




RÉPUBLIQUE  
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**EXPERTISE**

**CNRS INSTITUTIONAL  
SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE  
CHARTER – 2022**



The CNRS Institutional Scientific Expertise Charter (“The Charter”) is an integral part of the CNRS’s expertise mission<sup>1</sup> which its research personnel takes part in<sup>2</sup>. It must be respected by all CNRS personnel and any person mandated by the CNRS to carry out an expert review.

Institutional scientific expertise at the CNRS is collective in nature. It includes all activities aimed at answering a given question by making a critical survey of the available scientific knowledge on that subject. Its objective is to support public decision-making and public debate by sharing knowledge and providing independent scientific insight.

This Charter sets out the principles<sup>3</sup> which govern all institutional scientific expertise work carried out collectively by a group of experts working under the responsibility of the CNRS. This may be in response to an external request or on the CNRS’s own initiative and carried out by the CNRS alone or jointly with its partners.

The CNRS will ensure the application of this Charter and in particular the full respect of the principles of competence, transparency, plurality and impartiality for all the institutional scientific expert reviews that it directs.


Each institutional scientific expert review will lead to the publication of a report thereon.

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1. As defined in the French decree n°82-993 dated November 24th 1982 on the organisation and functioning of the CNRS.

2. On the basis of Article L. 411-1 of the Research Code.

3. These principles are inspired by the general principles set forth in the French National Expertise Charter published on March 2nd 2010 by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research and which itself refers to AFNOR standard NF X50-110: 2003 “Expertise Quality - General skill requirements for an expert review”.



## ARTICLE 1 ORGANISATION OF INSTITUTIONAL SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE AT THE CNRS

The **Mission for Scientific Expertise** (“MPES”) is part of the CNRS Scientific Office. It proposes and implements the CNRS institutional scientific expertise strategy. It centralises requests for institutional expertise (both external requests and self-referrals) and directs the preparation of responses to these. It also organises and coordinates all expertise work.

The MPES draws up the specifications (*cahier des charges*) for each expert review. These set out the purpose and reason for the expert review, the schedule, budget, procedures for carrying out the expert review along with the conditions for the dissemination of the subsequent report. In the case of expertise carried out following an external request, the MPES will also draw up an agreement to be signed by all parties.

The MPES coordinates all communication activities related to CNRS institutional scientific expertise work. It publishes the list of ongoing expert reviews and resulting reports. It promotes the CNRS’s expertise activity, the principles of the Charter and the expertise performed.

The MPES reports on its activities to the CNRS Scientific Board.

**The Scientific Expertise Steering Committee** (“the Steering Committee”) advises the MPES regarding all its activities. It makes recommendations on the key stages

of ongoing expert reviews including their launches, the composition of the groups of experts and the publication of the reports.

The Steering Committee is chaired by the CNRS Deputy CEO for Science. It also includes the Principal Private Secretary of the CNRS Chairman and CEO (or his representative in charge of public relations) and two people appointed by the CNRS Chairman and CEO. The Steering Committee may invite external personalities to take part in its work. It provides reasoned opinions.

The MPES and the Steering Committee may refer as necessary to the governing bodies of the National Committee for Scientific Research (CoNRS).

The **CNRS Chairman** and **CEO** defines the CNRS’s institutional scientific expertise strategy. Following a proposal from the MPES and after the Steering Committee provides its reasoned opinion, the Chairman and CEO takes decisions related to expertise work, particularly the launch of expert reviews, the nomination of experts, the signing of agreements with external parties requesting expertise and the publication of reports.

## ARTICLE 2 SELECTION AND PROTECTION OF EXPERTS

The MPES ensures that people with all the necessary skills are brought together to carry out each expert review. The CNRS Institutes support the MPES in identifying experts on the basis of their scientific activities and production while also making sure these experts are competent to work on the subject of the expert review. The MPES also communicates about the expert review the CNRS plans to launch and similarly examines the proposals of those scientists who volunteer to take part.

Experts participate on a voluntary basis. They are asked to make a confidential declaration of interests to the MPES which is a condition for their participation.

The MPES analyses these declarations of interest, if necessary by referring to the CNRS Ethics Officer to ensure that expert work is protected from undue influence.

The MPES then sends its recommendations on the composition of the expert group to the Steering Committee for advice thereon.

The CNRS Chairman and CEO sends a letter of assignment to the experts to formalise their appointment.

The CNRS takes all necessary and appropriate measures, including those that involve the experts’ employers, to preserve the independence, impartiality and peace of mind of experts taking part in an institutional scientific expert review under the CNRS’s responsibility. To this end, the names of a group of experts will not be made public until the end of the expert review the organisation is responsible for.



## ARTICLE 3 COLLECTIVE EXPERT REPORTS

The full collective expert report explains how the corpus of documents was created and how the bibliographical references on which the expert review is based were selected. It also includes an exhaustive detailed list of these references.

The report presents the state of the art of available knowledge. It reports on all the points of view expressed within the corpus which the expert work is based on including points for which the current state of available knowledge does not enable conclusions to be drawn. It may report on any divergences expressed within the group of experts and on scientific controversies. It may suggest further research on any unresolved scientific issues.

The collective expert report is collectively validated by the group of experts presented therein who worked on the expert review.

The CNRS undertakes to make the complete versions of the collective expert reports produced under its responsibility public and accessible. Each report will be accompanied by a synthesis accessible to a broader audience. Various forms of communication activities may be organised to promote the publication of the reports such as the organisation of a project review conference or a scientific debate.

The CNRS is in no way responsible for any uses that may be made of the collective expert report.

## ARTICLE 4 MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

The CNRS Institutional Scientific Expertise Charter was adopted by its Board of Trustees on June 17th 2022 after the Scientific Board gave its opinion. It supersedes and replaces all previous documents.

The Charter is published in the CNRS Official Bulletin and on the CNRS website.

The Charter will be respected by all CNRS personnel and any person mandated by the CNRS to carry out an expert review.

The MPES monitors and ensures the correct application of the Charter. It collects and examines any proposals for changes that are brought to its attention.

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