



CENTRE DE LA SCIENCE  
DE LA BIODIVERSITÉ  
DU QUÉBEC

QUEBEC CENTRE  
FOR BIODIVERSITY  
SCIENCE

## ***Statutes and regulations of the Québec Centre for Biodiversity Science***

*Modified and adopted on 05/25/2026*

### **Québec Centre for Biodiversity Science**

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## 1. Name

The official name of the interinstitutional centre for biodiversity science is “Centre de la Science de la Biodiversité du Québec”, in acronym CSBQ.

In English, the translation is the “Quebec Center for Biodiversity Science”, in acronym QCBS.

## 2. Affiliation

The head office of the QCBS is at McGill University due to the affiliation of the first director of the Centre. The head office may change to another academic institution depending on the appointment of a new co-director.

## 3. Vision, mission and values of the QCBS

### Vision:

To be a world leader in understanding changes in biodiversity and its valorization, by generating cutting-edge knowledge and promoting scientific cooperation to inform actions that support resilient ecosystems and societies in harmony with nature.

### Mission:

To increase and strengthen Quebec's scientific capacity to understand, protect and value biodiversity, and to support the development of knowledge-based public policies, through international-level scientific research and training, and a dynamic community of practice.

### Values:

- **Collaboration:** Fostering teamwork and interdisciplinary partnerships to enrich perspectives and discoveries.
- **Curiosity:** Cultivating a spirit of investigation and continuous learning, open to new knowledge and different disciplines.
- **Environmental responsibility:** Committing to assessing and minimizing the environmental impact of research activities, while raising awareness among researchers and the public of the importance of preserving the ecosystem.
- **Innovation:** Encouraging creativity and the exploration of new ideas and approaches to solve complex problems.
- **Inclusivity:** Promoting inclusion, diversity and equal opportunities in the research community.
- **Impact:** Conduct research projects that have a positive impact on society, the economy and the environment.

## 4. QCBS Research Program

Thanks to the mobilization of these resources, the research program is structured around four axes, each composed of different research themes:

- 1) observe and monitor biodiversity,
- 2) detect changes in biodiversity,
- 3) predict changes in biodiversity,
- 4) support policies and decision-making.

The QCBS is also one of the instigators of Biodiversity Quebec, a scientific partnership whose mission is to inform about the state of biodiversity and its changes, to carry out analyses and to offer tools to improve decision-making.

## 5. Contribution of the strategic cluster

Given its missions, the strategic cluster implements the following programs:

- **Research financial support program:** focused on promoting scientific cooperation (hubs of expertise), training (financial support for students, training workshops by research staff, guest speakers, intensive courses in biodiversity science) and support for research and other activities of members (website, annual conference, financial support for students to present the results of their research);
- **Scientific Support Program by Highly Qualified Professionals (HQP)** in the following areas:
  - o Development of collaborative research
  - o Student training
  - o Structuring the network of the research community
  - o Dissemination, information, and awareness-raising about research activities within the Center
  - o Mobilization and sharing of data, analyses and syntheses related to biodiversity science
- **Informing and engaging partners and stakeholders** (government, educational and university institutions, private sector, etc.) during partner university symposiums, the Center's annual symposium, and training workshops.

## 6. Partners, budget and personnel of the QCBS

### 6.1. Constituent Institutions of the QCBS

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The QCBS is a network that brings together university institutions and collaborating organizations through partnerships. The first director of the QCBS' institution is the managing institution for grants and contributions from the QCBS partners.

### 6.2. QCBS Budgets

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The QCBS budget consists of the main grant from the FRQNT (Fonds de recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies) and contributions from partner institutions included in submissions to the FRQNT, as well as contributions from the research community and their affiliated institutions.

The funds allocated to the QCBS are hosted by the managing institution of the main FRQNT grant. The use of funds is governed by the rules of the FRQNT strategic cluster program, following the procedures specific to each partner institution.

The QCBS personnel are co-funded in part by the main FRQNT grant.

