Statutes of the Max Planck Society PostdocNet

1 Definitions and Participation

1.1 Preamble

Henceforth, postdoctoral researchers within the Max Planck Gesellschaft (MPG) established a network to improve the working life of all Postdocs within the MPG (MPG Postdocs), to maximize opportunities for mentorship, academic exchange and to strengthen MPG Postdoc interactions and solidarity.

1.2 Definition

An MPG Postdoc is any person who holds a doctoral degree and is currently undertaking scientific research within the MPG by means of a time-limited contractual relationship from either internal or external funding. A postdoc is defined for the purposes of the PostdocNet as doctorate degree holders who have not yet established a significant level of independence. For the purposes of the MPG, this includes project leaders but - except for good cause- should exclude independent group leaders.

1.3 Name

The name of the network is “Max Planck Society PostdocNet” or, for short, PostdocNet.

1.4 Language

The working language of the PostdocNet is English.

1.5 Aims

The PostdocNet acts on its own terms and independently of the MPG. The PostdocNet provides support to all postdoctoral researchers within the MPG regardless of ability, gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, religion, identity and experience. The PostdocNet aims to provide support by means of fostering the professional development of MPG Postdocs in an environment which values their health and well-being, and to highlight the importance of postdocs from both research and community perspectives.

1.5.1 Provide an inclusive space to all MPG Postdocs

To provide support, as well as an inclusive space to all MPG Postdocs, the PostdocNet will organize in-person and virtual cross-sectional meetings, professional development workshops, and academic seminars to bring together MPG Postdocs from different Institutes. These events shall be organized by the Working Groups (see §2.1.8).

1.5.2 Improve the professional development of MPG Postdocs

To improve the professional development of MPG Postdocs, the PostdocNet will encourage cross-institutional and interdisciplinary networking, take actions to increase diversity including, but not limited to, gender balance at the postdoctoral level within institutes, highlight postdoctoral contributions to MPG research through social engagement and outreach, and promote the scientific careers of MPG Postdocs.

1.5.3 Identify and address collective concerns

MPG Postdocs at different institutes may find themselves confronted with difficulties that are of a similar nature, but may be handled differently from institute to institute, or with problems that cannot be resolved with the help of institute representatives alone. Therefore, the PostdocNet facilitates recognition, discussion, and resolutions of issues and represents all MPG Postdocs towards the MPG Administrative Headquarters (*Generalverwaltung*), the MPG Leadership, and to other external parties through the Steering Group of the PostdocNet. The PostdocNet provides a formal space with organized and structured support system to raise and address concerns.

1.6 Participation

All MPG Postdocs are invited and encouraged to contribute to PostdocNet activities, either at the General Meeting, at their own institutes, or through participation in the various

Working Groups. All MPG Postdocs are eligible to hold PostdocNet offices at all levels.

2 Organizational Structure and Officers

PostdocNet officers are Steering Group members, Working Group Leaders, and External Postdoc Representatives and are stratified across two levels: central and local. At the central level, the Steering Group broadly coordinates the entire PostdocNet and interacts with entities outside the network. Working Group Leaders coordinate the activities of the PostdocNet's Working Groups and act as contact points between these Working Groups and the Steering Group.

At the local level, MPG Postdocs within each institute are represented directly by a single External Postdoc Representative and Internal Postdoc Representative(s). The possibility of electing additional Internal Representatives is left to the discretion of the postdoc community within each institute, and the External Representative may also be an Internal Representative.

2.1 Central structure and officers

2.1.1 General Assembly, General Meeting, and Delegates

The PostdocNet will hold an annual General Meeting to bring together all officers and other interested MPG Postdocs. All MPG Postdocs in attendance at the General Meeting, collectively known as the General Assembly, determine the network's general strategic development. All MPG Postdocs may attend the General Meeting. Other guests must be invited and approved by the Steering Group; however, the guests are not eligible to vote at the General Meeting. The date of the General Meeting must be announced at least three months in advance, using the PostdocNet's official channels.

