



ROLE DESCRIPTION

Research Innovation and Commercialisation
Research Ethics and Integrity

Animal Ethics Committee Member: Category D (Layperson)

**CONTACT
FOR ENQUIRIES ONLY**

Emmanuel Christie
Senior Ethics Officer
Research Ethics and Integrity

+61 3 8344 4993
animal-ethics@unimelb.edu.au

Please do not send your application to this contact

Role Summary

Expressions of Interest are sought for Category D (Layperson) membership to The University of Melbourne's Animal Ethics Committees. Through its Animal Ethics Committees (AECs), the University strives to uphold best practice in animal-based science, while reflecting the expectations of the broader community. The primary responsibility of AECs is to provide efficient and effective ethical review and approval of all research and teaching activities involving animals at The University of Melbourne.

The University of Melbourne AECs consider applications in the areas of:

- Anatomy & Neuroscience, Pathology, Pharmacology & Therapeutics, and Physiology
- Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Dental Science, Medicine, Microbiology & Immunology, and Surgery
- Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences
- Other fields of science, including Biosciences

The Animal Ethics Committee Member Category D (Layperson) is expected to provide a valued independent and objective perspective on applications put to the AEC for ethical review, representing the broader community. The Category D (Layperson) member will contribute to the conduct and promotion of ethically sound research and teaching at The University of Melbourne. The Category D (Layperson) member will aid the Committee to ensure that all such activities are conducted in compliance with the current edition of the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes (2013).

1. Terms of Service

Applicants are expected to commit to one year of service on the AEC. Following one year of service, Category D (Layperson) AEC membership will undergo an annual review.

Post first year review, Category D (Layperson) AEC membership may be offered for a further two years. The Category D (Layperson) AEC Member may apply for additional terms at the end of their three-year service.

All AEC members receive:

- Training support for their role as AEC member
- A working lunch at each meeting
- The opportunity to understand the cutting-edge science activities being performed at the University
- An Honorarium, to be used to support costs that you incur in your role as an ethics committee member including, but not limited to, the purchase of a portable device, such as a tablet or laptop, to enable the electronic review of meeting documents, travel expenses, parking fees, training, conference attendance, etc.
- Access to the resources of the University's libraries

2. Key Responsibilities

2.1 AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF ANIMAL WELFARE LEGISLATION, CODES, AND POLICY

- Ø AEC members are required to promote committee decisions in accordance with specific legislative requirements to protect animal welfare. Committee members should maintain familiarity and serve in accordance with the relevant regulations and guidelines, including but not limited to the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition (2013), the Victorian Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1986) and Victorian Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2008.

- Ø AEC members are required to serve in accordance with any relevant University policies, including but not limited to The University of Melbourne Animal Ethics Committee Terms of Reference, The University of Melbourne Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy, and the University's Computing and Network Facilities Rules.

2.2 AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY PRACTICE

- Ø AEC members must declare any conflicts of interest before any business pertaining to a particular interest is considered by the committee. The affected member(s) must absent themselves from any decision pertaining to their particular conflict of interest and, albeit at the committee's discretion, shall ordinarily not be present at a meeting when any such decision is determined.
- Ø AEC members must keep confidential any information relating to the AEC's activities. It is understood that members may need to seek information/advice from external sources in order to properly fulfil their roles. Such activity is appropriate and encouraged, as long as no intellectual property, commercial in confidence, or identifying material is revealed to external parties in the process.

2.3 REVIEW OF ANIMAL ETHICS APPLICATIONS TO PROMOTE ETHICALLY SOUND RESEARCH AND TEACHING

- Ø The Category D (Layperson) AEC member is responsible for considering the manner in which the AEC operates and how it meets the requirements of the Code. Other members of the AEC will be able to provide specialist information about veterinary and scientific details.
- Ø AEC members must be able to commit time to pre-read and review applications prior to each meeting and attend the committee meetings. The AECs meet a minimum of 11 times per year – the exact time and duration of the meeting depends upon the committee.
- Ø All categories of AEC members are equally valuable and valued. AEC members should feel comfortable and confident in voicing any concerns in relation to the proposed research or teaching applications, while also appreciating the views of the other committee members.

3. Selection Criteria

3.1 ESSENTIAL

The Category D (Layperson) AEC member must:

- ▶ Be independent of the University of Melbourne
- ▶ Not have been previously involved in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities, in their employment or other activities beyond undergraduate education.

4. Terms of Reference

An Animal Ethics Committee's composition, terms of reference, functions and responsibilities and method of operation must conform to the requirements of the current *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes* ("the Code"), the *Victorian Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* ("the Act"), and the *Victorian Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2008* ("the Regulations").

