EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

Call for expressions of interest for membership of the Scientific Panels of the European Food Safety Authority (Parma, Italy)

(2008/C 268/07)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is the keystone of European Union (EU) risk assessment regarding food and feed safety. In close collaboration with national authorities and in open consultation with its stakeholders, EFSA provides independent scientific advice and clear communication on existing and emerging risks.

The Authority has set up a selection procedure that aims to draw up a reserve list of:

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This call is addressed to scientists wishing to be considered for membership of the scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare (AHAW), on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ), on Contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM), on Feed Additives and products or substances used in animal feed (FEEDAP), on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO), on Dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA), on Plant Health (PLH), on Plant Protection Products and their residues (PPR) and for membership of the Scientific Committee (SC) of the European Food Safety Authority in order to identify Europe's best scientists for this task.

THE EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

EFSA is the cornerstone of the EU system of risk assessment for food and feed safety; its scientific advice on existing and emerging risks underpins the policies and decisions of risk managers in the European Institutions and EU Member States. The Authority's most critical commitment is to provide transparent and independent scientific advice and clear communication grounded in the most up-to-date scientific methodologies and data available.

EFSA brings together Europe's best available experts in risk assessment in the field of food and feed safety, who act in an independent capacity for an autonomous, self-governed organisation to provide the European Institutions and the Member States with scientific advice of the highest standard.
The Authority is committed to the core standards of scientific excellence, openness, transparency, independence and responsiveness. By working independently, openly and transparently EFSA delivers the best possible scientific advice and therefore contributes to strengthening the European food and feed safety system.

The role of EFSA’s Scientific Panels and Scientific Committee

The Scientific Panels are responsible for providing the scientific opinions of the Authority and other advice as appropriate, each within their own spheres of competence.

The Scientific Panels are composed of normally 21 independent scientific experts.

Members of the Scientific Committee and Panels are appointed for a three-year term of office that may be renewed twice and are expected to attend and contribute actively to all meetings of the Panel where opinions, statements or guidance documents are adopted. It is estimated that the Scientific Committee and the Scientific Panels meet depending on the workload between six and ten times per year in two-day meetings usually in Parma, Italy. Panel members are also expected to participate, as appropriate, in working groups. Meetings and most documents are in English. Applicants should take into account that meetings in general involve preparatory work.

The Chairs of each Scientific Panel are also members of the Scientific Committee of EFSA together with 6 other Scientific Experts.

The members of the Scientific Panels are entitled to a compensation decided by EFSA Management Board for each full day meeting (for 2008 this amount is stated at EUR 300). In addition, the scientific experts receive subsistence allowance and incurred travelling expenses in accordance with EFSA’s compensation guide for experts meetings.

Panel on Animal Health and Welfare (AHAW)

The AHAW Panel provides independent scientific advice on all aspects of animal diseases and animal welfare. Its work chiefly concerns food producing animals, including fish.

Its risk assessment approach is based on reviewing scientific information and data in order to evaluate the risks as consequence of a given hazard. This helps to provide a science-based foundation for European policies and legislation and supports risk managers in taking decisions.

Visit the AHAW key topics section on the EFSA website for more details.

Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)

The Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) provides independent scientific advice on biological hazards in relation to food safety and food-borne diseases. This covers:

— food-borne zoonoses (animal diseases transmissible to humans),
— transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (BSE/TSEs),
— food microbiology,
— food hygiene and associated waste management issues.

The panel is one of EFSA’s key drivers on work on BSE and TSE.
It carries out risk assessments in order to produce scientific opinions and advice for risk managers. This helps to provide a sound foundation for European policies and legislation and supports risk managers in taking decisions.

Visit the BIOHAZ key topics section on the EFSA website for more details.

Panel on Contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)

The CONTAM Panel provides independent scientific advice on contaminants in the food chain and undesirable substances such as natural toxicants, mycotoxins and residues of unauthorised substances not covered by another Panel.

It carries out risk assessments in order to produce scientific opinions and advice for risk managers. This helps to provide a sound foundation for European policies and legislation and supports risk managers in taking decisions.

Visit the CONTAM key topics section on the EFSA website for more details.

