



World Organisation  
for Animal Health  
Founded as OIE

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**Guidance for WOAH  
Delegates and Applicants**

**Selection process for experts seeking  
nomination for election to WOAH  
Specialist Commissions**

**2024-2027**

## 1. Purpose

This document outlines the process to establish a list of suitable experts for the four WOAAH Specialist Commissions which the WOAAH World Assembly of Delegates (the Assembly) will use for the election of members of these Commissions. This aims to provide greater transparency to the nomination process.

This process complements the Basic Texts of WOAAH and retains the authority of the Assembly to elect the President, two Vice Presidents and three members of each of the Specialist Commissions. WOAAH Headquarters is responsible for implementation of this process.

The process was endorsed by the WOAAH Council in February 2017. See background in [Annex I](#).

## 2. Call for Nominations of Experts

The call for nominations of experts seeking nomination for election to the WOAAH Specialist Commissions will open on Monday 3 July 2023 and close on Friday 8 September 2023 (see key dates in [Section 10](#)).

This information will be disseminated through:

- Notification to WOAAH Delegates, Reference Centres, National Focal Points
- Publication on the WOAAH website of full guidance and one-page adverts and on social media

## 3. Application Process

Interested applicants must:

1. complete, in English, all required fields in the online application form using this guidance (the required information is listed in [Annex IV](#)). Applications received by email will not be accepted.
2. upload the following documents:
  - a) a brief CV in English (maximum four pages)
  - b) the Delegate endorsement letter or the Delegate's contact details
3. provide five short texts (written directly on the online form) demonstrating how the applicant meets each assessment criterion (competencies and attributes) as described in [Annex III](#).

Current Specialist Commission members wishing to be re-elected must also fill in the form online to declare their interest. The form excludes the 'assessment criteria' section ([Annex III](#)) but requires current members to provide a new Delegate's endorsement letter or the Delegate's contact details. Uploading a CV is optional but recommended, should they wish to supply an up-to-date CV.

## 4. Expertise and Qualifications and other expectations for applicants

The effectiveness of each Specialist Commission is influenced by the competence and interpersonal skills of each member. Expected professional qualifications and competencies, interpersonal skills and other expectations are described in [Annex III](#). The work of each Specialist Commission is presented in [Annex II](#) for information.

In addition to the required professional qualifications and interpersonal skills, the candidate must consider their ability to commit the time needed to deliver their elected responsibilities. Applicants will need the support of their government and employer to undertake preparatory work as part of their role and to attend Commission meetings and other events.

### *Required Availability*

**[Attendance to meetings]** to participate in two Commission meetings per year during the three-year term (February and September), usually in person at WOAAH Headquarters (Paris, France). Each Commission meeting last 8 or 9 full working days for the Code Commission, 6 days for the Aquatic Animal Commission, 5 days for the Scientific Commission and 5 days for the BSC.

**[Preparation in-between meetings]** to review comprehensively all working documents (which can be considerable) including Member comments on proposed revisions to new and existing text of the relevant WOAAH standard and associated reports of *ad hoc* Groups and Working Groups prior to meetings; to discuss and prioritise

agenda items prior to the meeting; to lead the discussion on some specific agenda items; to review the draft report and annexes for publication post meeting.

**[Additional support]** To provide advice to WOAH Headquarters on specific requests related to matters under the Terms of Reference of the Specialist Commissions.

**[Participation to activities]** To participate in relevant *ad hoc* Groups on behalf of the Commission. To represent the Specialist Commission at WOAH events such as Focal Point training workshops and conferences.

## 5. Endorsement of applications by WOAH Delegates

For the applicant to be considered eligible, a letter of endorsement from a WOAH Delegate must be submitted.

### ***Role of the applicant***

The applicant must obtain a letter of endorsement from a WOAH Delegate. The Delegate may be from the country where the applicant is born or from the country where the applicant is currently working or reside.

The applicant may either:

- Send his/her application or CV to their country's WOAH Delegate to obtain a letter of endorsement to upload in the online application; or
- Provide, on the online application form, the contact details of the Delegate from whom the applicant wishes to obtain the endorsement. WOAH Headquarters will make every effort to obtain the endorsement from the Delegate on the applicants' behalf within 10 days of receipt of the application to not delay the evaluation process.

You can consult the list of WOAH Delegates on the WOAH website: [click here to consult it](#).

