Y (Y-3L and Y-5L).

#### *Psychometric properties of EQ-5D-Y values/value sets*

Assessing the psychometric properties of EQ-5D-Y profile data summarised by EQ-5D-Y values as these values become available from a variety of value sets is of particular interest, including analyses of the similarities and differences in psychometric performance between values using self-complete versus proxy reporting of EQ-5D-Y, i.e. how the use of self- vs proxy-reports impacts on utility losses and gains when applying value sets. Research could use new or existing EQ-5D-Y databases. Comparison and sensitivity of results using different value sets with different properties is also of interest.

#### *Applications*

The YPWG particularly encourages research using EQ-5D-Y to assess the impact of **COVID19** and any COVID-related public health measures on health outcomes in children and adolescents. The research could focus on children and adolescents who have had (or have) the condition (in that sense, follow-up of children with 'long' COVID could be of particular interest), or it could focus on the effects on children of lockdown and other measures intended to limit social interaction, though other types of proposal will be considered as well. This area of application seems particularly suitable for large-scale collaborative initiatives between research teams in different countries and we encourage that type of approach.

#### *Assessing measurement properties*

A NICE Decision Support Unit (DSU) document published early last year<sup>1</sup> reported on the results from a systematic review of the psychometric performance of AQoL-6D, CHU9D, EQ-

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<sup>1</sup> Available in Value in Health: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jval.2020.09.012>

5D-Y, HUI2 and HUI3. The review covered literature up to March 2019 and focused on publications assessing known-groups validity, convergent validity, responsiveness, reliability, acceptability and feasibility.

The authors concluded that there is a paucity of studies assessing the psychometric properties of EQ-5D-Y instruments (only n=20 studies). Although it is arguable that some relevant studies were not included, the results suggest there is definitely room for more research investigating the Y's psychometric properties, acceptability, and content validity in patient, and other populations. Even in some of the most common chronic childhood conditions (cancer, diabetes, obesity/overweight, ADHD, epilepsy, autism, etc), research into the psychometric performance of EQ-5D-Y is relatively sparse, or non-existent. The YPWG therefore encourages research into the instrument's psychometric performance and content validity in these and other childhood conditions, including acute infectious conditions. Research that can shed light on specific areas of instrument performance where the DSU report suggested evidence is lacking or unclear will be especially welcome, i.e. research covering:

- test-retest reliability
- inter-rater reliability/agreement
- responsiveness
- content validity.

Research into these specific aspects of psychometric performance, and the Y's content validity, will be particularly welcome, both for the EQ-5D-Y-3L and the Y-5L. From psychometric research, we are also keen to learn if systematic differences exist in the psychometrics of the EQ-5D-Y instruments across administration conditions (e.g. Self-report, proxy, interviewer administered). Studies (or analyses of existing databases) which allow assessment of responsiveness after a health care or other intervention (e.g. behavioural interventions for children with ADHD) are especially encouraged.

In addition to the priority areas of application and validation noted above, we also encourage proposals on the following:

- Comparing distributions, agreement, and psychometric performance of the EQ-5D adult and youth versions in age ranges where either an adult or youth version can be used (ages 13 – 18)
- Usefulness and usability of EQ-5D-Y (Y-3L &/or Y-5L) as a routine outcome measure in clinical, or other settings

- Results from representative samples of the general population can provide a useful benchmark when interpreting outcomes on the EQ-5D-Y. The YPWG would like to encourage proposals aiming to provide such population reference data<sup>2</sup>.

Note: if your study will be conducted in a country where the relevant EQ-5D-Y translation is available yet, please be aware that the Office requires at least 6-9 months to produce a new language version of EQ-5D-Y-5L to support research. This should be considered when planning a project. You also need to incorporate the costs for the translation process into the budget of your proposal. Further, please note that all EQ-5D-Y-5L versions are experimental versions. If the English source version changes, amendments to other language versions might be necessary as well.

#### ***2.4.2. Value sets for EQ-5D-3L and research on methods for valuing Y instrument***

A valuation protocol for the EQ-5D-Y-3L is now available (Ramos-Goni et al 2020). Seven EQ-5D-Y-3L value set studies have completed data collection with a further three underway and still others planned. Producing more value sets for EQ-5D-Y-3L therefore is no longer a top priority. Although researchers are welcome to submit proposals for new EQ-5D-Y-3L value sets, to be eligible for funding by the EuroQol research foundation, proposed EQ-5D-Y-3L value set studies must contain a strong methodological element alongside use of the standardized protocol. Please note that proposed EQ-5D-Y-3L value set studies will be more likely to be well received if they (a) are co-funded by local organisations, and (b) indicate clear plans for consultation and engagement with and involvement of local HTA bodies and other key decision makers and advisors. EuroQol members interested in conducting a national valuation study for the EQ-5D-Y-3L are encouraged to contact members of the YPWG ([mikeherdman.insight@gmail.com](mailto:mikeherdman.insight@gmail.com), [nancy.devlin@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:nancy.devlin@unimelb.edu.au)) or Elly Stolk at the Office ([stolk@euroqol.org](mailto:stolk@euroqol.org)) to discuss their plans.

