INTERNAL RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

The European Resuscitation Council (ERC) is a non-profit organisation registered in Belgium and governed by Belgian law and applicable European Union legislation.

The objective of the ERC is to preserve human life by making high-quality resuscitation available to all. The ERC fulfils this objective through the development of evidence-based resuscitation guidelines, the delivery and implementation of education programmes, collaboration with National Resuscitation Councils (NRCs), support for research, advocacy, and international cooperation.

These Internal Rules operationalise the Articles of Association (AoA) of the ERC. They define the organisational structures, governance framework, membership arrangements, oversight mechanisms, and operational principles through which the ERC conducts its activities.

The Internal Rules must be read in conjunction with the Articles of Association. In the event of any inconsistency between these Internal Rules and the Articles of Association, the Articles of Association shall prevail.

The ERC is governed by a Board elected by the General Assembly. Oversight of governance standards, organisational processes, and compliance with principles of good governance is exercised by the Governance Committee, which is elected by and accountable to the General Assembly and operates in accordance with its approved Terms of Reference.

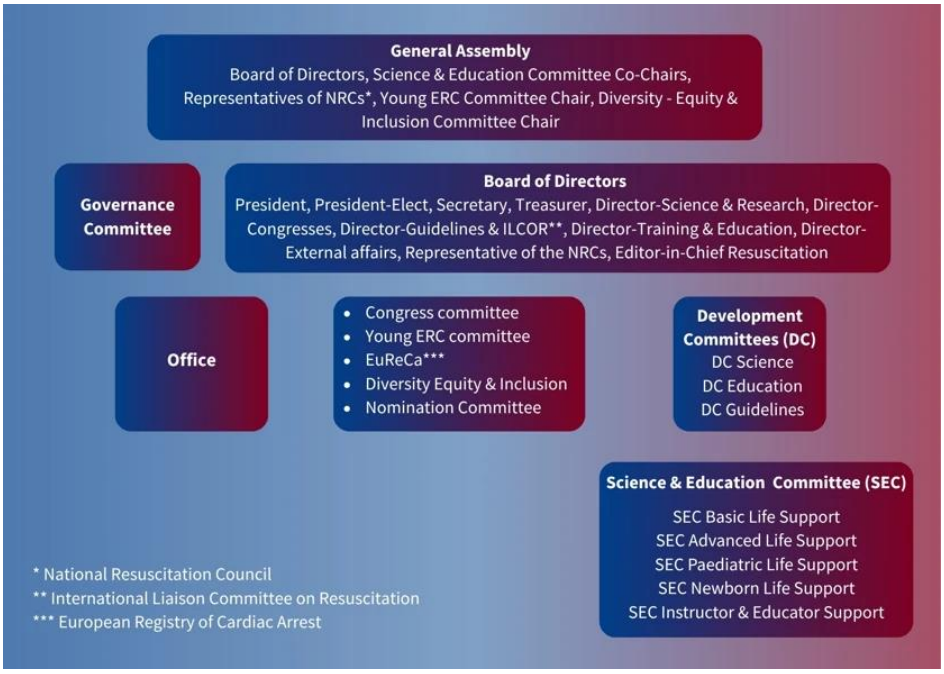
All governance structures and operational arrangements set out in these Internal Rules support the delivery of the ERC Strategic Plan.

All activities of the ERC shall be conducted in accordance with:

- Belgian legal requirements applicable to non-profit associations;
- Applicable European Union legislation;
- The ERC Code of Conduct;
- Conflict of Interest requirements;
- Approved ERC policies and procedures.

These Internal Rules may be amended by the Board.

European Resuscitation Council vzw
Galileilaan 11 – Isala
BE-2845 Niel - Belgium
www.erc.edu



2. National Resuscitation Councils (NRC)

For the purpose of defining European countries, the ERC refers to the definition used by the Council of Europe (https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/members-states). Organisations from countries outside this definition may apply for NRC status.