### ***Roles of the Delegate***

**Endorsement:** Before endorsing the applicant, the WOAH Delegate should confirm that the applicant has the relevant qualifications, competencies and skills to serve on the selected Specialist Commission ([Annex III](#)). **The Delegate should confirm that the applicant meets these criteria by returning an endorsement letter to the applicant.**

**Nomination:** Before the General Session 2024, WOAH Delegates may designate potential candidates from the Council-endorsed list for the President and two Vice Presidents posts.

**Vote:** During the Assembly in May 2024, WOAH Delegates will vote for their preferred candidates for each of the four Specialist Commissions. Delegates shall consider the need for balance of scientific and technical skills, together with regional and gender balance.

## 6. Administrative Processes

### ***Eligibility***

- An application will be considered as eligible if it includes:
  - ✓ CV attached (maximum 4 pages): brief description of education qualifications, relevant experience and key achievements or publications.
  - ✓ Written evidence for each five criteria (maximum 150 words each) that demonstrate scientific and technical expertise and provide examples of personal skills and attributes per criteria ([Annex III](#)).
  - ✓ Delegate endorsement letter attached or Delegates' contact details.
  - ✓ Support from employer.
- The application and documents must be submitted in English. Applications received in a language other than English will not be considered eligible for further evaluation.
- WOAH Delegates are not eligible to apply due to the potential conflict of interest associated with their role as WOAH Delegate and the time required to fulfil the role of a Commission member.

#### *Other administrative processes*

- All applicants will receive notification of receipt of their applications and be advised as to whether their application is eligible.
- WOAAH will keep a record of all applications received, the date received and whether they were determined to be eligible during the process.
- Applications may be referred to the WOAAH Legal Affairs and Partnerships Unit for advice, if necessary.
- Eligible applications will be forwarded to the Nomination Evaluation Committee (NEC) for evaluation.

### **7. Nomination Evaluation Committee**

- WOAAH Headquarters will establish a Nomination Evaluation Committee of at least eight members and will include representatives from the following:
  - ✓ WOAAH Deputy Director General for International Standards and Sciences
  - ✓ WOAAH Head of Standards Department
  - ✓ WOAAH Head of Science Department
  - ✓ WOAAH Head of Status Department, and
  - ✓ Four external evaluators
- The Chair of the Nomination Evaluation Committee will be selected by the WOAAH Council.
- The Secretariat for the Nomination Evaluation Committee will be provided by the Standards Department.
- The names of the proposed external evaluators will be provided to Council by September 2023 for approval.

### **8. Evaluation Process**

Each member of the Nomination Evaluation Committee will independently assess applications against the scientific and technical competencies and the personal skills and attributes outlined in this document. Each application will be evaluated by at least two members of the Committee separately before the Committee comes together to discuss all the applications against the selection criteria specified in the call for nominations. This will ensure transparency and independence of the evaluation process and provide an opportunity to resolve any differences of opinion.

Guidance on how to determine the suitability of applicants and methodology to use for the evaluation will be provided to the Nomination Evaluation Committee.

The evaluation report, including the list of applicants assessed as suitable for each of the Specialist Commissions will be provided to the WOAAH Director General no later than by the end of December 2023.

The list of all suitable experts will be provided to the WOAAH Council, for its endorsement, at its 2024 February meeting.

Candidates nominated for election will be advised in writing by 11 March 2024. If they wish to withdraw their application, they must do so by 18 March 2024 by notifying WOAAH in writing. [[expert\\_applications@woah.org](mailto:expert_applications@woah.org)].

At least 60 days before the General Session, the WOAAH Director General will provide WOAAH Delegates with the approved list of candidates which will be submitted to the Assembly for election at the 2024 General Session.

### **9. Election**

The procedures for elections and the legal basis for the appointment of members of the Specialist Commissions are well described in the WOAAH Basic Texts and the associated Terms of Reference and Internal Rules that govern their establishment and functioning.

Elections for members of the Specialist Commissions will take place during the General Session. Only Delegates present will be eligible to vote. Delegates will be informed of the voting process prior to the election and should take into consideration the need for geographic representation and gender balance when voting.

WOAH headquarters will notify successful candidates, in writing, within 30 days after the election.

## 10. Other relevant information

### *Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest*

- To uphold the integrity of the work done by WOAAH, a successful candidate must sign a 'Confidentiality Undertaking' and a 'Declaration of Interest'.