The focus of the EuroQol Group is currently on testing and strengthening the valuation protocol in the context of EQ-5D-Y-3L; proposals for EQ-5D-Y-5L value sets are not invited at present. Direct valuation of EQ-5D-Y-5L will only be invited after we have extracted lessons learned from EQ-5D-Y-3L valuation and developed a protocol for valuing EQ-5D-Y-5L. Consequentially, it may be the case that when the EQ-5D-Y-5L is approved, users need to rely on mapping from the EQ-5D-Y-5L to the EQ-5D-Y-3L to attach values to the EQ-5D-Y-5L health states. Research aimed at facilitating mapping is welcome.

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<sup>2</sup> e.g. see Åström M, et al. Population health status based on the EQ-5D-Y-3L among adolescents in Sweden: Results by sociodemographic factors and self-reported comorbidity. Qual Life Res. 2018 Nov;27(11):2859-2871

### ***2.4.3. EuroQol instruments in younger children and infants***

Interest in assessing health outcomes of young children is growing and this raises new questions about optimal administration conditions. Our guidelines currently recommend using the self-complete version of EQ-5D-Y from age 8 years and up, and proxy versions from 4 – 7 yrs. However, in a sense, these are somewhat arbitrary cut-off points and data collection will be complicated when other instruments need to be administered that use other cut-off points for their proxy or self-complete versions. We could potentially improve guidance for users by providing more information on how well children in that age range are able to self-complete the instrument. There has been relatively little research into the feasibility of self-completion of EQ-5D-Y above and below the 8-year threshold, say in the 6 – 9-year age range. We could also improve guidance by investigating the feasibility and validity of different modes of administration of EQ-5D-Y in that age range, as self-complete (or self-response) versions are now available in paper, digital, and Interviewer administered (IA) formats. Such research could furthermore highlight areas for improvements/modifications to the instrument and/or administration procedures.

### ***2.4.4. Other research***

As always, we are open to receiving proposals describing innovative research focusing on the EQ-5D-Y that falls outside of the research themes described above. Before sending a full proposal, it is advisable to contact a member of the WG to discuss the possible interest for the WG of the intended research.

## 2.5. Education and Outreach

The Education and Outreach Working Group (EO WG) has a mandate that supports part of the EuroQol Group' mission to sustaining the EuroQol membership and its goals : education and outreach.

As part of its mission the EuroQoL Group supports educational activities designed to develop and support its membership as well as to inform the wider scientific community. In addition, the Group supports other outward-facing activities designed to enhance the understanding of EQ-5D technologies across an expanding range of end-users.

The Education and Outreach Working Group (EO WG) has a role in commissioning the many initiatives that have now been instigated in support of these objectives.

As usual, we invite members to submit plans for any education outreach activity that supports the mission of EuroQol Group (<https://euroqol.org/euroqol/vision-and-mission/>). For example, funding may be requested for workshops or webinars, development and teaching of courses, or conference visits to support dissemination of new research findings. Below we highlight the areas that we currently focus on.

Because of the restrictions still imposed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the EO WG wants to ramp up efforts and offer more **virtual** opportunities such as webinars and online learning sessions, as well as opportunities for members and the public to connect and interact. We welcome your suggestions for these types of events and activities.

Another key area for the EO WG is to develop more **regional** education and outreach activities. EQ-5D researchers and EQ-5D users in different regions of the world have different needs. Regional events may be proposed to serve goals that are locally important, for instance to provide education or networking opportunities, to disseminate research findings, to train EQ-5D users, or to do strategic outreach.

The EO WG also wishes to support knowledge transfer within the EuroQol research network. The EuroQol Group's research portfolio has grown rapidly, and the dissemination of knowledge is becoming a challenge. To support dissemination of research findings, the EO WG has launched a monthly **EQ webinar series**. This series aims to keep members updated, connected, and informed about ongoing research by EQ members. We invite EQ members and other researchers who wish to present their work in this series to contact Zhihao Yang ([zhihao\\_yang\\_cn@126.com](mailto:zhihao_yang_cn@126.com)). Information on planned webinars can be found here <https://euroqol.org/euroqol/meetings/webinars/>. If you have other ideas to promote knowledge dissemination, the EO group welcomes your suggestions.

Last but not least: there is a need to strengthen support for **early career** researchers. The Foundation has offered 8 PHD scholarships/grants last funding round, and more PHD scholarships/grants may be awarded this year. We invite proposals that help this next generation of researchers to succeed.

If you have ideas for other activities that you would like feedback on, please feel free to send

a short email to Zhihao Yang (zhihao\_yang\_cn@126.com).

**Please note:** To receive funding for meetings or collaboration efforts of smaller teams, 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.

## 2.6. EQ-HWB

Several years ago, researchers from the University of Sheffield, in collaboration with an international team of researchers from the EuroQol Group and other organisations, started a research project titled “Going beyond health-related quality of life – towards a broader QALY measure for use across sectors (E-QALY)”. The aim of this research project was to produce a self-reported outcome measure, suitable for use across health care and social care. The project has been jointly funded by the UK Medical Research Council and the EuroQol Research Foundation. This project is nearing completion, with final study results expected in Q3 2021, if the pandemic allows it. The new instrument is titled EQ-HWB (EQ Health and Wellbeing instrument). See also: <https://euroqol.org/blog/eq-hwb/>.

