

Terms of Reference (ToR) EBSA Working Group

Working group: **Education and Training Working Group (ETWG)**

Date: 07-05-2024

Version number: 2024-ETWG-01

Background and aim

The European Biosafety Association's Education and Training Working Group (ETWG) has a long history of curating the program for EBSA's annual preconference courses. However, with the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the ETWG's role has evolved.

In response to the pandemic, the ETWG successfully pivoted to organizing online trainings. The positive reception of these virtual trainings has led to a permanent change in the group's focus.

Going forward, the ETWG will not only develop the program for the annual preconference courses but also organize online training opportunities throughout the year. These online trainings offer several advantages. They allow the ETWG to delve into more specialized topics, catering to a wider range of interests. Additionally, online trainings make participation more accessible for members new to the field and those facing financial constraints associated with travel to in-person trainings. This broader reach strengthens the EBSA community and fosters knowledge sharing within the field of biosafety and biosecurity.

Objectives

The main objectives of the ETWG are to:

1. Develop a high-quality education and training program that is relevant and useful to the EBSA members, both for online and in-person events. These trainings should be in line with international competence guidelines.
2. Provide a platform where training can be provided in an e-library for self-study
3. Keep up-to-date on new developments in training techniques in order to provide high quality of training

Members

The ETWG is composed of a group of experienced biosafety professionals with expertise in a variety of areas and education and should also represent the diversity EBSA Members.

The ETWG should consist of 5 to 10 members including the ETWG chair. Any EBSA Member can volunteer to join the ETWG as standing member. ETWG evaluates request based on criteria such as competence, previous experience and lack of conflicts of interests of the candidate. Candidates are then presented to EBSA Council for approval.

The term of the ETWG Members is for a period of four years and can be renewed at the end of this period. As an organisation EBSA highly values continuity and experience in the working groups but at the same time it is important to regularly make room for other EBSA Members to join the working group.

Within ETWG a chair is elected by the ETWG Members for a term of three years, re-election is possible. One of the members of the ETWG, preferably the Chair, takes on the role of liaison to the EBSA Council.

Operations

The ETWG meets regularly to discuss topics and instructors for preconference courses, online trainings and training methodologies through a combination of face-to-face meetings, on-line meetings and e-mail communication. Meetings are called by the Chair. The meeting location (physical, on-line) is decided based on what is most convenient for all participants and least expensive for EBSA.

Decisions are made by simple majority, while the Chair should strive as much as possible for unanimity. Whenever disputes cannot be resolved by the ETWG Members, EBSA Council will be contacted.

As required, ETWG Members may be charged with particular tasks and they report on progress to the Chair.

ETWG is involved with the following types of activities:

1. The in-person yearly preconference courses, where the working group
 - a. suggests and selects topics for training,
 - b. composes a diverse and relevant program of preconference courses and
 - c. works closely with the EBSA Office and the Local Organising Committee (LOC) to organise preconference courses.
2. Online Trainings, where the working group
 - a. looks for hot topics that are of interest to the EBSA members and
 - b. develops a yearly online training program
3. Training methodologies, where the working group
 - a. discusses and decides on training techniques and methods to be used.

ETWG and the EBSA Administrative Office will establish and update on a regular basis an Operational Guidance that covers working group procedures, indicates timing and responsibilities for different tasks during preparation, delivery and after training events.

Documents produced by ETWG are centrally stored and is accessible to ETWG Members and the EBSA Office. EBSA Council can access documents on-demand.

Reporting and Evaluation

ETWG regularly reports to Council and annually to the members on the work carried out and the results of their work.

The EBSA Council liaison of ETWG is invited to the EBSA Council meetings where the status of the work and the results achieved are discussed. The ETWG chair (or other working group member) reports to the EBSA Members during the Annual General Assembly (AGM) about the work and results achieved in the past year.

ETWG organises feedback requests to all participants at activities organised by ETWG.

The ETWG's performance will be evaluated annually by the EBSA Council. The evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

- The quality and relevance of the courses including preconference, online event and e-library courses
- The level of participation and engagement from the participants at training events
- The overall feedback from attendees to EBSA training events