

STATUTES OF THE WILLIAM JAMES CENTER FOR RESEARCH

Article 1. Nature and Institutional Affiliation

1. The William James Center for Research (WJCR) is a Psychology Research Unit jointly constituted by Ispa (leading institution) and the Universidade de Aveiro (partner institution).
2. Ispa- Instituto Universitário, Rua Jardim do Tabaco, 34, 1149 – 041 Lisboa, acts as the legally responsible institution for administrative, financial, and compliance matters, including representation before funding bodies.
3. Universidade de Aveiro, Campus Universitário de Aveiro, 3810-193 Aveiro, acts as a partner institution, contributing with human resources, infrastructure, and scientific collaboration, and ensuring institutional implementation of governance decisions within its responsibilities.

Article 2. Objectives

1. The WJCR's primary objective is to advance scientific knowledge on human and non-human functioning through high-quality, innovative, and interdisciplinary research, integrating basic and applied approaches across cognition, emotion, and behaviour, and promoting the translation of research into societal contexts.
2. To achieve this objective, the WJCR shall:
 - a. Promote excellent scientific production, internationalisation, and open and responsible research practices aligned with FAIR principles;
 - b. Attract, train, and mentor highly qualified researchers, with particular emphasis on early-career researchers;
 - c. Strengthen national and international collaboration across academic and professional communities;
 - d. Contribute to regional and inter-regional development through knowledge exchange and transparent engagement with society;
 - e. Support the transfer and dissemination of scientific knowledge in accordance with ethical and institutional standards.

Article 3. Membership Categories

1. The WJCR comprises the following categories of members:
 - a. Integrated Members;
 - b. PhD Students and other students holding a research fellowship;
 - c. Collaborators;
 - d. Other Researchers.

Article 4. Governance Structure and Principles

1. The governance structure of the WJCR includes:

- a. Governing Board;
- b. Scientific Council;
- c. Internal Advisory Board;
- d. External Advisory Board;
- e. Ombudsperson.

2. Governance is guided by principles of transparency, collegiality, accountability, and balanced representation between institutions.

Article 5. Scientific Coordinator

1. The Scientific Coordinator shall be appointed by the Rector of ISPA, following an internal call for expressions of interest open to eligible Integrated Members, and after consultation with the members of the Scientific Council and the Rector of the Universidade de Aveiro.

2. The mandate is three years, renewable once.

3. Responsibilities include:

- a. Provide strategic leadership and scientific coordination;
- b. Chair the Governing Board and the Scientific Council;
- c. Represent the WJCR in all official acts;
- d. Prepare scientific and financial reporting to funding agencies;
- e. Plan meetings of the External Advisory Board and Internal Advisory Board.

4. The Scientific Coordinator may delegate specific duties to a member of the Governing Board.

5. In cases of conflict of interest, the Scientific Coordinator shall abstain from decision-making on the matter concerned.

6. The Scientific Coordinator may resign by written notice. In such cases, replacement follows the same procedure as appointment and applies for the remainder of the mandate.

Article 6. Governing Board

1. The Governing Board consists of the Scientific Coordinator and two Integrated Members, one from each institution.

2. Institutional representatives are elected by the Integrated Members of their respective institutions. The institutional representative of the Universidade de Aveiro assumes responsibility for coordinating the WJCR activities within the institution.

3. The mandate is three years, renewable once.

4. The Governing Board meets monthly and whenever necessary, upon call of the Scientific Coordinator or at the request of at least two of its integrated members.
5. Quorum requires the presence of the Scientific Coordinator and representation from both institutions.
6. Decisions are taken by unanimity or, where unanimity cannot be reached, by consensus between the institutional representatives. All decisions are recorded in formal minutes.
7. The Governing Board is the executive body of the WJCR and is responsible for:
 - a. Defining strategic orientation and research priorities, informed by input from the Scientific Council;
 - b. Prepare the annual plan, annual report, and budgetary allocations and submit them for approval of the Scientific Council;
 - c. Deciding on admission, renewal, suspension, and termination of membership;
 - d. Overseeing resource allocation, financial management, and administrative compliance;
 - e. Defining key performance indicators and monitoring performance.
8. In cases of conflict of interest by any member of the Governing Board, the member concerned shall abstain from decision-making on the matter concerned.
9. Governing Board members may resign by written notice. Replacement follows the same procedure as appointment for the remainder of the mandate.

Article 7. Scientific Council

1. The Scientific Council comprises all Integrated Members of the WJCR.
2. It meets at least twice per year; additional meetings may be convened by the Scientific Coordinator or by two-thirds of its integrated members.
3. Responsibilities include:
 - a. Approving internal regulations, as defined in these Statutes;
 - b. Providing scientific input on research priorities and strategic orientation to support Governing Board decision-making;
 - c. Discussing and approving the annual plan, budgetary orientation, and research agenda with the Governing Board;
 - d. Contributing to internal and external evaluation processes;
 - e. Supporting internationalisation, open science, and responsible research practices;
 - f. Propose and approve the members of the External Advisory Board;
 - g. Propose and approve the WJCR Ombudsperson.
4. All Approvals of the internal regulations, as defined in these Statutes, require a majority within each institution.

5. Members of the Scientific Council shall declare any conflict of interest and abstain from participation in discussions or decisions concerning the matter in question.

