

The Quebec Network for Research on Protein Function, Engineering  
and Applications

# PROTEO Bylaws

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## 1. Vision

To promote Quebec's bioeconomy in a context of sustainable development by positioning PROTEO as a leader in research and innovation on the function, engineering and applications of proteins.

## 2. Mission

To support and promote the UN Sustainable Development Goals, including the dimensions of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

To bring together a critical mass of researchers having diverse and complementary expertise working in the field of protein research (a strategic area of sustainable development in the province of Quebec).

To facilitate access to valuable human and material resources to create a unique, cutting-edge research infrastructure in the province of Quebec that will enable researchers to do more and perform better on an international scale in a highly competitive field.

To generate knowledge on model protein systems by tackling major problems using the synergy of the network's complementary expertise and sophisticated scientific infrastructure.

To promote democratization and universal access to knowledge in protein sciences.

To create a highly stimulating scientific environment to attract, train and retain world-class scientists.

To train talented researchers having a diversity of backgrounds through the acquisition of disciplinary and cross-disciplinary skills in order to support the growth of (bio)pharmaceutical and biotechnological companies, and the green economy in the province of Quebec.

To develop fruitful partnerships with stakeholders, as a hub of protein research and innovation.

To promote protein science and the importance of research to the general public, especially to young people.

To address scientific, environmental, economic, and societal issues related to protein function, engineering and applications, to foster inclusive, equitable and open innovation.

To stimulate innovation through the development of new technologies applicable to tomorrow's bioeconomy in the province of Quebec.

### 3. Values

PROTEO's values are:

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)  
Integrity, collaboration and professionalism  
Innovation, excellence and scientific rigour  
Education, science outreach and societal commitments  
Sharing and access to knowledge

### 4. Axis/Research themes

The realization of PROTEO's vision and mission is possible thanks to the diversity of research expertise that covers both the understanding at the molecular level of biological systems involving proteins and the use of proteins for biotechnological purposes. The network research axes are articulated in three themes:

Area 1: Fundamental discoveries on the function of proteins and interactomes

Area 2: Engineering of proteins and innovative biological systems

Area 3: Biofabrication, bioprocessing and scaling up to enhance discoveries

### 5. Members

#### 5.1. Members definition

PROTEO members are divided into various categories based on their affiliation, level of participation or status:

##### 5.1.1- Regular member

A regular member is a researcher who is a professor in a Quebec university or college, or a researcher in a Quebec technology transfer center (CCTT), whose application for membership has been accepted by the regular members at a general assembly (GA).

Only regular members of PROTEO have voting rights at the AGA and can hold a position on the Executive Committee (EC). Regular members, as well as people working in their team, have access to all activities, scholarships and grant programs offered by PROTEO.

The regular member must meet all of the following requirements at all times:

- a) devote more than 50% of their time to research and at least 50% of their research activities to subjects related to PROTEO's scientific programming;

- b) publish regularly in peer-reviewed scientific journals on topics related to PROTEO's scientific programming (does not apply to college researchers);
- c) hold research grant(s) and/or contracts on topics relevant to PROTEO's scientific programming;
- d) supervise and/or co-supervise at least one graduate student or postdoctoral fellow registered in a Quebec university, on a topic relevant to PROTEO's scientific program (does not apply to college researchers);
- e) participate regularly and actively, along with their research group, in PROTEO activities: the annual symposium, retreats and/or competition evaluation committees;
- f) respond expeditiously to requests from the Executive Committee (EC), particularly with respect to statistics for the annual report;
- g) facilitate access to the research equipment and infrastructure of its research laboratory to other members and share the related expertise (costs could be expected for the user);
- h) consent to PROTEO's use of their name, resume and accomplishments in the promotion and preparation of grant applications for the network;
- i) to contribute to the promotion of PROTEO in the scientific community;
- j) acknowledge their affiliation with PROTEO in research publications (including articles, books, reports, dissertations and theses, as well as scientific papers, conferences and posters), as follows:

English version: PROTEO - The Quebec Network for Research on Protein Function, Engineering and Applications

#### 5.1.2- Associate member

An associate member is a researcher who is a professor in a Québec university or college, or a researcher in one of the college centres for technology transfer (CCTT), a professor in a university outside Quebec or a representative of industry whose application for membership has been accepted by the regular members at the GA. The associate member does not have to meet all the conditions listed in 5.1.1 at all times.

Associate members have access to all PROTEO activities and are encouraged to participate in meetings and events, but do not have voting rights and are not eligible for financial benefits.

The associate member must:

- a) consent to PROTEO's use of their name, resume and accomplishments in the promotion and preparation of grant applications for the network;
- b) to contribute to the promotion of PROTEO in the scientific community;

- c) acknowledge their affiliation with PROTEO in research publications (including articles, books, reports, dissertations and theses, as well as scientific papers, conferences and posters).