1. Membership

- 1.1. The Committee must comprise at least four persons, including a separate person appointed to each of the following categories in accordance with the requirements of the Code:
- i **Category A:** a person with qualifications in veterinary science that are recognised for registration as a veterinary surgeon in Australia and with experience relevant to the activities of the University. Veterinarians who lack this experience must familiarise themselves with the biology and clinical characteristics of the species of animals used;
 - ii **Category B:** a suitably qualified person with substantial and recent experience in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities. This must include possession of a higher degree in research or equivalent experience;
 - iii **Category C:** a person with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who is not employed by or otherwise associated with the University, and who is not currently involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. Veterinarians with specific animal welfare interest and experience may meet the requirements of this category. While not representing an animal welfare organisation, the person should, where possible, be selected on the basis of active membership of, and nomination by, such an organisation; and
 - iv **Category D:** a person not employed by or otherwise associated with the University and who has never been involved in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities, either in their employment or beyond their undergraduate education. Category D members should be viewed by the wider community as bringing a completely independent view to the AEC and must not fit the requirements of any other category.
- 1.2 In addition to the prescribed membership Categories A to D, a person responsible for the routine care of animals from within the University shall be invited to meetings of the Committee.
- 1.3 To assist the Committee to function effectively, the University may appoint as members, people with skills and background of value to the Committee. These members may be additional to the members required by Categories A to D.
- 1.4 If the Committee has more than four members, Categories C and D together must represent at least one-third of the AEC membership.
- 1.5 The Animal Welfare Officer shall be invited to meetings of the Committee.
- 1.6 Category B members are nominated by the Nominated Person of the Scientific Procedures Premises Licence.
- 1.7 Appointments are made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee and are effective for the period of 1 January to 31 December in any given year. Vacancies are filled on a casual basis for the remainder of a position's normal period of appointment to 31 December in any given year. Members are eligible for re- appointment on an annual basis at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee.

- 1.8 Membership must be reported to and endorsed by The University of Melbourne Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee.
- 1.9 Members are required to acknowledge in writing their acceptance of the terms of reference of the AEC and any requirements for confidentiality.
- 1.10 Members must declare any conflicts of interest before any business pertaining to an interest is considered by the Committee. The affected member(s) must absent themselves from any decision pertaining to their particular conflict of interest and, albeit at the Committee's discretion, shall ordinarily not be present at a meeting when any such decision is determined.

2. Chairperson

- 2.1 A Chairperson is appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research). The Chairperson may be an additional appointment to Category A to D members.

3. Functions and responsibilities

- 3.1 To report to The University of Melbourne Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee (AWEC), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and regulatory authorities as required.
- 3.2 To determine, based on information provided in the Animal Ethics Committee application form, that the day-to-day care and management of all animals used for scientific purposes in the scientific procedures premises is according to the standards of the Code, the Act and Regulations, and any additional procedures approved by the AWEC. This shall include the monitoring of acquisition, transport, production, housing, care, use and fate of animals.
- 3.3 To examine and approve, approve subject to modification, or not approve written proposals relevant to the use of animals for scientific purposes. This means approving only those studies for which animals are essential and justified and which conform to the requirements of the Code and the Act and Regulations. The committee may withdraw approval for any project or authorise the emergency treatment or euthanasia of any animal within its sphere of authority.
- 3.4 To discuss and make recommendations to the AWEC on any aspect needed to ensure that the standards of the Code and the Act and Regulations are maintained. This includes examination and comment on all University plans and policies, within its sphere of authority, which may affect the welfare of animals used for scientific purposes.
- 3.5 To determine, based on information provided in the Animal Ethics Committee application form, that the research and teaching personnel are appropriately qualified to perform animal experiments and that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, are adhered to.
- 3.6 To ensure that a record of proposals and projects is maintained and available for review by regulatory authorities.
- 3.7 To require accurate daily records of all animals used for scientific purposes held in the faculty/department(s), including any instructions for special care that may be necessary, are maintained.

4. Method of operation

- 4.1 Committees shall meet at least quarterly.
- 4.2 Minutes shall be maintained by the Office for Research Ethics and Integrity and provided to the AWEC, as required.
- 4.3 The Committee is required to provide a written report to the AWEC on its activities at least annually in accordance with the Code.
- 4.4 The Committee may establish an Executive that must include one member from Category C or D.
- 4.5 The Executive may approve minor modifications to projects and deal with emergencies. The Executive may not approve new proposals. Any decisions taken by the Executive must be reviewed by the Committee at its next meeting.
- 4.6 The AWEC expects that day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that high standards of animal care are maintained will rest with the Nominated Person of the Scientific Procedures Premises Licence(s). A report on the animal facilities should be made to each meeting of the Committee and the animal facilities should be available for inspection by the Committee at the time of each meeting. A formal inspection by the Committee of all animal facilities and laboratory areas from within the relevant Scientific Procedures Premises Licence(s) must be conducted at least once a year.
- 4.7 All members must have ready access to the faculty/department(s) animal facilities at any reasonable time during the year and to experiments performed within the relevant department. Such access must be arranged through the Chairperson of the Committee or nominee.