



**FENS Bylaws**  
**Adopted by Vote of the Governing Council**  
**[27 November 2024]**

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## **Article 1 Objectives of the Bylaws**

In conformity with Article 17 of the *Articles of Association* of the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (hereafter referred to as FENS), the present *Bylaws* complement the *Articles of Association*, to provide more detailed rules and procedures for the organisation, administration and activities of FENS.

In case of any contradiction between the *Articles of Association* and the *Bylaws*, the *Articles of Association* shall prevail.

## **Article 2 Amendments to the *Articles of Association* and the *Bylaws***

The *Articles of Association* and the *Bylaws* may be modified by a decision of the FENS Governing Council in conformity with Articles 17 and 20 of the *Articles of Association*.

## **Article 3 Core Values**

FENS was created to bring together the scientific community and advance research and education in neuroscience in Europe and beyond. It believes in inclusive, responsible science. FENS takes great pride in its position as the representative of European neuroscience and strives to structure its activities around the following core organisational values:

### **Credibility**

FENS acknowledges the responsibility of the scientific community to carry out transparent, reproducible research to support the development and generation of excellent, credible science. It upholds the highest standards of honesty and integrity in all of its activities, from reporting results regardless to properly attributing collaborators. This system of ethics guides the practice of science, from data collection to publication and beyond.

### **Inclusivity**

FENS believes that individual differences should never constitute a barrier to scientific excellence. As such, FENS strives to ensure that all of its activities, both internally and externally, are as inclusive and representative of the neuroscience community as possible, irrespective of gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, appearance, ethnicity, race, national origin, pregnancy, medical condition, genetic information, ancestry, marital status, citizenship, age or religion.

### **Sustainability**

FENS is committed to bringing together researchers for scientific exchange and progress. Acknowledging the associated environmental impact of this commitment and its related activities, FENS continues to promote and implement relevant initiatives to minimise the impact of its actions and apply sustainable practices in collaboration with the scientific community.

## **Article 4 Code of Conduct**

FENS aims to ensure that all of its activities, both internally and externally, are carried out in a professional, respectful, harassment-free and inclusive manner, and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. FENS representatives<sup>1</sup> are expected to act in their FENS roles with the utmost professionalism, integrity and respect towards all persons they meet and with whom they work.

### **Harassment**

FENS considers harassment as consisting of improper or unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be perceived as causing offence or humiliation to another person. Harassment may involve any conduct of a verbal, non-verbal or physical nature, including written and electronic communication. Harassment in any form is not tolerated by FENS in any of its activities and work.

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<sup>1</sup> A FENS representative is a member of the Executive Committee, Governing Council, Standing or Special Committees, Divisions and Administration (including interns, volunteers and consultants) or any other persons who serve in FENS-designated roles.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Comments – whether verbal or written – that reinforce social structures of domination related to e.g., career status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, ethnicity, race, age, religion, political affiliation
- Any form of bullying or abuse of power through coercion, manipulation, etc.
- The production or non-consensual sharing of photography or unwanted recording, including sexual images, in public spaces (in any format, electronic or otherwise)
- Deliberate intimidation, humiliation, stalking or following
- Sustained disruption of presentations, talks, sessions or other events
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Unwelcomed sexual attention
- Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behaviours

### **Conflict of interest**

A conflict of interest is hereby defined by FENS as any conflict between the private or professional interests and the official responsibilities of any FENS representative, including but not limited to:

- A (direct or indirect) interest of a financial nature contrary to the interests of FENS; and
- A (direct or indirect) interest resulting from the individual's relationship to another organisation with which FENS does business, competes, or which could be affected by an action taken by FENS.

If a conflict of interest becomes apparent with regards to any decision to be taken by a FENS governing body, committee or division, the concerned individual or informer shall immediately notify the members of the body concerned. The minutes or notes of the meeting shall reflect that individual's declaration as well as the justifications relating to the conflict of interest.

A conflicted individual shall recuse themselves from the conflicted agenda item or, having declared an interest, rather than a conflict of interest, shall be entitled to take part in the deliberation of the related agenda item but shall not be entitled to vote on the decision giving rise to the conflict of interest. The concerned body, and excluding the person with a declared conflict or declared interest, shall decide on any discussion that may arise regarding the existence of a conflict or interest.

### **Confidentiality and public reporting of FENS activities**

FENS representatives are required to maintain the highest confidentiality with regards to the matters discussed and decisions taken in formal meetings of the FENS Executive Committee, Governing Council, Standing and Special Committees, Divisions, Administration or other bodies, as well as any confidential information obtained through informal sources and meetings. This is understood to include confidential matters pertaining to FENS activities, the administration and interactions with partners and third parties.

Reporting of confidential discussions and decisions may, depending on the circumstances, be extended to the relevant governing bod(y)(ies) of the member societies. Members of the Executive Committee who serve in their own name shall be bound by a duty of discretion and confidentiality and not report to other societies or bodies with whom they are related. In case of doubt, the the core FENS leadership (President, Secretary General and Treasurer) and the Executive Director–shall decide on the matter.

Reporting of information which is not in the public domain, including to FENS officers<sup>2</sup> not present at a particular discussion or decision, to third parties or publicly, is carried out in collaboration with the administration and with the agreement of the relevant FENS decision-making body, the core FENS leadership (President, Secretary General and Treasurer) and the Executive Director. Officers are requested to verify with the Executive Director and the core FENS leadership in case of any doubts in this regard and prior to any public disclosure of information.

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<sup>2</sup> FENS officers are members of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board.

## **Article 5 Membership**

The specifications about FENS membership are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Article 4.

### **5.1 Eligibility**

In addition to the specifications about eligibility for membership in FENS stated in the *Articles of Association*, eligibility as a Full Member Society comprises the geographical requirement of having its legal seat located in Europe, it being understood that exceptions to this requirement can be approved by the Governing Council provided that an organisation has a strong focus of its activities in Europe. FENS defines Europe based on the countries recognised by the World Health Organization as part of the European region (<https://www.who.int/countries>), but reserves the right to modify this definition depending on the impact of changing conditions in the region relevant to FENS. Any change in definition shall be taken in accordance with the procedure set out for amending these *Bylaws*.

All other membership categories are open to organisations and individuals from countries inside and outside of Europe.

### **5.2 Applications for Membership**

Candidatures for Full Member Society or Associate Member Society shall be addressed to the Secretary General at least three months before a Governing Council meeting by submitting the completed application form for societies, including the required background documentation. Candidates for Full Member Society or Associate Member Society will be notified of the decision on their admission within two weeks after the Governing Council meeting at which the resolution was taken. This is without prejudice to the power of the Executive Committee to block a candidature if it considers that the applicable requirements are not met.

Candidatures for Individual Membership shall be addressed to the FENS Secretariat by submitting the completed application form for individuals including the required background documentation. Candidates for Individual Membership will be notified about their admission within two weeks after receipt of their application.

### **5.3 Obligations of Member Societies**

Full Member Societies take part in the governance of FENS by participating in the meetings and decisions of the Governing Council, and they are entitled to nominate and elect FENS officers.

Full Member Societies and Associate Member Societies shall, to the extent applicable, inform FENS of any significant change in their Articles of Association (Statutes) and of changes in their board. They will be asked to provide contact details to the FENS administration regularly and to keep it informed of any changes.

Full Member Societies and Associate Member Societies are required to keep the lists of their members updated and accurate within the FENS online database. The lists are taken into consideration in calculating the annual fees decided by the Executive Committee (*Articles of Association*, Articles 4.2 and 4.3). The FENS administration will request the payment of the annual fees during the first quarter of the year.

Full Member Societies and Associate Member Societies shall inform their members and prospective members about FENS membership and are strongly encouraged to highlight FENS membership benefits in membership campaigns. To the extent possible, Full Member Societies and Associate Member Societies are expected to promote FENS and its activities via their websites, in materials and at events.