#### 5.1.3- Student or postdoctoral fellow member

The student/postdoctoral community member is a person registered in a Québec university, or a trainee (registered or not), whose research work is supervised or co-supervised by a regular member of PROTEO.

In the same way as a regular member, the student/postdoctoral fellow must:

- a) participate regularly and actively, along with their research group, in PROTEO activities: the annual symposium, retreats and/or competition evaluation committees;
- b) consent to PROTEO's use of their name, resume and accomplishments in the promotion and preparation of grant applications for the network;
- c) to contribute to the promotion of PROTEO in the scientific community;
- d) acknowledge its affiliation with PROTEO in research publications (including articles, books, reports, dissertations and theses, as well as scientific papers, conferences and posters).

#### 5.1.4- Employee member

The employee member is a person under contract for research work under the supervision of a regular member of PROTEO.

In the same way as a regular member, the employee member must:

- a) participate regularly and actively, along with their research group, in PROTEO activities: the annual symposium, retreats and/or competition evaluation committees;
- b) consent to PROTEO's use of their name, resume and accomplishments in the promotion and preparation of grant applications for the network;
- c) to contribute to the promotion of PROTEO in the scientific community;
- d) acknowledge its affiliation with PROTEO in research publications (including articles, books, reports, dissertations and theses, as well as scientific papers, conferences and posters).

## 5.2. Membership for regular and associate members

To join the network, applicants meeting the above criteria must submit a written application (in a single PDF document), including the following documents:

- A letter of no more than two (2) pages, describing how their research program fits into PROTEO's research focus;

- An up-to-date CV, clearly indicating affiliations, publications, research grants and/or contracts, students supervised over the past five (5) years, and any other relevant information.

Candidates' applications will be evaluated at the next scheduled GA. A decision will be sent in writing within 15 working days following this GA. The effective date will be the first day of the month following the GA.

### 5.3. Review of membership status

Failure to adhere to the conditions listed in 5.1 may result in revocation of the regular member's status (or change to associate membership) by the Executive Committee (EC).

It is the responsibility of each member to demonstrate compliance with the above conditions.

A member may leave PROTEO at any time by notifying the Executive Committee in writing.

## 6. Management

### 6.1. Director

#### 6.1.1. Election of the director and mandate term

A written notice (by email) is sent to all regular members to initiate a two-week nomination period, at least 30 days before a GA. Candidates must justify their motivation and competence in a one-page letter, and attach a CV with relevant information. These documents are to be sent to the regular members at least seven (7) days before the GA. A candidate will be elected if they obtain a majority of the votes cast by 50% of the regular members plus one (+1) in an anonymous ballot, which may be held electronically.

The director is elected by the GA for a four-year (4) term, renewable only once, save in exceptional cases (e.g., lack of nominations). They must remain a regular member for the duration of their mandate.

In order to facilitate the transfer of responsibilities, it is desirable that the outgoing director, depending on their availability and at the request of the new director, remains on the EC for the following year, as an observer.

In the event of the resignation or incapacitation of the director before the end of their term, the EC may suggest to its members that a person serve as interim director if the unexpired portion of the term is less than two (2) years. If the unexpired portion of the



term is more than two (2) years, an election process must be held within three (3) months of the resignation or incapacitation, as described above.

#### 6.1.2. Duties

The director's mandate is to ensure the realization of actions planned by the EC. If necessary, the director assists the EC members and the other committees to reach their objectives, while ensuring that the budget is respected. The director is also responsible for managing the personnel financed by the group.

The director may appoint other individuals to assist with specific tasks, after approval by the GA.

Specifically, the director:

- a) ensures the realization of PROTEO's vision and mission;
- b) administers and provides the necessary infrastructure and personnel for the efficient management and coordination of the network;
- c) is accountable to the GA for the decisions made regarding the network;
- d) ensures the application of EDI principles in appointments, grants and all processes within the network;
- e) convenes the GA;
- f) ensures the transparency and efficiency of the EC;
- g) supports axis leaders in their respective roles;
- h) ensures the active participation of the members;
- i) ensures the transparency of all processes and decisions regarding the network activities and facilitates the flow of information among the members;
- j) with the EC, establishes a strategic action plan and ensures that the network strategic and scientific orientations are respected;
- k) ensures that the network bylaws are respected;
- l) works to promote and maintain the scientific accomplishments of PROTEO, primarily on the provincial scene, but also at the national and international levels;
- m) develops and maintains links between stakeholders of various relevant sectors, including financial partners;
- n) with the support of the host institution, manages the network budget by allocating funds in an efficient, equitable and transparent manner according to the decisions of the EC and the GA;
- o) prepares the network reports and grant applications, with the EC members and the active participation of the network members;
- p) manages the administrative staff employed by the network.

