

Statute and Rules of Procedure of the Research Ethics Committee

Article 1

Introductory Provisions

- (1) This Dean's Regulation is valid for the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (hereinafter referred to as "FTZ") of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (hereinafter referred to as "CZU") and regulates the activities of the FTZ, CZU Research Ethics Committee.
- (2) The roles and positions mentioned herein are intended to apply to both male and female genders.

Article 2

General Provision

- (1) The FTZ, CZU Research Ethics Committee (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee") is established by Dean's Regulation No. 03/2025.
- (2) The Committee is an independent advisory and supervisory body to the Dean of the FTZ, CZU.
- (3) The purpose of the Committee is to ensure that research conducted under the auspices of the FTZ, CZU meets national and international ethical standards for research and creative work, such as the European Charter for Researchers, the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, the Nagoya Protocol, and is compliant with the valid legal regulations of the Czech Republic and the European Union, and the internal regulations of the FTZ and CZU.
- (4) The main objective of the Committee is to ensure the ethical aspects of research carried out within the creative activities of FTZ, CZU employees and students.

Article 3

Scope of Authority and Powers of the Committee

- (1) The Committee discusses submitted applications and assesses ethical aspects according to Article 2, paragraph 3 of this Regulation, especially for:
 - (a) research involving human subjects using surveys, interviews, and participatory research,
 - (b) research on animals and plants,
 - (c) research with environmental and social impacts in sensitive or protected areas,
 - (d) research using personal and sensitive data, including data under the GDPR.

- (2) The Committee assesses the ethical aspects of research primarily from the perspective of protecting research participants, with research proponents having to ensure that the research does not pose an undue burden or risk to the participants.
- (3) The Committee assesses the ethical aspects of research only **before** its commencement. The Committee is not obliged to discuss applications for the assessment of ethical aspects of ongoing or completed research.
- (4) The Committee does not assess the legal context and legal consequences arising from research proposals, nor from the actions of applicants and other researchers and participants in the research. The Committee bears no responsibility whatsoever for the actions and legal consequences caused during the implementation of the approved research.
- (5) The Chairperson of the Committee is responsible for the Committee's activities to the Dean. The Chairperson of the Committee submits a report to the Dean of the FTZ, CZU once a year, which summarizes in particular the number of reviewed applications for the calendar year and the outcome of the Committee's decisions; key ethical issues encountered in the applications; recommendations for updating and institutional improvement in the area of research ethics.

Article 4

Composition of the Committee

- (1) The members of the Committee are academic or research staff and students of the FTZ, CZU.
- (2) Individual members of the Committee are appointed by the Dean of the FTZ, CZU for a three-year term. A member of the Committee may be reappointed. The Dean has the right to recall a member of the Committee at any time, especially due to inactivity or a breach of the commitment to maintain confidentiality according to Article 5, paragraph 9 of this Regulation.
- (3) The Committee has six members. The Dean of the FTZ, CZU usually appoints the Vice-Dean for Science, Research, and Doctoral Studies of the FTZ, CZU as the Chairperson of the Committee. The other members of the Committee are appointed, one employee from each department of the FTZ, CZU, and one member is appointed from the ranks of FTZ, CZU students. Membership in the Committee is non-transferable.
- (4) Administrative support for the Committee's activities (hereinafter referred to as "administrative support") is provided by an authorized employee of the FTZ, CZU Department for Science, Research, and Doctoral Studies, who has no voting right in the assessment of applications. This employee is responsible, in particular, for receiving applications for research assessment, assigning them a file number, preparing the minutes of the Committee's meetings, handling correspondence between the Committee and the applicants, and other tasks.
- (5) Membership in the Committee terminates before the end of the term of office by:
 - a. resignation by written declaration of the Committee member to the Dean,
 - b. recall of the member by the Dean of the FTZ, CZU according to paragraph 2 of this Article,
 - c. termination of the employment relationship with the FTZ, CZU or termination of studies at the FTZ, CZU.
- (6) If the function of a Committee member terminates before the expiry of their term of office, the new member is appointed only for the remainder of the original Committee member's term of office.

Article 5

Committee Proceedings

- (1) Regular meetings of the Committee are held twice a year (usually at the beginning of the semester; information about this regular meeting date and the collection of applications for assessment is announced 30 calendar days in advance). In justified cases, the Chairperson of the Committee may call an extraordinary meeting of the Committee outside the dates mentioned in the previous sentence. The Chairperson of the Committee is always obliged to call an extraordinary meeting of the Committee if requested by the Dean of the FTZ, CZU. The Committee meeting may also take place online or in a hybrid format. During the meeting, the Committee primarily assesses submitted applications.
- (2) The Committee's meetings are convened and chaired by its Chairperson, or by a Committee member authorized by the Chairperson.
- (3) The Committee has a quorum if more than half of all Committee members are present.
- (4) The Committee decides on the assessed applications and any other discussed points at its meetings by voting, which may also take place *per rollam*, and a statement with a positive opinion on the ethical aspects of the research proposal, i.e., approval of the research, or other decision, is adopted if at least a simple majority of the present Committee members vote for its adoption. The Chairperson and each Committee member have one vote. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson's vote is decisive.
- (5) The *per rollam* voting procedure is as follows:
 - a. The Chairperson of the Committee first ensures, through administrative support, the distribution of the assessed application or other matter, including the proposed decision to be agreed upon, to all Committee members and simultaneously sets a deadline for the Committee members to vote, which must not be shorter than 5 working days, and the email address to which the Committee members should vote, or determines another procedure for voting outside the meeting;
 - b. If any Committee member notifies the Chairperson of the Committee within the set deadline that they require a discussion of the decision to be adopted *per rollam*, such a decision cannot be adopted *per rollam*;
 - c. The decision is adopted when more than half of all Committee members have voted in favor;
 - d. After the voting deadline, the Chairperson of the Committee ensures, through administrative support, the distribution of the voting result to all Committee members. The administrative support also keeps a record of all documents related to this vote and provides information to the Committee members on the course and result of the *per rollam* voting at the next following Committee meeting, which will become part of the minutes of that Committee meeting.
- (6) If any Committee member is in a **conflict of interest** concerning the discussed research assessment application, they must immediately report this circumstance to the Chairperson of the Committee. If the Chairperson of the Committee is in a conflict of interest, they shall communicate this circumstance to the other Committee members, who shall elect a Committee member from among themselves by voting to chair the relevant meeting. A Committee member who is in a conflict of interest with respect to the discussed research assessment application shall not participate in the Committee meeting, the assessment of the ethical aspects of such