As stated in the *Articles of Association*, Article 4.7, Full Member Societies shall concur to the success of the FENS Forum every two years on even years by promoting the Forum among their members, and shall avoid holding a scientific meeting of their society in the year of the Forum.

## **Article 6 FENS Affiliates**

Through its Affiliates, FENS provides a forum for ongoing dialogue, information exchange and collaboration with philanthropic and corporate partners globally.

FENS Affiliate status is open to foundations, companies or other entities that wish to enter into relations with FENS to support its mission in Europe and beyond. An organisation that qualifies for Full Member Society status or Associate Member Society status may instead apply to become an Affiliate. FENS retains full independence from third parties in terms of decision-making and strategy.

Affiliation is subject to approval by the Executive Committee after consultation with the Governing Council. Candidatures shall be addressed to the Secretary General at least three months before an Executive Committee meeting by submitting the completed application form for Affiliates including the required background documentation. Candidates will be notified of the decision on their admission within two weeks after the Executive Committee meeting at which the resolution was taken.

The terms and conditions of FENS Affiliate status and contribution are determined on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Committee. FENS Affiliation is kept intentionally flexible so that the relationship may be tailored to the common interests shared with each Affiliate.

The Affiliate status and contributions are re-evaluated by the Executive Committee on an annual basis and reported to the Governing Council during its meetings.

Affiliates are not considered members of FENS, and as such do not have any voting rights in the Governing Council and are not entitled to participate in the meetings of the Governing Council.

## **Article 7 Governing Council**

The specifications about the Governing Council and Governing Council meetings are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Articles 7 and 8.

### **7.1 Governing Council Meetings**

In accordance with the Articles of Association, the Governing Council shall meet at least once per year, and typically twice per year.

In accordance with the legal requirements prevailing in Belgium, the Governing Council will hold a meeting within six months of the closing of the financial year to approve the annual accounts. This meeting will typically be held remotely. A second in person meeting towards the end of the fourth quarter is also regularly scheduled each year in Brussels, Belgium.

In even years, the Governing Council customarily meets additionally in conjunction with the FENS Forum.

The FENS ordinary governance meeting schedule can be found in Annex 2 of the *Bylaws*.

The Executive Committee may invite guest participants to attend Governing Council meetings.

## **Article 8 Executive Committee**

The specifications about the Executive Committee are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Article 9. Vacancies are described in the *Articles of Association*, Article 9.11.

### **8.1 President**

The President is a FENS officer and Chair of the Executive Committee and of the Governing Council. They also serve on the Advisory Committee on Nominations. They work in close collaboration with the FENS Secretary General and FENS Treasurer and are assisted by the FENS administration.

The President of FENS is responsible for promoting the development and impact of FENS, among FENS member societies and across the neuroscience community, as well as promoting neuroscience research among scientists, decision-makers and the public at large.

The President represents FENS and European neuroscience research in national and international scientific institutions, decision-making organisations and events of public interest.

The tasks of the President are:

- To act as the primary spokesperson of the Association.

- To chair the meetings of the Executive Committee.
- To chair the meetings of the Governing Council.
- To be part of the Advisory Committee on Nominations.
- To lead the development, orientation and implementation of the FENS Strategic Plan<sup>3</sup>.
- To oversee and advise on the activities of FENS Committees.

The President-elect is an officer-elect and serves on the Advisory Board and Advisory Committee on Nominations. They shall attend all Executive Committee meetings and Governing Council meetings, and participate in their discussions, with no voting rights. The President-elect collaborates closely with the President to obtain sufficient insight into the FENS administration and operations in preparation of their role as President.

As Past President, they serve as Member of the Advisory Board and Advisory Committee on Nominations, as well as President of the Board of the FENS Marketing Foundation. They shall attend all Executive Committee meetings and Governing Council meetings, and participate in their discussions, with no voting rights.

## **8.2 Secretary General**

The Secretary General is a FENS officer, member of the Executive Committee and of the Governing Council of FENS. They work in close collaboration with the FENS President and FENS Treasurer and are assisted by the FENS administration.

The tasks of the Secretary General are:

- To oversee that the Articles of Association and Bylaws are respected.
- To support the President in their duties and strategic vision.
- To prepare/review the agenda and prepare/review minutes of FENS governance meetings.
- To review membership applications and make recommendations to the Executive Committee.
- To contribute to the implementation and updating of the FENS Strategic Plan.

The Secretary General-elect is an officer-elect and serves as Member of the FENS Advisory Board and Advisory Committee on Nominations, as well as Secretary General of the Board of the FENS Marketing Foundation. They shall attend all Executive Committee meetings and Governing Council meetings, and participate in their discussions, with no voting rights. The Secretary General-elect will collaborate closely with the Secretary General to obtain sufficient insight into the FENS administration and operations in preparation of their role as Secretary General.

## **8.3 Treasurer**

The Treasurer is a FENS officer, member of the Executive Committee and of the Governing Council of FENS. They work in close collaboration with the FENS President and FENS Secretary General and are assisted by the FENS administration.

The tasks of the Treasurer are:

- To oversee all resources and expenses of FENS in conformity with the law and the decisions of the Executive Committee and Governing Council.
- To report to the Executive Committee and the Governing Council on the resources, expenses and investments of FENS, and to provide a provisional budget.
- To check periodically current accounting, payments, income, invested assets and FENS contracts containing financial matters.
- To oversee the administrative preparation of reports about fiscal balance, audit results, current budget status, prospective budget and earmarking for the following year.
- To review the final financial report of each FENS Forum.

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<sup>3</sup> The FENS Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap that sets priorities and defines the overall direction of the organisation to ensure the best possible development of activities and resources for the continued benefit of FENS membership and the neuroscience community at large.



- To contribute to the implementation and updating of the FENS Strategic Plan.

The Treasurer-elect is an officer-elect, and serves as member of the FENS Advisory Board and Advisory Committee on Nominations, as well as Treasurer of the Board of the FENS Marketing Foundation. They shall attend all Executive Committee meetings and Governing Council meetings, and participate in their discussions, with no voting rights. The Treasurer-elect will collaborate closely with the Treasurer to obtain sufficient insight into the FENS financial structure and operations in preparation of their role as Treasurer.

#### **8.4 Chairs of the Standing Committees**

The designation and responsibilities of the Chairs of the Standing Committees are defined in Article 11 of the *Bylaws*.

- **Committee for Higher Education and Training (CHET)** (see Article 11.4 of the *Bylaws*)
- **Communication Committee** (see Article 11.5 of the *Bylaws*)
- **Programme Committee** (see Article 11.6 of the *Bylaws*)

#### **8.5 Chair of the Host Society Committee**

The designation and responsibilities of the Chair of the Host Society Committee are defined in Article 14.2 of the *Bylaws*.

#### **8.6 Electoral and voting procedures**

The specifications about the appointment of the President, Secretary General and Treasurer are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Article 9.9.

The specifications about the electoral and voting procedures for the Chairs of the Standing Committees and the Host Society Committee are defined in the *Bylaws*, Articles 11 and 14.2.

The specifications of officer reappointments are described in the *Articles of Association*, Article 9.5.

#### **8.7 Executive Committee meetings**

The specifications about Executive Committee meetings are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Article 9.

The members of the Advisory Board and chairs of the Divisions are entitled to attend the Executive Committee meetings, with no voting rights.

### **Article 9 Advisory Board**

The specifications about the Advisory Board are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Article 15.

Once in office, officers-elect of the Advisory Board cannot be proposed for candidature to any position of elected officer or member in FENS Standing Committees, Special Committees or Divisions, with the exception of ordinary membership in the ALBA Network, a FENS Division.

#### **9.1 Past President**

At the end of their term as President in the Executive Committee, the President is appointed to the Advisory Board as Past President for a two-year term.

