

## Call for Experts

Global Commission for the Certification of the Eradication of Poliomyelitis - Containment Working Group  
(GCC – CWG)

Issued:	20 September 2023	Deadline:	30 October 2023
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The World Health Organization (WHO) is seeking experts to serve as members of the Global Commission for the Certification of the Eradication of Poliomyelitis – Containment Working Group (GCC – CWG). This “Call for experts” provides information about the GCC – CWG, the expert profiles being sought, the process to express interest, and the process of selection. If you have any questions, please e-mail [containment@who.int](mailto:containment@who.int).

### Background

Poliovirus containment is a critical component of polio eradication. The poliovirus containment strategies and activities are aligned with the containment principles of the Polio Eradication Strategy 2022–2026<sup>1</sup> aimed at maintaining a polio-free world. In line with this, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) Strategy for Global Poliovirus Containment<sup>2</sup> and the Global Poliovirus Containment Action Plan 2022–2024<sup>3</sup> were developed to define the strategy, goals and objectives towards ensuring safe and secure containment in the post-eradication and post-oral poliomyelitis vaccine (OPV) cessation era.

The global strategy to minimize the risk of a facility-associated release of poliovirus is described in the WHO Global Action Plan for Poliovirus Containment, 4th edition, 2022 (GAPIV)<sup>4</sup>. This is achieved through: (1) risk elimination by destruction of unneeded poliovirus materials in all facilities except those designated as serving critical functions such as polio vaccine production and control, crucial research, diagnostics, etc. requiring the retention of polioviruses post-eradication in facilities such as laboratories, vaccine manufacturers; etc. and (2) the biorisk management of facilities retaining polioviruses through strict compliance with facility-, immunization coverage- and environmental control- safeguards. The biorisk management standards for facilities retaining polioviruses post-eradication in GAPIV provides the framework for facility compliance verification and containment certification following the Containment Certification Scheme (CCS)<sup>5</sup>.

In resolution WHA71.16<sup>6</sup>, the World Health Assembly urged all Member States to accelerate the implementation of poliovirus containment and to complete survey and inventory activities for the relevant polioviruses, reduce to an absolute minimum the number of facilities designated as serving critical functions requiring the retention of polioviruses post-eradication, and accelerate progress with national containment certification processes following the CCS.

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<sup>1</sup> Polio Eradication Strategy 2022-2026: Delivering on a Promise. Available at: <https://polioeradication.org/gpei-strategy-2022-2026/>

<sup>2</sup> GPEI Strategy for Global Poliovirus Containment, 1st edition, 2022.. Available at: <https://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Strategy-Global-Poliovirus-Containment.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Global Poliovirus Containment Action Plan 2022–2024. Available at: <https://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/GPCAP-2022-2024.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> WHO Global Action Plan for Poliovirus Containment, 4th edition, 2022 (GAPIV). Available at: <https://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/WHO-Global-Action-Plan-for-Poliovirus-Containment-GAPIV.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Poliovirus Containment Certification Scheme, 1st edition, 2017 (CCS). Available at: [http://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/CCS\\_19022017-EN.pdf](http://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/CCS_19022017-EN.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Seventy-First World Health Assembly Resolution WHA71.16 Poliomyelitis – containment of polioviruses (2018). Available at: [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA71/A71\\_R16-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA71/A71_R16-en.pdf)

As agreed by the GCC<sup>7</sup> and described in the CCS, the GCC will act as the global oversight body to certify global poliovirus containment. In line with this and to support the GCC in this role, the GCC – CWG, established in December 2016 was tasked to undertake the day-to-day activities associated with facility containment certification<sup>7,8</sup> which includes facility, immunization, and environmental safeguards.

#### Functions of the GCC - CWG

In its capacity as a working group of the GCC, the GCC – CWG is expected to review national containment certification applications of designated poliovirus-essential facilities (PEF) and make recommendations to the GCC on issues related to containment certification of these facilities involving all phases of containment certification described in CCS i.e., certificate of participation (CP), interim certificate of containment (ICC) and certificate of containment (CC). Its aim is to provide the required level of assurance that GAPIV requirements are appropriately identified, implemented and monitored, following the CCS.