In line with our current IP Protection Policy both versions of the EQ-HWB instrument have been given an Experimental Version status. This means that EQ-HWB is only available to research collaborators. The Executive Committee of the EuroQol Group appointed the EQ-HWB Special Interest Group (SIG), as part of the Descriptive Systems Working Group, to oversee further development and testing of the instrument. Co-chaired by Simon Pickard and Clara Mukuria, this international group will coordinate EQ-HWB research with the aim to refine the instrument and collect evidence about its performance as needed to raise the status of the instrument.

In common with other EuroQol instruments, it is envisaged that the EQ-HWB-S will be accompanied by preference-weighted value sets to facilitate its use in the economic evaluation of health and social care. A large feasibility valuation study is being undertaken. Evidence produced can support further refinement of the EQ-HWB descriptive system and guide research on valuation.

Currently, studies to support the development of the source version and methodological work to inform the descriptive system with different modes of administration such as interviewer versions or proxy versions will be considered. Methodological work on valuation is also invited. The EQ-HWB-S has nine dimensions which can be more challenging for participants to attend to compared to the EQ-5D. There is also an interest in assessing how the EQ-HWB instruments perform in different populations using existing data or piggyback studies. Given the experimental status and on-going work, there is limited support for translation so individuals are encouraged to consider using existing translations (English, Spanish, German and Simplified Chinese). No national value sets or large data collection will be funded at this stage.

If you have any question about the possibility to become a research collaborator, please contact Aureliano Finch ([finch@euroqol.org](mailto:finch@euroqol.org)).

### 3. Submission Guidelines

#### 3.1. Available budget

For the current call a budget of more than €3M can be made available, but the Foundation reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available for this round depending on the number and quality of proposals received. The Foundation expressly invites researchers to make the best possible use of the research funding options presented in this call.

#### 3.2. What we fund

This call invites applications for various types of project grants: proposals for small projects, regular research applications, proposals for educational or regional meetings, topical research applications for larger projects or programmes of work, and proposals for funding of PhD research.

*Low cost proposals:* Low cost proposals (max budget 25.000 euros) qualify for a lighter review procedure. These proposals will be reviewed by WGs and based on these reviews a decision will be rendered by the Executive Committee.

*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. 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.

*PhD proposals:* The current call also invites applications for PhD scholarships/fellowships. The Executive Committee has prepared a practical guidance document for applicants seeking funding for PhD proposals from EuroQoI (Appendix 4).

The attached budget guidelines specify how the budgets should be presented. The budget guidelines are the same for all proposals.

### 3.3. 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/organizations (Universities, NGOs, companies, etc.). The Principal 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).

### 3.4. Submission procedure

All proposals 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 update your submission right until the submission deadline (even if you have submitted it already). **The deadline for submissions is October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 at 23:59 CET.**

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

### 3.5. 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 in November 2021
- your proposal will be discussed by the Exec in December 2021
- applicants will normally receive further information about the decision of the Exec within three weeks after the Exec meetings.

### 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>
	Bram Roudijk	<a href="mailto:roudijk@euroqol.org">roudijk@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	Mike Herdman	<a href="mailto:mikeherdman.insight@gmail.com">mikeherdman.insight@gmail.com</a>
	Elly Stolk	<a href="mailto:stolk@euroqol.org">stolk@euroqol.org</a>
Education and Outreach	Zhihao Yang	<a href="mailto:zhihao_yang_cn@126.com">zhihao_yang_cn@126.com</a>
EQ-HWB	Aureliano Finch	<a href="mailto:finch@euroqol.org">finch@euroqol.org</a>

If you are interested to seek collaboration 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:emelie.heintz@ki.se">emelie.heintz@ki.se</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**

- Working Group (WG)s aims
- Guidance for applicants
- Budget guidelines
- Guidance for applicants seeking funding for PhD research



## **Working Group (WG) aims**

*By the EuroQol Executive committee*

*Last update: May 2021*



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## 1. Introduction

In this document, informed by the Strategic Research Priorities and WGs Review documents, we describe the current scope of each WG. It 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.



## 2. General information about the WG policy

### 2.1. 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.
- 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.
- Working Groups (WGs) are charged with clearly defined, specific objectives relating to the scientific agenda of the EuroQol Group, as defined by the Executive Committee.
- 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.

### 2.2. 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 though 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.



### 2.3. 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.

### 2.4. Summary of WGs

The WG structure currently includes five WGs:

Working Group	Aim
Descriptive Systems WG	The aims of the DSWG are framed around the generation of knowledge for, and development of, existing instruments, instruments currently under development, and future instruments. .
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
Population and Health Systems WG	The purpose of the PHS WG is to promote and enhance the use of EuroQol instruments in health care system applications, and for the measurement and valuation of population health.
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.
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## 2.5. 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 undergo 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 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 present aims for the grant round and provide information about current research priorities. Members of WGs can also apply, but the WG is not expected to lead the research as a team.
- 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, and the aims they are charged with..