#### **9.2 President-elect**

The President-elect shall be elected during the Governing Council meeting held in even years before the FENS Forum. The President-elect takes office for a term of two years, immediately at the conclusion of the FENS Forum in the year elected and is appointed as Member of the Advisory Board.

#### **9.3 Secretary General-elect**

The Secretary General-elect shall be elected during the Governing Council meeting held in even years before the FENS Forum. The Secretary General-elect takes office for a term of two years,

immediately at the conclusion of the FENS Forum in the year elected and is appointed as Member of the Advisory Board.

#### **9.4 Treasurer-elect**

The Treasurer-elect shall be elected during the Governing Council meeting held in even years before the FENS Forum. The Treasurer-elect takes office for a term of two years, immediately at the conclusion of the FENS Forum in the year elected and is appointed as Member of the Advisory Board.

#### **9.5 Electoral and voting procedures**

The specifications about the electoral and voting procedures of the Advisory Board are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Article 15.5.

#### **9.6 Advisory Board tasks**

The Advisory Board functions, together with the current President, as the Advisory Committee on Nominations (*Articles of Association*, Article 15.9). The specifications about the Advisory Committee on Nominations are defined in the *Bylaws*, Article 15.3.

### **Article 10 Core Leadership**

The FENS core leadership is a small team composed of the current President, Secretary General and Treasurer. Convened by the President, the team helps to ensure that the organisation is achieving its goals according to its mission, governance decisions and strategic objectives. It also considers issues and concerns of potential interest to the governing bodies, committees, divisions and administration. Core leadership usually meets once every two weeks. The Executive Director attends the meetings as head of administration and Advisory Board members may be invited to attend optionally.

### **Article 11 Standing Committees**

The specifications about the Standing Committees are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Article 16.

Whenever a Standing Committee is created or dissolved, the *Bylaws* of FENS and, to the extent required, the *Articles of Association*, shall be amended.

The following Standing Committees have been established:

- 1) The Committee for Higher Education and Training (CHET)
- 2) The Communication Committee
- 3) The Programme Committee

The Governing Council has a duty to give due regard to the qualifications, fields of expertise, experience, vision and to the diversity and representation of the elected members of the Standing Committees.

#### **11.1 Chair**

Chairs of the Standing Committees are FENS officers. They are responsible for convening and chairing committee meetings, setting the workplan during their tenure, ensuring that committee tasks are fulfilled and reporting on progress to the Executive Committee and Governing Council.

An Ordinary Member may be appointed Assistant Chair by the Chair to support the Chair in their duties if the Chair becomes temporarily incapacitated or unavailable or requires additional assistance. The Assistant Chair does not replace the Chair in their elected role as a FENS Officer but may present the committee report at the meetings of the Executive Committee and Governing Council. Assistant Chairs may not vote on behalf of the Chair.

#### **11.2 Budget**

For their activities, including expenses of the Committee members, Standing Committees shall present a budget for approval by the Executive Committee. The budget is administered by FENS in accordance with its rules and notably in accordance with the *Guidelines & Specifications for FENS*

### **11.3 Decisions and Reporting**

Unless otherwise stated in the present *Bylaws*, a Standing Committee shall meet at least once per year. A quorum of a majority of the members of the Standing Committee is required during meetings.

Decisions within the Standing Committee can be reached by consensus or by an absolute majority vote of the votes cast by the members present. All members of the Standing Committee have one vote within the committee. Voting by electronic means is allowed.

On request by the Executive Committee or the Standing Committee, members of the Executive Committee may attend Standing Committee meetings, with no voting rights within the committee.

All Standing Committees shall report to the Executive Committee and the Governing Council on their activities and proposals.

### **11.4 Committee for Higher Education and Training (CHET)**

The Committee for Higher Education and Training (CHET) is responsible for the FENS priorities, programme development and activity implementation around neuroscience education, training and research in Europe.

#### **11.4.1 Composition**

CHET is composed of:

- 1 Chair
- 4 Ordinary Members
- 2 members appointed by the IBRO Pan-European Regional Committee (PERC)

#### **11.4.2 Electoral procedures and terms**

##### **- Chair -**

The current CHET Committee members may propose a member as candidate for the position of Chair at the end of their first term. Individuals who have been elected directly as Chair during a first term may be proposed as Chair during a second term. The Chair shall be approved by the Executive Committee, and then by the Governing Council during their meetings held at the end of the last quarter of odd years or at the forthcoming Governing Council meeting if a decision is postponed by the Governing Council.

If there is no candidate among the members serving their first term, or if the candidate fails to be approved by the Executive Committee or the Governing Council, a call for nominations for a Chair shall be included in the elections, and a Chair shall be elected at the next Governing Council meeting held before the FENS Forum. Each Full Member Society and each member of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board may propose one candidate. Members currently on their second term cannot be proposed. Election shall take place using the uninominal voting procedure defined in Article 13 of the *Bylaws*. The elected Chair shall take office at the end of the FENS Forum.

##### **- Ordinary Members -**

The group of Ordinary Members shall be renewed by rotation every two years. Ordinary Members are elected for a two-year term, which can be renewed only once. A Chair may serve their first term on the committee as Chair and then as an Ordinary Member if their service is renewed for a second term. At the end of their first term, a maximum of two Ordinary Members may be renewed for a second term, on proposal by the current committee. Renewal shall be approved by the Executive Committee, and then by the Governing Council during their meetings held at the end of the fourth quarter in odd years. If there is no candidate for renewal, or if one or more candidates fail to be approved by the Executive Committee or the Governing Council, the number of new Ordinary Members to be elected will be increased so as to have four Ordinary Members.

New Ordinary Members shall be elected on even years during the Governing Council meeting held at the time of the FENS Forum. Each Full Member Society and each member of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board may propose a maximum of two candidates for Ordinary Members,

in conformity with the *Guidelines & Specifications for Elections*. Election shall proceed using the plurinominal voting procedure defined in Article 15.7.2 of the *Bylaws*. The elected members take office at the end of the FENS Forum in the year elected.

#### **11.4.4 Tasks**

CHET shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- To monitor and identify the educational, training and research needs of neuroscience in Europe.
- To oversee and assess FENS existing programmes and resources in education, training and research.
- To recommend and develop new opportunities that meet the educational, training and research needs of the European neuroscience community.
- To coordinate and implement the selection of FENS grants, awards and fellowships.
- To work with and recommend external partners who may support and implement CHET activities.

CHET shall report through the CHET Chair to the Executive Committee and the Governing Council on its activities.

The Committee shall prepare and maintain a handbook of *Guidelines & Specifications* for running its activities.

### **11.5 Communication Committee**

The Communication Committee is responsible for promoting and extending the visibility of FENS and its activities towards its members, partners, the scientific community at large, as well as the general public, and for advising the Executive Committee and Governing Council on all matters concerning the FENS communication policy and emerging science communication and outreach topics important to the European neuroscience community.

#### **11.5.1 Composition**

The Communication Committee is composed of

- 1 Chair
- 4 Ordinary Members

#### **11.5.2 Electoral procedures and terms**

##### **- Chair -**

The current Communication Committee may propose a member as candidate for the position of Chair at the end of their first term. Individuals who have been elected directly as Chair during a first term may be proposed as Chair during a second term. The Chair shall be approved by the Executive Committee, and then subsequently by the Governing Council at the end of the fourth quarter of odd years or at the forthcoming Governing Council meeting if a decision is postponed by the Governing Council.

If there is no candidate among the members serving their first term, or if the candidate fails to be approved by the Executive Committee or the Governing Council, a call for nominations for a Chair shall be included in the elections, and a Chair be elected at the next Governing Council meeting held before the FENS Forum. Each Full Member Society and each member of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board may propose one candidate. Members currently on their second term cannot be proposed. Elections shall take place using the uninominal voting procedure defined in Article 15.7.1 of the *Bylaws*. The elected Chair shall take office at the end of the FENS Forum.