### *WOAH Specialist Commission Performance Management Framework*

- In accordance with [Resolution No.11](#) adopted in May 2015 the performance of each Specialist Commission and its members will be evaluated continuously throughout the term. Members must agree to participate in the WOAAH Performance Monitoring Framework applied to the Specialist Commissions.

### *Travel & expenses*

- Members of the Specialist Commissions required to travel to attend Commission or other meetings will be provided with travel (economy class) and a per diem in accordance with rules of WOAAH.

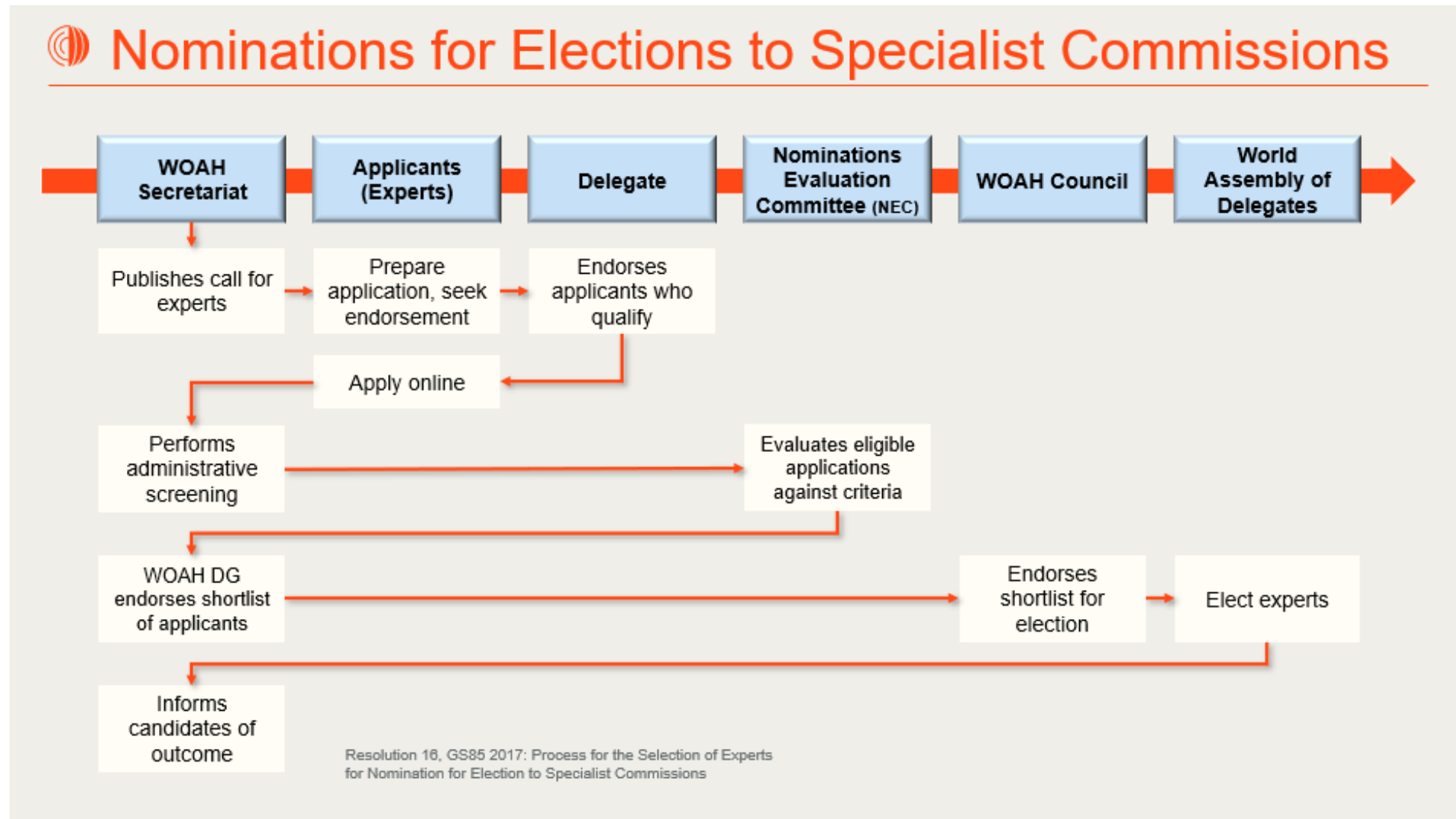
### *Contact*

- Questions concerning the process can be directed to the Head of the Standards Department via email [expert\\_applications@woah.org](mailto:expert_applications@woah.org)