### 3. Current remit of each working group

#### 3.1. Descriptive System Working Group

*(last updated: April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021)*

##### ***3.1.1. Aims of the DSWG:***

The three aims of the DSWG are framed around the generation of knowledge for, and development of, existing instruments, instruments currently under development, and future instruments. The aims are as follows:

1. To generate further knowledge and understanding of existing EuroQol instruments
2. To further develop the descriptive systems of EuroQol instruments (including existing instruments, instruments under development, and bolt-ons) scientifically and strategically.
3. To explore the development of future instruments, descriptive systems and bolt ons, scientifically and strategically.

These aims position the DSWG as central to the life cycle management of EuroQol instruments (current, those under development, and future). They enable the DSWG to develop research activities and programmes, and work on priority areas, as guided by the Executive Committee over the short and long term. They lead to the production of knowledge and outcomes with relevance to the entire EuroQol group.

##### ***3.1.2. Broad research programmes and activities***

Within the three suggested aims, research programmes and activities will be developed and coordinated by the DSWG. A broad set of programmes and activities are outlined below. These will be refined and prioritised by the DSWG in consultation with the Executive Committee and EQ office, and can be subdivided into smaller programmes of work as needed. This list is not exhaustive, meaning that the DSWG can be responsive to changes in the research landscape, and add programmes and activities as and when needed. The DSWG is interested in the use of mixed methods approaches (including literature reviewing, and qualitative and quantitative work) across its research activities.



*a) Programme of research to evaluate current and future EuroQol instruments  
(Aims 1-3)*

This programme will:

- Generate knowledge about existing EuroQol Instruments in different populations and settings. This can be done using mixed methods approaches in primary and secondary data, and literature reviews.
- Further develop group expertise in psychometric methods by testing approaches for the evaluation of existing EuroQol instruments.
- Assess the cross cultural validity of EuroQol instruments

Within this broad programme, there are specific areas related to the instruments that can be investigated. For example, these include, but are not limited to

- Assessing consistency across the same versions of instruments (e.g. issues around mode of administration, language versions, interviewer administered versions, proxy and self-complete)
- Investigating descriptive system issues (for example, investigating the composite dimensions (PD and AD) building on other recent work in this area)
- EQ VAS-specific research
- Testing the influence of recall periods (current and alternative)
- Supporting the VMC with their research needed

*b) Programme of research to test methods for the development of instruments and descriptive systems (Aims 2-3)*

This programme will

- Further develop group expertise in psychometric and measure development methods by testing approaches for the development of new instruments and descriptive systems. This can be done using mixed methods approaches in primary and secondary data, and literature reviews.
- Testing methods to promote the cross cultural validity of future EuroQol instruments and descriptive systems
- Test the use of innovative methods (e.g. multidimensional IRT) in the development and assessment of new items or attributes



*c) Moving towards a psychometric protocol for the development and testing of EQ instruments (Aims 1-3)*

- The output of Programmes 1 and 2 could further develop a psychometric evidence knowledge base to inform the broader work of the group, and support the DSWG in generating a psychometric protocol for the development and testing of all current and future EuroQol instruments

*d) Research programmes to explore the development of items, attributes or versions linked to the core measure (Aims 2 and 3)*

- These long term initiatives may include research to explore extensions to the core measure, including, for example, the development of a deep dive instrument, and a pictorial version of the descriptive system.

*e) Further production of evidence on bolt-ons (Aims 1 – 3)*

The DSWG will develop their existing bolt on research programme to:

- Conduct conceptual work based on current and future bolt-ons
- Extend bolt-on development strategically (e.g. where bolt-ons may be required)
- Test the performance of existing bolt-ons in different settings in relation to the five dimensions, the dimensions included in other instruments, and other bolt-ons (this also links with Programmes 1 - 3)

*f) Exploration of conceptual frameworks for existing instruments, additional instruments and descriptive systems (Aims 1 – 3)*

Conceptual framework research is at the core of the development and understanding of instruments, and our work in this area can:

- Outline the conceptual framework for developing additional health instruments (e.g. deep dive instruments and item banks).
- Outlining the conceptual framework for developing extended health instruments (e.g. PREMS, quality of care, wellbeing and end of life instruments)
- Understand and describe what is meant by the concepts and terminologies used in the field and test the appropriateness of EuroQol instruments to measure these



*g) Support research to further develop the EQ-HWB*

In collaboration with the EQ-HWB SIG, the DSWG continues its involvement in the development of the EQ-HWB measures as follows.

- Validation of the HWB-9 and HWB-25
- Validating and developing the items and measures using new approaches to data collection internationally
- Validating and developing the items, measures and dimension structure using existing international datasets
- Translatability and adaptation to other cultures and languages
- Comparisons to other measures
- Longitudinal performance

*h) Involvement in the development of a framework and process for moving instruments through IP stages (experimental, beta and approved).*

The work of the DSWG is central to the process required to progress instruments and bolt-ons through the IP stages. The DSWG is leading the development of the documentation outlining this process, and the work led by the group will be central in producing the evidence required to make decisions about instrument status.