##### **- Ordinary Members -**

The group of Ordinary Members shall be renewed by rotation every two years. Ordinary Members are elected for a two-year term, which can be renewed only once.

At the end of their first term, a maximum of two Ordinary Members may be renewed for a second

term, on proposal by the current Communication Committee. A Chair may serve their first term as Chair and then as an Ordinary Member if their service is renewed for a second term. Renewal shall be approved by the Executive Committee, and then by the Governing Council during their meetings at the end of the fourth quarter in odd years. If there is no candidate for renewal, or if one or more candidates fail to be approved by the Executive Committee or the Governing Council, the number of new Ordinary Members to be elected will be increased so as to have four Ordinary Members.

New Ordinary Members shall be elected on even years during the Governing Council meeting held before the FENS Forum. Each Full Member Society and each member of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board may propose a maximum of two candidates for Ordinary Members, in conformity with the *Guidelines & Specifications for Elections*. Election shall proceed using the plurinominal voting procedure defined in Article 15.7.2 of the *Bylaws*. The elected members take office at the end of the FENS Forum.

### **11.5.3 Tasks**

The Communication Committee shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- To develop a communication strategy for FENS, and to oversee and actively participate in their implementation.
- To regularly assess the communication strategy and its impact on the FENS membership and community.
- To define, propose and report on FENS communication activities, and identify emerging science communication and public outreach topics relevant to the neuroscience community.
- To increase the visibility of European neuroscience towards institutional partners, decision-makers and the general public through the consideration of topics, events and dissemination methods.

The Communication Committee shall report through the Communication Committee Chair to the Executive Committee and the Governing Council on its activities.

The Committee shall prepare and maintain a handbook of *Guidelines & Specifications* for running its activities.

## **11.6 Programme Committee**

The Programme Committee is a scientific committee in charge of preparing and overseeing the scientific programme of the FENS Forum.

### **11.6.1 Composition**

The Programme Committee is composed of seventeen members who are elected or appointed. The outgoing Chair, or the outgoing members who have served in two successive Programme Committees, cannot be proposed for election or appointment.

- 1 Chair, elected by the Governing Council
- Eight Ordinary Members, elected by the Governing Council
- Five members, appointed by the newly elected Chair, chosen to further achieve balance and representation of themes and geographic distribution
- The Chair of the Host Society Committee
- One member representing the Society for Neuroscience (SfN), and appointed by this society or, by default, by the Programme Committee Chair
- One member representing the Asia/Pacific, Latin American and African regions nominated by the respective regional neuroscience organisations and then appointed by the Programme Committee Chair.

The composition of the Programme Committee shall give due regard to the fields of scientific

expertise and to the geographical distribution, career stage, model systems, from discovery science to clinical applications, scientific approaches and other diversity criteria of its members

The eight Ordinary Members elected by the Governing Council shall each represent a different scientific domain of neuroscience. The domains for the election of Ordinary Members of the Programme Committee are specified in the *General Guidelines and Specifications for the FENS Forum Programme Committee*.

#### **11.6.2 Electoral procedures and terms**

Elections for the Programme Committee shall be held in even years.

##### **- Chair -**

One or more candidates should preferably be proposed from among the eligible members of the outgoing Programme Committee or, in exceptional cases, eligible members of the last two Programme Committees, on recommendation by its Chair. It shall be approved by the Executive Committee, and then by the Governing Council during the Governing Council meeting held at the time of the FENS Forum.

If there is no candidate among Ordinary Members in their first term, or if the candidate fails to be approved by the Executive Committee or the Governing Council, election of the Chair shall take place at the next Governing Council meeting. Each Full Member Society and each voting member of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board is entitled to nominate either one eligible candidate from the outgoing Programme Committee or a new candidate. Election of the Chair shall be made using the uninominal voting procedure.

The Chair is elected for a term of two years and becomes a member of the Executive Committee after the end of the FENS Forum in the year of their election.

##### **- Ordinary Members -**

Elections shall be held at the Governing Council meeting at the end of the fourth quarter in even years after the last FENS Forum. Ordinary Members are elected for a two-year term, which can be renewed only once. No more than one quarter of the outgoing members may be re-elected for a second term in the Committee. Only the Programme Committee Chair may select members from the two previous Programme Committees.

Each Full Member Society and each voting member of the Executive Committee and Advisory Board may nominate one candidate in up to two different scientific themes. A minimum of two different scientific themes must be indicated for each proposed candidate. At the end of the nomination process, the Chair of the Programme Committee groups the nominated candidates into the eight scientific themes, considering the dual themes indicated for each candidate during nomination to ensure balanced distribution of candidates across disciplines.

The Governing Council elects the Ordinary Members theme by theme, to ensure a geographical and disciplinary spread of representation in the Programme Committee as the voting proceeds. Each position is elected using the uninominal voting procedure.

#### **11.6.3 Meetings**

The Programme Committee shall meet on average three times during one tenure. As a rule, all candidates are required to agree, if elected or designated, to be present at the Programme Committee meeting.

#### **11.6.4 Tasks**

The specific tasks, rules and agenda of the Programme Committee shall be detailed in the *Guidelines & Specifications for a FENS Forum* established by the Executive Committee. The Programme Committee shall prepare and independently supervise the scientific programme of the FENS Forum. During the Programme Committee meetings, it selects the plenary lecturers, symposia and technical workshops. The Chair of the Programme Committee supervises the presentation of poster abstracts. They supervise and approve special lectures, special interest events, mini-conferences, sponsored, networking and satellite events and other proposed FENS Forum

programme activities.

Any matter arising as to the scientific programme of the Forum is under the responsibility of the Programme Committee through its Chair.

The Programme Committee shall report through the Programme Committee Chair to the Executive Committee and to the Governing Council on its activities.

## **Article 12 Special Committees and Divisions**

According to the *Articles of Association* (Article 16.5), the Executive Committee has the authority to establish and dissolve Special Committees and Divisions on behalf of FENS.

Special Committees and Divisions are established with a defined scope in fields or topics deemed of particular interest and relevance to FENS. The Secretary General of FENS will inform the Governing Council of recent or envisioned changes in the Special Committees and Divisions of FENS.

With the exception of the Chair of the Host Society Committee, being a Chair or Chair-elect of a Special Committee or Division cannot be combined with being a FENS officer, officer-elect or Ordinary Member in a Standing Committee. In addition, a Chair or Chair-elect of a Special Committee or Division cannot combine this with being a Chair or Chair-elect of another Special Committee or Division.

Ordinary Members of Special Committees and Divisions may serve as Ordinary Members of other Special Committees and Divisions and Standing Committees.

The list of current Special Committees and Divisions, as well as their specifications, is available in Appendix 1 of the *Bylaws*. Revision of Appendix 1 is under the authority of the Executive Committee.

### **12.1 Terms**

Unless the Executive Committee delineates special provisions, all members of Special Committees are appointed and approved for a two-year term at the first Executive Committee meeting in even years. The Special Committees shall be renewed by rotation every two years on even years to take office after the FENS Forum. All member terms can be renewed only once, unless otherwise designated by special provisions.

Specifications of terms of Divisions are described in Appendix 1 of the *Bylaws*.

### **12.2 Decisions and reporting**

Unless the Executive Committee delineates special provisions, Special Committees and Divisions shall meet at least once per year.

Specifications on quorum and decisions of Divisions are described in the Division governance documents. The Executive Committee approves Division governance documents. For Special Committees, a quorum of a majority of the members is required during their meetings. Decisions within the Special Committees can be reached by consensus or by an absolute majority vote of the members present. All members of Special Committees have one vote within their committees.

Special Committees and Divisions shall report to the Executive Committee during their annual meetings, and when requested by the Executive Committee. In their annual reports, Special Committees and Divisions shall present their assessment and results of activities as well as their future plans, which shall be subject to approval by the Executive Committee.