## 6.2. Codirector

### 6.2.1. Election of codirector and term of office

A written notice (by email) is sent to all regular members to initiate a two-week nomination period, at least 30 days before a GA. Candidates must justify their motivation and competence in a one-page letter, and attach a CV with relevant information. These documents are to be sent to the regular members at least seven (7) days before the GA. A candidate will be elected if they obtain a majority of the votes cast by 50% of the regular members plus one (+1) in an anonymous ballot, which may be held electronically.

The codirector is elected by the GA for a four-year (4) term, renewable only once, save in exceptional cases (e.g., lack of nominations). The codirector must remain a regular member for the duration of his or her mandate.

In the event of the resignation or incapacitation of the co-director before the end of their term, the EC may suggest to its members that a person serves as interim director if the unexpired portion of the term is less than two (2) years. If the unexpired portion of the term is more than two (2) years, an election process must be held as described above.

### 6.2.2. Duties

In addition to supporting the director in their duties (see 6.1.2), the co-director:

- a) replaces the director in case of incapacity or if the situation requires it;
- b) acts as a scrutineer for elections (except for their own position, in which case the director shall act as a scrutineer), with the assistance of the network staff;
- c) ensures the application of EDI principles in appointments, awards and all processes within the network.

## 6.3. Executive committee (EC)

### 6.3.1. Duties of the EC

The EC is chaired by the director. It supports the director and codirector in their mandate and ensures to take the means and measures conducive to the proper functioning of the network and the realization of its missions, especially for its evaluation by the FRQNT.

The EC has executive power to make decisions without recourse to the GA, with the exception of major modifications to the budget, recruitment of new members and changes to the statutes (see 7.2).

### 6.3.2. Composition of the EC

The EC is composed of the following members:

- a) director
- b) co-director
- c) five (5) regular members elected by the GA
- d) two (2) student members or postdoctoral fellows as observers elected by the student GA
- e) PROTEO administrative staff members are invited ex officio, as observers
- f) any person whom the EC wishes to appoint (with observer status)

### 6.3.3. Election of the five (5) regular members of the EC

The five (5) members of the EC (other than the director and codirector positions) are elected by the GA of members for a four-year (4) mandate\*, renewable only once, except in exceptional cases (e.g., lack of candidates). At least one of the five (5) members must come from Laval University, and at least one from an institution in the greater Montreal area.

(\* at the time of establishment, two (2) three (3) year terms and three (3) four (4) year terms)

When a position is open on the EC, a written notice (by email) is sent to all regular members to initiate a two (2) week nomination period, at least 30 days prior to a membership meeting. Candidates must justify their motivation and competence in a one-page letter, and attach a CV with relevant information. These documents are sent to the regular members at least seven (7) days before the GA. A candidate will be elected if they obtain a majority of the votes cast by 50% of the regular members plus one (+1) in a ballot, which may be held electronically.

### 6.3.4. Responsibilities of the EC members

The following five (5) positions will be assigned to each of the five (5) elected members at the first meeting following their election, according to the interests of each, and with the help of the director and the co-director, who will decide, if necessary. Changes may occur during the term of office. EC members may consult with other PROTEO members (including the student community and postdoctoral fellows) to ensure fulfillment of their mandates.

#### *- Responsible for internal affairs*

The duties of the person in charge include but are not limited to the following:

- organize the annual PROTEO Symposium;
- organize member retreats;
- coordinate intra-PROTEO and pan-PROTEO conferences.

#### *- Responsible for external affairs*

The duties of the person in charge include but are not limited to the following:

- establish and maintain links with industry;
- organize the Bioeconomy Forum and/or other collaborative initiatives with partner organizations;
- oversee the Protein School and other outreach/general public initiatives;
- stimulate intra-PROTEO entrepreneurial initiatives.

*- Responsible for academic affairs*

The duties of the person in charge include but are not limited to the following:

- work with student community representatives to ensure that student competitions and scholarship programs are carried out;
- support the organization of summer schools.

*- Responsible for scientific affairs*

The duties of the person in charge include but are not limited to the following:

- to coordinate, with the codirector, the scientific committee composed of the axes leaders;
- establish the programs for new initiatives;
- stimulate/favour the acquisition and sharing of infrastructures;
- ensure links with CCTT partner institutions.

*- Responsible for communications*

The duties of the person in charge include but are not limited to the following:

- ensure PROTEO's presence on social networks, with representatives of the student community;
- work with PROTEO's administrative staff to keep the website up to date;
- stimulate the creation of original material to promote PROTEO's outreach;
- coordinate the actions of public relations firms.

