

## **PhageNet DZIF**

### **Governance and Access Policy**

#### **§1 Network definition and structure**

The Phage-Network DZIF (short: PhageNet DZIF) is an organization carried by the *Deutsches Zentrum für Infektionsforschung* (DZIF). It strives for the development and implementation of structural requirements, educational sessions and scientific projects to promote translational bacteriophage (short: phage) research and application in Germany. The main goal is to establish a multidisciplinary network of experts and stakeholders in this field by inviting national and international participants. Another aim is to create awareness for the need of alternative treatment strategies for multi-resistant pathogens and to make phage therapy accessible to a broader public. This also includes veterinary applications like the reduction of antibiotics through additive phage therapies in small animal medicine or phage therapy of farm animals instead of antibiotics. Phage therapy should be promoted as a possibility to reduce the use of antibiotics in human as well as veterinary medicine.

#### **§2 Aims of the Phage-Network DZIF**

The objectives of the network are:

##### **(1) Information exchange**

The PhageNet DZIF aims to unite phage interested parties in Germany and beyond to create synergies in scientific and clinical work. To realize clinical and translational research, PhageNet DZIF members exchange information on current and past strategies, develop materials, e.g. treatment pathways and brochures and make them available as templates and/or for review to other members of the network or to the network as a whole. The use of phages in inpatients and outpatients, farm and pet animals should be facilitated by closer cooperation between researchers, producers, stakeholders, physicians and veterinarians and optimized for the best possible care and safety.

##### **(2) Research**

The members of the PhageNet DZIF support each other in planning and conducting scientific projects. These can be basic research or studies of different types, such as cohort studies, interventional studies, etc.

##### **(3) Network meetings and continuing education**

The PhageNet DZIF offers regular meetings and training events (at least once per quarter) and thus contributes to quality assurance in the field of bacteriophage research and therapy. The program and the main topics can be co-designed by the participants. In this context, joint strategies and treatment recommendations can also be developed and agreed upon. The meetings can take place online or as face-to-face events. Only network members and specifically invited non-members are allowed to participate in (virtual) events. Participation-Links to online meetings should not be shared with third parties by the members and/or invited non-members. Released information as well as jointly developed strategies, treatment recommendations and educational materials shall be made available to all members. Unless otherwise specified, the member receiving the material must maintain confidentiality about its contents and may not share it itself, including with other members

of the Phage-Network DZIF. The authors consent must always be obtained prior to any further use or publication of any kind. Possible trademark rights and copyrights remain unaffected.

### **§3 Members**

#### **(1) Cooperation and duties**

The participation in the PhageNet DZIF as well as the offered meetings is voluntary and can be revoked at any time. The members participate in the individual scope of their possibilities in the realization of training events, in scientific projects and/or in the exchange of information and expertise.

#### **(2) Admission process**

The PhageNet DZIF is open to all scientists, physicians and veterinarians involved or interested in the implementation of bacteriophage research, development and therapy. Participation is also open to international parties, which will be facilitated by defining English as the official network language. However, there is a geographical limitation of the membership to the EU, non-EU countries associated with the HORIZON program and some additional countries mentioned in the EU General Export Authorisation No. EU001 (see Annex 1). Employees or associates from commercial companies (private laboratories, pharmacies, pharmaceutical companies, startups etc.) can become members with limited rights. The limitations apply to *Scientific Steering Committee* (SSC) membership and the SCC election. Applications for membership can be submitted via the official PhageNet DZIF website. The *Scientific Steering Committee* decides on the acceptance of registrants. The decision of the SSC will be based on the affiliation and short motivation provided by each interested person upon registration. The network management will provide this information to the SSC and following a two-week review process inform the applicant about his/her acceptance as a member. In specific cases and upon agreement of the SSC, the review process can also be shortened. A personal signature is not necessary in order to be officially registered as network member.

### **§4 Scientific steering committee**

#### **(1) The PhageNet DZIF is operated by the *Scientific Steering Committee* (SCC).**

This committee is responsible for the development and possible future modifications of the network governance. Furthermore, it decides on the admission of new members and the content of the network events.