Article 8. Internal Advisory Board

1. The Internal Advisory Board comprises six members (three Integrated Members, two PhD students and one Other Researcher), elected every two years.

a) Institutional representatives of the Integrated Members (two affiliated with ISPA and one affiliated with the Universidade de Aveiro), as well as the representatives of the doctoral students, represent each institution and are elected by the Members of their respective category and institution;

b) The representative of the Other Researchers is elected by the members of the same category.

2. It meets at least twice per year; additional meetings may be convened by the Scientific Coordinator or by two-thirds of its members.

3. Responsibilities include:

- a) Providing a forum for members not represented in the Scientific Council;
- b) Reviewing the annual report and annual plan;
- c) Providing recommendations to improve scientific quality and research integrity;
- d) Advising on internal policies and the research environment.

Article 9. External Advisory Board

1. The External Advisory Board is composed of five independent external experts of recognised international standing.

2. Members are appointed for a three-year term, renewable once; at least one member shall continue to ensure continuity.

3. Members act independently and shall declare any conflict of interest.

4. Responsibilities include:

- a) Reviewing scientific activities and strategic development;
- b) Providing independent advice on scientific quality and international positioning;
- c) Issuing written recommendations to the Governing Board and Scientific Council after each meeting.

Article 10. Membership Criteria

1. Integrated Members

- a. Integrated Members are PhD holders proposed by an Integrated Member and submit a curriculum vitae and a motivation letter;
- b. Admission is decided by the Governing Board following an evaluation of the alignment between the candidate's scientific activity and the objectives of the WJCR, based on a balanced quantitative and qualitative assessment, including scientific production, competitive funding, training and supervision activities and other relevant research and societal contributions;
- c. For the evaluation of scientific production, reference is made to the publication of at least six ISI-indexed articles in the previous five years or to an ISI h-index of at least 6;
- d. The evaluation will take into consideration the candidate's career stage (e.g., PhD completion date) and context, as well as any formally recognised career interruptions (e.g., parental leave; long-term absence due to illness);
- e. Integrated Members dedicate at least 30% of their research activity to the WJCR;
- f. Admission is granted for renewable three-year terms, subject to the submission of an activity report and favourable evaluation by the Governing Board.

2. PhD Students and other students holding a research fellowship

- a. PhD Students and other students holding a research fellowship are admitted upon confirmation that they are supervised or co-supervised by an Integrated Member;
- b. PhD Students and other students holding a research fellowship normally dedicate their full research activity to the WJCR for the duration of their doctoral training;
- c. In duly justified cases, the Governing Board may authorise a lower level of dedication;
- d. PhD Students remain members throughout the duration of their doctoral studies;
- e. Students holding a research fellowship remain members for the entire duration of the respective contract;
- f. Upon completion of the PhD, continued affiliation as a Collaborator may be requested for the purpose of finalising publications associated with the WJCR.

3. Collaborators

- a. Collaborators may be proposed by an Integrated Member or apply directly;
- b. Admission is decided by the Governing Board following an evaluation aligned with the criteria applied to Integrated Members, adjusted to institutional affiliation;
- c. Collaborators dedicate between 10% and 30% of their research activity to the WJCR;
- d. Admission is granted for renewable three-year terms, subject to evidence of continued contribution to the WJCR's objectives.

4. Other Researchers

- a. Researchers specially contracted, under the terms of Articles 12, 13, 14, and 15 of the Scientific Career Statute, as set out in Annex II to Law No. 55/2025 of April 28, become

members upon their hiring within projects hosted by Integrated Members, for the duration of their contracts;

b. May request continued affiliation as Collaborators after contract termination for the purpose of finalising publications.

5. General provisions

a. All members shall comply with ethical, data-protection, and open research policies;

b. Membership admission, renewal, suspension, and termination decisions are taken by the Governing Board;

c. Membership may be suspended or terminated in cases of non-compliance or sustained inactivity.

Article 11. Resources and Support

Members have access to facilities, administrative support, and training, subject to availability and institutional rules.

Article 12. Equality and Inclusion

The WJCR promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion in all activities.

Article 13. Research Integrity, Ethics, and Data Governance

1. Activities requiring ethical approval shall obtain it prior to implementation.

2. Activities shall comply with the scientific-applicable data-protection regulations.

3. The WJCR promotes responsible data management, including data management plans and FAIR principles, in accordance with the host-institutions policies.

Article 14. Conflict Resolution

Conflicts are addressed by the Scientific Coordinator and, where appropriate, referred to the Governing Board or the Ombudsperson.

Article 15. Evaluation and Reporting

1. The WJCR is subject to periodic internal and external evaluation.

2. The annual plan and annual report are formally submitted by the Governing Board to the Scientific Council for appreciation.

3. Evaluation outcomes inform strategic planning and continuous improvement.

Article 16. Ombudsperson

1. The Ombudsperson is an independent external member appointed by the Scientific Council.
2. The Ombudsperson provides confidential, impartial and non-binding guidance on matters related to research integrity, ethical conduct, conflicts, and interpersonal or institutional concerns.
3. The mandate of the Ombudsperson is three years and may be renewed once.
4. The Ombudsperson shall declare any conflict of interest and abstain from involvement in the relevant matter.
5. The Ombudsperson may be replaced before the end of the mandate in cases of written resignation addressed to the Governing Board, conflict of interest, or serious breach of duties, by decision of the Scientific Council.

Article 17. Revisions and Amendments

1. These Statutes are reviewed every five years or before by proposal of the Governing Board or of at least two thirds of its Integrated Members.
2. Amendments to these Statutes require approval by the Scientific Council in accordance with its decision rules and confirmation by the partner institutions.

These statutes take effect on 15 June 2026