### 6.3. QCBS Personnel

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An Operations Coordinator ensures the daily administrative and financial management of the Center under the direction of the executive committee. They are assisted in their tasks by an Administrative Assistant. The QCBS provides HQP (Highly Qualified Professionals) to its members. The student community in the work-study program assists the administration in its tasks. A communications officer supports the administration in disseminating information about the centre's activities.

## 7. QCBS Members and Their Status

Members of the QCBS belong to one of the categories described in the following paragraph.

All members of the QCBS have reviewed the statutes, regulations, and procedures governing the operation of the Center.

### 7.1. Members of the Research Community

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According to the general rules of the FRQ (Fonds de recherche du Québec, version 2025), the status of a researcher implies holding a PhD or an equivalent status.

The FRQ defines three categories of researchers:

- **Academic Researcher:** A person holding a regular or grant-funded university position as a professor or full-time researcher with a Quebec university affiliation, and who is authorized to independently supervise students. Early-career or retired individuals are also eligible.
- **College Researcher:** A person holding a PhD who is employed full-time by a recognized college institution and who occupies either a college teaching position or a research position in a college technology transfer centre.
- **Other Research Status:** A researcher from a government institution recognized by the FRQ, researcher from the government or private sector, person from the practice or artistic fields, or person participating as an individual.

The candidacy of members of the research community must have been accepted according to the procedures in place (see Section 8.4: Admission Process for a Member of the Research Community to the QCBS).

### 7.2. Members of the Student Community and Postdoctoral Fellows

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A member must meet the following conditions:

- Conducts research aligned with the scientific programming of the QCBS,
- Is enrolled in a partner university institution of the QCBS,
- Has a supervisor who is a co-researcher or collaborator of the QCBS, and
- May be affiliated with a second strategic cluster funded by the FRQNT.

Note : Postdoctoral fellows must be enrolled full-time in a partner university institution of the QCBS.

## 8. Status of the QCBS Research Community

The status of a QCBS researcher is a category used for the internal management of the QCBS.

The statuses of QCBS researcher members are defined as follows:

- **Co-Researcher Status** is available to members of the academic or college research community from one of the QCBS member institutions recognized by the FRQ.
- **Collaborator Status** is available to members of the research community whose research activities contribute occasionally to the development or implementation of the network's activities. Note that a researcher from outside Quebec can only obtain collaborator status.

### 8.1. General Responsibilities of the QCBS Research Community

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The general responsibilities of QCBS researchers are as follows:

- Conduct research in biodiversity science that is aligned with the QCBS scientific programming (research axes, themes and projects) within the QCBS;
- Determine their level of participation in the QCBS and, if applicable, in another strategic cluster;
- Promote scientific cooperation by participating in research teams, working groups, etc.
- Supervise and co-supervise members of the student community and postdoctoral fellows whose projects are integrated into the QCBS research axes;
- Participate in QCBS events (QCBS annual symposium, members' general assembly, meetings convened by the Directorate);
- Support the idea of sharing infrastructure, on an equitable basis, among QCBS partner institutions;
- Share information with the QCBS regarding publications, awards, funding received, and other relevant information to facilitate the preparation of the QCBS annual report;
- Share information with the QCBS regarding the student community: new and graduating students;
- Mention QCBS affiliation in presentations or publications produced within the Centre, as appropriate, to contribute to the network's visibility and promotion;
- Provide the necessary updates to keep their QCBS profile up to date, including the list of QCBS student members under their supervision.

### **8.2. Rights and Benefits of a QCBS Co-Researcher**

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The QCBS co-investigator has the following rights and benefits:

- Voting rights at the general meeting of members;
- Access to the QCBS funding program and training offered;
- Opportunity to collaborate with HQP and research staff;
- Preferential admission to events organized by the QCBS;
- Access to funding allocated to the student community that he or she declares as a QCBS student member.