The programmes and activities are broadly described within the aims, and can be further developed prioritised by the DSWG in consultation with the Executive Committee. It will be possible for the DSWG and Exec to seek 'alignment' over the short and long term objectives and priorities of the DSWG. This could be via semi-regular discussions (for example twice a year) between DSWG, Executive and EQ office stakeholders.

**3.1.3. Other initiatives:**

To maximise the potential of the aims and research themes outlined above is planning a number of related initiatives:

- Explore the potential to set up a DSWG specific SIG, or project specific taskforce. For example, this could be a general SIG around DS specific issues, or targeting a particular part of the research programme (the development of the approval guidelines, or the development of a pictorial version).
- Explore the potential to develop a data repository for use in DSWG specific projects (in collaboration with the office as potential coordinators of the process)
- Build further collaboration with other WGs and committees. This will include close coordination with the VMC (building on a recent joint call for proposals), and possible



coordination of the valuation of bolt-ons with the VWG. The development of criteria for moving instruments forward in status is also relevant to the YWG, and we will build links with them for involvement in that process. The development of the research activities above would benefit from consultation with the LSAWG.



## 3.2. Valuation Working Group

(Last updated: 2015)

### 3.2.1. Aims of the Valuation Working Group

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).
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.
3. To support methodological research examining the basis/rationale for value sets for patient groups.
4. To provide scientific guidance and support for existing protocols related to valuation studies.
5. To collaborate with other WGs or approved groups that work on conceptual and practical issues concerned with valuation of EQ-5D technologies.
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.
7. To provide scientific guidance and support for valuation of bolt-on studies.

### 3.2.2. Rationale

This WG has a broad remit, 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.



### 3.3. Population and Health Systems Working Group

*(Last updated: May 2021)*

#### ***3.3.1. Aims of the Population and Health Systems Working Group***

The purpose of the PHS WG is to promote and enhance the use of EuroQol instruments in health care system applications, and for the measurement and valuation of population health. The PHS WG has several objectives grouped under the following three key remits:

##### 1. Research

- Initiate research on the use of EuroQol instruments in population health and health care systems applications (e.g. by initiating RFPs)
- Guide and support the development of research applications under the PHS WG remit
- Monitor and evaluate the progress of research related to the WG

##### 2. Implementation and support

- Support the initiation and development of PROMs programs utilizing the EuroQol instruments (e.g. for routine outcome measurement within patient registries and health organizations)
- Support the development of proof-of-concept applications utilizing the EuroQol instruments
- Explore the development of new products and tools that support the use of EuroQol instruments in health systems

##### 3. Stakeholder engagement

- Facilitate capacity building and knowledge exchange activities with external users and stakeholders (e.g., patients, providers, system administrators, and policy makers)
- Promote the EuroQol instruments to new user groups (e.g. for monitoring, evaluating and promoting health systems performance)
- Foster international collaborations amongst EuroQol Group members and users of the EuroQol instruments
- Promoting the inclusion of EuroQol instruments in national health surveys



### ***3.3.2. Broad research programmes and activities***

The WG is interested in innovative research proposals for both methodological and applied research. Within the three suggested aims, research programmes and activities will be developed and coordinated by the DSWG. A broad set of programmes and activities are outlined below. Note that research interests and priorities of the PHS WG may overlap with those of other WGs such as the DSWG and the E&OWG. For advice or guidance in developing your research proposal, please feel free to contact the co-chairs or members of the PHS WG, the Health Inequalities SIG or members from the Canadian APERSU program, and the Swedish PROMs program.

#### ***a) The use of EuroQol instruments in population health assessment***

This topic covers research activities that attempt to measure the health of the general population using EuroQol instruments. We encourage analysis of secondary data as well as primary data collection. These data will typically also include information on the presence of conditions and general background variables (age, gender, socio-economic characteristics).

We are especially interested in research proposals, preferably involving more than one country, in the following areas:

- *Measuring population health and examining its determinants:* This includes areas of study such as the burden of disease, changes in population health status (due to e.g., disasters or COVID-19), population risk factor models (e.g., including vulnerability), and population norms. As well as descriptive studies, we are interested in studies exploring factors that determine population health status including demographic, cultural and epidemiological factors, and how these impact on health over geographical regions and time.
- *Studying health inequalities:* We are interested in studies that measure inequalities in health and health care using EuroQol instruments, including the relationship of inequalities to social and individual determinants of health and specific policies (local, national). This includes the relation of health inequalities to healthcare access inequalities and the impact of external factors like the COVID-19 pandemic and social policies. This may also include the intended and unintended effects of health policies on health inequalities.



b) *The use of EuroQol instruments as patient reported outcome measures (PROMs) in health system applications*

Many health systems and organizations around the world are using the EQ-5D as a patient-reported outcome measure (PROM) to support various purposes such as enhancing patient-centred care; monitoring, evaluating and improving quality of care; and incorporating patient-reported outcomes into value-based purchasing arrangements. The EQ-5D is currently being used alongside disease-specific PROMs in routine outcome measurement within patient registries and health organizations in Sweden, Canada and England, respectively. Many other countries are using the EQ-5D in similar applications at a smaller scale.