2.1 Eligibility

- The criteria for becoming an NRC is defined within the Articles of Association.
- Only one organisation may be recognised as the NRC in each country at any given time.

2.2 Application and Approval

The process, documentation requirements, evaluation criteria, and timelines for NRC recognition are defined in the approved NRC Application Procedure.

Final approval of NRC status rests with the Board.

2.3 Agreements

Each recognised NRC shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or Agreement (of Cooperation) with the ERC, as defined in the NRC application procedure and the Articles of Association.
MoUs or Agreements (of Cooperation) shall be reviewed periodically; the collaboration agreements will be reviewed every three years.

2.4 Responsibilities of NRCs

In addition to what is reflected in the Articles of Association and Internal Rules, the responsibilities of both the ERC and the NRC are detailed within the MoUs or Agreements (of Cooperation) signed by both parties.

An NRC shall not represent itself as having authority beyond that granted under its agreement with the ERC.

European Resuscitation Council vzw
Galileilaan 11 – Isala
BE-2845 Niel - Belgium
www.erc.edu

2.5 Monitoring and Review

The Board is responsible, via the Representative of the NRCs, for ensuring that recognised NRCs comply with their agreements and with ERC standards.
Where governance concerns arise, the Governance Committee may review relevant aspects in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

2.6 Withdrawal of Recognition

Recognition as an NRC will automatically be withdrawn when the Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement (of Cooperation) between the NRC and ERC ends. The Board can also withdraw the recognition as NRC when the NRC no longer meets the characteristics for NRC's as mentioned in the AoA.

Before a decision is taken, the NRC shall:

- Be informed in writing of the concerns;
- Be given an opportunity to respond;
- Where appropriate, be offered a defined remediation period.

3. Members

The ERC is composed of Voting Members and Associate Members. Voting members are defined in the Articles of Association.

All members shall support the objectives of the ERC and comply with:

- The Articles of Association;
- These Internal Rules;
- The ERC Code of Conduct;
- Conflict of Interest requirements;
- Other applicable ERC policies and procedures
- Payment of all applicable membership fees

3.1 Associate Members

Associate Membership is open to individuals who wish to support and participate in the activities of the ERC.

Admission

Applicants must complete the prescribed application process and pay the applicable annual membership fee. Admission is confirmed upon approval and receipt of payment.

The number of Associate Members is unlimited.

Fees

Membership fees:

- Are decided by the Board;
- Are payable annually.

Failure to pay within the prescribed timeframe may result in suspension. Continued non-payment may result in termination of membership.

Rights

Associate Members may:

- Participate in ERC activities;
- Apply for committee or working group membership where eligible;
- Stand for roles where permitted under the Articles of Association.

Associate Members do not hold voting rights unless separately appointed or elected as Voting Members.

European Resuscitation Council vzw
Galileilaan 11 – Isala
BE-2845 Niel - Belgium
www.erc.edu

Resignation

An Associate Member may resign at any time by written notice to the ERC Office.

Suspension or Termination

Membership may be suspended or terminated in cases of:

- Serious breach of the Code of Conduct;
- Failure to comply with Conflict of Interest requirements;
- Conduct bringing the ERC into disrepute;
- Persistent non-payment of fees.

Before suspension or termination:

- The member shall be informed in writing of the concerns;
- The member shall be given an opportunity to respond;
- A decision shall be taken in accordance with the approved Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.

The final decision on suspension or removal rests with the Board, or governance committee, if Board member(s) involved).

3.2 Voting Members

Voting Members are those entitled to sit and vote on the General Assembly as defined in the Articles of Association.

3.3 Honorary Members

Honorary Membership of the ERC is a prestigious award granted by the Board that honours individuals for their complete professional career and their outstanding life-long commitment and leadership in resuscitation care. Honourees are nationally and internationally recognised for their contributions to the science, the education and/or the implementation of resuscitation care.

The criteria, selection process, and associated benefits for honorary members are defined in the corresponding Internal Policy.