### **12.3 Budget**

For their activities, including expenses of the Special Committee and Division members, the Special Committees and Divisions shall present a budget for approval by the Executive Committee who then presents it to the Governing Council for final approval. Budgets are administered by FENS in accordance with its rules and notably with the *Guidelines & Specifications for FENS Leadership, Committee and Division Expenses*.

## **Article 13 Administration**

The administration of FENS is managed by the Executive Director, along with the FENS

administrative staff, under the direct supervision and authority of the Executive Committee.

The specifications about the Executive Director and Secretariat are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Articles 13 and 14, respectively.

### **13.1 Executive Director**

The Executive Director is appointed by the Executive Committee and shall report annually to the Executive Committee, and when requested by the Executive Committee.

The supervisory duties of the Executive Director include monitoring and improving FENS management and operations, overseeing the activities of the FENS-administrative staff, ensuring the timely and efficient implementation and execution of the decisions made by the Executive Committee and the Governing Council, and proposing and developing new ideas and focus areas of FENS. Additionally, the Executive Director is responsible for facilitating the flow of communication between the administration and leadership to ensure cohesive and effective organisational operation and helping to identify, manage and mitigate risks to the organisation. In case the Executive Director cannot perform their duties, a contingency plan provides guidance on allocation of responsibilities and procedures, including the possible appointment of a deputy director.

The Executive Director shall assist and/or represent the President, Secretary General and Treasurer of FENS on request.

### **13.2 Secretariat**

In conformity with Article 14 of the *Articles of Association*, the Executive Committee may establish a Secretariat for the management of FENS and its activities. The activity of the Secretariat is under the authority of the Executive Committee, and entrusted to the responsibility of the Executive Director.

FENS is registered under Belgium law as an international non-profit association (AISBL/IVZW). The current Secretariat has been established in Brussels. FENS hires and manages its own staff for the Brussels office in conformity with Belgium law. Decisions on the hiring, promotion or dismissal of staff are recommended by the Executive Director and approved by the President and Treasurer.

## **Article 14 FENS Forum of Neuroscience**

The FENS Forum is an international scientific meeting organised every two years on even years in a European country, and hosted by a member society alone or in collaboration with other member societies. The Forum alternates with national meetings that are preferably held in odd years by member societies.

The FENS Forum is under the responsibility of FENS and the Stichting FENS Marketing Foundation. Any change in responsibilities shall be approved by the Executive Committee of FENS and the Board of the Stichting FENS Marketing Foundation. The specific details and organisation of the FENS Forum shall be described and regularly updated in the *Guidelines & Specifications for a FENS Forum*, and approved by the Executive Committee of FENS and the Board of the Stichting FENS Marketing Foundation.

### **14.1 Venue and host society**

Venues and host societies are chosen by the Executive Committee in accordance with the *Guidelines & Specifications for a FENS Forum*. The technical and financial advantages of potential venues, aspects of sustainability, as well as the possibility for the Member Societies in the countries of the venues to act as Host Societies, shall be taken into account.

### **14.2 Host Society Committee**

The Host Society Committee is a Special Committee of FENS. After approval by the Governing Council, the Host Society Committee Chair becomes a member of the Executive Committee and Programme Committee after the last FENS Forum before which they were elected.

The role and responsibilities of the Host Society Committee and Host Society Committee Chair are defined in more detail in Appendix 1.3 and the *Guidelines & Specifications for the Host Society Committee*.



### **14.3 Programme**

The scientific programme of the FENS Forum is under the sole responsibility of the Programme Committee as defined in Article 11.6 of the *Bylaws* and in the *Guidelines & Specifications for a FENS Forum*.

### **14.4 Budget**

The budget of the Forum includes all expenses and income related to the preparation and the realisation of the Forum, including the budget related to the specific responsibilities of the Host Society Committee. A provisional budget shall be prepared under the responsibility of the Treasurer, updated and approved by the Executive Committee of FENS and the Board of the FENS Marketing Foundation. The Forum should not result in a loss and this condition should be incorporated into any contract with external organisers. The final accounts of the meeting shall be submitted to the Executive Committee and the Governing Council of FENS and the Board of the FENS Marketing Foundation.

## **Article 15 Electoral and Voting Procedures**

### **15.1 General principles**

The various bodies of FENS may reach decisions by consensus or by voting. All decisions involving the elections of officers of FENS or candidates to various positions in committees shall be taken by secret ballot. Decisions involving the elections of candidates to various positions in Divisions shall be taken by secret ballot or according to special provisions approved by the Executive Committee.

Unless otherwise specified, all voting procedures shall conform to Article 15 of the *Bylaws*. Whenever a secret ballot shall be taken during a Governing Council meeting, the Secretary General shall appoint, for the duration of the meeting, three members of the Governing Council to an Election Committee, in charge of supervising, collecting and counting the votes.

### **15.2 Voting members**

Voting members of the Governing Council and Executive Committee are defined in Articles 4 and 9 of the *Articles of Association*. For Standing Committees, voting members are defined in each Article of the *Bylaws* relative to the organisation of the Committee. Unless otherwise stated, only voting members present at a meeting may vote.

### **15.3 Advisory Committee on Nominations**

The Advisory Committee on Nominations is tasked to make recommendations on leadership candidates for discussion at, and subsequent election by, the Governing Council. Its role therefore is to ensure that the structure and composition of FENS committees allows the mission and strategic plan of FENS to be fulfilled while encouraging the broad participation and representation of member societies in FENS governance. The role of the Advisory Committee on Nominations is to assess and nominate candidates for FENS leadership positions prior to election by the Governing Council. More specifications can be found in the *Nominations Guidelines*.

The Advisory Committee on Nominations does not propose and nominate candidates for the Host Society Committee.

#### **- Composition -**

The Advisory Committee on Nominations consists of ex officio FENS officers:

- 1 Chair, the FENS Past President
- 4 members: the FENS President, President-elect, Secretary General-elect, Treasurer-elect

#### **- Tasks -**

- Seeks to broaden individual scientist participation in FENS committees.
- Advises member societies and the Executive Committee on potential candidates to nominate for FENS officers.
- Assesses candidates for FENS leadership positions, taking into account the academic

excellence, leadership experience, international recognition and relevant competence of each nominee, while also seeking to ensure gender, career stage, geographic and scientific diversity across candidates for election.

#### **15.4 Candidatures for FENS officers**

Candidatures shall be proposed by societies with full membership status, members of the Executive Committee or members of the Advisory Board. Candidates shall be proposed on the basis of their scientific expertise, leadership experience, international recognition and relevant competence of each nominee, while also seeking to ensure gender, career status, geographic and scientific diversity for the position to be filled. Once proposed, the candidates shall confirm their agreement for candidature. Candidatures can be withdrawn by the candidates only, by writing to the Secretary General one week before the meeting of the Governing Council at the latest. Candidatures shall be submitted to the Governing Council without mentioning the proposing members.

The call for nominations and candidatures for FENS officer positions shall be sent by the Secretary General at least one month before the election, following the instructions given in the *Guidelines & Specifications for Elections*. Failure to comply with the deadline, format and content of the application forms will lead to rejection of the application. Candidatures shall conform to the *Articles of Association* and *Bylaws* of FENS concerning its committees and its officers. Criteria for eligibility are defined in each article pertaining to the organisation of the committees. The FENS Administration will check for possible conflicts of interest. The Secretary General shall send to the Governing Council members, the list of candidatures and the corresponding applications, at least 15 days before the election.

