

Statutes

November 17, 2020

1. Constitution

These statutes govern the inter-institutional grouping of Aquatic Resources Quebec, which is known as "RAQ."

2. Mission

RAQ's primary mission is to promote excellence in student research and training on the use and responsible development of Quebec's aquatic resources.

3. Objectives

RAQ is an inter-institutional grouping dedicated to the sustainable development of the aquaculture industry and fisheries in Quebec. Its objectives are as follows:

- 1) Contribute to the responsible and sustainable use of aquatic resources;
- 2) Bring together regional personnel working on aquaculture research and fisheries while promoting links with the international community;
- 3) Actively promote the formation of multidisciplinary and cross-sector teams;
- 4) Create an inter-institutional synergy and complementarity through these teams based on the sharing and optimal use of human and material resources of participating institutions;
- 5) Train highly qualified professionals to meet the sector's needs by providing an environment that fosters national and international co-directing and exchanges;
- 6) Facilitate knowledge transfer by fostering interactions between the sector, government partners, and industry;
- 7) Provide leverage for researchers to better position themselves for major provincial, national, and international research funding.

4. Members

Individuals who join RAQ must have read these statutes and agreed to comply with them. Members are grouped into different categories depending on their position at their university or their level of participation.

a. Co-investigator member

A co-investigator member is a university researcher (CHU) or college researcher (CHC) who significantly contributes to the realization of RAQ's scientific programming. To be a member of this category, a person's involvement in the group's activities must be 50% or more of their workload. The researcher's CV is required and considered during RAQ's evaluation by *Fonds de recherche du Québec - Nature et technologies* (FRQNT).

Persons wishing to become members of this category must provide their CV and a letter of intent for evaluation by the Board of Directors. The letter of intent should present the candidate's research, how their research fits into RAQ's program, and how the member intends to be involved in developing RAQ (e.g., networking, scientific publications).

b. Collaborating member

A collaborating member is a university or college researcher who contributes on an ad hoc or occasional basis to carrying out the scientific programming of the strategic grouping. A collaborating member's involvement in the group's activities is 49% or less of their workload.

Researchers supported by grants (CHO), affiliated professors (CHA), and researchers who work in the government (CHG), industry (CHI), or outside Quebec (CHH) are also considered collaborating members.

Persons wishing to become members of this category must provide their CV and a letter of intent for evaluation by the Board of Directors. The letter of intent should present the candidate's research, how their research fits into RAQ's program, and how the member intends to be involved in developing RAQ (e.g., networking, scientific publications).

c. Student member or postdoctoral fellow

Any graduate student enrolled in a program related to RAQ's scientific topics and from one of RAQ's partner universities can become a student member. A postdoctoral fellow conducting research related to one of RAQ's scientific themes in a RAQ research member's laboratory may become a member of this category.

Student members or postdoctoral fellows cannot be a member of another strategic network funded by FRQNT and must apply individually for membership by providing, among other things, the following information:

- The exact title of their research project;
- How their project fits into one of RAQ's research axes;
- A description of collaborations with RAQ members within the project;
- Their director's approval.

Applications will be reviewed by the coordinator, who will select relevant applications or submit applications to the Board of Directors. Eligibility for financial support is based on specific guidelines. RAQ membership ends when the student member / fellow no longer attends the partner university.

d. Employee member

Any research professional or research technician who works under the supervision of a research or collaborating member on projects that are part of RAQ's scientific programming may become a member of this category.

5. Organizational structure:

RAQ's organizational structure includes a coordinator, director, steering committee, partner council, and student committee.

a. Coordinator

Coordination is assumed by a person employed full-time by the network; the coordinator is under the supervision of the director.

b. Director

The director is appointed every three years at the annual general meeting. If a vote is required, it will be done electronically. This leadership task may be shared by two people who must be research members.

c. Board of Directors (BD)

Composition. The BD is made up of the director or co-directors, members responsible for each research axis, two student representatives, one government researcher, and the coordinator.

The appointments of student representatives and the government member are made annually at the general meeting. To ensure continuity within the committee, it is strongly recommended that the whole committee not be changed at once.

Functions. The BD oversees and administers all RAQ activities; manages assets and appropriations; approves annual budget estimates and annual balance sheets; provides policy direction and scientific programming; admits new research and collaborating members; validates applications for student grants; and authorizes hiring of staff when contracts are for more than six months.

The BD must meet at least six times per fiscal year.

d. Council Committee (CC)

Composition. The CC is made up of eight partner members chosen by the BD.

Function. The CC's mandate is to determine the direction of the work, the objectives, the priorities for action, the evaluation of research projects within RAQ, and the status of research projects.

The CC must meet at least once each fiscal year.

e. Student Committee (SC)

Composition. The SC is made up of five or more student members who represent the diversity of the student members' institutions and their territorial distribution.

The term of office is at least one year and ends at the student's request or when the student is no longer enrolled at the university.

Function. The SC's mandate is to promote the transfer of knowledge within the scientific community. More broadly, it is to propose training initiatives for student members and to encourage student cohesion within RAQ.

The student committee meets two to three times per fiscal year.

6. General Assembly

The general meeting of RAQ members occurs at least once a year. During this assembly, members review the annual financial report and management activities, endorse appointments to various committees, and vote on any issue submitted by the BD.

7. Authorized representative

The university from which an FRQNT grant application originates acts as RAQ's authorized representative. At the request of the BD, it provides financial administration of RAQ-

related funds, signs contracts on its behalf, and performs any other legal action required for the smooth running of the organization.

The university from which the FRQNT grant application grant originates becomes the legal owner of any property acquired by RAQ from the grants and contracts obtained by RAQ as such, unless there are special requests made by partner universities or granting agencies. However, RAQ promotes the development of human resources, not the acquisition of equipment.

8. Human resource sharing policy

RAQ has implemented a human resource policy with the goal of sharing valuable and unique skills and maximizing the use of personnel. All RAQ members are committed to complying with this policy, which is available on request and on the [website](#).

9. Diversity equity and inclusion policy

RAQ has a policy that promotes a research culture based on equity, diversity, and the inclusion of various groups. All RAQ members are committed to complying with this policy, which is available on request and on the [website](#).

10. Modification of statutes

Any proposal by members to amend these statutes must be first submitted in writing to the director(s). The proposal is then forwarded to the BD for review and possible modification. If the proposal is accepted, it is communicated to all RAQ members when notice is sent of the next general assembly. For final approval of amendments to the statutes, a two-thirds majority of members present at the general assembly is required.

These statutes were presented on 17 November 2020 at the general assembly.