#### 6.3.5. EC meetings and decision-making

The EC fosters a culture of collaboration. Meetings are held monthly (except for a summer break), and are scheduled in August for the following academic year. The quorum for a valid meeting is 5/7 of the voting members. The content of each meeting must be recorded in minutes to be adopted at the next meeting. The minutes are available at all times and can be consulted by members who wish to do so.

#### 6.3.6. Appointment and roles of student community members and postdoctoral fellows

The student community and postdoctoral fellow members who are observers on the EC are elected by the student community GA for a two (2) year term. Members must come from two different institutions. Ideally, the start of the term for members of this community is one (1) year apart.

Duties of these individuals include but are not limited to the following:

- actively participating in EC meetings;

- ensuring the sharing of questions/comments/information between members of the student and postdoctoral community and the EC;
- organizing and facilitating the student and postdoctoral fellows GA;
- organize the conference fellowship competitions;
- coordinate the summer schools;
- Ensure PROTEO's presence on social networks, with the EC member responsible for communications.

#### 6.3.7. Annual general meeting of the student community

The GA of the student community is composed of the members from the student and postdoctoral community and the employee members. This annual GA allows:

- to elect their two (2) representatives at the end of their mandate (see section 6.3.6), (only the members of the student and postdoctoral community have the right to vote);
- inform members of PROTEO news that concerns them;
- raise ideas and comments from members that can be shared with the PROTEO organization.

#### 6.4. Coordination

The scientific and administrative activities of the network may be supported by a scientific coordinator and/or a project manager and an administrative assistant working in collaboration. They take care of the administrative aspects necessary for the proper functioning of the cluster, including the EC (e.g., convening, agenda, drafting of minutes and follow-ups). Their role is also to provide the necessary support to the animation, coordination and management of scientific activities, as well as to help with the recruitment and the integration of new members.

Specifically, the scientific coordinator and/or a project manager will be responsible for, but not limited to, the following tasks:

- strengthen PROTEO's strategic positioning, notably through the website and social networks;
- advise on policy issues (including EDI), funding objectives and priorities;
- coordinate the writing of grant applications for the cluster, as well as the necessary follow-up activities;
- oversee competition processes and their evaluation;
- develop, implement and monitor projects and programs;
- coordinate the development and implementation of various initiatives, including the annual symposium;
- respond to requests from PROTEO members;
- support the director, co-director and EC members in their duties.

## 6.5. Project manager/Administrative assistant

In collaboration with the co-ordinator, this person shall perform, but not be limited to, the following duties

- plan and follow-up on all PROTEO meetings (EC and sub-committees), including taking minutes;
- manage and respond to the organization's email and telephone messages or forward them to the appropriate people;
- communicate with institutional bodies and respond to requests for information
- plan and write announcements for internal competitions and assist in the evaluation process;
- compile cluster statistics for institutional reports;
- complete and follow up on expense reports, purchase requisitions and payments;
- assist in the organization of conferences, webinars and symposia;
- support the management, co-leadership and members of the EC in their duties.

## 7. General Assembly (GA) of members

### 7.1. Composition of the GA

The GA consists of all members of PROTEO, as defined in 5.1.1. Only regular members have the right to vote.

### 7.2. Functions of the GA

The role of the GA is to facilitate requests, proposals and suggestions to the EC in order to improve and expedite the network's activities and strategic planning. The management also reports on activities. The members' GA coordinates voting on the following matters:

- a) budget
- b) recruitment of new members
- c) amendment of the statutes
- d) election of the director, co-director and the members of the EC

### 7.3. Meetings

The GA of members is presided over by a regular member other than the persons occupying the positions of director and co-director, whose mandate is determined at the beginning of each meeting.

If deemed relevant, the chair of the meeting may refer to the *Code de procédure des assemblées délibérantes* of the Université de Montréal.

The director shall convene meetings of the GA at least seven (7) days in advance, on their own initiative or at the request of five (5) members of the GA entitled to vote, who

must justify their request in writing. The GA must meet at least once (1) a year. A total of 50% of the regular members plus one (+1) constitutes a quorum at the GA. In the event that a quorum is not reached at a second GA, a third meeting may be called within seven (7) days, at which time a quorum will consist of only the members present. A meeting may be held by any means of communication deemed appropriate by the director, co-director or the EC. The same applies for the voting method, which can be held electronically and valid if 50% of the regular members plus one (+1) have voted by the deadline.

## 8. Bylaws modification

The mandates and bylaws remain valid until amended. Any request for amendments must be made in writing and presented to the regular members of PROTEO for a vote in which a minimum of 50% plus one (+1) of the regular members participate. If the majority feels that the statutes need to be discussed and revised, another GA is called.