In close collaboration (administrative and technical support) with the WHO Secretariat (also see section: Secretariat of the GCC - CWG), the GCC – CWG is expected to:

1. review applications to ensure that a designated PEF is eligible to join the certification process;
2. recommend to GCC approval/endorsement of the process to award containment certificates;
3. review and recommend to GCC the approval/endorsement of national reports on containment activities based upon information supplied through the GCC-endorsed process (following the CCS); and
4. recommend to GCC the issuance of containment certificates (certificates of participation, interim certificates of containment and certificates of containment) submitted following the CCS process;

#### Operations of the GCC – CWG

Members of the GCC – CWG will be expected to attend regular teleconferences/in-person meetings to discuss and finalize the recommendations for the consideration of the GCC following the review of the containment certification applications received. The working language of the GCC - CWG will be English. The frequency and duration of meetings or teleconference of the GCC – CWG are subject to change.

GCC – CWG members do not receive any remuneration from WHO for the work performed. However, when attending in-person meetings at the invitation of WHO, travel cost and per diem shall be covered by WHO in accordance with the applicable WHO rules and policies.

Additional information on the functions- and operations- of the GCC – CWG are available in the terms of reference of the GCC – CWG available at:

[http://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/TOR\\_GCC-CWG.pdf](http://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/TOR_GCC-CWG.pdf)

#### Duration of GCC – CWG membership

Members including the Chair of the GCC – CWG shall be appointed to serve for a period of at least three years per appointment and shall be eligible for reappointment once unless circumstances require otherwise. To avoid the loss of capacity of the GCC – CWG due to the end of appointment of several members at one time, WHO may introduce a rotation-off policy taking into consideration the interest of WHO, intention of the

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<sup>7</sup> Report of the 14th Meeting of the Global Commission for the Certification of the Eradication of Poliomyelitis, 20–21 Sep 2015, Bali, Indonesia. Available at: <https://polioeradication.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/1Report.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Report of the 15th Meeting of the Global Commission for the Certification of the Eradication of Poliomyelitis, December 2016, Colombo, Sri Lanka. Available at: <https://polioeradication.org/tools-and-library/policy-reports/certification-reports/global-certification-commission/>

member and code of conduct of WHO experts<sup>9</sup>. The appointment of members of the GCC – CWG or designation as Chairperson of GCC – CWG may be terminated at any time by WHO if WHO's interest so requires, or as otherwise specified in the terms of reference of the GCC – CWG.

#### Eligibility and required expertise of members of the GCC – CWG

The GCC – CWG will be multidisciplinary, with members who have a range of technical knowledge, skills and experience relevant to: large- or small-scale biorisk management; compliance promotion, monitoring, verification and enforcement including inspection and audits against biorisk management standards, good microbiological practice and procedure (GMPP), good manufacturing practices (GMP), good laboratory practices (GLP), etc.; vaccine production and quality control or other related disciplines in large- or small-scale settings handling biological agents or toxins, i.e., laboratory, vaccine manufacturer, etc.

GCC – CWG members must respect the impartiality and independence required of WHO. In performing their work, members may not seek or accept instructions from any Government or from any authority external to WHO. They must be free of any real, potential, or apparent conflicts of interest.

#### Secretariat of the GCC - CWG

WHO shall provide the secretariat support for the GCC – CWG , including all necessary administrative support e.g., selection process for members, organization of meetings, review of the completeness of submissions, etc.; technical support e.g., ensure all technical information, documents or data are included, if not made available to enable review of the submissions, perform preliminary technical evaluation of submissions for consideration by the GCC - CWG, provide guidance on CCS processes and information required for review of containment certification application (CP, ICC and CC), manage all technical aspects arising during the GCC – CWG meetings, etc.; coordination support e.g., liaise with the WHO Secretariats of other WHO advisory groups e.g., Poliovirus Containment Advisory Group (CAG) or other units within WHO in case of additional information needs, etc.