Minutes of the General Meeting are to be published on the PostdocNet webpage no later than eight weeks after the General Meeting has concluded, along with the annual reports of the Steering Group and Working Groups.

MPG Postdocs of each institute shall send their elected External Representative as their institute delegate to the General Meeting. This delegate participates in all major voting on behalf of their institute. Other members of the General Assembly vote only in minor votes (see §3 for minor/major voting distinction). In cases when the External Postdoc Representative cannot attend the General Meeting, they may appoint another MPG postdoc from their institute as a proxy to serve as a delegate. The External Postdoc Representative must email the Secretary Group (see §2.1.8) at least 2 weeks in advance of the General Meeting to inform them about this change.

If an institute has no elected External Representative, but has
postdocs attending the General Meeting, a single delegate must be chosen to represent the institute in major voting.

The Secretary Group will contact all registered attendees from such institutes and request delegate nominations via email. The result
of the decision on the delegate for an institute must be communicated by the Secretary Group by email to all registered attendees for a given institute no later than one day before the start of the General Meeting.

To ensure transparency, following the General Meeting, the Secretary Group will produce a report with the names of all institute delegates who participated in major voting. This report will be released with the meeting minutes on the PostdocNet webpage, no later than 8 weeks after the General Meeting has concluded.

2.1.2 Steering Group

The Steering Group is responsible for the overall development of the PostdocNet according to the resolutions of the General Assembly. The Steering Group consists of the

Spokesperson, the Deputy Spokesperson, the three Section Representatives, the General Secretary, and the Financial Officer. In addition to the fixed responsibilities of each office, Steering Group members adopt responsibilities for other organs: each Working Group is assigned, by the Steering Group, a Steering Group member that oversees it. The composition of the Steering Group of the Max Planck PostdocNet should reflect the diversity of MPG Postdocs and the MPG institutes. The Steering Group meets at least quarterly and calling the meeting is the responsibility of the Spokesperson.

2.1.3 Spokesperson

The Spokesperson represents and manages the PostdocNet and heads the Steering Group. The Spokesperson is responsible for communication within the network as well as with external parties, such as the President of the MPG and other official MPG branches. The Spokesperson shall report on the work of the Steering Group in front of the General Assembly during the General Meeting, near the end of their term. The spokesperson will take part in the quarterly meeting of the Postdoc Network Alliance consisting of the Max Planck PostdocNet, Helmholtz Association PostDoc Network (HAPN) and the Leibniz PostDoc Network.

2.1.4 Deputy Spokesperson

The Deputy Spokesperson takes on the responsibilities of the Spokesperson when the Spokesperson is temporarily unable to carry out their duties. In the case that the Spokesperson is unable to complete their term of office, the Deputy Spokesperson will become the new Spokesperson for the remainder of the term and a new Deputy Spokesperson must be elected using the rules stated in §3.3. Next to the Spokesperson, the Deputy Spokesperson is responsible for the representation of the PostdocNet. The debuty spokesperson will also take part in the quarterly meeting of the Postdoc Network Alliance consisting of the Max Planck PostdocNet, Helmholtz Association PostDoc Network (HAPN) and the Leibniz PostDoc Network.

In case neither the spokesperson nor the debuty can join these meetings, another member of the steering group or communications working group might be assigned as a proxy.

2.1.5 Section Representatives

The three Section Representatives represent the diverse disciplines of MPG Postdocs in their respective MPG sections: Biology and Medicine Section (BMS), Chemistry, Physics and Technology Section (CPTS), and Human Sciences Section (HSS). The Section Representatives are the primary points of contact within the Steering Group for Postdoc Representatives at their constituent institutes and should thus maintain contact with those representatives. Section Representatives represent the interests of their section’s Postdocs within the Steering Group. Section Representatives work to expand the membership of the PostdocNet, implement local PostdocNet structures, and help to advertise the General Meeting to their respective section. Additionally, Section Representatives support the Spokesperson in liaising with the governing body of the Sections, including with the Section Chairperson and the Speakers for the Scientific staff.

