



Bylaws of the FUTURE Consortium

Introduction

The FUTURE Consortium (Fracture Union Through Unified Research & Education) is a scientific initiative aimed at advancing research, education, and consensus development in fracture-related infection (FRI) and fracture non-union (FNU). These bylaws define the structure, leadership, selection, rights, and obligations of members within the FUTURE Consortium.

Aim(s) and Structure

FUTURE promotes high-quality collaborative research in the field of FRI and FNU, develops definitions and guidelines, fosters multidisciplinary collaboration, and contributes to EBJIS scientific leadership in this field. Research activities will include:

- Consensus-driven guideline development for FRI and FNU
- Large-scale, multicenter clinical studies
- Integration of basic science with clinical research
- Standardized data collection to enable meaningful comparison and collaboration

The consortium is guided by a Steering Committee (SC) composed of internationally recognized experts representing major scientific societies and organizations, and coordinated by a FUTURE Chair.

Internal structure

1. Steering Committee (SC)

1.1. Role of the SC

The Steering Committee (SC) is the principal scientific and strategic governing body of the FUTURE Consortium and will provide strategic oversight. More specifically, the SC is responsible for defining the Consortium's strategic research priorities, selecting and appointing Consortium members, approving research questions and projects, overseeing the quality and rigor of methodological processes, and ensuring alignment with the broader mission of EBJIS. The SC oversees the establishment and supervision of working groups, monitors project progress, approves key deliverables, and provides guidance throughout each phase of the Consortium's multi-year workflow. The SC and its activities are coordinated by the FUTURE Chair.

1.2. Composition and functioning of the Steering Committee

The SC is composed of six to eight members appointed by the EBJIS Executive Committee, including the FUTURE Chair.

SC members represent a broad range of relevant scientific organizations, disciplines and geographical regions, ensuring inclusivity and balanced international representation of expertise.

The SC meets on a regular basis, either virtually or in person, as required to fulfill its responsibilities. SC members are expected to maintain active engagement, uphold the highest standards of scientific integrity, and contribute to long-term planning and international dissemination of FUTURE activities and outputs. Membership lasts for two years and may be renewed for up to two additional terms. The EBJIS Executive Committee may withdraw membership for misconduct or persistent inactivity.

1.3. Quorum and Voting Procedures

Voting under this section applies exclusively to decisions taken by the SC within its remit as defined in these bylaws, including but not limited to strategic, scientific, and organizational matters of the FUTURE Consortium.

For decisions of the SC to be valid, a quorum of at least 50% of voting SC members must be present, either physically or through virtual participation. Decisions are taken by simple majority unless otherwise specified in these bylaws.

Secure remote voting mechanisms may be used for time-sensitive matters, provided the quorum requirement is met. Abstentions are recorded but do not count toward the calculation of the majority. The FUTURE Chair ensures that voting procedures are followed and documented.

1.4. Role and term of the FUTURE (Vice-)Chair

The FUTURE Chair is appointed by the EBJIS Executive Committee and serves as the primary coordinator and representative of the FUTURE Consortium. The Chair presides over SC meetings, supports the implementation of the Consortium's strategic objectives and ensures effective communication and coordination between the SC, working groups and EBJIS governing bodies.

The Chair is responsible for convening meetings, setting agendas in consultation with the SC and representing FUTURE in internal and external scientific and organizational matters.

The EBJIS Executive Committee also appoints a Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair supports the Chair in the performance of the Chair's duties and may, when appropriate, act on behalf of the Chair. The role of Vice-Chair is intended to support continuity and effective functioning of the Steering Committee and does not imply automatic succession to the position of Chair.

2. FUTURE Consortium Members

2.1. Recruitment of members

Membership is open to experts who apply through a structured application process, hosted on the FUTURE website (a subpage of the EBJIS website). Regarding member selection, the following requirements apply:

- Seniority: applicants should be senior clinicians or researchers affiliated with a recognized academic, clinical or research institution. They must demonstrate expertise in one or more of the following domains:
 - o FRI
 - o FNU
 - o Infectious diseases, microbiology or relevant basic/translational research.

- Strong scientific track record, including first and/or senior author publications relevant to the field within the past five years. Experience with clinical trials, registries, or prior involvement in consensus-building or guideline development is considered an advantage.

To evaluate the above-mentioned criteria, applicants are requested to include:

- Curriculum Vitae (max. 2 pages)
- Motivational statement: all applicants should provide a short motivational statement (max. 300 words) describing relevant expertise, intended contribution and primary area(s) of interest
- Publication list
- Declaration of potential conflicts of interest (see below)

2.2. Selection and term of membership

Applications will be reviewed by the SC and evaluated based on scientific merit, relevance to the consortium's objectives and balanced international and disciplinary representation. To ensure broad global participation, a maximum of four members per country are expected to be appointed. The Consortium will comprise a maximum of 50 experts in total, including the SC. Membership lasts for two years and may be renewed for up to two additional terms. The SC may withdraw membership for misconduct or persistent inactivity.

