

FLC Policy: Volunteers

Approved by the FLC Executive Board on October 18, 2023

1. FLC OPERATIONS

The Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer (FLC) operates through the combined effort of paid Support Partner staff and unpaid volunteers. Volunteers are key to successful operation of the FLC. This policy describes the roles and responsibilities of FLC volunteers, and an engagement framework for their participation in FLC sponsored activities.

2. FLC COMMITTEES AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

For the purposes of this Policy, all committees, subcommittees, and working groups will be referred to collectively as Committees unless otherwise specified.

- a. The FLC Executive Board is comprised of volunteer Laboratory Representatives, Agency Representatives, and Consortium Participants who are either elected or appointed according to FLC Bylaws and Policies.
- b. FLC has three Standing committees with elected Chairs: Promote, Educate, and Facilitate.
 - i. Each Standing committee has subcommittees which may be permanent or temporary, dependent upon current FLC needs as documented in each committee's annual charter.
- c. FLC has Functional committees established periodically for specific purposes with limited durations, such as the Nominating, Validation, and Special committees.
- d. Occasionally, informal Working Groups are formed to address specific requirements for FLC, such as updating the FLC Green Book.
- e. Each Committee will have two Volunteer roles, Chair and Members, both of which are described in Section 5.
- f. Committees will have at least three (3) and no more than twenty-one (21) Members, including the Chair.
- g. Committees meet at least monthly and may convene in-person, virtually, or via teleconference. If another meeting schedule is preferred or required, it may require more time and would be at the agreement and sole discretion of Committee Members.

3. VOLUNTEER ELIGIBILITY

Volunteers provide their time and talent to help guide and implement FLC programs.

- a. Only US citizens may serve as FLC volunteers.
- b. Volunteers can be Consortium Representatives, Consortium Participants, or other interested stakeholders from industry, academia, and state and local government.
- c. Volunteer positions include those positions defined and governed by the FLC Bylaws and other roles as described in Section 2.e.
- d. Individuals serving in positions described in the Bylaws may also serve as volunteers in other areas.
- e. Persons barred from serving or working with the US Federal Government may not serve as FLC volunteers.

4. VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS

- a. Only Consortium Representatives and Consortium Participants may serve as Committee Chairs, or in other equivalent titles that may be used to designate a leading role.

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- b. Prospective volunteer Members will be reviewed, and accepted or referred to other FLC volunteer opportunities, by Committee Chairs.
- c. Volunteer Members may serve on multiple Committees.
- d. Committee Chairs reserve the right to limit Membership on their Committees to comply with FLC policies and ensure broad representation of Consortium Members.
- e. However interest is expressed to FLC, prospective volunteers will be connected with the requested Committee Chair for consideration. If no specific Committee is requested, the volunteer will be referred to the Executive Committee for a Committee assignment recommendation.

5. VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

- a. Volunteers serve on FLC Committees to help the FLC achieve its documented goals and are required to follow FLC Bylaws and policies.
- b. Volunteers strive to be available for all FLC calls, meetings, and activities for which they volunteer.
- c. The two FLC volunteer roles are Committee Chair and Committee Member. All requirements and expectations for Members also apply to Chairs, with Chairs having additional responsibilities. Chair terms are two years and Member terms are one year, both starting on October 1
- d. **Members.** Members are the Committee participants and serve renewable one-year terms in collaboration with the Committee Chairs. Members are expected to:
 - i. Participate in at least 75% of Committee meetings in each fiscal year;
 - ii. Devote at least four (4) hours a month to Committee activities;
 - iii. Work with other Members and the Chair to accomplish Committee efforts; and
 - iv. Attend the National Meeting, if possible.
- e. **Chairs.** Chairs are the Committee leaders and serve two year terms. Chairs approve initial participation and annually confirm continuation of, Committee Members. Chairs may develop internal policies that complement and do not conflict with, FLC Bylaws and any FLC policies.

i. Appointments

1. The Executive Board approves Standing Committee Chairs as defined in the Bylaws.
 - a. Standing Committee Chairs are FLC Executive Board members as defined in the Bylaws.
 - b. Standing Committee Chairs appoint their Standing Committee's Subcommittee Chairs, if any.
2. The FLC Chair or FLC Executive Committee appoint Functional Committee Chairs as defined in the Bylaws.
3. The FLC Chair, Executive Committee, or Standing Committee Chair appoint Working Group Chairs, as appropriate for each situation.

ii. Responsibilities

1. Lead the Committee in alignment with the FLC Strategic Plan and the Committee Charter;
2. Drive the Committee to plan and achieve its specific goals;
3. Provide quarterly updates on Committee activities to the Executive Board;
4. Meet monthly with Support Partner staff to develop monthly meeting agendas and coordinate Committee activities;

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5. Lead monthly Committee meetings;
6. Participate in at least 90% of Committee meetings in each fiscal year;
7. Devote at least eight (8) hours monthly to Committee efforts;
8. Update this Charter annually with Support Partner staff;
9. Attend the National Meeting, if possible.