2.1.6 General Secretary

The General Secretary oversees the administrative tasks of the central level of PostdocNet, including the elections of local External Representatives. For assistance with these tasks, the General Secretary leads the Secretary Group formed in the General Assembly. The General Secretary may add more MPG Postdocs to the Secretary Group throughout their term. The General Secretary also keeps meeting minutes, and those minutes (possibly redacted) can be made available upon an email request.

2.1.7 Financial Officer

The Financial Officer handles the PostdocNet's budget. The name of the Financial Officer must be communicated to the MPG Administrative Headquarters (*Generalverwaltung*) within four weeks after the General Meeting has concluded. If there is no Financial Officer elected, the Deputy Spokesperson will take over this position.
The
Finance Officer reports every transaction to the Steering Group in a timely manner and provides a final statement of accounts to the Spokesperson and the succeeding
Financial Officer at the end of their term. In the event that the Financial Officer is unable to act at any required moment (e.g. sickness), a member of the Steering
Group shall be appointed Financial Officer until further notice.

2.1.8 Working Groups

The Working Groups (WGs) are essential to the PostdocNet's mission, as they provide the principal platform for the network's day-to-day activities. Each WG has one or more (co)leader(s), one of whom acts as the main contact point, elected using the rules of §3.2.2 (Minor voting). During their term, each WG Leader may add more MPG Postdocs to the WG. The WG Leaders report regularly to the Spokesperson. The Steering Group can establish additional WGs regularly throughout the year if they deem necessary. The following five WG are permanently established:

- General Meeting WG (organization of the annual General Meeting)
- Secretary WG (administration and support of the network)
- Career Development WG (organization of soft skills and scientific seminars)
- Communication WG (design and maintenance of the PostdocNet's web and social media presence).
- Survey WG (responsible for the PostdocNet's surveys)

All working groups should regularly communicate with the Steering Group in any manner they see fit. A year-end report must be prepared by each Working Group and presented to the Steering Group prior to the General Assembly. This year-end report will then be posted following the General Meeting as described in §2.1.1.

2.2 Local structure and officers

2.2.1 Internal Postdoc Representatives

The PostdocNet encourages the MPG Postdocs affiliated with an institute to elect one or more Internal Postdoc Representative(s) for their institute as their direct representatives in the institute. An institute's Internal Postdoc Representative(s) maintain(s) cohesion of their local constituents by representing the interests of their constituents to the institute's management and administration. Concretely, Internal Postdoc Representative(s), for example, convene regular meetings of the MPG Postdocs at their institutes; they assist with initiating election processes for Internal and External Representatives; they look for and create opportunities to improve postdoctoral training conditions for their constituents; and they keep in touch with their institute's directors, administration, academic staff member in the scientific council, ombudsperson, *Promotionsbeauftragte*/r, works council (*Betriebsrat*), SAB, and others.

2.2.2 External Postdoc Representative

The MPG Postdocs affiliated with an institute additionally elect a single External Postdoc Representative to serve as their representative to the central level of the PostdocNet. Whereas the Internal Postdoc Representatives act entirely within their institutes, the External Postdoc Representative acts within the PostdocNet, for example, by reporting to their Section Representative and by voting as a Delegate at the General Meeting on behalf of their institute. The External Postdoc Representative may be an Internal Postdoc

Representative at the same time. External representatives convey official announcements and information from the PostdocNet to their institute such as upcoming workshops or events, minutes from Steering Group events, General Meeting information, or other pertinent information.

2.3. MPG-wide Structure and Officers

2.3.1 Officers elected in §2.1

For all Steering Group members, the term of office begins 30 days after the conclusion of the General Meeting. In the case of exceptional circumstances leading to postpone the elections in the General Meeting, the current Steering Group will remain in office until a new election is held.

