



Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

Guideline Development Group for *WHO Guideline on Contact Tracing*

The World Health Organization (WHO) is seeking experts to serve as members of the Guideline Development Group for a WHO Guideline on Contact Tracing (the “GDG on Contact Tracing”).

The guidance below provides information about rationale for this guideline, the advisory group in question, the expert profiles being sought, the process to express interest, and the process of selection; and should be followed with submission no later than **Sunday 12 March 2023 17:00 Geneva time (CET)**. EOIs should be sent by email to Marie-Amélie Degail and Sara Hollis (degailm@who.int; holliss@who.int) using the subject line “*Expression of interest for GDG on Contact Tracing.*”

Background

Historically, contact tracing has suffered from a lack of a real “home” in public health. It relies on the work of professionals and citizens from diverse backgrounds, including public health and laboratory staff, digital experts, anthropologists, ethicists, risk communication and community engagement specialists, community leaders and community health workers. With its components dissipated across disciplines, it rarely receives sufficient attention and resources in outbreak preparedness activities, yet it remains a critical component of public health response.

Furthermore, the absence of and clear need for clarity on optimal contact tracing strategies, guidelines and standard operating procedures has been stressed at many forums, including during the June 2020 consultation organised by the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN).¹

To address this need, WHO is in the process of developing a *WHO Guideline on Contact Tracing*. The envisaged product will be the first global policy resource from WHO with an explicit focus on evidence-based methodology of contact tracing, with specific considerations for how it should be adapted in certain settings and epidemiological scenarios.

The GDG on Contact Tracing will act in an advisory capacity to WHO, through the Surveillance Systems Department and the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) Secretariat, towards the development of this guidance and implementation considerations. The target audience for this guidance are local, national and international public health stakeholders including communities, civil society, ministries of health, national public health institutes, NGOs, UN agencies, three levels of WHO, with the purpose of:

1. improving timely and effective decision-making and policy-setting in the context of outbreaks, epidemics and/ or pandemics;

¹ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/online-global-consultation-on-contact-tracing-for-covid-19-9-11-june-2020>

2. strengthening capabilities globally across all stakeholders;
3. creating a multi-disciplinary collaborative environment, and;
4. harmonizing global surveillance for public health emergencies.

Functions of the GDG on Contact Tracing

In its capacity as an advisory body to WHO, the GDG shall have the following functions:

- provide input into the scope of the guideline;
- assist the steering group in developing the key questions in PICO format;
- choose and rank priority outcomes that will guide the evidence reviews and focus the recommendations;
- examine the Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) evidence profiles or other assessments of the quality of the evidence used to inform the recommendations and provide input;
- interpret the evidence, with explicit consideration of the overall balance of benefits and harms;
- formulate recommendations taking into account benefits, harms, values and preferences, feasibility, equity, acceptability, resource requirements and other factors, as appropriate; and
- review and approve the final guideline document before submission to the GRC.

Operations of the GDG on Contact Tracing

1. The GDG is expected to meet once per quarter (Q2 2023 – Q2 2024). However, WHO may convene additional meetings as required. A two- or three-days face-to-face workshop (likely in Q4 2023) will be organized and will aim at developing recommendations based on the systematic review team's findings. Any other meetings will be held virtually, via video or teleconference.
2. WHO may invite external individuals, representatives from intergovernmental organizations and from non-state actors to attend the open sessions of the GDG or parts thereof. Such invitees will be referred to as "observers". Observers may be asked to present the views and policies of their organizations.
3. The GDG may decide to establish smaller working groups (sub-groups of the GDG) to work on specific issues.
4. GDG members are expected to attend the quarterly meetings. If a member misses two consecutive meetings, WHO may end his/her appointment as a member of the GDG.
5. Information and documentation to which members may gain access in performing GDG-related activities shall be considered as confidential and proprietary to WHO. GDG members will not purport to speak on behalf of, or represent, the GDG or WHO to any third party. All proposed members will be required to sign an appropriate confidentiality undertaking and provisions on ownership.
6. WHO retains full control over the publication of the reports of the GDG, including deciding whether or not to publish them.
7. Appointments to and participation in this WHO GDG are not remunerated
8. GDG proceedings will be conducted in English

Who can express interest?

