

Nordic GRADE Network

Terms of reference for the Coordinating Group

16 January 2025

1. Background

The Nordic GRADE Network was created to advance the use of GRADE for evidence-informed decision making for policy and practice in the Nordic countries. The Network is part of the GRADE Working Group.

2. Purpose

The Nordic GRADE Network aims to:

- advance the use of GRADE for evidence-informed decision making for policy and practice in the Nordic countries.
- bring together contributors to GRADE within the Nordic countries, to then jointly agree on the priorities and strategies for advancing GRADE activities.
- link with and support researchers, policymakers, educators and methodologists in use of and training in GRADE for systematic reviews and guidelines.

3. Objectives of the Coordinating Group

The objectives of the Nordic GRADE Network Coordinators are to:

- Plan and coordinate activities of the Network, together with Network members.
- Disseminate information on the Network and on Network activities within the region, including maintaining a list of members and a website.
- Perform all activities that are needed for the proper management of the work of the Network.
- Maintain and strengthen links to our host institutions or networks and other institutions and networks in the region that use GRADE.
- Report annually or as required to the GGG on Network activities.

4. Membership

4.1 Composition of the Coordinating Group

- The Coordinating Group will include people based in institutions and networks in Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway (no less than 1 and no more than 3 members per country) that actively use GRADE and / or teach GRADE methods.
- We will strive to ensure representation from institutions and networks in each country that are major users of GRADE in that setting.
- In the event of a vacancy in the coordinating group, the Coordinating Group will attempt to identify a shortlist of individuals who are active GRADE users from the same institution or network to replace this individual (if this institution or network remains a major user of GRADE). If the institution or network is no longer a major user of GRADE; the Coordinating Group will attempt to identify a shortlist of individuals from another relevant institution or network that is a major user of GRADE. The replacement will be decided by a majority vote of the coordinating Group and this suggestion will then be taken to the relevant institution. If necessary, the Coordinating Group will discuss alternative replacement with the institution
- The position of a Coordinating Group member will become vacant if:
 - The individual indicates that they are no longer able to take on this role.

- The individual is absent from Coordinating Group meetings for more than 4 meetings in a year without a reasonable reason and / or fails to fulfill the responsibilities of Coordinating Group members (see section 6).
- The individual has, in the view of the Coordinating Group, acted against the aims of the Network and / or the GRADE Working Group.
- A decision on whether a Coordinating Group member has failed to fulfill the responsibilities of their position (see section 6) or has acted against the aims of the Network and / or the GRADE Working Group will be taken by a majority vote of Coordinating Group members.
- Others involved in the Network may attend Coordinating Group meetings as observers.

4.2 Terms of service of the Coordinating Group

- Coordinating Group members will have a 3-year term, renewable once if the member is still willing to serve and still fulfills the criteria outlined in section 4.1. Former Coordinating Group members who have served two terms may rejoin the Group after a break of 3 years.
- The Coordinating Group will attempt to ensure that there is continuity of Coordinating Group membership by staggering the departure of those whose terms are due to end at a similar time.
- The chair and note-taker for meetings will rotate every 3 months.
- Declaration of interests: All members of the Coordinating Group will be asked to declare their interests annually. Any potential conflicts of interest will be discussed in the Group and, if needed, with the GGG.

5. Meetings and communication

- The Coordinating Group aims to meet monthly. Most of these meetings will be online, but in-person meetings will be organised when feasible. The Chair may call additional meetings if needed.
- The agenda and supporting papers for Coordinating Group meetings will be prepared by the Chair and circulated at least 5 working days prior to the meeting date for changes and approval.
- Minutes of Coordinating Group meetings will be taken by the note-taker and saved in the Group's Teams folder. The Coordinating Group may agree to redact any sections of the minutes that concern confidential issues.

6. Responsibilities of Coordinating Group members

- Attend at least 60% of meetings per year.
- Be responsive to email requests for advice and input from other members of the Coordinating Group and the Network.
- Contribute to ongoing activities and projects of the Network (e.g., training, translation and dissemination).
- Adhere to the aims of the Network and the GRADE Working Group.

7. Terms of remuneration for Coordinating Group members

- Membership of the Coordinating Group is voluntary and will not be remunerated.