If a member of the Steering Group other than the Spokesperson is unable to complete the term of office, the remaining members of the Steering Group should initiate an election in accordance with the rules in §3.3 if the General Meeting is not within 3 months. This election must be communicated to the PostdocNet through the PostdocNet's official channels. If a member resigns within three months of the General Meeting, then the position is left vacant until an election is held at the General Meeting, with the remaining Steering Group members sharing responsibility for the position.

In the case that a Working Group Leader is unable to complete their term of office, they must select a replacement within the Working Group before their departure and the Steering Group should be informed in advance.

All PostdocNet officers should summarize their experiences in writing for their successors in order to ensure smooth transitions and efficient knowledge management. The outgoing Steering Group instructs the newly elected Steering Group before their assumption of office. At least one member of the outgoing Steering Group should be available to the newly elected Steering Group as a consultant for the first half of their term. If no Steering Group members are able to be a consultant, this duty is left to the outgoing Spokesperson.

2.3.2 Officers elected in §2.2

For External Postdoc Representatives, the term of office and the respective election procedure must follow Appendix A. For Internal Postdoc Representatives, the term of office and election procedure is to be determined locally.

For institutes with less than 10 postdocs, a formal election is not necessary. The institute must inform the General Secretary about who their elected representative is.

3 Voting and Election Procedures

Various forms of voting and election take place at the different levels of PostdocNet.

3.1 Local Elections

On the local level, voting occurs within each institute for the election of Postdoc External Representatives. The election of Postdoc Representatives is described in full detail in Appendix A.

Internal Postdoc Representatives are allowed to be chosen however the institute sees fit (i.e. on a volunteer basis or via elections). Institutes may use the procedure in Appendix A to hold those elections as well if necessary.

3.2 Central Elections

At the central level, voting occurs at the General Assembly of the PostdocNet. The voting can be characterized into two categories: major and minor voting. Major votes are voting procedures reserved for delegates only, whereas minor votes are voting procedures which are open to all members of the General Meeting and Working Group.

3.2.1 Major Voting

Major voting consists of the elections of Steering Group members and votes to ratify new

versions of these statutes. Only delegates may participate in a major voting, for which each delegate is allocated a single vote. Except in the case of the election of Section Representatives (see §3.2.6), major voting requires a quorum: the delegates of a majority of the current member institutes of the MPG must be present in person and only with exceptions virtually.

3.2.1.1 Election of Steering Group Members

The elections for the Steering Group shall be held during the General Meeting of PostdocNet. Any MPG-Postdoc that is present at the General Meeting can stand for election for Steering Group offices, provided that they expect to stay an MPG-Postdoc throughout the term of the Steering Group. WGs must be formed before the election of the Steering Group takes place.

The elections of the Spokesperson, Deputy Spokesperson, General Secretary and Financial Officer require an absolute majority (more than 50%) of delegates who do not abstain. The elections of the three Section Representatives require an absolute majority of delegates among the institutes of the respective section who do not abstain (see §3.2.6 for special quorum rules).

If something is not explicitly stated within these statutes, any procedural questions or issues will follow the most recent version of Robert's Rules of Order (see http://www.rulesonline.com).

The Election Committee must be formed and follow the tasks as it is written for the election of External Representatives (see Appendix A, §5.3). However, there are two significant procedural differences.

1. There will be an opportunity at the General Meeting for candidate speeches and questions for all elected positions. Each candidate, in a randomly selected order, will have a maximum of 3 minutes to speak. After the speech, the General Assembly has the opportunity to ask questions, which will last no more than 10 minutes.
2. The call for nominations will be open from two weeks prior to the General Meeting until the scheduled beginning of the candidate's speeches. The Election Committee must make a formal last call for nominations in front of the General Assembly before the first candidate speech. A person can nominate themselves or another person. A nomination must then be accepted or declined.