### **8.3. Rights and benefits of the QCBS collaborator**

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The QCBS collaborator has the following rights and benefits:

- Participation in the general meeting of members (without voting rights);
- Possibility of collaborating with research staff and in training offered;
- Preferential entry fee for events organized by the QCBS;
- Access to the funding program allocated to the QCBS co-researcher community as part of a scientific collaboration with a QCBS co-researcher who is primarily responsible for the grant application.

Student and postdoctoral fellows affiliated with the Centre are not eligible for student funding unless they are co-supervised by a QCBS co-investigator.

*Exceptions may be made depending on the status of the researchers.*

#### CSBQ Researcher Admission Process

The admission process for new members includes the following steps:

- The applicant submits an application to the Centre, including their CV and a summary of their research interests, demonstrating how these interests align with the Centre's research program;
- The applicant requests a letter of reference from a QCBS co-investigator;
- The candidate's application, CV, and letter of recommendation are reviewed by the executive committee, which makes a decision on the application within a maximum of four weeks.

Upon acceptance, the researcher is registered in the QCBS' co-researcher registry.

#### **8.4. Revision of the list of members**

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The revision of the list of QCBS members occurs in March each year.

Termination of QCBS membership:

- Termination occurs in the case of a request made by a member;
- Termination is ratified by the executive committee in the following cases:
  - o Failure to update the Canadian common CV for two consecutive semesters. This failure affects the QCBS's ability to report on the level of activity of the strategic cluster: list of students, publications, projects, etc.;
  - o Non-participation in activities, whether in working groups, in the development of new initiatives within the framework of start-up grants, etc.

### **9. Status of the QCBS Student Community and Postdoctoral Fellows**

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#### **9.1. Status of the QCBS Student Community and Postdoctoral Fellows**

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A student or postdoctoral fellow may be registered as a student member or postdoctoral member of the QCBS by his or her supervisor, if the latter is a member of the QCBS. However, he or she may not be registered by his or her supervisor if the latter is a member of more than two strategic cluster funded by the FRQNT.

The supervisor registers in the QCBS the members of his or her student community and postdoctoral fellows whose research is related to the QCBS research program.

#### **9.2. Responsibilities of the QCBS Student Community and Postdoctoral Interns**

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The responsibilities associated with QCBS membership are as follows:

- Be involved in research that can be linked to the QCBS research program.
- Be enrolled in an undergraduate, master's, PhD program, or as a postdoctoral intern at a QCBS partner institution.
- Be supervised or co-supervised by a QCBS co-researcher or collaborator.
- Authorize the QCBS to use the information contained in their CV, excluding personal information, to ensure QCBS visibility and to apply for necessary funding for QCBS activities.

#### **9.3. Rights and Benefits of the QCBS Student Community and Postdoctoral Interns**

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Provided they are supervised by a QCBS co-researcher, the rights and benefits associated with QCBS membership are as follows:

- Right to vote at the general meeting of members
- Student members can apply for QCBS funding to co-finance the following activities: presenting results at conferences, participating in training workshops, taking intensive courses, and training through laboratory internships and field projects;
- Master's and doctoral student members can apply for international internship grants offered by the FRQNT to the QCBS;
- Undergraduate student members can apply for Discovery Awards in Biodiversity Science;

All student members and postdoctoral interns have the following rights and benefits:

- Discounted access to training workshops offered by research staff or learning and development communities.

- Access to scientific support from HQP and QCBS research staff.
- Discounted entry to events organized by the QCBS.

Students supervised by IRBV staff members have access to the same rights and benefits mentioned above.

A member of the QCBS student community or postdoctoral fellow may belong to only one other strategic cluster funded by the FRQNT. They must disclose this information upon joining and commit to not receiving financial contributions from other strategic clusters when applying for funding.

#### **9.4. Annual review of the lists**

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The review of the list of student members and postdoctoral fellows takes place every year in March. The researcher member must also communicate to QCBS the list of their supervised students and postdoctoral fellows who are declared as QCBS members.