#### Expression of interest for membership of the GCC – CWG

To register your interest in being considered for the GCC – CWG, please submit the following documents by 30 October 2023 (UTC/GMT +2 hours) (early submissions are encouraged) to [containment@who.int](mailto:containment@who.int) using the subject line 'Expression of interest for the GCC – CWG'

- Brief cover letter (as an attachment or embedded in the body of the e-mail) indicating your motivation to apply, your expertise and how you satisfy the eligibility and other pertinent information relevant to the work of the GCC – CWG. Please note that, if selected, membership will be in a personal capacity – thus institutional or employer letterheads or other such identifiers should not be used.
- Your curriculum vitae; and
- A signed and completed Declaration of Interests (DOI) form for WHO Experts, available at <https://www.who.int/about/ethics/declarations-of-interest>.

After submission, your expression of interest will be reviewed by WHO. Due to an expected high volume of interest, only selected individuals will be informed.

#### Important information about the selection processes and conditions of appointment of the GCC - CWG

Members of the GCC – CWG must be free of any real, potential, or apparent conflicts of interest. To this end, applicants are required to complete the WHO Declaration of Interests for WHO Experts, as stated above, and

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<sup>9</sup> Code of Conduct for WHO Experts. Available at: <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/declaration-of-interests---annex-b>

the selection as a member of the GCC – CWG is, amongst other things, dependent on WHO determining that there is no conflict of interest or that any identified conflicts could be appropriately managed (in addition to WHO's evaluation of an applicant's experience, expertise and motivation and other criteria).

All GCC – CWG members must meet necessary requirements in terms of confidentiality and will serve in their individual expert capacity and shall not represent any governments, any commercial industries or entities, any research, academic or civil society organizations, or any other bodies, entities, institutions, or organizations. GCC – CWG members shall not be members of a national authority for containment (NAC), or of a poliovirus-essential facility (PEF) applying for containment certification, nor have worked in a any capacity to NACs/PEFs or similar role, where conflicts of interest may be of concern, for a period of at least 3 years. They are expected to fully comply with the Code of Conduct for WHO Experts (<https://www.who.int/about/ethics/declarations-of-interest>).

At any point during the selection process, telephone interviews may be scheduled between an applicant and the WHO Secretariat to enable WHO to ask questions relating to the applicant's experience and expertise and/or to assess whether the applicant meets the criteria for membership in the GCC – CWG.

If selected by WHO, proposed members will be sent an invitation letter and a Memorandum of Agreement. Appointment as a member of the GCC – CWG will be subject to the proposed member returning to WHO the countersigned copy of these two documents.

WHO reserves the right to accept or reject any expression of interest, to annul the open call process and reject all expressions of interest at any time without incurring any liability to the affected applicant or applicants and without any obligation to inform the affected applicant or applicants of the grounds for WHO's action. WHO may also decide, at any time, not to proceed with the selection of new members or their reappointment, disband the existing group or modify the work of the GCC – CWG.

WHO shall not in any way be obliged to reveal, or discuss with any applicant, how an expression of interest was assessed, or to provide any other information relating to the evaluation/selection process or to state the reasons for not choosing a member.

If you have any questions, please e-mail [containment@who.int](mailto:containment@who.int) well in advance of the deadline.

#### Useful websites:

Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) website	<a href="https://polioeradication.org/">https://polioeradication.org/</a>
Poliovirus containment landing page	<a href="https://polioeradication.org/polio-today/preparing-for-a-polio-free-world/containment/">https://polioeradication.org/polio-today/preparing-for-a-polio-free-world/containment/</a>
Poliovirus containment resources	<a href="https://polioeradication.org/polio-today/preparing-for-a-polio-free-world/containment/containment-resources/">https://polioeradication.org/polio-today/preparing-for-a-polio-free-world/containment/containment-resources/</a>