In the case that no candidate receives an absolute majority, a run-off vote between the two candidates that received the most votes will be held. In the case of a tie, all tied candidates participate in the run-off vote. If the run-off vote is also tied, the election for this position will be repeated. If there is only a single candidate for any position, the ballot shall contain the options "Yes", "No", and "Abstention", and the election requires more than 50% of "Yes" votes of those delegates who do not abstain. In the case that the candidate does not receive an absolute majority, a new vote will be held. If this new vote also does not reach the needed "Yes" votes, the position will remain vacant until another election can be held (see §3.2.8 for procedures).

Additional rules for the election of Spokesperson, Deputy Spokesperson, and Section Representatives follow.

3.2.1.1.1 Rules for electing Spokesperson and Deputy Spokesperson

Candidates nominated for Spokesperson or Deputy Spokesperson can also be nominated for General Secretary or a Section Representative position, but they cannot hold multiple positions. Hence, elections for Spokesperson and Deputy Spokesperson have to be held before the rest of the Steering Group is elected. If a WG Leader is elected Spokesperson or Deputy Spokesperson, they are no longer WG Leader and the WG shall determine a new

leader before the end of the General Assembly.

3.2.1.1.2 Rules for Electing Section Representatives

A single Section Representative for each one of the three MPG sections (BMS, CPTS, HSS) will be elected by the delegates of that section.

In case the Section Representative positions cannot be filled, upon a successful motion proposed by the Spokesperson, the General Assembly can hold an additional round of voting in which the sectional restrictions on candidates are lifted so that all three seats on the Steering Group may be filled. A candidate thus elected will be a Steering Group member-at-large but not a Section Representative if they are not an MPG postdoc in that section.

3.2.1.2 Ratification of New Statutes

These statutes may be replaced by new statutes upon a ratification vote. The proposed new statutes must have been sent to the MPG Postdocs of all institutes no later than two weeks prior to the first day of the General Assembly. The draft may be further amended at the General Meeting, before ratification, by motions proposed by members of the General Assembly. The ratification vote to replace these statutes with the (possibly amended) new version requires a two-thirds majority of the “Yes” votes of present delegates. In the case of a successful vote, these statutes are replaced with the (possibly amended) new version and a record of the change must be appended.

3.2.2 Minor Voting

Minor Voting consists of votes on motions proposed at the General Meeting and the election of WG Leaders. All members of the General Assembly are eligible to participate in minor voting. Minor voting may be conducted by, for example, voice or show-of-hands vote.

3.2.2.1 Votes on Motions

At the discretion of the Steering Group, an immediate minor vote may be taken on a motion proposed by a member of the General Assembly. A successful motion requires at least 50% of the votes by members of the General Assembly present, in which case the motion must be enacted. A motion may not be used to circumvent major voting.

3.2.2.2 Election of Working Group Leaders

Except for the Secretary Group (lead by the General Secretary as defined in §2.1.6), the members of each

group conduct a minor vote to elect that Group’s Leader(s). Each election requires at least 50% of the votes of the Group’s members.

3.3 Voting Outside of the General Meeting

In extreme circumstances, Steering Group positions are either vacated during the term or unable to be filled during the General Meeting. Major Voting may occur outside of the General Assembly if this does happen. The votes for these Major Votes will be electronic, provided the service complies with Data Privacy Laws (e.g. LimeSurvey by GWDG).

The Election Committee will be formed by the General Secretary and at least one MPG postdoc who is not a member of the Steering Group. If the General Secretary is unavailable, a Section Representative will take their place. The Election Committee then follows the rules as stated in §3.2.1, except for the rules regarding the nomination of candidates. The call for the nomination of candidates must take place at least two weeks before the election; the call must end at least one week before the election. Then, the Election Committee must announce the final list of candidates immediately. Candidates may include a written speech which will be sent to all postdocs prior to the election. The voting period can be anywhere from twenty-four to forty-eight hours.

If a candidate is elected using this manner, their term officially begins one week from their

election and ends one month after the next General Meeting (see §2.3.1).