## **10. Governance Structure**

The governance structure of QCBS includes the following bodies:

- The Executive Committee (ExC), which includes the Scientific Committee (SC),
- The Advisory Council (AC),
- The QCBS General Assembly (GA of the QCBS).

### **10.1. Executive Committee**

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The Executive Committee is composed of the following representatives:

- The two QCBS co-directors;
- The Director of Biodiversity Québec;
- The QCBS Operations Coordinator;
- The representatives of QCBS geonodes;
- The scientific directors of each research axis;
- Two representatives of the student and postdoctoral community of QCBS.

Except for the Director of Biodiversity Québec, the QCBS Operations Coordinator, and the student and postdoctoral representatives, the representatives on the Executive Committee serve three-year terms.

The executive committee is a decision-making body that oversees the planning of activities and implementation:

- Adopt the scientific program developed by the QCBS scientific directors;
- Validate the annual program and budget prepared by the coordinator of operations;
- Monitor the implementation of the resolutions of the executive committee;
- Approve the hiring of administrative and research staff of the QCBS;
- Approve funding proposals following evaluations.

The quorum is reached with an absolute majority, i.e. 50% of the members present plus 1.

The executive committee meets three to four times a year.

The operations coordinator prepares and leads the executive committee meetings. He or she prepares the minutes of each meeting.

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### ■ The QCBS co-directors

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Mr. Andrew Gonzalez, the first director of QCBS, brought together the initial partners and submitted the proposal that led to the establishment of QCBS in 2009. In 2024, Fanie Pelletier joined the organization as co-director alongside Andrew Gonzalez, who thus became co-director.

If one of the QCBS co-directors is replaced, the new co-director is proposed by the Executive Committee, and their candidacy is approved by the General Assembly. The QCBS leadership is appointed for a renewable three-year term once approved by the General Assembly.

The roles of the two co-directors are as follows:

- Chair the executive committee;
- Co-design a long-term vision for the QCBS;
- Ensure the development of a dynamic scientific collaboration;
- Ensure provincial, national and international visibility for the QCBS;
- Prepare grant applications for the Centre;
- Ensure management of the grants that make up the Centre's budget (FRQNT grant and partner contributions).

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### ■ The QCBS Operations Coordinator

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The QCBS Operations Coordinator is an employee of the institution managing the main grant.

The functions of the Operations Coordinator are as follows:

- Ensure the implementation of the decisions of the QCBS Executive Committee, including the Scientific Committee;
- Ensure the management of the administrative and financial services of the QCBS;
- Prepare and ensure the application of the procedures governing the harmonious functioning of the QCBS;
- Ensure the coordination of efforts and the monitoring of all QCBS staff;
- Ensure close liaison between members and the QCBS in order to ensure optimum use of the resources available to members (funding and research personnel);
- Ensure liaison between external stakeholders in order to maximize funding opportunities for QCBS co-researchers;
- Ensure external visibility and promote the QCBS and the results of members' research through events (university department symposiums, open days) and various media (website, posters, brochures, etc.);
- Prepare the annual operating plan and the annual budget of the QCBS with the co-directors of the QCBS to submit it to the executive committee;
- Prepare the QCBS annual report and the financial report to be submitted to the executive committee, with the co-directors of the QCBS, for submission to the scientific council;
- Provide the necessary documentation prior to holding the meetings of the executive committee and the scientific committee;
- Ensure regular management of the FRQnet application;
- Organize the meetings of the executive committee.

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### ■ QCBS geopolyes

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The management of the QCBS is based on the participation of members who are grouped into geopoles within a partner academic institution, or a group of partner academic institutions, if the number of co-researcher members of the QCBS is not sufficient to justify the creation of a geopole within an academic institution.

To be recognized and presented to the EC, a geopole must bring together at least 4 QCBS co-researchers.

