



THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN CONSTITUTION OF THE NEUROSCIENCE INSTITUTE

Preamble

1. The Neuroscience Institute (NI) is a **research institute**, accredited by Senate on the recommendation of the University Research Committee, located organisationally in the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), and based in a purpose-built facility on the Groote Schuur Hospital campus.
2. The NI is a **cross-faculty interdisciplinary institute** linking neuroscience activity across the university, the associated teaching hospitals of the Western Cape Government Department of Health, and further afield. The NI aspires to be a South African centre of research excellence, providing a vibrant world-class environment that offers shared clinical and research facilities and meeting spaces designed to foster collaboration and mentorship.
3. The **vision** of the NI is an Africa where people achieve their full potential through brain health. Our **purpose** is to advance research, training, and advocacy through an interdisciplinary network of scientists and clinicians who share skills and expertise to improve lives and contribute to our understanding of the human brain.
4. The **research strategy** of the NI encourages the focused application of each member's scientific and clinical skills within this interdisciplinary environment, extending from basic enabling technologies to clinical studies and public health and preventive approaches. Our research questions seek to understand the various forms of brain insult and injury and how these intersect with brain development across the lifespan, as well as the methods used to investigate these conditions, in order to advance brain health for the people of Africa.
5. The NI is a voluntary **membership** body. Each member, who must also be a member of an academic department at UCT (in any faculty), is confirmed for a defined period by the Governing Board on the advice of the the Leadership Team. Membership may be renewed for successive periods where the member meets the membership criteria and expectations set out in Appendix I.

Members will actively contribute to the Institute's activities in research, clinical service, teaching and training, and advocacy; promoting transformation, diversity and equity across these domains.

6. Members may also lead or form **research groups** which may in turn be accredited by the University Research Committee as recognised research groups, but the primary goal of the institute is to foster collaboration between members of the NI.
7. The bodies established to govern, advise, lead and manage the NI are set out in Appendix II. These include the joint Council-and-Senate University Research Committee and:

- a) **The Governing Board** gives strategic advice to the Director and the Dean on the direction and management of the Neuroscience Institute (NI), as well as acting as advocates for the Institute. The Governing Board is appointed by the University Research Committee (URC) in consultation with the DVC: R&I and the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences.
- b) **The International Scientific Advisory Committee (ISAC)**, appointed by the Governing Board, is responsible for advising the Governing Board and the Director on current and future research strategy and scientific matters. Its terms of reference are set out in Appendix III.
- c) **The Directorate:** The Director and Deputy Director will be appointed by the University Research Committee and are responsible to the Dean for the work of the NI, and together with the Research Enterprise Manager, Operations Manager and other key support staff comprise the Directorate which is responsible for day-to-day management of the NI
- d) **The Working Groups:** appointed by the Director, represent the interests of the neuroscience research community on the Leadership Team.
- e) **The Young Investigators Forum:** comprising early career researchers, postdocs and postgraduate students.
- f) **The Leadership Team:** appointed by the Dean after consultation with the Director, is responsible for assisting in the day-to-day operation of the NI.

Rules regulating the governance of the NI

8. Structure of the NI

The Institute consists of:

- a) a Director, Deputy Director and Research Enterprise Manager; and
- b) elected members who may be also be members of other URC-accredited research groups;
- c) professional and support staff who enable the activities of the institute

Every member (including the Director) must have a **current appointment** in a UCT academic department. This appointment may be permanent or for a fixed term, and may be honorary; and it may be on the UCT staff establishment, the UCT/WCG joint staff establishment, or the UCT/NHLS joint staff establishment.

Members must have a clear understanding of the the duties for which they are accountable to their Head of Department and the duties for which they are accountable to the NI Director, where applicable via their research group's head.

9. Membership

The Governing Board elects members based on the advice of the Leadership Team and must satisfy itself that candidates meet the criteria for membership set out in Appendix I.

The key criteria are commitment to the vision and purpose of the NI and further include: excellence in research as evidenced by publications and ability to secure research funding; excellence in clinical practice as evidenced by professional standing; success in teaching and training postgraduate students; and evidence of active involvement in advocacy in relevant areas.

Membership is for a fixed period, and is subject to periodic review. The Governing Board may terminate a person's membership for good cause. A person automatically ceases to be a member if he/she ceases to be a member of the UCT staff, or if he/she resigns unless elected to an honorary UCT position.