3.4 Announcement of election results

After all elections have successfully been conducted and the positions have been filled, the outgoing Steering Group must inform all MPG Postdocs, the MPG Administrative Headquarters (*Generalverwaltung*), and other official MPG branches. This should include the names of all elected officers at the central level and be completed within one week after the General Meeting.

4 Enforcement

These statutes come into force the day after they are published on the PostdocNet website (http://www.postdocnet.mpg.de), having previously been accepted by the Delegates in the PostdocNet General Assembly.

APPENDIX A

5 Election procedure for External Postdoc Representatives

At every institute founded or adopted by the Senate of the Max Planck Society, and its associated institutes an External Postdoc Representative (Representative, for short) shall be elected for the period of one year.

5.1 Entitlement to vote and to stand for election

The following rules apply for External Postdoc Representatives:

1. All MPG Postdocs (as defined in §1.2) affiliated with an institute are allowed to vote for their Representative.
2. MPG Postdocs who are entitled to vote are eligible to stand for election.
3. MPG Postdocs who are affiliated with more than one Institute have to decide before the election period at which institute they want to be eligible to vote and stand for election.

5.2 Formation of an Election Committee

The election will be prepared for and conducted by an Election Committee which consists of at least two voluntary members who are eligible to vote. These members must be announced to those eligible to vote upon formation of the Committee. If a member is no longer able to perform their duties, a new member can be appointed to the Election Committee as a replacement. Any changes made to the Election Committee must be announced to those eligible to vote; this announcement must include an account of the rationale behind the changes in question. The members of the Election Committee forfeit their eligibility to stand for election.

5.3 Tasks of the Election Committee

The Election Committee has the following tasks:

1. The Committee must prepare a list of those who are eligible to vote. We suggest the Election Committee ask their institute's Administration for assistance preparing this list. However, it is ultimately up to the committee to determine who is eligible to vote. The role of the institute's administration is thus explicitly limited to the provision of logistic support so as to ensure the independence of the election process. This list must be sent to all researchers of the institute before the election declaration, to allow anyone who is not on the list to make a case to be added, and anyone who does not believe they should be on the list to ask to be removed.

If a more specific definition of a Postdoc is required to define the pool of candidates or voters, the Election Committee is encouraged to consult the European framework definition (R2 Researcher) which is the basis on which the European Union decides in which bracket a researcher fits within the academic pyramid for funding applications. (https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/europe/careerdevelopment/

trainingresearchers/research-profiles-descriptors)
2. The Committee should determine a procedure for voting remotely to collect votes from those eligible voters unable to participate in the vote on the day of the election.
3. The Committee must declare the election no less than two weeks prior to the starting date of the election to all those eligible to vote. The election declaration must contain:
a. the place (if applicable) and date of the election,
b. a procedure for voting remotely,
c. a copy of this election procedure,
d. a description of each position,
e. the electoral roll, and
f. a call for nominations for candidates who wish to stand for election.
4. Upon any objections of the electoral roll, The Election Committee will have the final say. If there are any questions regarding the eligibility of voters, contact the Secretary Group.
a. If a voter objects to the voting eligibility of an Election Committee member, they should contact the Secretary Group. This right should be communicated in the election declaration.
5. The Committee must announce the final list of candidates at least one week prior to the election.
6. The Committee must supervise the due and proper casting of votes and must count the votes.
7. The Committee must announce the result of the election within five days and report it to the General Secretary.