The functions of the geopoles are as follows:

- Designate, from among its QCBS co-researchers as defined in the previous paragraph, a representative to the QCBS ExC;
- Ensure the participation of co-researchers from each geopole in the activities of the QCBS;
- Ensure consultation on scientific programming at the geopole level and, more generally, at the QCBS level;
- Propose representatives to the review committees for applications submitted for grants;
- Represent the QCBS with the partner university institution and with its external collaborators.

The researchers of each QCBS geopole are responsible for setting up a decentralized structure of the QCBS, promoting a good level of participation of its members in meetings and good governance.

The QCBS geopoles meet regularly and the points discussed are presented by the geopole representative at the executive committee meetings two to three times a year.

## **10.2. The Scientific Committee**

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Integrated into the executive committee, the scientific committee is composed of:

- The co-directors of the QCBS;
- The scientific co-directors of the four research axes;
- The representative of Biodiversité Québec.

The QCBS coordinator participates in the scientific committee meetings that he or she plans and leads. He or she prepares the minutes of each meeting.

The tasks of the scientific committee are as follows:

- Update the scientific program and guide the research and training activities of each of the research axes;
- Ensure that cooperation develops between the research axes;
- Approve the allocation of funding to researchers within the framework of the QCBS research funding program;
- Ensure the integration of the QCBS into a vast provincial, national and international network for all questions relating to biodiversity science;
- Prepare an annual report of the activities carried out within the research axes that will be submitted to the co-directors of the Center. The latter will be responsible for preparing the Center's annual report on this basis.

The scientific co-directors have a three-year term, renewable.

The scientific co-directors are proposed by the co-directors to the executive committee and their appointment is ratified at the general meeting of members.

During the meetings of the scientific committee, the quorum is reached provided that at least one co-director of the axis is present.

The scientific committee meets twice a year: at the end of the fiscal year in April, and in October.

### **10.3. The Advisory Committee**

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Role: The advisory committee provides guidance and advice on the operation and strategic directions of the Center.

Composition: Contacted by the co-directors of the QCBS, the committee agrees to provide an opinion on a voluntary basis. The advisory committee is composed of at least 5 individuals with extensive experience, as well as an international reputation in the field of biodiversity science.

Operation: The members of the advisory committee provide an opinion based on the annual reports of the QCBS or upon consultation with the co-directors of the Center. Their mandates are renewed every 3 years.

### **10.4. The QCBS General Assembly**

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The QCBS General Assembly (GA) is convened by the QCBS Co-Directors. It is open to all QCBS members.

The functions of the QCBS GA are as follows:

- Review the annual activity report for the past year;
- Approve the program and budget for the coming year;
- Approve the appointment of a new management team;
- Approve any matter submitted by the executive committee and management;
- Adopt, if necessary, amendments to the QCBS' bylaws and regulations.

The QCBS GA is held once a year during the QCBS annual conference. If circumstances require, the QCBS Co-Directors may convene an exceptional GA.

Only QCBS co-researchers, as well as their students and postdoctoral fellows, have voting rights. A quorum of 5% of co-researcher members and 5% of the student and postdoctoral fellow community is required. A vote of 50% + 1 is required for a decision to be adopted at the general assembly. There is no minimum voting requirement based on membership status.

## **11. QCBS Research Staff**

The QCBS research staff is a resource available to the Centre's research members and their student members.

Research staff are funded by the main FRQNT grant (up to 50%), by regular contributions from the research offices of partner universities and/or by funds from co-researchers or partners and their affiliated departments.

### **11.1. The services offered by the research staff**

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Their tasks are linked to the QCBS missions: to promote world-class research and training programs in biodiversity science and to facilitate scientific cooperation and learning between transdisciplinary research groups.

In addition to these scientific tasks, the research staff represents the Centre to members. If necessary, the research staff contributes to the proper functioning of the QCBS by collecting the information necessary for the management of the centre, in particular for the production of annual reports.