application, or the vote on the decision. For the purposes of this Regulation, a **conflict of interest** means a situation where the personal interests of a Committee member may influence the proper performance of their function as a Committee member, particularly in cases where the Committee member is the applicant submitting the application for the assessment of the ethical aspects of the research, or the applicant is a close person to them, or where the Committee member or a close person to them is actively involved in the research which is the subject of the application, or where the Committee member is the supervisor of a student or the head of a student's qualification thesis in the case of student research.

- (7) Committee meetings are **closed** to the public. In addition to the Committee members and administrative support, the Dean of the FTZ, CZU also has the right to attend the meeting. The applicant for the assessed application is also entitled to attend the part of the Committee meeting concerning the assessment of the specific application, but they do not participate in the actual voting on the assessed application. The Committee may invite other persons to the meeting to ensure an expert opinion on the assessed application. These other persons participate only in the parts of the meeting determined by the Chairperson of the Committee.
- (8) Minutes are taken of the course and results of the Committee meeting, the preparation of which is ensured by administrative support. The administrative support shall submit the final version of the minutes to all Committee members no later than one week after the Committee meeting. The minutes shall be published on the FTZ website within 30 calendar days of the meeting.
- (9) Committee members, administrative support, and other persons participating in the Committee meeting according to paragraph 7 of this Article are obliged to **maintain confidentiality** regarding all confidential or otherwise sensitive matters discussed at the Committee meeting, it being understood that all proceedings and discussed documents are confidential. The Chairperson of the Committee, or another Committee member authorized to chair the Committee meeting, is obliged to inform other persons participating in the Committee meeting according to paragraph 7 of this Article in advance of their duty to maintain confidentiality about the facts discussed, and the consent and commitment to confidentiality of these persons shall become part of the minutes of that Committee meeting.

Article 6

Procedure for Receiving Applications for Assessment and Issuing the Committee's Statement

- (1) The necessity of assessing the ethical aspects of the proposed research by the Committee is decided by the FTZ, CZU employee responsible for the research. This employee is then the applicant for the assessment. An external researcher whose research is carried out in cooperation with the FTZ, CZU may also be the applicant. The necessity of assessing the ethical aspects of proposed student research within the framework of qualification theses is decided by the relevant supervisor of the qualification thesis. FTZ, CZU students are obliged to apply to the Committee for the assessment of the ethical aspects of their qualification thesis research **only** on the basis of a written recommendation from the supervisor. The supervisor of the qualification thesis is authorized to assess and approve the ethical aspects of student research that poses no or only minimal burden or where there is no or only minimal risk to participants.
- (2) The applicant is obliged to submit the application for research assessment by the Committee using the official form via email to ethics@ftz.czuz.cz in sufficient time before the planned research begins, **at least 30 calendar days in advance**. If an external provider, to whom the project proposal is submitted, requires an ethical assessment on its own form, the applicant shall use this and simultaneously supplement the form used by the FTZ with all data not contained in the external provider's form.

(3) Each application for Committee assessment will be assigned a file number and, after the application has been discussed, the decision will be issued in the form of a written Committee statement, which may be as follows:

- The Committee issues a statement with a **positive opinion** on the ethical aspects of the research proposal, i.e., approves the research.
- The Committee issues a statement with a **negative opinion** on the ethical aspects of the research proposal, i.e., rejects the research.
- The Committee issues a statement specifying areas or topics that require supplementation or revision, i.e., the application is **deferred**. The applicant must submit the revised application for further discussion by the Committee no later than **30 calendar days** after notification of the need to supplement/revise the application. Failure to do so within this time will result in the research being rejected.

(4) The Committee reviews the submitted applications during its regular meetings, or an extraordinary meeting if convened, and prepares a written statement no later than **60 calendar days** from the discussion of the assessment application. In case the Committee requested a revision/supplementation of the application, the 60-calendar-day period is counted from the date of submission of the revised application.

(5) The Committee's statement is always issued with the signature of the Chairperson, or the authorized Committee member who chaired the relevant meeting.

Article 7

Final Provisions

(1) This Regulation shall enter into force and effect on the date of signature by the Dean of the FTZ.

In Prague on 15 December 2025

doc. Ing. Hynek Roubík, Ph.D.

Dean of FTZ