#### **15.5 Modalities of vote**

- Votes concerning FENS officers and candidate officers shall be taken by a secret ballot. If present, the person involved shall not participate in the discussions and shall withdraw from the meeting room during the discussions. If the person is a voting member, however, they can participate in the vote.
- Votes concerning the selection of chairpersons for scientific meetings organised by or in collaboration with FENS shall be taken by open ballot. If an absolute majority of the voting members is in favour of a secret ballot, the vote shall be taken by secret ballot.
- Votes which do not concern persons can be taken by open or secret ballot. If an absolute majority of the voting members requests a secret ballot, the vote shall be taken by secret ballot.

#### **15.6 Rules of majority**

The specifications about the rules of majority are defined in the *Articles of Association*, Article 21.

Unless otherwise stated in the *Articles of Association* and *Bylaws*, at every meeting where a quorum is present, only votes by the members present and voting are taken into account, ignoring blanks, invalid votes and abstentions. The possibility to vote for none of the options shall be provided. Such votes (votes for none of the options) shall be taken into account and recorded.

#### **15.7 Voting procedures**

For the Governing Council and the Executive Committee, all voting shall be carried out under the responsibility of the Secretary General, with support of the FENS Administration. The Secretary General shall make available all the information relative to the proposal to the voting members of the Governing Council or the Executive Committee. Whenever a secret ballot shall be taken during a Governing Council meeting, the Secretary General shall appoint, for the duration of the meeting, three members of the Governing Council to an Election Committee, in charge of supervising, collecting and counting the votes.

##### **15.7.1 Uninominal voting procedure**

This procedure consists in electing one person from a list of several candidates through one or several rounds of voting. Each position shall be filled by a separate election.

The bulletin shall contain the alphabetical list of candidates. Each voting member shall tick one

name on the list. Blank vote (no mark), or any additional mark or writing on the bulletin renders the bulletin blank. After voting, the candidates shall be ranked by the number of votes in their favour, those with the highest numbers being in the first ranks. If there is a tie vote in rank x between n candidates, the following rank shall be numbered x+n (e.g. if in rank 1 (x) there is a tie between 2 (n) candidates, the following rank shall be numbered rank 3 (x+n) and not rank 2).

- a) First round of voting: All candidates are listed in the bulletin. After voting, the candidate with an absolute majority is elected;
- b) If there is no absolute majority for one candidate, a second round of voting shall be taken using a new bulletin listing in alphabetical order the 3 or more candidates in ranks 1 to 3 only. After a second voting, the candidate with an absolute majority is elected;
- c) If there is no absolute majority for one candidate, a third round of voting shall be taken using a new bulletin listing in alphabetical order the 2 or more candidates in ranks 1 to 2. After voting, the candidate receiving a relative majority of votes is elected.
- d) In case of a tie vote in position 1, as indicated in the general voting rules, one further and final fourth round of voting may be taken to choose between candidates. If there is still a tie vote, the tie will be broken by the President. In case of absence of the President, the Secretary General will break the tie.

### **15.7.2 Plurinominal voting procedure**

This procedure consists in electing several persons from a list of candidates through one or several rounds of voting.

- a) The bulletin shall contain the alphabetical list of candidates. Each voting member marks in the list a number of candidates equal to or less than the number of candidates to elect. Blank vote (no mark) or any additional mark or writing on the bulletin renders the bulletin blank. After voting, the candidates shall be ranked by the number of votes in their favour, those with the highest numbers being in the first ranks. If there is a tie vote in rank x between n candidates, the following rank shall be numbered x+n (e.g. if in rank 1 (x) there is a tie between 2 (n) candidates, the following rank shall be numbered rank 3 (x+n) and not rank 2).
- b) At the first round of voting, all candidates are listed in the bulletin. Voting is repeated if necessary until all the candidates to elect have been elected, the number of candidates to elect in each successive round being diminished by the number elected at the previous rounds of voting. At each successive round of voting, if any, a new bulletin shall contain the list of remaining candidates in alphabetical order.

#### **c) Number of candidates to elect:**

##### **c.1 4 candidates to elect:**

If there are exactly 4 candidates in ranks 1 to 4, they are elected.

If there are more than 4 candidates in the first 4 ranks or less because of a tie vote, the following procedure shall be followed:

- If there are more than 4 candidates in rank 1, another round of voting shall be taken between candidates in rank one only.
- If there are 3 candidates in ranks 1 to 3, and a tie vote in rank 4, candidates in ranks 1 to 3 will be elected and another round of voting shall be taken between candidates in rank 4 only.
- If there are 2 candidates in ranks 1 to 2, and a tie vote in rank 3, candidates in ranks 1 to 2 will be elected and another round of voting shall be taken between candidates in rank 3 only.

##### **c.2 3 candidates to elect:**

If there are exactly 3 candidates in ranks 1 to 3, they are elected.

If there are more than 3 candidates in the first 3 ranks or less because of a tie vote, the following procedure shall be followed:

- If there are more than 3 candidates in rank 1, another round of voting shall be taken between candidates in rank 1 only.
- If there is one candidate in rank 1, and more than 2 candidates in rank 2, the candidate in rank 1 is elected, and another round of voting shall be taken between candidates in rank 2 to elect 2 candidates.
- If there are 2 candidates in ranks 1 to 2, and more than 1 candidate in rank 3, the 2 candidates in rank 1 and 2 are elected, and another round of voting shall be taken between candidates in rank 3 to elect 1 candidate.

### **c.3 2 candidates to elect:**

If there are exactly 2 candidates in ranks 1 to 2, they are elected.

If there are more than 2 candidates in the first 2 ranks because of a tie vote, the following procedure shall be followed:

- If there are more than 2 candidates in rank ~~one~~ 1, another round of voting will take place between candidates in rank 1 only.
- If not, the candidate in rank 1 is elected, and another round of voting shall be taken between candidates in rank 2 only.

d) In case of a tie vote, after one further vote, the tie will be broken by the President. In case of absence of the President, the Secretary General will break the tie.

## **15.8 Voting by electronic means**

### **15.8.1 Distance voting**

The Governing Council or the Executive Committee may decide that a proposal needs further development and can be subjected to electronic distance voting without convening a new meeting. Only proposals that have been discussed during a meeting can be submitted to an electronic distance voting. Decision to proceed by electronic voting shall be accepted by an absolute majority vote at the meeting. The decision must indicate the conditions that the proposal must meet before being submitted to voting, the date of voting, as well as the applicable majority requirements.

The modalities of vote for distance voting by electronic means follows Article 15.5 of the *Bylaws*.

It shall be noted that:

- a) In the electronic voting, only the persons present at the Governing Council or Executive Committee meeting can participate.
- b) The decision obtains the required majority in the electronic vote on the basis of the quorum present at the Governing Council or Executive Committee meeting. If no quorum is reached at the Governing Council or Executive Committee meeting to take a certain decision, no decision can be taken to subject the decision to electronic distance voting.

The procedure of electronic distance voting cannot be used for amendments to the *Articles of Association* and *Bylaws*, for the dissolution of FENS and for decisions involving officers of FENS. Exceptions to this rule may be activated in cases such as *force majeure* (e.g., a pandemic) when FENS will be obligated to follow Belgian law.

### **15.8.2 In meeting e-voting**

The Secretary General may decide to implement the use of electronic ballots for in-meeting voting in Governing Council meetings. The value of e-ballots is identical to physical ballots and may be used in all instances where a ballot-based vote is needed within a meeting. When designed to maintain the anonymity of the delegates, e-ballot voting can be used for secret ballot voting.

For FENS Committees, except for the Programme Committee, unless otherwise stated, if an absolute majority of their members agrees, decisions may be discussed by electronic means and electronic voting shall be carried out under the responsibility of the Committee Chair, following the same procedure.

## **Article 16 Removal of Committee/Division members**

Content valid for any Committee/Division member

A Committee/Division member may be removed or suspended for reasons including those listed below:

1. violation of the code of conduct, Articles of Association or Bylaws
2. failure to fulfill duties and perform designated tasks
3. adversely affecting the Association in an unreasonable or unlawful manner, including involvement in scientific misconduct or similar breaches of scientific duties.