The GDG will be multidisciplinary, with members who have a range of technical knowledge, skills and experience. Approximately 10-20 may be selected. WHO welcomes expressions of interest from (but not limited to) individuals with the following attributes:

1. Relevant technical experts with professional experience and scientific excellence (evidenced by publications in peer-reviewed journals) in areas, such as:
 - infectious disease
 - social and behavioral science
 - health workforce
 - public health policy
 - health financing
 - operational research
 - community engagement
 - scientific communication
2. End-users who will adopt, adapt and implement the guideline, including local, national and international public health stakeholders, such as:
 - Communities, and civil society;
 - Ministries of health, and national public health institutes, and inter-governmental organizations;
 - Non-governmental organizations;
 - United Nations agencies; and
 - WHO
3. Other technical experts, such as:
 - Experts on ethics, equity, human rights and gender in public health
 - Health economists
 - Field epidemiologists
 - Experts on processes and methods for developing evidence-based guidelines

All GDG members will serve in their individual expert capacity and shall not represent any governments, any commercial industries or entities, any research, academic or civil society organizations, or any other bodies, entities, institutions, or organizations. No honoraria will be provided to any GDG members for their services or otherwise. They are expected to fully comply with the [Code of Conduct for WHO Experts](#). GDG members will be expected to sign and return a completed [confidentiality undertaking](#) prior to the beginning of the first meeting.

As per WHO handbook for guideline development², representatives of commercial organizations cannot serve as members of a GDG.

² <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241548960>

Submitting your expression of interest

To be considered for the GDG on contact tracing, please submit the following no later than **Sunday 12 March 2023 17:00 Geneva time (CET)** to degailm@who.int and holliss@who.int using the subject line *"Expression of interest for GDG on Contact Tracing."*

- A cover letter, indicating your motivation to apply and how you satisfy the selection criteria. Please note that, if selected, membership will be in a personal capacity. Therefore do not use the letterhead or other identification of your employer);
- Your curriculum vitae;
- A signed and completed Declaration of Interests (DOI) form for WHO Experts, available at <https://www.who.int/about/ethics/declarations-of-interest>; and
- A signed and completed [Confidentiality Undertaking form](#)

After submission, your EOI will be reviewed by WHO. Due to an expected high volume of interest, only selected individuals will be informed.

Selection processes

Each curriculum vitae will be reviewed to assess whether the applicant meets the qualifications and has relevant expertise in the subject matter areas listed above. Declaration of Interest forms will be reviewed. Any potential or perceived conflicts of interest based on the declared information in the Declaration of Interests form will be considered in the selection process.

At any point during the selection process, telephone interviews may be scheduled between an applicant and the WHO Secretariat to enable WHO to ask questions relating to the applicant's experience and expertise and/or to assess whether the applicant meets the criteria for membership in the relevant GDG. The selection of members of the GDGs will be based on the following criteria: technical expertise, experience in international and country policy work, and ability to work constructively with people from different cultural backgrounds and orientations. The selection of GDG members will also take account of the need for diverse perspectives from different regions, and for gender diversity.

WHO reserves the right to accept or reject any expression of interest, to annul the open call process and reject all expressions of interest at any time without incurring any liability to the affected applicant or applicants and without any obligation to inform the affected applicant or applicants of the grounds for WHO's action. WHO may also decide, at any time, not to proceed with the establishment of the GDG, disband an existing GDG or modify the work of the GDG. WHO shall not in any way be obliged to reveal, or discuss with any applicant, how an expression of interest was assessed, or to provide any other information relating to the evaluation/selection process or to state the reasons for not choosing a member.

GDG members will not be remunerated for their services in relation to the GDG or otherwise. Travel and accommodation expenses of GDG members to participate in GDG meetings will be covered by WHO in accordance with its applicable policies, rules and procedures.

The appointment will be limited in time as indicated in the letter of appointment. If you have any questions, please write to degailm@who.int and holliss@who.int well before the applicable deadline.