(2) The SCC is elected by the network members. In a transition period it consists of 5 founding members and 4 newly elected representatives. The first mandate is 2 years following the inaugural meeting of the SSC. Importance should be attached to the best possible professional and gender diversity and at least two positions should be occupied by DZIF members.

(3) Every 2 years new SCC elections are held by the network members, in which a simple majority is sufficient. Each member receives 5 votes and the candidates with the highest number of votes are elected to the SCC. Re-election is possible. The election can be conducted in written form (also digitally), as well as at network meetings.

(4) If an SSC member resigns during his/her mandate, a new candidate will be voted by the network members (see (3)).

(5) Regular meetings of the SCC (on an at least quarterly basis) are held, at which all decisions are made in a participatory manner.

## **§5 Communication and Network Coordination**

Communication and Network coordination is handled by a respective project manager and supported by the SSC.

Their responsibilities include the following aspects:

- Assistance in the set-up and maintenance of the network website and social media presence
- Organizing the network meetings
- Supporting the work of the SCC

## **§6 General rules on authorships**

### **(1) General rules on authorships**

Future authorship of publications generated by the Phage-Network DZIF must comply with the "Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals" of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). The recommended criteria for ICMJE authorship are as follows:

- Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

(Source: ICMJE recommendations of points authorship needs to be based on)

### **(2) Order of authorship**

The person who performed the key analyses and/or drafted the manuscript should be designated as the first author. According to the rules of good scientific practice, the actual leader of this particular analysis may claim the position as last author, should he/she not already be first author. In case of multiple analysis leaders, they should agree on the last authorship among themselves at an early stage; shared first and last authorships should also be considered.

### **(3) Group acknowledgements**

As a rule, publications based on network projects should be made "on behalf of the Phage-Network DZIF".

**(4) Approval by SCC before publication**

Each publication based on network projects needs to be approved by the SCC prior submission.

**(5) Lectures and talks including achievements/plans of the PhageNet DZIF**

If a member of the PhageNet DZIF plans to include current achievements or future plans of the PhageNet DZIF as a main topic of a lecture/talk at a conference or elsewhere, he/she should inform the project coordinators at least 2 weeks prior to this event. The project coordinators will then forward the information to the SSC. In case the SSC has any objections against the planned lecture/talk the member should be notified at least 1 week prior to the talk. Each member is free to present a Phage-Network DZIF slide at the end of phage-related lectures/talks to promote the activities of the network. No formal announcement of this is necessary, however it is encouraged to inform the project coordination as well.

**§7 Disclaimer of liability**

All information, materials, and content made available through the network are provided for general informational purposes only. Any decisions or actions taken based on information obtained through the network are the sole responsibility of the user. Neither the PhageNet DZIF, nor the German Center for Infection Research (DZIF e. V.), nor any individual member or participating organization shall be liable for: the accuracy, completeness, or timeliness of the information provided, or any direct or indirect damages resulting from the use of, reliance on, or inability to use such information. All content is provided "as is", without any express or implied warranties. Participation in or membership of the PhageNet DZIF does not constitute an endorsement, certification, or quality assessment of any member, organization, product, service, or activity, and does not imply that participants have been reviewed, audited, or otherwise evaluated beyond basic eligibility for participation.

**§8 Other aspects**

- (1) This document may be amended any time by the SCC to accommodate further aspects that require regulation. Amendments will require a formal SSC acceptance voting performed online or in-person (simple majority sufficient)

**Annex 1: List of accepted countries for membership**

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### **Phage-Network DZIF**

Countries that can be accepted for a network membership:

- EU countries
  
- Non-EU countries that are associated to HORIZON Europe:
  - Albania
  - Armenia
  - Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - Canada
  - Faroe Islands
  - Georgia
  - Iceland
  - Israel
  - Kosovo
  - Moldova
  - Montenegro
  - New Zealand
  - North Macedonia
  - Norway
  - Serbia
  - Tunisia
  - Türkiye
  - Ukraine
  - United Kingdom
  
- Countries listed in the General Union Export Authorisation No. EU001 that are not listed above:
  - Australia
  - Japan
  - Canada
  - Switzerland
  - Liechtenstein
  - USA