Honorary Members:

- Do not automatically hold voting rights
- Are not required to pay membership fees unless otherwise determined by the Board
- Must comply with the ERC Code of Conduct.

Honorary Membership may be revoked by the Board in cases of serious misconduct or breach of ERC policies, following due process.

3.4 Fellows of the ERC (FERC)

Fellows of the ERC (FERC) are members of the ERC honoured because of their outstanding achievements and ongoing commitment to science, education, leadership in Resuscitation Care. The title is granted by the Board.

The criteria, selection process, and associated benefits for FERCs are defined in the corresponding Internal Policy.

FERC status:

- Does not confer voting rights;
- Does not automatically confer governance roles;
- Requires continued compliance with ERC policies;
- May be revoked by the Board in cases of serious misconduct or breach of ERC policies.

European Resuscitation Council vzw
Galileilaan 11 – Isala
BE-2845 Niel - Belgium
www.erc.edu

Fellows may use the designation “FERC” in professional communications.

4. Committee Structures

Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups support the delivery of the ERC Strategic Plan and operate within the governance framework established by the Articles of Association and these Internal Rules.

All committees, working groups or task forces members shall:

- Be Associate members of the ERC
- Comply with the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest requirements;
- Act in the best interests of the ERC.

4.1 Committees

A Committee is a standing structure established by the Board to deliver defined objectives aligned with the ERC Strategic Plan.

Committees:

- Operate under Board approved Terms of Reference;
- Have defined membership and leadership roles;
- Report to the Board, except where otherwise specified;
- May be allocated an annual budget by the Board.

The process for appointment or election of committee members is defined in the relevant Terms of Reference.

Committee members serve for defined terms as specified in their Terms of Reference.

Committees shall provide regular reports to the Board on activities, performance and progress against objectives.

The Board may establish, merge, or dissolve Committees as required to meet strategic needs.

The Governance Committee is defined within the Articles of Association. Its members are elected and accountable to the General Assembly.

4.2 Existing ERC committees

Each committee has its own Terms of reference defining its role, purpose, and objectives in order to fulfil the organisation’s mission.

- Development committees for Science, Education and Guidelines
    - Science and Education Committees for ALS, BLS, PLS, NLS, IES
- Governance Committee
- Young ERC
- Congress Committee
- EuReCa Committee
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
- Nomination committee

4.3 Working Groups

A Working Group is a time-limited structure established by the Board, by an existing committee, or other governing body, to deliver specific projects, outputs, or defined areas of work.

European Resuscitation Council vzw
Galileilaan 11 – Isala
BE-2845 Niel - Belgium
www.erc.edu

Working Groups:

- Are established for a defined period, normally not exceeding three years;
- Operate under a defined mandate set by the appointing committee / governing body;
- Report to the Board, a designated Committee, or governing body.

Membership of each Working Group is determined and appointed by the appointing committee, or governing body.

Members of working groups are appointed for a maximum of three years.

Working Groups shall be dissolved upon completion of their mandate unless renewed by the appointing committee / governing body.

4.4 Appointment, Conduct and Removal

Appointment processes for Committees and Working Groups shall:

- Be transparent;
- Follow defined procedures as defined in the Terms of Reference;
- Be subject to governance oversight where appropriate.

All members must:

- Submit Conflict of Interest declarations as required;
- Declare conflicts at meetings;
- Commit to active participation;
- Maintain confidentiality.

Membership of a Committee or Working Group may be terminated as defined in the relevant Terms of Reference of that Committee. Before termination, the individual shall be informed in writing and given an opportunity to respond.

5. Code of Conduct

The ERC Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour, integrity, professionalism, and accountability expected of all individuals acting for or on behalf of the ERC.

All individuals within scope must confirm that they have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct.

The Governance Committee oversees governance aspects of ethical conduct processes, including monitoring compliance frameworks, in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

The Code of Conduct is maintained as a separate approved document and may be updated from time to time. Amendments to the Code of Conduct shall be approved in accordance with governance procedures defined by the Board. The General Assembly shall be informed of amendments to the code of conduct.