### *Key dates for Applicants and Delegates*

Date	Activity
<b>2023</b>	
<b>June 2023</b>	Selection Process Announced and Guidance published
<b>03/07/2023</b>	Selection Process Opened
<b>08/09/2023</b>	Selection Process Closed
<b>30/09/2023</b>	Eligible candidates informed
<b>October-December 2023</b>	Nomination Evaluation process
<b>2024</b>	
<b>February 2024</b>	Council endorses shortlist
<b>11/03/2024</b>	Candidates informed whether shortlisted or not for the election
<b>18/03/2024</b>	Deadline to inform WOAAH if candidate wishes to withdraw
<b>27/03/2024</b>	List of suitable candidates sent to Delegates
<b>30/05/2024</b>	Election of members of the Specialist Commissions during the General Session
<b>01/07/2024</b>	Candidates informed of results (unsuitable, suitable but not elected and elected)
<b>July 2024</b>	Start of term for members of Specialist Commissions
<b>May 2027</b>	End of term for members of Specialist Commissions

Diagram showing the flow of Selection process for experts seeking nomination for election to the WOAH Specialist Commissions



## ANNEX I: BACKGROUND OF THE PROCESS

A major objective of the WOAH's Sixth Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 was Scientific Excellence. In particular, the Delegates asked WOAH to improve transparency of the election process and establish term limits for the elected members of the Specialist Commissions. To fulfil this objective, WOAH has developed a process that guides the selection of experts for election to the four Specialist Commissions. The process describes how WOAH (Council and WOAH HQs) manages the Selection of Experts through a call for nominations and assessment of applications against a set of criteria by a Nomination Evaluation Committee (consisting of WOAH headquarters staff, a representative of the Council and independent experts). The process establishes a list of suitable candidates to be proposed for election to the Specialist Commissions. This process is in line with best practice approaches used by many other international and national bodies. It supports the involvement of the WOAH Council, Regional Bureaux and WOAH Delegates and ensures that the best scientific advice is provided when developing WOAH standards, guidelines and recommendations.

### Objectives of the process

1. Engage veterinary and scientific experts reflecting the specific demographics of the respective professions while continuing to respect geographic and expertise parameters and improving the gender balance.
2. Ensure that the WOAH decision-making processes reflect the global membership of the organisation and are based on the most recent and informed scientific opinion of specialists (including those familiar with cutting-edge scientific developments and technologies), as well as the opinions of specialist in economic, social and environmental areas.
3. Ensure the transparency of the process for the election of such experts and to maintain the independence of those experts in carrying out their roles and responsibilities.

The election procedures and legal basis for the appointment of the Specialist Commissions are well described in the [Basic Texts](#) and the associated Terms of Reference and Internal Rules that govern the establishment and functioning of WOAH. These are the International Agreement and its Appendix of January 25, 1924, the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of France and WOAH of February 21, 1977, the Organic Rules of WOAH of May 24, 1973 and the General Rules and other Texts adopted in May 2011 and revised in May 2012 and May 2013 with the appendices of Terms of Reference and Internal Rules applicable to the Specialist Commissions. [Resolution No 16](#) detailing the Process for the Selection of Experts for Nomination for Election as Members of WOAH Specialist Commissions was adopted in May 2017.

## **ANNEX II: WHAT DO SPECIALIST COMMISSIONS DO AND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF COMMISSION MEMBERS?**

The role of the Specialist Commission's members varies according to which Specialist Commission they are elected to. Fundamentally, members engage in group work with other experts to reach consensus on scientific matters in relation to WOAH's international standards, guidelines and recommendations. This involves prioritising and overseeing the development of new or revised standards and guidelines, identifying issues with existing standards, making decisions on implementation of standards and providing advisory support for other aspects of WOAH's scientific work programmes. They are responsible for the official recognition of animal health status and. The views of the Delegates of WOAH Members are routinely sought through the circulation of draft and revised texts, and at each General Session, the Delegates discuss and formally adopt revised or new draft texts as WOAH standards. These texts are then incorporated into the next edition of the *Terrestrial Code*, *Terrestrial Manual*, *Aquatic Code* and *Aquatic Manual*.