Panel on Feed Additives and products or substances used in animal feed (FEEDAP)

The FEEDAP Panel provides independent scientific advice on the safety and/or efficacy of additives and products or substances used in animal feed. The Panel evaluates their safety and/or efficacy for the target species, the user, the consumer of products of animal origin and the environment. It also looks at the efficacy of biological and chemical products/substances intended for deliberate use in animal feed.

The Panel performs much of its work in relation to substances which must be evaluated by EFSA before they can be authorised for use in the EU.

Visit the FEEDAP key topics section on the EFSA website for more details.

Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO)

The GMO Panel provides independent scientific advice on the safety of:

— genetically modified organisms (GMOs) such as plants, animals and microorganisms,
— genetically modified food and feed.

The Panel carries out risk assessments in order to produce scientific opinions and advice for risk managers. Its risk assessment work is based on reviewing scientific information and data in order to evaluate the safety of a given GMO. This helps to provide a sound foundation for European policies and legislation and supports risk managers in taking decisions. The Panel carries out much of its work in the context of assessing applications, since all GM food and feed products must be evaluated by EFSA before they can be authorised in the EU.

Visit the GMO key topics section on the EFSA website for more details.

Panel on Dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA)

The NDA Panel deals with questions related to dietetic products (foods intended to satisfy particular nutritional requirements of specific population groups), human nutrition and food allergies. It also advises on associated subjects such as novel foods (foods or ingredients which have not been consumed in the EU to a significant degree before 15 May 1997).
The Panel’s work is based on reviewing scientific information and data in order to evaluate risks, for instance in relation to food allergies and novel foods, and to provide scientific advice concerning human nutrition and the nutritional value of foods, food ingredients and products. The Panel’s activities also include assessing whether any claims about the health benefits or nutritional value of foods are scientifically reliable and justified and work on Population Reference Intakes. The Panel provides scientific opinions and advice for risk managers. This helps to provide a sound foundation for European policies and legislation and supports risk managers in taking decisions. For more information on EFSA’s role with regard to Nutrition and Health Claims, see Nutrition and Health Claims in Focus and/or visit the NDA key topics section on the EFSA website for more details.

Panel on Plant Health (PLH)

The PLH Panel provides independent scientific advice on the risk posed by plant pests which can cause harm to plants, plant products or biodiversity in the EU. The Panel reviews and assesses those risks with regard to the safety and security of the food chain.

Its risk assessment work is based on reviewing scientific information and data in order to evaluate the risks posed by a given issue. This helps to provide a sound foundation for European policies and legislation and supports risk managers in taking decisions.

Visit the PLH key topics section on the EFSA website for more details.

Plant Protection Products and their residues (PPR)

The Panel on plant protection products and their residues (PPR Panel) provides independent scientific advice on the risk assessment of plant protection products (commonly known as pesticides) and their residues, looking at risks for the user/worker, the consumer and the environment.

This helps to provide a sound foundation for European policies and legislation and supports risk managers in taking decisions.

The Panel works closely with the Pesticide Risk Assessment Peer Review (PRAPeR) which is responsible for the EU-peer review of active substances used in new or existing plant protection products. The PPR Panel is asked for its opinion on any issues that cannot be resolved within this procedure or when further scientific guidance is needed, mostly in the field of toxicology, ecotoxicology, fate and behaviour of pesticides and residues. Another activity is to update the existing European Guidance Documents in risk assessment of plant protection products and to develop ones in new scientific areas.

Visit the Pesticides ‘In Focus’ section for more information on EFSA’s work with regard to pesticides.

Visit the PPR key topics section on the EFSA website for more details.

Scientific Committee (SC)

The Scientific Committee is composed of the Chairs of each Scientific Panel and six (6) other scientific experts.
EFSA's Scientific Committee has the task of supporting the work of EFSA on scientific matters of a hori-
zontal nature and providing strategic advice to EFSA's Executive Director. It is also responsible for general
coordination to ensure consistency in the scientific opinions prepared by the Scientific Panels. The Scientific
Committee focuses on developing harmonised risk assessment methodologies in fields where EU-wide
approaches are not already defined.

The Scientific Committee produces scientific opinions and advice for risk managers, to provide a sound
foundation for European policies and legislation and to support risk managers in taking decisions.

Visit the SC key topics section on the EFSA website for more details.