### **11.2. The distribution of responsibilities of research staff**

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The objective of this first distribution of tasks is to raise awareness among research members about the diversity of efforts made by research staff:

- Support for the development of research by QCBS members in biodiversity science (40%);
- Training of all QCBS members through training workshops and consultations (20%);
- Support for the development of scientific collaborations between QCBS researchers (20%);
- Visibility on various media (website, newsletter, etc.) and participation in the organization of QCBS or QCBS-associated events (10%);
- Collection of information required for the proper functioning of the Center, preparation of scientific and management meetings, grant applications and for the purposes of the Center's annual report (10%).

### **11.3. Research personnel management**

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Research personnel are affiliated with the institution managing the FRQNT main grant when they are co-funded by regular contributions from the QCBS partner universities to the Centre's budget. Research personnel are affiliated with partner university institutions when they are co-funded by funds from researchers and their departments.

Research personnel management is the responsibility of the QCBS management, which organizes a quarterly coordination meeting to ensure the implementation of the annual operations plan adopted by the QCBS GA.

## **12. QBCS funding program review committees**

To ensure an evaluation of the files of co-researchers and their students submitted to the QCBS as part of funding programs, the Centre has two evaluation committees for: i) reviewing grants to researchers and ii) reviewing funding files allocated to student members.

### **12.1. The QCBS Co-Investigator Grant Evaluation Committee**

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Role: Evaluate the start-up and working group grant applications submitted to the QCBS according to the evaluation criteria set out in the submission procedures.

Composition: The Co-Investigator Grant Evaluation Committee is composed of a representative designated by each partner for a period of one year.

Operation: The Center coordinator calls upon two members of this committee to evaluate the proposals submitted to the Center, taking care to avoid conflict of interest situations. The evaluators develop comments, possibly ask questions that the applicants will have to answer and make a recommendation regarding the funding of the proposal by the QCBS. The submissions, their evaluation and the recommendations are submitted to the QCBS Scientific Committee, which will give a final opinion on the funding of the application.

## **13. Adoption of public positions**

One of the missions of the QCBS is to adopt a leading role for issues related to biodiversity science and thus contribute to public and academic debates on biodiversity issues. The adoption of public positions by the QCBS helps to defend a consensus on topics related to biodiversity, its use and conservation by various actors in Quebec, Canada or more globally.

The public positions of the QCBS are of two types:

- Those issued by the co-directors of the QCBS
- Those issued on behalf of the QCBS

### **13.1. The public positions of the co-directors of the QCBS**

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During the exercise of their mandate, the co-directors of the QCBS are regularly called upon to speak out on various topics related to biodiversity.

The public positions of the co-directors are identified as such in order to be distinct from the public positions of the QCBS.

### **13.2. Public Positions of the QCBS**

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A draft public position of the QCBS must be submitted to the executive committee by the representative of the geopole to which the researcher who submits the project belongs.

The executive committee meets to examine the proposal and decides whether to forward it to the members for consultation.

The co-researchers or collaborators of the QCBS have 4 weeks to provide an opinion on the draft public position of the QCBS that has been submitted to them.

At the end of the consultation period, the executive committee decides whether to publish the QCBS position as such, or with the modifications proposed by the members of the QCBS.

The document is marked – Position of the QBCS – and appears on a dedicated section of the QCBS website.

### **13.3. Limits on public positions**

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The provisions provided to allow the taking of public positions by the co-directors of the QCBS or the taking of public positions on behalf of the QCBS in no way limit the right of expression and the position of each co-researcher of the QCBS.

## **14. Annual report**

Under the responsibility of the co-directors of the Centre, an annual report is prepared within two months following the end of the fiscal year.

The annual report is reviewed by the scientific and advisory committees and adopted at the annual meeting of members.

## **15. Modifications to the statutes**

Any request to amend the statutes of the QCBS must be presented to the executive committee and be ratified by the general meeting of members.

## **16. Rules of ethics and conflict management**

The members of the QCBS comply with the policies and regulations in force at their respective universities that are partners in the strategic cluster.

## **17. Entry into force**

These statutes come into force on the day of their adoption by the members of the QCBS.