Members of each Commission meet at least twice yearly to address its work programme. The Specialist Commissions collaborate closely on issues needing a harmonised approach while ensuring the latest scientific information is used in their work.

Each Specialist Commission comprises six members who are elected by the Assembly for a period of three years. Members shall be eligible for re-election based on their performance, skills and the changing needs of the Specialist Commission.

The terms of reference, roles and responsibilities of each Commission are further described in the Basic Texts, which can be found [here](#).

The WOAH Secretariats, based at the WOAH Headquarters in Paris, are responsible for preparation of working documents, dossiers, and collation and analysis of Member Country comments. They also coordinate collaboration with other Specialist Commissions when relevant.



### ANNEX III: EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed in accordance with five criteria: three professional expertise criteria specific to each Specialist Commission and two criteria to evaluate skills and attributes. The applicant will have to demonstrate that s/he meets each of these criteria by providing a short text (up to 150 words each) using the online form. The applicant will also have to demonstrate his/her proficiency in English and confirm their independence of thoughts.

#### [A] Professional Competencies (three criteria per Specialist Commission)

##### Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission

1. **[Qualifications and expertise]** have a degree in veterinary science. Be internationally recognised, with a broad understanding of, and practical experience with, the major diseases of animals addressed by the *Terrestrial Code* (i.e. mammals, reptiles, birds and bees) and have expertise in the prevention and control of animal diseases, animal welfare, international animal health policy, Veterinary Services and veterinary public health.
2. **[International Standards]** understand the role of WOAAH in the development of WOAAH international standards and have experience in the implementation of standards in the *Terrestrial Code*.
3. **[International Trade]** have knowledge and experience in international trade in animals and animal products and the implementation of WOAAH standards at the national level including risk assessment and management, development of sanitary measures or border control to support the import or export of animals and animal products regionally or internationally.

##### Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission

1. **[Qualifications and expertise]** have a degree in veterinary science or biological sciences, or equivalent with a specific focus on aquatic animal health. Be an internationally recognised specialist with a broad understanding of and practical experience with the major diseases of aquatic animals addressed by the *Aquatic Code* (i.e. fish, molluscs, crustaceans or amphibians) including experience in surveillance, prevention and control of aquatic animal diseases, welfare of farmed fish, and international animal health policy and Aquatic Animal Health Services; or have international experience in standards for diagnostic tests addressed in the *Aquatic Manual* including aquaculture establishment biosecurity, test validation, laboratory quality assurance, new laboratory technologies.
2. **[International Standards]** understand the role of WOAAH in the development of WOAAH international standards and have experience in the implementation of standards in the *Aquatic Code* and *Aquatic Manual*.
3. **[International Trade]** have knowledge and experience in international trade in aquatic animals and aquatic animal products and the implementation of WOAAH standards at the national level including risk assessment and management, development of sanitary measures or border control to support the import or export of aquatic animals and aquatic animal products regionally or internationally.

##### Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases

1. **[Qualifications and expertise]** have a degree in veterinary science or biological sciences or equivalent. Be an internationally recognised specialist with broad understanding of, practical experience with and have a scientific publication record in a field relevant to the prevention and control of infectious diseases of animals addressed by the *Terrestrial Code* (i.e. mammals, reptiles, birds and bees) and relevant expertise in animal disease management, in particular WOAAH listed diseases and diseases for which WOAAH has a procedure for official recognition of disease status (AHS, BSE, CBPP, CSF, FMD, PPR<sup>1</sup>).
2. **[International Standards]** understand the role of WOAAH in the development of its international standards and have experience in the implementation of standards in the *Terrestrial Code* and *Terrestrial Manual*.
3. **[Scientific Technical Expertise]** have expertise in providing scientific guidance to develop policies on the assessment and prevention and control or eradication of diseases in domestic animals and wildlife, notably those with the potential to affect trade in terrestrial animals and their products or affect human health. Have expertise in one or more of the following areas: risk analysis, epidemiology, disease surveillance, animal health socioeconomic, laboratory diagnosis or vaccinology applied to disease prevention and control at the national or international level and an understanding of the role of Veterinary Services.