2.3. Roles and Obligations of Members

Active participation of FUTURE Consortium Members in working groups, meetings and publications is expected throughout each term. Continuation or renewal of membership is contingent upon demonstrated engagement, timely contribution to assigned activities, and adherence to FUTURE and EBJIS standards.

2.4. Rights of Members

Members have the right to be listed on the FUTURE website (a subpage of the EBJIS website), participate in internal decision-making processes relevant to FUTURE activities, and access shared research resources and Consortium outputs, in accordance with data-sharing and confidentiality policies.

3. Acknowledgement of Participating Organizations

Scientific societies and other organizations that are formally represented within the FUTURE Consortium or contribute to FUTURE activities through SC representation, working groups, or officially endorsed projects shall be appropriately acknowledged.

Such acknowledgement may include listing on the FUTURE website (a subpage of the EBJIS website) and recognition in scientific publications, presentations, and other dissemination materials arising from FUTURE activities, in accordance with applicable authorship and acknowledgement guidelines.

4. Working Groups

Working Groups are established by the SC to address specific scientific, clinical, or methodological topics. Each Working Group operates under defined objectives, deliverables, and anticipated timelines.

4.1. Working Group Leaders

Working group leaders are appointed by the SC and report on progress and outcomes. Each Working Group will have one or two Working Group Leaders, chosen based on their expertise in the research topic. These Leaders will assign specific tasks, including the preparation of systematic reviews, for example. For each publication, the Working Group will designate:

- Lead Author: Responsible for drafting the initial manuscript, reviewing data, and integrating feedback from other working group members
- Senior Author: Provides oversight and final approval of the manuscript.

Authorship will follow ICMJE recommendations and be based on substantive intellectual contribution.

4.2. Working Group Deliverables and Dissolution

The SC conducts an annual review of Working Group progress, activity, and output. Working Group Leaders provide regular updates to the SC and ensure that findings align with FUTURE's objectives. A Working Group is dissolved upon completion and approval of its assigned deliverables. Extensions, restructuring, or renewal of a Working Group require explicit approval by the SC.

4.3. Research Fellows

Research Fellows may be appointed to support the scientific and operational activities of FUTURE, including literature reviews, data management, methodological support, and coordination of Working Group activities.

Research Fellows are appointed by the SC, based on scientific qualifications, relevant experience, and alignment with FUTURE's objectives. Their appointment is for a term of two years and may be renewed for up to two additional terms. The SC may withdraw a Research Fellow's appointment in cases of misconduct or persistent inactivity.

Research Fellows do not hold voting rights within the SC. They operate under the supervision of the SC and/or designated Working Group Leaders. Authorship eligibility and acknowledgement of Research Fellows shall follow ICMJE recommendations and be based on substantive contributions to each research project.

Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy

To ensure transparency, scientific rigor, and independence of the FUTURE Consortium, all SC members, Working Group Leaders, Consortium Members and Research Fellows must submit a Conflict of Interest (COI) declaration upon appointment and update it annually. Members must promptly report any new or emerging conflicts during their term.

In situations where a COI may influence objectivity, the affected individual shall recuse themselves from related discussions and decisions. The SC is responsible for evaluating disclosed conflicts and implementing appropriate measures to safeguard the integrity of FUTURE activities.

Industry Funding and External Support

The FUTURE Consortium does not accept educational or research grants from industrial or commercial partners and does not accept industrial sponsorship.

Industrial or commercial entities, including representatives acting on behalf of such entities, are not eligible for membership in the FUTURE Consortium.

Industrial or commercial partners shall have no influence on the selection of research topics, study design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of results, authorship, publication decisions, or any SC deliberations or votes.

All conflicts of interest related to interactions with industrial or commercial entities must be transparently disclosed and managed in accordance with EBJIS policies and the FUTURE COI Policy.

Meetings and Reporting

FUTURE will hold at least one annual consensus meeting, with additional online meetings as needed. Summaries of activities, progress and outputs will be shared with the EBJIS Executive Committee.

Amendments to the Bylaws

Amendments require a proposal supported by the FUTURE Chair or at least 50% of Consortium members, and final approval by the EBJIS executive committee. These bylaws will be submitted to the EBJIS Executive Committee for review and formal approval.

Duration and termination of FUTURE activities

The FUTURE Consortium is established for an initial two-year term, with the option to extend for up to two additional 2-year terms. Termination requires approval from the EBJIS General Assembly based on a proposal from the EBJIS Executive Committee.

In case of conflict, EBJIS statutes supersede the above-mentioned bylaws.

These bylaws got approved by the board of EBJIS in May 2026 and are in effect as of May 2026.