If a ground for removal or suspension is identified, a signed written petition shall be sent to the Chair (or a member of such body, if the Chair is under consideration) of the body that is competent for the removal or suspension. Prior to a final decision being taken, the members of the body competent for the removal or suspension shall be duly informed of the reasons for removal or suspension.

[For Committee members, a proposal for removal or suspension shall only be put to a vote, if such proposal is supported by at least (i) the absolute majority of the other members of the committee, or (ii) at least 20% of the members of the body that is competent for the removal or suspension.]

For Standing Committee members, they may be removed or suspended by the Governing Council who will appoint another member of the committee as a temporary replacement until formal elections can take place.

For Special Committee members, they may be removed or suspended by the Executive Committee who will appoint another member of the committee as a temporary replacement until formal elections can take place.

For Division members, Division governance guidelines apply with final ratification from the Executive Committee.

To the extent the aforementioned provisions deviate from what is mentioned in the AoA, the relevant provisions in the AoA shall prevail.

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I: Special Committees and Divisions of FENS**

#### **A1.1 Committee on Animals in Research (CARE)**

The Committee on Animals in Research (CARE) is a Special Committee in charge of advising FENS on matters related to the responsible use of animals in neuroscience research.

##### **A1.1.1 Composition, designation and terms**

The committee is composed of the following members:

- 1 Chair, appointed by the Executive Committee upon proposal by CARE
- Up to 6 Ordinary Members, appointed by the Executive Committee on proposal by the Chair

All members are appointed for a two-year term at the Executive Committee meeting held in the first half of even years. The committee shall be renewed by rotation every two years on even years, to take office after the FENS Forum. All member terms can be renewed only once. The Executive Committee may decide to deviate from the term limit if this is deemed of special importance to the committee.

##### **A1.1.2 Tasks**

The committee shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- To promote the formation and coordination of national Committees on Animals in Research by the neuroscience societies affiliated to FENS.
- To advocate for the use of animals in neuroscience research in a responsible manner at the national and European policymaking levels.
- To monitor and inform FENS of any critical matters related to animals in neuroscience research in Europe and recommend suitable actions, including taking part in any network or organisation acting for a responsible use of animals in research.
- To submit to the Executive Committee an annual activity plan and budget request.
- To assess and further develop CARE activities and report regularly to the Executive Committee and Governing Council on progress at their meetings.

#### **A1.2 Brain Conferences Committee**

The Brain Conferences Committee is a Special Committee in charge of identifying themes and chairs for the biannual Brain Conferences, implemented by FENS in collaboration with The Brain Prize (The Lundbeck Foundation). The details of this collaboration are formalised in a contract between the two partners. The committee ensures that the Brain Conferences have a consistent and distinctive format aimed at establishing the Brain Conferences as uniquely recognisable high-profile events in the neurosciences worldwide.

##### **A1.2.1 Composition, designation and terms**

The Committee is composed of the following members:

- 1 Chair, approved by the Executive Committee following nominations from the current committee Chair and The Brain Prize (The Lundbeck Foundation)
- Up to 7 Ordinary Members, proposed by the current committee Chair and The Brain Prize (The Lundbeck Foundation) and approved by the Executive Committee

In addition to the current committee Chair, The Brain Prize (The Lundbeck Foundation) can propose candidates as members (included as part of the 7 Ordinary Member total) in consultation with previous Brain Prize winners and the committee for The Brain Prize (The Lundbeck Foundation). It is understood that nominations to the committee require final approval by both FENS and The Brain

Prize (The Lundbeck Foundation). The formal appointments of new members to the committee is, however, under the full responsibility of the Executive Committee of FENS.

The Executive Committee appoints members of the committee for a two-year term during its first meeting in even years. Terms start immediately or as defined by the Executive Committee. The committee shall be renewed by rotation every year by at least one member. All member terms can be renewed only once. The Executive Committee may decide to deviate from the term limit if this is deemed of special importance to the committee.

#### **A1.2.2 Tasks**

The committee shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- To select the topics and chairperson(s) of the annual Brain Conferences and monitor the implementation of these conferences.
- To define and review the format of the Conferences in collaboration with the Lundbeck Foundation.
- To submit to the Executive Committee the minutes of its meetings, and any proposal for a new committee chair or member.
- To report on progress to the Executive Committee at its meeting in the third quarter of each year.

#### **A1.3 FENS Forum Host Society Committee**

The FENS Forum Host Society establishes a local organising committee, hereafter named Host Society Committee (HSC). The HSC is a Special Committee with special provisions that plans, organises and implements Host Society activities at the FENS Forum in close collaboration with FENS. The role and responsibilities of the Host Society Committee are defined in detail in the *Guidelines & Specifications for the Host Society Committee and the Host Society Agreement*.

##### **A1.3.1 Composition, designation and terms**

The committee's composition and Chair are proposed by the Host Society in conformity with the general criteria for eligibility outlined in the *Guidelines & Specifications for the Host Society Committee*. The Chair shall be approved by the Executive Committee by an absolute majority vote during its first meeting in even years, and by the Governing Council by an absolute majority vote during the Governing Council meeting held at the time of the FENS Forum. If there is no candidate proposed, or if the candidate fails to be approved, the Executive Committee nominates a Chair for the Host Society Committee.

The Committee is composed of the following members:

- 1 Chair, nominated by the Host Society, and approved by the Executive Committee and Governing Council. The Chair also serves as Member of the Executive Committee, the Programme Committee and Governing Council after the FENS Forum when they are approved. In the event that a vacancy for the position of Chair of the Host Society Committee arises before the end of the term, the Executive Committee will appoint a new Chair after a proposal by the Host Society, with full voting rights until the end of the current term (*Articles of Association*, Article 9.11).
- Up to 12 Ordinary Members proposed by the Chair and approved by the Executive Committee

The HSC Chair and HSC Ordinary Members are bound by the rules defined in Article 12 of the *Bylaws* related to membership and chairing of other FENS committees and divisions. No member of the HSC or its subcommittees can participate as Chair and/or Speaker at the Forum.

##### **A1.3.2 Decisions and reporting**

The role and responsibilities of the Host Society Committee are defined in detail in the *Guidelines & Specifications for the Host Society Committee*. The HSC shall submit its proposed Forum initiatives to the Executive Committee during its meeting in September on even years, a year and a half before the Forum. Any project or initiative shall be approved by the Executive Committee.

The Chair shall report on the progress of the Host Society Committee activities to the Executive Committee at each of their meetings, or upon request by the Executive Committee, and to the Governing Council.

The Chair shall report to its national society as required by the Host Society.

#### **A1.3.3 Tasks**

The committee shall be responsible for the tasks outlined in the *Guidelines & Specifications for the Host Society Committee* and the *Host Society Agreement*.

#### **A1.3.4 Budget**

Further specifications regarding the budget of the Host Society Committee are described in the *Guidelines and Specifications for the Host Society Committee* and the *Host Society Agreement*.

### **A1.4 FENS Regional Meeting Committee**

The FENS Regional Meeting (FRM) Committee is a Special Committee responsible for selecting a FENS regional neuroscience meeting prepared and proposed by Full Member Societies.

#### **A1.4.1 Composition**

The FRM Committee is composed of *ex officio* members:

- 1 Chair, the FENS President-elect
- 4 members: the FENS President, the Chair and one Ordinary Member of the Programme Committee designated by the Programme Committee and the CHET Chair

#### **A1.4.2 Tasks**

The FRM Committee shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- To examine the proposals made by the different societies and recommend the meetings which will be held by FENS, according to the *Guidelines & Specifications for the FENS Regional Meeting (FRM)*
- To submit to the Executive Committee the proposals to be approved by an absolute majority vote. The Executive Committee may submit proposals to the Governing Council (*Articles of Association, Article 7.2*) for their endorsement.
- To advise and support the elected societies in establishing the scientific programme

### **A1.5 The ALBA Network**

The ALBA Network is a Division of FENS that represents a global network of neuroscientists involved in research, education, communication and advocacy who are committed to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in the brain sciences.