The use of EQ-5D as a PROM for these purposes is under-studied. Given the growing interest in PROMs around the world, especially the work that is driven by the OECD, we seek to promote the EQ-5D as the generic PROM of choice. For that, the PHS WG supports research that examines various aspects of the use of EQ-5D as a PROM including the following:

- *Implementing systems for collecting, analysing and reporting EQ-5D as a PROM*<sup>1</sup>: This includes exploring best practice of collecting EQ-5D data in PROMs programmes, and examining issues in implementing PROMs systems, such as the challenge of measurement. What data capture approaches work best; can different instruments be implemented simultaneously; can healthcare providers do proxy measurements if needed? What is the effect of feedback information to the patient on survey compliance? How do you manage language versions or proxy support? Another challenge is reporting and communicating EQ-5D information to end users in a way that is - demonstrably - instrumental to that user (dashboard graphics, etc.). Note that different user groups (e.g. individual patients, health care providers, managers, policy makers) may require different information and presentational formats.
- *Examining the applications of EQ-5D as a PROM*: There are many potential applications of EQ-5D as a PROM; our focus is on its use in three areas: quality control, performance management, and individual patient decision making. Questions of interest include: how can EQ-5D data be analysed and reported in comparing performance of healthcare providers or to inform quality improvement

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<sup>1</sup> In certain cases does t EQ foundation fund the implementation of any new PROMs program including EQ-5D. A strong case for need would have to made, that could consist of a novel way of implementation. Further positive aspects could include local co-funding and/or a strong support base with local stakeholders.



initiatives? How can EQ-5D data be used to inform clinical management or to support patient decision making around treatment options (e.g., patient-decision aids)?

- *Examining the impact of EQ-5D/PROMs systems:* There is lack of information about the overall impact of PROMs programmes, such as evidence that they have resulted in changes in, for example, clinical practice, hospital performance or the health of patient populations. Demonstrating such impact is challenging, so we are especially interested in innovative ways (e.g., pragmatic cluster RCTs) to examine the effectiveness and/or cost-effectiveness of using EQ-5D as a PROM in various clinical areas.

Please note that to be eligible for funding by the EuroQol research foundation, it is essential that the proposed research is primarily about the EQ-5D, rather than including the EQ-5D as an incidental component of a PROMs program or simply as an example.

### *c) Methodological advancements*

This includes research exploring retrospective measurement<sup>2</sup>, health trajectories, the use of change variables vs. difference scores, response style measurement and adjustment (response heterogeneity, response shift), equivalence studies on related concepts (e.g., healthy days, DALYs), prospective study designs, and case-mix adjustment in the context of comparing population health or health care performance.

While many research proposals will involve some data collection by the investigators, we also support those who use existing data sources and strongly support projects which collaborate with the EuroQol Foundation's collaborative program agreements currently in Sweden and Canada.

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<sup>2</sup> Retrospective measurement of EQ-5D has been applied to create pseudo-longitudinal data, relevant when pre-data is lacking (e.g. with event like conditions such as stroke or injuries). This method may be applied but the method itself may also be methodologically studied.



### 3.4. EQ-5D in Children Working Group

*(Last updated: 2015)*

#### **3.4.1. Aims of the EQ-5D in Children Working Group**

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).
2. To promote research to explore the validity of the EQ-5D-Y as a measure of health status in children.
3. To work closely with WG on Valuation Methodology in developing a work programme for the valuation of EQ-5D-Y states.
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.
5. To update the user guide for the 5-level Youth version.

#### **3.4.2. 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.



### 3.5. Education and Outreach Working Group

#### ***3.5.1. Aims of the Education and Outreach Working Group***

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.
2. Organize and promote regional meetings of researchers, decision makers and users interested in EQ-5D outside Europe and North America.
3. Propose additional educational and uptake initiatives to the Executive Committee that could be supported by the Foundation.

#### ***3.5.2. Rationale***

This 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.



#### 4. Contact persons

If you would like more information on any aspect of the WG policys, 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)

Kim Rand, Chair of the Executive Committee: [krand@krand.no](mailto:krand@krand.no)

## 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 EuroQol Project Submission Portal (<https://euroqol-proposals.grantplatform.com/>). 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 [EQ-5D Nomenclature](#).
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 request for proposals will outline what type of projects are invited. Regular proposals can always be submitted. Proposals for PHD scholarship and grants can only be submitted if invited.
8. Proposals are reviewed every quarter in March, June, September and December. Please note that:
  - a. Time sensitive and other high priority proposals, earmarked as such by the Exec Chair, can be reviewed by a fast track procedure as explained below.
  - b. Different review and decision procedures exists for regular proposals and low cost proposals (maximum budget 25.000 euro)

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)) or to the Scientific Team Leader ([Stolk@euroqol.org](mailto:Stolk@euroqol.org)).