5.4 Election Procedure

1. Voters have only one vote to give. The vote is cast by marking one of the names listed on the ballot. If there is only one candidate standing for the election, the ballot paper must include the alternatives “Yes”, “No”, and “Abstention”. If there are multiple candidates, the ballot paper must include the choices “Candidate A”, “Candidate B”, ..., “Candidate X”, “No to all”, and “Abstention”. Ballot papers on which more than one name is crossed off or which contain additional marks will be invalid.
2. Voters not present on the day(s) of election may vote remotely in accordance with the election declaration. When the casting of votes is concluded, the Election Committee must add the votes received remotely, ensuring that no remote voter already cast a vote as in paragraph 1.
3. The election requires a quorum: at least 50% of eligible voters must participate in the election. “Abstention” votes count towards the quorum. If no quorum is reached, the election shall be invalid. The election procedure must then be repeated at a later date announced to all eligible voters. In this second election, a quorum is not needed.
4. The candidate with the most votes will be elected, provided they receive more votes than “No/No to all”. In the event of a tie, a second round of voting will take place with the candidates who tied. In this second round, the candidate with the most votes is elected, provided they receive more votes than “No to all”. In the event of a tie in the second round, the election must be carried out with the formation of a new Election Committee from the beginning. If no candidate gets more votes than

"No/Not to all", the election shall be invalid and start from the beginning.
5. An electronic record must be kept of each election. This record, for which a template will be provided by the PostdocNet, must in particular state:
a. the name of the institute,
b. the name of the Election Committee members,
c. the people who were eligible to vote,
d. the number of people eligible to vote,
e. the number of votes cast per candidate,
f. the number of invalid votes, and
g. if the election was valid, a statement of acceptance signed by the elected candidate (see §5.7).

5.5 Electronic Voting

With due consideration to the interests of confidentiality and in compliance with the specified deadlines, the election may be prepared for and conducted by suitable electronic means. The electronic means must satisfy the MPG Data Privacy Policy and thus, the PostdocNet strongly recommends using LimeSurvey, provided by GWDG. The rules and statutes contained above are to be applied accordingly.

5.6 Contesting an Election

A challenge to an election shall be resolved by the Secretary Group. Any such challenge must be presented electronically no later than two weeks after the day of the election for the attention of the General Secretary. The Secretary Group and General Secretary can determine whether an election should be re-contested based on submitted testimony, with a written justification of the decision submitted to the Steering Group for their record.

5.7 Reporting the Election to the General Secretary

The elected candidate for the institute must be reported as the Postdoc Representative to the General Secretary no later than a week following the election. The Election Committee shall provide the General Secretary with the name and contact information of the elected Representatives and the electronic record of the election procedure.

5.8 Term of Office

If there is no challenge to the election, the term of office commences at least two weeks after the day of the election, as determined by the Election Committee, and lasts for one year. The outgoing Postdoc Representative should be available to the succeeding Postdoc Representative as a consultant**,** preferably for at least the first half of their term.

5.9 Premature withdrawal

Should the Postdoc Representative withdraw from office prior to the expiry of their one year term of office, a new election must be held at the Institute and the General Secretary must be informed. All election rules above apply.
An elected Postdoc Representative prematurely withdraws from office if they:
a. permanently depart the institute,
b. lose their status as a postdoc,
c. are temporarily on leave from the Institute for more than three months, or d. resign.
Resignations of Postdoc Representatives take immediate effect and are to be announced at the institute and sent to the General Secretary.

APPENDIX B: Voting Process in the Steering Group

6 Voting process in the Steering Group

During the daily running of the Steering Group, it is possible that a democratic vote on a discussed subject may be required; an official vote is required when consensus cannot be reached via discussion within the Steering Group. Each Steering Group member has a single

vote.
If necessary, the procedure for Steering Group voting will be as follows:
1. The Spokesperson calls for the vote and formulates the voting subject/question and the voting options in as simple and concise way as possible.
2. There should always be “No” and “Abstain” options to accommodate individuals who do not agree with any of the options presented or do not feel they are able to vote without a bias.
3. The General Secretary sets up the vote and assures anonymity for voting.
4. The vote should be announced by email to all parties eligible to vote.
5. There should be an email to remind people to vote the day previous to when voting opens.
6. All votes should be cast/submitted within the 48-hour timeframe in which to vote.
7. The option that has the most votes in favor wins and does not require a majority of votes. However, this vote does require a quorum for the vote to be valid.
8. In the case of a tie, the Spokesperson makes the final decision.