**Selection procedure**

Candidates are requested to provide in the application form their preferences for the Scientific Panels and/or
Scientific Committee.

**The requirements**

*Qualifications and experience*

**A. Eligibility criteria**

(i) a university degree in areas including Toxicology, Ecotoxicology, Environmental Sciences, Chemistry,
Biochemistry, Food technology, Pharmacology, Veterinary Medicine, Human Medicine, Pharmacy,
Biology, Life Science, Agronomy/Agricultural Science, Food microbiology, Epidemiology, Occupational
Medicine, Public Health or in areas related to public health, at post-graduate level;

(ii) at least ten (10) years of professional experience relevant to the remit of the Panel(s) chosen at a
level to which above required qualifications give admission;

(iii) good knowledge of the English language;

(iv) candidates must complete the Declaration of Interests included in the application in an extensive,
accurate and complete manner. Please note that failure to fill in this part of the form in a complete
manner will result in the rejection of the application;

(v) candidates must be nationals of a Member State of the European Communities, European Free Trade
Association (EFTA) countries and EU accession countries. Experts from non-European countries may
also apply but will be considered only when the required level of expertise cannot be found among
European experts.

For more information regarding Declarations of Interests:
B. Selection criteria

— experience in carrying out scientific risk assessment and/or providing scientific advice in fields related to food and feed safety in general and, in particular in the areas of competence and expertise of the Scientific Committee or the Scientific Panel preferred,

— proven scientific excellence in one, or preferably several fields linked to the area covered by the Scientific Committee or the Scientific Panel preferred,

— experience in peer reviewing scientific work and publications, preferably in fields related to the area covered by the Scientific Committee or the Scientific Panel preferred,

— the ability to analyse complex information and dossiers, often from a wide range of scientific disciplines and sources and to prepare draft scientific opinions and reports,

— professional experience in a multidisciplinary environment, preferably in an international context,

— experience in project management related to scientific matters,

— proven communication skills, based on teaching experience, public presentations, active participation in meetings, publications.

Applications meeting the eligibility requirements will be admitted to a comparative evaluation carried out by EFSA on the basis of the selection criteria given above. EFSA reserves the right to consult third parties on the professional experience of applicants in the context of their application.

Members of the Scientific Panels and Scientific Committee will be appointed by the Management Board acting upon a proposal from the Executive Director.

Apart from the Scientific Committee, candidates may indicate their preference for two (2) Scientific Panels but can only be appointed to one of them. Applicants may, with their prior consent, be assigned to a Scientific Panel even if they did not specifically apply for that Panel. Candidates meeting the requirement for membership but who are not appointed may be invited to remain on the reserve list in case vacancies occur or may be invited to contribute to the activities of a Scientific Panel or Scientific Committee as ad hoc expert.

All the short listed experts will be contacted and asked the permission to include their data in the expert database of EFSA.

For more information regarding EFSA’s expert database:
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/AboutEfsa/WhoWeAre/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1178712806106.htm

Independency and declarations of commitment and interest

The members of the Scientific Panels are appointed on a personal basis. Applicants are required to include a declaration that they will undertake to act independently of any outside influence and a declaration of interests which may be deemed to be prejudicial to their independence.
Equal opportunities

EFSA takes great care to apply the principles of equal treatment in its procedures.

Submission of applications

Candidates are requested to submit their application together with Declaration of Interests electronically through the EFSA’s website: www.efsa.europa.eu

Applications delivered via email will not be accepted.

Candidates are kindly invited to fill in their application form in English in order to facilitate the selection procedure.

All candidates applying to this call for expressions of interest will be informed by mail about the outcome of the selection process.

The personal information EFSA requests from candidates will be processed in line with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. The purpose of processing of the personal data candidates submit is to manage applications in view of a possible pre-selection and selection at EFSA.

Closing date for sending applications

Applications must be submitted no later than 7 January 2009 at midnight (local time, GMT +1). For those sent by registered mail, the postmark date will serve as a proof.

Please note that, due to the extremely large number of applications we receive, when reaching the deadline for submission of applications, the system may have problems to process the large amounts of data. We therefore advise the applicants to send in their application well ahead of the closing date.

Note:

In the event of inconsistency or discrepancy between the English version and any of the other linguistic versions of this publication, the English language version shall prevail.