9. 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 another researcher 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 scientific team leader chooses the reviewers.
- d. All reviews will be completed online using the EuroQol Project Submission Portal, where reviewers can view the proposal and rate or leave comments pertaining to the following criteria: Strategic and scientific importance; Approach/study; Design/methods: Feasibility; Budget, timelines and deliverables; Data protection and protection of human subjects. Next, the scores and/or comments are shared with all members of the Exec to decide on the proposal.
- e. The Exec Chair may install a triage committee to facilitate the decision making process. This will be announced in the Request for proposals, together with a description of the triage process. The triage committee will consider the proposals and their reviews and make a triage decision based on the reviewer comments when a clear picture emerges from the review reports. These triage decisions need to be ratified by the full Exec. If there are important concerns raised by any member of the Exec about any triage-decision, the proposal will be deferred for discussion at the next Exec meeting. If the review reports do not provide a strong basis for a decision, the proposal no triage decision will be made and the proposal is moved to the discussion with the full Exec.
- 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.

10. The **review procedure of low cost proposals** is as follows

- a. A somewhat lighter review process is used to decide about low cost proposals. The Exec members will not participate in the review process. Instead, the relevant Working Group(s) will review the proposal.
- b. The Chair-, or the Deputy Chair of the Exec will consider the review(s) and will provide a recommendation, along with the proposal and the review, to members of the Exec. That recommendation needs to be ratified by the Exec in their quarterly decision making meeting. In case any concern is raised with the suggested decision, the proposal will be discussed by the full Exec to reach a decision.

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

- a. Decisions on time sensitive or other high priority proposals can be fast tracked. The fast track procedure provides a possibility to judge funding requests in the interval between Exec

decision meetings. The fast track procedure invites reviews for proposals upon receipt, and the decisions are made offline.

- b. A review will be sought from minimally one member of the Exec. One or more additional reviews can be requested from the Exec or Working Groups, at the discretion of the (Deputy) Exec Chair.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. If you want to have your proposal reviewed by the fast track procedure, you need to contact the scientific team leader ([stolk@euroqol.org](mailto:stolk@euroqol.org)), who will discuss with the chair of the Exec if your proposal qualifies for the fast track procedure. .
- f. Applicants should use the regular approach to submit their proposal, via the EuroQol Project Submission Portal, see point 2.

**12. Executive Committee decisions on proposals 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.

13. 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.

14. Abstracts of applications that are awarded funding will be published on the public website.

15. When funding is awarded, the Executive Director, or the Scientific Team Leader, will follow-up with a letter confirming Executive Committee approval. The letter will include a proposed payment schedule in two or more instalments and explain what is required before an invoice can be sent.

16. If funding for a proposal is refused, the Executive Director, or the Scientific Team Leader, will follow-up with a rejection notification mail that includes the reasons. To appeal a decision, you must write a letter to the Executive Director or the Scientific Team Leader asking to have the decision reconsidered and motivate this request.

17. **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, using the Research Project Final Report Form on the EuroQoI Project Submission Portal (<https://euroqol-proposals.grantplatform.com/>), together with the original proposal, all deliverables described in the proposal and all reviewer reports, if applicable.
- b. For symposia and workshops the Workshop and Symposia Report Form should be submitted using the portal, 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](#).
- 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 final report review will be completed online using the EuroQoI Project Submission Portal, where reviewers can view and rate the report and offer a recommendation (Sign-off, or Revise and Resubmit). Reviewers are asked to comment on: *Was the work completed as planned? Is the reporting up to standard? Are there strategic implications?* Next, the scores and/or comments are shared with all members of the Exec to decide whether the report can be signed off.
- 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. 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 last 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](#) or the [Scientific Team Leader](#).

## 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 ≤ €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.

## **GUIDANCE TO APPLICANTS SEEKING FUNDING FOR PHD PROPOSALS FROM EUROQOL**

**Date:** February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**By:** Elly stolk, scientific team leader

The Executive Committee has decided to allocated funds to give EuroQol members the opportunity to invite top students to perform research as a PhD candidate on an original research project. Because there are considerable differences in PhDs between countries, this memo was written to clarify what EuroQol wants to see in PhD proposals.

### **Aim**

EuroQol invites proposals for PhD research that supports EuroQol's wider goals. The grant should allow a PhD student to do original research, write it up in a thesis that meets local requirements, and defend that thesis and earn the PhD title, as well as meeting the minimum requirements of EuroQol as listed below. The student's focus will be on broadening the theoretical understanding of a theoretical subject or exploring into any unknown area, and enhancing research skills. While the primary aim essentially is *personal* capacity building, the secondary aim is to provide opportunities to investigate in depth a particular EuroQol related *topic* or *dataset*.

### **Who can apply**

All EuroQol members who have approval to be a lead or co-supervisor of a PhD candidate at an institution that confers PhDs are eligible to apply. The PhD research could be undertaken at more than one institution, but the institution at which the student is enrolled will provide the lead supervisor and be the official representative of the project and budget holder.

### **Who can supervise the student**

Applicants need to ensure that the student has the necessary lead-supervisor and institutional support. Other people involved can be co-supervisors or part of a broader advisory team. The lead-supervisor must have approval to be a primary supervisor at the institution at which the student is enrolled. The lead-supervisor needs to have institutional capacity to provide the support, opportunities, and resources needed to enable effective supervision and to ensure that the candidate will qualify for the PhD according to relevant standards (this may include teaching). Qualifications of all project team members need to be clarified by including their full academic CV and intended roles in the application.