The Neuroscience Institute is committed to creating an environment of transformation and inclusion and to diversifying its member (and student-member) base in alignment with the university's transformation benchmarks. Please get in touch if you identify a need or can contribute to these goals in any way.'

10. Research Groups

While it is not necessary for members of the NI to be part of another research group, members of the NI may individually or collectively seek University accreditation as research groups. Alternatively, a new member may, if the Governing Board and the URC agree, locate his/her existing University accredited research group in the NI.

11. The Governing Board

- a) **Composition:** The composition of the Governing Board is determined by the URC in consultation with the DVC: R&I and the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences and comprises:

- The URC Chair; DVC for Research & Internationalisation, or nominee (Chair)
- A member of the URC appointed by the URC
- The Chief Executive Officer of Groote Schuur Hospital
- The Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences
- Deans of other Faculties with significant representation in the NI
- The Director of the NI
- The Deputy Director of the NI
- Two Institute Members, elected by the Institute Membership for 3 years
- Additional members at the discretion of the Chair

- b) **Chair and Deputy Chair:** The Chair is the Chair of the URC or their nominee and the Deputy Chair is the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences or their nominee

- c) **Terms of reference:** The Governing Board will: [CONSTITUTION](#) | October 2021

- Advise the Dean on the work of the NI and its budget
- Advise the URC on strategy for the NI
- Advise the Director on the direction and leadership of the NI
- Seek the advice of its International Scientific Advisory Board

- Elect members on the advice of the Leadership Team and terminate membership on good cause shown.
- d) **Quorum:** Four members of the governing body constitute a quorum.
- e) **Meeting:** The governing body must meet annually and more frequently if the Director or the Chair requires this.

12. The International Scientific Advisory Committee

The Governing Board must appoint a scientific advisory committee, securing the active participation of suitable experts. The International Scientific Advisory Board (ISAC) will:

- Review the work undertaken in the NI at least annually; by receiving and interrogating reports from the Director.
- Advise the Director, and via him or her, the Governing Board on the work of the NI.

The size and composition and terms of reference of ISAC will be as determined by the Governing Board from time to time. The Terms of Reference are set out at Appendix III.

13. The Leadership Team

The Dean, in consultation with the Director, must appoint a Leadership Team for the NI, to assist the Director in the operation of the NI. The Leadership Team will include the Director and Deputy Director, the Research Enterprise Manager, the Chairs of the 2 Working Groups and the Young Investigators Forum, and the Facility Manager. The Leadership Team will meet regularly and be chaired by the Director. Day-to-day management of the NI will be by the Director assisted by the Deputy Director, the Research Enterprise Manager or the Facility Manager, as appropriate.

The Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring the NI is more than the sum of its parts, with members representing key areas of activity within the neuroscience community, as well as playing key strategic and administrative roles. The Leadership Team will meet monthly and have oversight of responsibilities such as finance, fundraising & sustainability, membership, people management and communication, mentorship & capacity development, health & safety, space, infrastructure, innovation & IP (incl data), core facilities, and monitoring & evaluation of the Institute's research strategy. Should the need arise, subcommittees in any of these areas may be formed by the Leadership Team.

14. The Director

The Director is appointed by the University Research Committee and will be a member of an established academic department, or will be made an honorary member of an appropriate department. The Director:

- Is responsible to the Dean for the work of the NI
- Is responsible to the Dean for the financial management of the NI: this requires the Director to submit annual budgets to the Dean, and to report quarterly on performance against budgets to the Dean

- Must report on the scientific activities of the NI to the International Scientific Advisory Committee and seek its advice
- Must account to the Governing Board for the work of the Institute, and must keep the Governing Board informed on the financial position of the NI.

Members of the Institute are accountable (where relevant via the heads of their research groups) to the Director for:

- The work they do in the Institute
- The activities of their staff in the Institute
- The activities of their students in the Institute.

15. Amendments

These arrangements and rules are subject to change by Senate and Council.

Appendix I	Membership Terms of Reference
Appendix II	Organisational design of the NI
Appendix III	International Scientific Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

**Approved by the DVC:R&I and Dean, faculty of Health Sciences
For approval by the Governing Board**