6. Conflict of Interest (COI)

The ERC is committed to ensuring that decisions are taken in the best interests of the organisation and free from undue influence.

A conflict of interest arises where an individual's personal, professional, financial, or organisational interests could influence, or be perceived to influence, the impartial performance of their duties on behalf of the ERC. The details of conflict of interest is set out in the separate COI policy.

The ERC Office shall maintain a register of declared conflicts in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.

European Resuscitation Council vzw
Galileilaan 11 – Isala
BE-2845 Niel - Belgium
www.erc.edu

In matters involving Board members or senior governance roles, governance oversight may involve the Governance Committee in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

6.1 Failure to Declare

Failure to declare a material conflict of interest may constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or removal from role, in accordance with the applicable procedure.

7. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

The ERC is committed to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of its governance, activities and representation.
The ERC recognises that diversity strengthens decision-making, enhances innovation, and improves the quality and accessibility of resuscitation practice across Europe and beyond.
The ERC seeks to ensure that its structures, processes and culture are inclusive and free from discrimination.

7.1 Principles

The ERC is committed to:

- Promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment;
- Encouraging participation across different professional backgrounds, disciplines, genders, ethnicities, cultures and regions;
- Ensuring that governance processes are transparent and accessible;
- Fostering a respectful and inclusive organisational culture;
- Preventing discrimination, harassment or exclusion.

All individuals acting for or on behalf of the ERC must comply with these principles and with applicable legal requirements relating to equality and non-discrimination.

7.2 Governance and Accountability

The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that DEI principles are embedded within the ERC's governance and strategic planning.
The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (or equivalent body established by the Board) supports the development, implementation and monitoring of DEI initiatives.
The Governance Committee may review governance processes to ensure that they are consistent with principles of fairness and good governance.
DEI considerations should be taken into account in:

- Elections and appointments;
- Committee and Working Group composition;
- Leadership development;
- Programme delivery;
- External representation of the ERC.

8. Complaints

The ERC is committed to maintaining high standards of professionalism, integrity and accountability.
The ERC provides a fair and transparent mechanism for raising concerns or complaints relating to the conduct, governance, services or activities of the organisation within its complaints policy and procedure.

European Resuscitation Council vzw
Galileilaan 11 – Isala
BE-2845 Niel - Belgium
www.erc.edu

A complaint may relate to:

- Breach of the Code of Conduct;
- Conflict of Interest concerns;
- Conduct of members, Board members, Committee members or volunteers;
- Governance processes;
- Service delivery or programme activities;
- Other actions taken on behalf of the ERC.

Conduct and complaint procedures are governed by the corresponding internal policies.

9. Final Provisions

9.1 Interpretation

These Internal Rules shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with:

- The Articles of Association;
- Applicable Belgian law;
- Applicable European Union legislation;
- The objectives of the ERC.

In the event of any conflict between these Internal Rules and the Articles of Association, the Articles of Association shall prevail.
Headings are included for convenience only and do not affect interpretation.

10. Policies and Procedures

Operational procedures, election procedures, nomination processes, disciplinary procedures and other supporting governance documents are maintained separately from these Internal Rules, unless provided otherwise.
Such documents must be consistent with these Internal Rules and the Articles of Association.
Where a supporting document conflicts with these Internal Rules, these Internal Rules shall prevail.

11. Review

These Internal Rules shall be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with:

- The Articles of Association;
- The ERC Strategic Plan;
- Applicable legal and regulatory requirements;
- Principles of good governance.

Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Board for approval in accordance with the Articles of Association.

12. Entry into Force

These Internal Rules shall enter into force upon approval by the Board and shall supersede any previous version.

European Resuscitation Council vzw
Galileilaan 11 – Isala
BE-2845 Niel - Belgium
www.erc.edu