6. FLC SUPPORT PARTNER STAFF EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

The FLC Support Partner lead staff member for each Committee is expected to:

- a. Organize and support monthly Committee meetings in coordination with the Committee Chair, including but not limited to, scheduling, organizing, arranging meeting platforms, developing agendas, recording minutes, and publishing minutes.
- b. Attend all Committee meetings.
- c. Implement the activities of the Committee with volunteers and other FLC staff.
- d. Meet with the Committee Chairs monthly outside the Committee meeting for planning purposes.
- e. Provide guidance and perspective to the Committee regarding its current and projected annual tactics, strategies, and other activities.
- f. Coordinate with the FLC Executive Director and Committee Chair to develop an annual Committee budget.
- g. Present quarterly Committee updates at FLC Executive Board meetings in coordination with the Committee Chair.

7. SEPARATION OF VOLUNTEERS FROM FLC

- a. Volunteers may resign from FLC service as a Committee Member for any reason and at any time by providing written notification to the Committee Chair.
- b. Volunteers may resign from FLC service as a Committee Chair for any reason with a minimum of 30 days written notice to the Executive Committee.
- c. Committee Chairs may remove volunteers that are in violation of this or any FLC policy if deemed necessary to protect the values and vitality of the FLC.
- d. The Committee Charters are renewed annually, as such subcommittees may change or be dissolved completely dependent on FLC needs.
- e. All volunteers are reviewed annually for continuation of service by the Committee Chairs.
- f. Repeated absence exceeding the minimum required participation may result in separation from service.
 - i. FLC Representatives or Participants may appeal separation to the FLC Chair for reconsideration. The FLC Chair and the Committee Chair will meet to discuss the reasons for separation and next steps.
 - ii. Volunteers who are not FLC Representatives or Participants do not have an appeal option available.

8. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- a. A conflict of interest arises when a volunteer may benefit financially from a decision he or she could influence in their FLC volunteer capacity, including but not limited to, indirect benefits to family

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members, third parties, or businesses with which the person is closely associated. This policy is focused upon material financial interest of, or benefit to, such persons.

- b. At all times, FLC Volunteers must act in the best interests of the FLC, and not for personal or third-party gain or financial enrichment.
- c. Volunteers are expected to disclose potential conflicts of interest. When encountering potential conflicts of interest, volunteers shall identify the potential conflict to the Committee Chair or to the FLC Chair, and remove themselves from any discussions and votes on any matters for which they have identified conflicts of interest.

9. PARTICIPATION AS A VENDOR TO THE FLC OR FEDERAL LABORATORIES

- a. Volunteers who are not FLC Representatives or Participants can participate in an FLC Request for Proposal (RFP) process and otherwise offer goods or services to the FLC for a fee, only in the event of full compliance with this policy.
- b. If a volunteer has an interest in a proposed transaction with the FLC in the form of a direct or indirect personal financial interest or other personal interest in the transaction, he or she must make full disclosure of such interest before any discussion or negotiation of such opportunity or subsequent transaction in any Committee meeting or other FLC communication.
- c. The volunteer prospective FLC vendor must have an existing business entity currently providing the goods or services that the volunteer seeks to provide to the FLC.
- d. Any volunteer who has such an interest in a proposed transaction shall not be present at any meeting in which there is any discussion or vote related to the proposed transaction.
- e. Any such volunteer must not participate, directly or indirectly, as an advocate on his or her own behalf, either formally at meetings or informally through private contact, communication, and discussion, except to the extent permitted for non-Member vendors to the association.
- f. An FLC volunteer that becomes an FLC vendor is immediately separated from FLC volunteer service and is no longer eligible for FLC volunteer service.
- g. In such cases, Committees need to evaluate:
 - i. Is the FLC paying more or getting less than it would from a non-interest seller or buyer or comparable goods or services?
 - ii. What efforts have been made to develop “comparables” to help establish “fairness” (e.g., surveys, competitive bids)?
 - iii. Will the vendor provide the best quality goods or services at the most competitive price?
- h. Volunteers who are not FLC Representatives or Participants may not use FLC distribution or mailing lists for promotion of their business interests or activities.
- i.

10. DISCRIMINATION

- a. FLC prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran status, military status, or other protected category under federal law, such as opposing discrimination or participating in any complaint process at the EEOC or other human rights agencies.
- b. FLC will not tolerate discrimination of any sort, and this is a grounds for removal or other action permitted by law.

11. HARASSMENT

- a. FLC prohibits and will not tolerate harassment or derision of any sort directed by or at Members, staff, volunteers, or at others who may work with FLC or attend its functions. This includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Spreading malicious gossip and/or rumors;
 - ii. Using obscene or abusive language, or engaging in disorderly, antagonistic conduct; and
 - iii. Threatening, intimidating, or coercing others.
- b. Individuals have differing perceptions of what is offensive. All volunteers need to be sensitive to these differences in their dealings with others and strive to create a safe environment in which everyone can participate fully to develop and execute successful events and activities for FLC.
- c. Sexual harassment will be grounds for separation and potentially other actions as allowed by law.
 - i. Sexual harassment is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example:
 1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or continued participation in FLC activities.
 2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions or other professional opportunities affecting such individual.
 3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.
 - ii. Sexual harassment may encompass a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors, including, but not limited to:
 1. Physical and verbal sexual advances or repeated demands for dates;
 2. Sexually derogatory or demeaning remarks or names;
 3. Off-color jokes, vulgar comments, offensive language, and teasing about sexual preferences;
 4. Unwelcome touching, such as hugging, kissing, pinching or patting;
 5. Displaying, storing or transmitting pornographic or sexually oriented materials using FLC equipment or resources; and
 6. Creating a hostile environment by the use of inflammatory and patently offensive epithets and slurs.