## **Qualifications of the PhD candidate**

The candidate is selected by the lead-supervisor. If the application is initiated with a specific candidate in mind, a CV of the prospective candidate must be provided together with the CVs of other team members. In case of projects initiated by the applicant, and for which there is no identified candidate, the strategy and timeline for recruiting or selecting the PhD candidate needs to be described. A suitable candidate must be identified who has demonstrated interest in the area.

## **Scientific content**

The most important part of the application form is the project description. The project description explains the research project or projects for the PhD, and it outlines the research strategy in some detail. It is important to present a strong rationale for the research. The background should identify gaps in the evidence base/methodological issues that will be addressed, leading to the stated aims of the PhD proposal. The significance of the research questions (1) to the field, (2) to the EuroQol community should be clearly stated. The methods of all planned projects need to be described in a level of detail. It is not necessary to provide every last detail, but the description should allow reviewers to judge what level of quality is being pursued and to consider feasibility of the proposed work and assess risk. Details of existing data sources must be provided to allow quality and suitability of the data to be assessed. If new data will be collected, a description is needed of how data will be collected, analyzed, and reported. Unlike other standard proposals, attention should be paid to interaction with the research communities addressed, including the EuroQol group (e.g. by indicating which WG will be the most natural sounding board).

## **Deliverables**

The required deliverables for a PhD project will be defined in part by the local context. In some countries the requirements are defined in terms of published papers, while in others it rests on a thesis presented to an exam committee. The EuroQol-Group acknowledges this and accepts that the deliverables of PhD projects funded by EuroQol will vary. The lead-supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all local requirements are met, as well as the possible additional requirements defined by EuroQol. The EuroQol-Group defines as a minimum requirement from a PhD project submission of two research articles to a peer reviewed journal, and at least one of these must have been accepted for publication during the timeframe of the PhD. Furthermore, the PhD student is expected to present the research regularly at scientific conferences, including those organized by the EuroQol-Group. The EuroQol-Group expects contribution to the scientific network, e.g. if invited by a WG or the EuroQol-leadership. If applicable it also includes creating documentation/guidelines for users of the EuroQol-instrument on the topic/dataset. Generally, it is assumed that analytical tools/programs are shared with those EuroQol-members. If another organization/agency also is supplying funding to the PhD student then the EQ requirements are modified to reflect the magnitude of investment.

## **Timelines and progress reports**

The timelines and important milestones of the project need to be presented (ideally on a Gantt chart), in order to allow progress to be judged. The timeline needs to include the required milestones of the host institution and of EuroQol. The project team needs to pay appropriate attention to potential barriers for timely availability of data (including ethical approval). EuroQol requires the submission of annual progress reports to monitor if the project is on track and delivering expected results. More generally, the annual report is an important communication tool for knowledge transfer and also to document changes that become necessary or even desirable during the PhD project after its approval and require sign off by EuroQol.

## **Setting**

Please provide relevant detail about how PhD research is structured in the host institution, and list the formal requirements in terms of process and outcome. The description needs to clarify the rights and duties of a PhD student and explain whether the student will receive research training, and have tasks and duties beyond the PhD research. If travel is involved (covid-sensitive), this needs to be explained and justified.

## **Budget**

Your local context will also define the way in which the budget will be made available to the student (e.g. as a stipend and fees or salary).

The targeted amount for PhD proposals is in the range of 150.000 – 160.000 euro; higher amounts may be requested if properly motivated. A smaller budget can also be requested if EuroQol funding is requested to supplement a previously awarded project or extend the budget available for an existing PhD study. You need to provide a budget plan to explain and justify the requested budget.

In addition to stipend/fees/salary for the student, you may request:

- an individual bench fee of 5000 euro for the PhD student to encourage his or her scientific career. The student can freely decide whether to spend this on travel to conferences, registering for courses, etc.
- a budget up to 25.000 euro to cover material cost, e.g. for data collection/acquisition. This can be included in the original proposal, or applied for separately at a later stage after approval of the project while the work is ongoing.
- supporting funds for 1 or 2 supervisors. The amount is capped at 7500 euro in case of 1 supervisor and at 10.000 euro in case of two supervisors.

Note: The cost of attending EuroQol meetings will be fully reimbursed, if applicable, and do not need to be included in the budget.

It is *not* possible to request funding to cover indirect costs or overheads. Budgets to cover open access fees should not be included in your application now, but can be requested later upon acceptance of a manuscript.

A EuroQol grant may be combined with other sources of funding if it does not fully cover the cost of a PhD. Please describe the total amount of funds you currently have from other sources. If decisions on other grant requests are pending, EuroQol grants may be awarded as a conditional grant that will be released as soon as the remainder of the budget has been secured. The budget will be made available in annual instalments.

### **Assessment procedure**

All applications will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the EuroQol Group and by members of the relevant Working Group. Applicants will be assessed on the following criteria: strategic importance, scientific quality, coherence and connectedness (field of application, network), experience and expertise of the lead-supervisor, co-supervisors and advisors, feasibility, budget appropriateness.

### **Questions**

Please contact EuroQol's scientific team leader at [stolk@euroqol.org](mailto:stolk@euroqol.org) if you have any questions about applying for PhD funding.