

# RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Transparency International Lithuania is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation established in 2000.

For more information about us, please visit [www.transparency.lt](http://www.transparency.lt)

## **1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- 1.1. The purpose of these internal rules is to define the operating procedures of the Research Ethics Review Committee (hereinafter referred to as the RERC) of Transparency International Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as TI LT).
- 1.2. The purpose of the RERC is to grant approval regarding compliance with ethical requirements for research planned by TI LT prior to its implementation.
- 1.3. The RERC evaluates only those studies that involve human participants (hereinafter referred to as the research participants) and/or may involve the use of personal data.
- 1.4. The members of the RERC are appointed and its composition approved by the General Assembly of TI LT.
- 1.5. The RERC members do not receive remuneration for their work.
- 1.6. The RERC Rules of Procedure are approved by the TI LT General Assembly and enter into force on the day of the General Assembly's decision.
- 1.7. The Chair of the RERC reports to the TI LT General Assembly on the Committee's activities.
- 1.8. All information regarding the planned RERC assessment of compliance with research ethics requirements is confidential.
- 1.9. The RERC Rules are publicly available on the TI LT website.

## **2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RERC**

- 2.1. The RERC evaluates and provides an opinion on the compliance of proposed TI LT research with general principles of research ethics and integrity, and grants approval regarding such compliance.
- 2.2. The RERC provides recommendations on research ethics matters and consults TI LT representatives on related issues.
- 2.3. In its evaluation, the RERC aims to ensure respect for the dignity, well-being, and rights of research participants, to minimize the risk of harm to participants, and to ensure that data protection regulations are followed during research.

### **3. RERC MEMBERS**

- 3.1. The RERC is composed of 3–5 scholars who are not employed by TI LT and are not part of other TI LT governance structures.
- 3.2. A representative of the TI LT administration, appointed by TI LT, also participates in the work of the RERC without voting rights. This TI LT representative's role is to assist with the drafting of protocols and other daily activities necessary for the effective functioning of the RERC, as determined by the RERC Chair.
- 3.3. RERC members are appointed for a two-year term.
- 3.4. Members may resign at any time. A resigning member must inform TI LT of their intention to resign.
- 3.5. The RERC is chaired by a Chair elected by a majority vote of the Committee members from among themselves. In the event of a tie, the Chair is appointed from among the members proposed by the TI LT General Assembly. The Chair's term is two years.
- 3.6. The Chair is responsible for the management of the RERC. In this capacity, the Chair convenes meetings, presides over them, and, in consultation with other members, sets the agenda.
- 3.7. If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting, the RERC members elect a person to act as Chair for that meeting.
- 3.8. If the Chair is unable to participate in meetings or fulfill their duties, another RERC member temporarily elected during the meeting shall act as Chair, then a new Committee member shall be elected by the TI LT General Assembly.

### **4. RERC MEETINGS**

- 4.1. The RERC convenes upon receiving a request from TI LT to review the compliance of proposed research with general principles of research ethics and integrity and to provide ethical approval.
- 4.2. A RERC meeting may be convened at any time by the TI LT General Assembly, the TI LT director, the RERC Chair, or a majority of RERC members.
- 4.3. RERC meetings may be held in person or remotely. Members participating remotely are considered present. RERC decisions may also be adopted and approved remotely.

- 4.4. The RERC Chair may invite other TI LT representatives and/or the lead researcher to attend meetings if their participation is considered useful for providing information relevant to the RERC decision.
- 4.5. TI LT shareholders or the TI LT director may attend RERC meetings when necessary.
- 4.6. A quorum exists when more than half of the RERC members are present or represented at a meeting.
- 4.7. After checking the quorum, the Chair opens the meeting by reminding members of the agenda items. Decisions are made by a simple majority vote. Other TI LT representatives may participate in discussions but do not have voting rights and may not participate in the voting.
- 4.8. Voting by proxy A RERC member may be represented by another Committee member by providing them with a proxy to vote. Notice of the proxy must be given in advance. No member may hold more than one proxy vote.
- 4.9. Minutes are taken at each meeting and submitted to the TI LT director. They are prepared by the Committee Chair, with the assistance of the designated TI LT representative if needed.
- 4.10. The working languages of the RERC are Lithuanian and English.