

**Policy and Procedure for Solicitation,
Approval, and Initiation of EAL Expert
Panel Workgroups**



Revised: October 2021

As an organization that utilizes an explicit, systematic process to develop the systematic reviews and the Evidence-Based Nutrition Practice Guidelines, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics must insure balance, independence, objectivity, and scientific rigor in this work. To assure appropriate expertise and limit bias, the Workgroup Selection Subcommittee will follow the outlined procedures and criteria and adhere to the established ground rules in selection of EAL expert panel workgroup members.

A. The Expert Panel Workgroup

1. Each EAL expert panel workgroup (workgroup) will be comprised of a minimum of six members. One or two patient advocates will be added for all guideline projects. At least half of the workgroup will be RDNs. An alternate can be selected should a workgroup member resigns.
2. Order of preference are:
 - a. Registered Dietitian Nutritionists or Dietetic Technician Registered (must hold Academy membership to serve on the workgroup);
 - b. Academy members without RDN/RDT
 - c. Non-members that are recognized for their research or practice experience in the project topic area.
3. Workgroup members will have a balance of research or practice.
4. Workgroup members will be appointed until completion of the project.
5. Content experts may be brought in on an as needed basis throughout the evidence analysis process to assist the comprehension of the research or practice relevant to the topic. These individuals will be identified by the expert workgroup.
6. All workgroup members are required to disclose potential conflicts of interest throughout the project using the Academy's Conflict of Interest form.
7. Individuals may not serve as an evidence analyst

B. Solicitation of Candidates

1. Communication – information to encourage qualified candidate to apply for consideration.
 - a. The Academy staff liaison will develop a call for content experts.
 - b. Workgroup responsibilities
 - c. General timeline for the project will be announced
 - d. Outcome of project (systematic review, guideline, manuscript)
2. Candidates – a wide search will be conducted through the following:
 - a. Current and former workgroup members.
 - b. Publications that are relevant to the topic including Academy position papers.
 - c. Dietetic Practice Groups with special emphasis on DPGs related to the topic.

Council on Research: Workgroup Selection Subcommittee

- d. Member Interest Groups to encourage diversity
 - e. Internet searches
 - f. Self-nominations via the *Get Involved* link on the EAL
 - g. Academy communication resources – Eat Right Weekly, affiliate newsletter, DPG newsletter, social media platform
 - h. Patient advocacy groups
 - i. Topic-related professional associations
3. Application
- a. The application is designed to solicit contact data and gather information on the applicant's expertise on the topic area.
 - b. The application should be in an online/web-based format to allow for greater range of solicitation and ease of submission.

C. Scoring Criteria

1. Expert Panel Workgroup
Candidates will be evaluated and scored on the following based on the most current version of the Scoring Companion Guide:
 - a. Education/Degree – points will be given for the applicant's education and certifications
 - b. Practice/Patient Care – minimum of 5 years practice experience; extra points for management
 - c. Research and Scholarly Experience – points are given for research experience and prior service on a systematic review panel
 - d. Professional Presentation – this section gives points for serving on a session or meeting panel
 - e. Publication Experience – this section gives points for publication experience, extra points for reviewer and editor experience.
 - f. Leadership Experience – points are given for volunteer work in a committee or group setting
 - g. Personal Statement – the candidate is given the opportunity to express themselves and explain why they want to serve on the workgroup and the unique qualifications they bring to the workgroup if appointed.
 - h. CV – a copy of the candidate's CV will be reviewed to enhance the application.
2. Patient or Consumer Advocate
 - a. English speaking
 - b. Have the topic condition or is a caregiver to someone with the topic condition
 - c. Experience in policy, advocacy, or research
 - d. Affiliation with a patient advocacy group

D. Selection Process

1. Academy staff will provide the members of the Workgroup Selection Subcommittee a copy of each candidate's application and CV.
2. Each member of the Workgroup Selection Subcommittee must review and score each candidate.
3. Applicant scores will be entered into the online scoring form.

Council on Research: Workgroup Selection Subcommittee

4. Academy staff will tally the scores and distribute the results to the Workgroup Selection Subcommittee for final selection.
5. A webinar will be held with the subcommittee to discuss the applicants and finalize the selection.
6. The final selection will not only be based on score. The Workgroup Selection Subcommittee will look for a balance of location and experience brought to the workgroup.
7. A chair is selected from the approved applicants.
8. An alternate may be selected if the Workgroup Selection Subcommittee has a qualified candidate.

E. Workgroup Initiation

1. Communication with Selected Candidates
 - a. Academy staff will send formal letter notifying the candidate of their acceptance. A deadline to respond will be provide.
 - b. Candidate must complete Conflict of Interest form, Confidentiality Form, and Copyright Release Form.
 - c. Workgroup members are added to the Academy's online portal.
 - d. Workgroup members are introduced to the project manager.

F. Replacement of Workgroup Member

1. If a workgroup member resigns or is unable to meet the responsibilities, the Workgroup Selection Subcommittee will appoint an individual to fill the role.
2. If an alternate was selected during the scoring process, the individual will be notified (see Workgroup Initiation).
3. If no alternate is selected, the regular solicitation process is initiated.
4. If the chair resigns, a new chair will be determined from the existing workgroup members by the project manager.