The role and responsibilities of the ALBA Network are defined in detail in the *Governance & Guidelines for the ALBA Network*.

#### **A1.5.1 Composition, designation and terms**

The ALBA Board of Directors (BoD) decides on ALBA's objectives, priorities, initiatives and activities within the mission of ALBA as determined by the FENS Executive Committee.

The ALBA Board of Directors is composed of the following members:

- ALBA Core leadership: 1 Chair, 1 Chair-elect and 1 Past Chair
- Up to 9 Ordinary Members, shortlisted by the ALBA Nomination Committee and elected by ALBA members
- Up to 6 Ad-hoc Members, appointed by ALBA core leadership with the approval of the ALBA Nomination Committee

Following the election of new BoD members, the core leadership proposes to the BoD a new Chair-elect. The proposal is approved by the rest of the BoD, requiring a two-thirds majority, and then



ratified by the FENS Executive Committee. The ALBA Chair is invited to the FENS Executive Committee and Governing Council meetings.

All BoD members are appointed for a three-year term after being ratified by the FENS Executive Committee. They can be re-elected for only one consecutive term.

### **A1.5.2 Decisions and reporting**

The ALBA Board of Directors meets 3 times per year (usually in February/March, June and October/November). A quorum of the majority of the Board members is required during the meetings. Decisions within the committee can be reached by consensus or by an absolute majority vote, with the exception of the two-thirds majority for the Chair-elect. All members of the committee have one vote within the committee.

The ALBA Network shall report through the ALBA Chair to the FENS Executive Committee and Governing Council on its budget and activities.

### **A1.5.3 Tasks**

- Promote best practices to counteract bias.
- Recognise outstanding contributions to science and diversity.
- Provide networking and mentoring opportunities to promote careers for members of underrepresented groups.
- To report on activities and progress to the Executive Committee and Governing Council at their meetings.

## **A1.6 The FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence (FKNE)**

The FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence (FKNE) is a Division of FENS consisting of a multidisciplinary, international group of early- to mid-career European neuroscientists who perform pioneering research and share the vision of shaping the future of Neuroscience.

The role and responsibilities of FKNE are defined in detail in the *Governance & Guidelines for the FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence*.

### **A1.6.1 Composition, designation and terms**

FKNE consists of a maximum of thirty members, hereafter referred to as FENS-Kavli Scholars. A total of fifteen new FENS-Kavli Scholars are selected every even year and approved by the FENS Executive Committee.

FENS-Kavli Scholars are appointed for a period of two terms of 2 years each (4 years in total) with effect of 1 September in even years. Reappointment is not possible.

The FKNE Board is selected by the FENS-Kavli Scholars and consists of a Chair, a Vice Chair and Chairs of each thematic activity area of FKNE.

### **A1.6.2 Decisions and reporting**

The FENS-Kavli Scholars [and the FKNE Board] shall meet at least once per year. The level of agreement necessary to adopt a decision within the FENS-Kavli Network is at the 75% threshold for FENS-Kavli scholars and at the 66% threshold for the FKNE Board.

### **A1.6.3 Tasks**

FKNE shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- To promote scientific exchange among its scholars and alumni.
- Improve Neuroscience in Europe and beyond.
- Provide opportunities for young scientists, influence science policy, and facilitate interaction between science and society.
- To report on activities and progress to the Executive Committee and Governing Council.

- To ensure continuity / long-term impact via the FKNE Alumni group: facilitate interactions between FKNE Scholars and Alumni to enhance scientific collaboration, mentorship, outreach and advocacy actions across multiple FKNE generations

### **A1.7 Advocacy Committee**

The FENS Advocacy Committee is a Special Committee dedicated to increasing visibility and support for the European neuroscience community at the national, European and global policymaking levels.

The role and responsibilities of the Advocacy Committee are defined in detail in the *Guidelines for the FENS Advocacy Committee*.

#### **A1.7.1 Composition, designation and terms**

The committee is composed of the following members:

- 1 Chair, appointed by the Executive Committee
- Up to 7 Ordinary Members, appointed by the Executive Committee  
(at least one of which should be a member of the CARE Committee and one of which should be a current member of FKNE)

All members are appointed for a two-year term at the Executive Committee meeting in the first half of even years. The committee shall be renewed by rotation every two years on even years, to take office after the FENS Forum. All member terms can be renewed only once. The Executive Committee may decide to deviate from the term limit if this is deemed of special importance to the committee.

#### **A1.7.2 Tasks**

The committee shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- To develop and implement the advocacy strategy of FENS.
- To monitor and inform FENS of any critical matters related to neuroscience advocacy in Europe and recommend suitable actions.
- To submit to the Executive Committee an annual activity plan and budget request each year.
- To assess and further develop Advocacy Committee activities and report regularly to the Executive Committee and Governing Council on progress at their meetings.

### **A1.8. Finance Advisory Committee**

The Finance Advisory Committee is a Special Committee of FENS that acts as a steward of the short-term and long-term fiscal health of the association. It advises on best practices and fiscal strategies to help ensure FENS fulfills its fiduciary responsibility to its membership and achieves sustainable growth in the future.

#### **A1.8.1 Composition, designation and terms**

The committee is composed of the following members:

- 1 Chair, the FENS AISBL President
- FENS AISBL Treasurer
- FENS AISBL Secretary General
- President(s) of the FENS Foundation(s)
- Secretary General(s) of the FENS Foundation(s)
- Treasurer(s) of the FENS Foundation(s)
- Up to 3 financial experts, appointed by the Executive Committee on proposal by the Chair.

All members are appointed for a two-year term at the Executive Committee meeting in the first half of even years. The committee shall be renewed by rotation every two years on even years, to take office after the FENS Forum. All member terms can be renewed only twice. The Executive Committee may decide to deviate from the term limit if this is deemed of special importance to the

committee.

### **A1.8.2 Tasks**

The committee shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- Create and monitor the financial development strategy and planning of FENS.
- Provide guidance on investments, budgets and fundraising.
- Report to the Executive Committee at its meeting in the third quarter.

## APPENDIX II: MEETING SCHEDULE

### A2.1. Ordinary Meeting Schedule

Forum year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ExCom (remote or in-person) in first half of the year</li><li>• GC meeting (remote) in first half of the year</li><li>• ExCom (in-person) at the Forum</li><li>• GC meeting (in-person) at the Forum</li><li>• ExCom (remote) in third quarter of the year</li><li>• ExCom (in-person) in last quarter of the year, typically in Brussels</li><li>• GC meeting (in-person) in last quarter of the year, typically in Brussels</li></ul>
Off-Forum year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ExCom (remote or in-person) in first half of the year</li><li>• GC meeting (remote) in first half of the year</li><li>• ExCom (remote) in third quarter of the year</li><li>• ExCom (in-person) in last quarter of the year, typically in Brussels</li><li>• GC meeting (in-person) in last quarter of the year, typically in Brussels</li></ul>

## **APPENDIX III: EXPENSES**

### **A3.1 Expenses: Executive Committee, Advisory Board, Committees and Divisions**

FENS will cover the expenses related to the attendance of meetings of the Executive Committee, Advisory Board and Committee and Division members as specified in the *Guidelines & Specifications for FENS Leadership, Committee and Division Expenses*.

### **A3.2 Expenses: Governing Council Meetings**

For Governing Council meetings, representatives of Full Member Societies are expected to cover their travel and accommodation expenses to attend the in-person meeting taking place on the day before the FENS Forum.

For the in-person Governing Council meeting held in the fourth quarter of the year in Brussels, FENS will book and cover the hotel costs up to 2 nights for society representatives.