



## TERMS OF REFERENCE Ferrets Subcommittee

**DATE OF PUBLICATION:** October 2023

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the terms of reference for the Ferrets Subcommittee is to establish the ground rules for a new subcommittee tasked with development of guidelines on ferrets. The terms of reference describe the composition of the subcommittee, including the relevant expertise required to undertake the work, the scope of the task, the process for completion of the task, and responsibilities of the subcommittee members and others involved in the development of the *CCAC guidelines: Ferrets*.

### MANDATE

To develop the *CCAC guidelines: Ferrets* that includes the topics listed in the table of contents for the types of animal guidelines and provides expert peer advice and current interpretation of scientific evidence.

### FORMATION OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE

This subcommittee is formed at the discretion of the CCAC Standards Committee, on the advice of the CCAC Governance and Nominations Committee, and as approved by the CCAC Board of Directors, to respond to the need for expertise in the development of the *CCAC guidelines: Ferrets*.

The selection of subcommittee members follows the procedures outlined in the [CCAC process: Formation of a guidelines subcommittee](#). Each member of the subcommittee will be knowledgeable in one or more aspects of the guidelines document to be developed, and one non-voting member of the subcommittee will be drawn from the Standards Committee.

### TERM

In general, subcommittees are disbanded upon publication of the guidelines document. However, some subcommittees may remain active where the CCAC is likely to encounter requests for the development of supporting documents or input into key external documents. In addition, all subcommittee members are asked if they are willing to continue to provide advice and assistance to the CCAC on an ad hoc basis.

### MEETINGS

Typically, the subcommittee will meet once a month by videoconference. Additional funds can be requested when the budget allows, should the need for an in-person meeting arise.

Normally, the expenses incurred by subcommittee members in attending meetings or workshops will be met by the CCAC in accordance with the *CCAC Travel Expenses Reimbursement Guidelines*.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR**

The chair must be knowledgeable about the care and use of ferrets in science, and is responsible for the following:

- chairing all subcommittee meetings
- establishing consensus among subcommittee members
- ensuring the scientific quality of the material submitted by subcommittee members
- working with the CCAC Secretariat at each stage in the preparation of the guidelines document
- adhering to the responsibilities of subcommittee members noted below

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Subcommittee members should be committed to ensuring the steady progress of the document as outlined in the process. If unable to meet the proposed commitments, the subcommittee member should communicate this to the CCAC Secretariat; an alternate with similar expertise will be selected in accordance with the [CCAC process: Formation of a guidelines subcommittee](#).

Most subcommittee work is conducted by email or videoconference. Subcommittee members are responsible for responding to requests from the chair or CCAC Secretariat in a timely manner, and for alerting them to any likely delay in response.

Subcommittee members should make every effort to attend subcommittee meetings, so that consensus can be reached efficiently. Subcommittee discussions through videoconferences, email, or in-person meetings are considered confidential.

Subcommittee members will be asked to contribute to the drafting and revision of the guidelines document, and they should ensure all statements are based on comprehensive scientific evidence.

For the peer review of the draft guidelines document, subcommittee members will be asked to suggest experts who would be suitable reviewers. A final list of experts will be approved by the chair, who will ensure all topic areas will be covered.

Following each review of the draft guidelines, the subcommittee members will be provided with collated comments from the review and tasked with evaluating those comments and providing feedback on areas where the draft guidelines need to be modified.

While the guidelines document is under development, it should be treated as "restricted access", unless it has been approved for external review. Subcommittee members may discuss the content of the document with trusted colleagues to obtain their opinion but should not circulate drafts until officially released for review.

The contributions made by subcommittee members will be recognized in the document and in announcements regarding publication of the document.

Close to the time of publication, some members of the subcommittee may be invited to facilitate sessions highlighting the guidelines document at the CCAC's National Workshop.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CCAC SECRETARIAT

The CCAC Secretariat is responsible for working with the subcommittee to ensure steady progress on the guidelines under development, and to ensure the development of the guidelines document follows the process approved by the Standards Committee. This includes arranging videoconferences and meetings, recording minutes, drafting and editing the document in line with the decisions of the subcommittee, conducting external reviews, compiling feedback from the reviews for consideration by the subcommittee, and forwarding the draft guidelines document at appropriate stages for review/approval by the Standards Committee and Board of Directors.

The CCAC Secretariat is also responsible for providing feedback on the draft guidelines document to the subcommittee to ensure:

- the guidelines are in line with the mandate of the CCAC to advance the ethical care and use of animals in science
- the guidelines address relevant issues that have arisen in the work of the CCAC with the scientific and animal welfare communities, both nationally and internationally

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CCAC STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Standards Committee is responsible for following the progress of the subcommittee's work and providing comments and approval of draft guideline documents prior to peer review, public review, and publication in a timely manner.

The Standards Committee will have one member sit on the subcommittee as a non-voting member.

## MEMBERSHIP

A balance of subcommittee members will be sought with regard to expertise, knowledge of biocontainment and infectious diseases, large and small institutions, geographical location, and gender.

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE

| ROLE   | EXPERTISE   | POSITION                            |
|--------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Chair  | General expertise in ferrets                                  | Veterinarian or Researcher          |
| Member | Ferret health and disease                                     | Veterinarian                        |
| Member | Procedures conducted on ferrets (e.g., surgery, anesthesia)   | Veterinarian                        |
| Member | Novel studies involving ferrets                               | Researcher                          |
| Member | Biomedical research involving ferrets                         | Researcher                          |
| Member | Other studies involving ferrets (e.g., toxicology, behaviour) | Researcher                          |
| Member | Ferret facilities   | Facility manager                    |
| Member | Ferret husbandry and procedures                               | Research technician/technologist    |
| Member | Ferret husbandry  | Animal care technician/technologist |

| ROLE   | EXPERTISE                 | POSITION                              |
|--------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Member |                           | Standards Committee member            |
| Member | Laboratory animal welfare | Animal welfare scientist              |
| Member |                           | Representative of the Canadian public |

## PROCESS

The subcommittee will adhere to the following process.