<sup>1</sup> African horse sickness (AHS), Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP), Classical swine fever (CSF), Foot and mouth disease (FMD), Peste des petits ruminants (PPR)

### Biological Standards Commission

1. **[Qualifications and expertise]** have a degree in veterinary science or biological sciences or equivalent. Be an internationally recognised specialist, with broad understanding of and practical experience with the major diseases of animals addressed by the *Terrestrial Manual* (i.e. mammals, birds and bees) with international expertise in the diagnosis, prevention and surveillance of infectious animal diseases, particularly in laboratory methods, operations and vaccine production.
2. **[International Standards]** understand the role of WOAH in the development of its international standards and have experience in the implementation of Standards in the *Terrestrial Manual*.
3. **[Scientific Technical Expertise]** be an internationally recognised expert in laboratory diagnosis and immunological prevention of diseases with respect to international trade or movement of terrestrial animals or their products, particularly diseases included in the *Terrestrial Code*. Have expertise in one or more of the following fields: standards for biological products, diagnostic preparations, vaccines and immune sera relating to terrestrial animals, veterinary laboratory management, biosafety and biosecurity, vaccine production, test validation, laboratory quality assurance, genomics and new laboratory technologies. Be an active member of their national veterinary laboratory network and actively involved in regional and international networks.

### **[B] Attributes and skills (two criteria required for all Specialist Commission members):**

In approximately 50 words (maximum 150 words), the applicants must provide evidence of his/her ability for the following two criteria:

4. **[Communication and analytical skills]** must provide examples that demonstrate the applicant's ability to analyse and synthesise scientific and technical information into structured assessments, reviews and reports and that the applicant can present a scientific opinion in a constructive manner and to build consensus.
5. **[Intercultural Awareness and teamwork skills]** must provide examples demonstrating situations where the applicant was able to work within a small team of people from different cultural backgrounds as well as experts from various disciplines.

### **[C] Other requirements**

On the application form, the applicants must:

**[Language]** demonstrate proficiency in English, both orally and in writing. Being a native English speaker or having acquired the language through studying English (e.g. certificate) or studying or working in an English environment are examples which can be provided. Additional language skills in French or Spanish are desirable but not essential.

**[Independence]** confirm having the ability and the authority to act in their personal and independent capacity and not as a representative of his/her employer or national government.

#### ANNEX IV: ONLINE FORM STRUCTURE

**Please note that it is not possible to save an incomplete application form to return to it later. We recommend to gather the information in a separate document to copy-paste into the online form when ready to submit.**

1. Initial question which will select the relevant form to fill-in.
  - a) Indicate if you are applying as a current Specialist Commission member or as a new applicant
2. Personal information
  - a) Title
  - b) Surname and First name
  - c) Nationality and current country of residence
3. Contact details
  - a) Email address
  - b) Phone number with country code e.g. +33 (0) x xx xx xx xx
4. WOAH Delegate endorsement letter
  - a) Confirm if letter of endorsement from WOAH Delegate is supplied by applicant or
  - b) Provide contact details of Delegate to contact in absence of an endorsement letter
  - c) Confirm that the applicant's employer supports the application
5. Upload files
  - a) Upload CV: max 4 pages; should include a description of educational qualifications, experience in relation to specific diseases, animal species or other specialities and achievements relevant to the Commission
  - b) Upload list of publications if relevant and applicable
  - c) Upload endorsement letter if obtained
6. Confidentiality agreements
  - a) Tick to allow WOAH to store personal data for the purpose of this process
  - b) Tick for WOAH to inform all Delegates of candidates nominated for election to the Specialist Commissions
  - c) Tick for WOAH to keep personal data post process, as potential experts for other WOAH activities
7. Keywords
  - a) Indicate the key expertise for which the candidate wishes to be considered
  - b) Indicate the key diseases of expertise
  - c) Indicate the key species of expertise
8. Specialist Commissions
  - a) Indicate for which Specialist Commission the applicant wishes to apply. To apply to more than one Specialist Commission, the applicant must submit separate applications
  - b) Indicate whether the applicant has applied before (if yes, specify which)
9. Evidence texts
  - a) They must be written in the online application for each required 5 criteria (max 150 words per criterion). Should include examples to support the applicant's claims against the professional competencies and personal attributes and skills as described in [Annex III](#). The text can be written in a Word document before being pasted into the online form
  - b) Demonstrate the applicant's proficiency in English.
  - c) Confirm that the applicant has the ability and control to be independent
10. Other comments
  - a) Add information if necessary