RIFOR Membership and Affiliation Agreement

Current public membership terms

Purpose. These terms define the limited research membership, affiliation, email, and profile-hosting services administered by RIFOR. They do not create employment, academic credentials, ethics approval, peer review, or endorsement of a member's research.

1 Acceptance and membership record

1.1 Acceptance The Member accepts these terms by expressly confirming acceptance after RIFOR approves the application and provides the membership details in writing.

1.2 Membership record RIFOR will confirm in writing the membership type, fee, term, approved public name, approved email address, profile visibility, and any additional services. That confirmation and these terms together form the membership agreement.

1.3 Eligibility The Member confirms that they are at least 18 years old, that application information is materially accurate, and that they have authority to enter into this agreement.

2 Membership scope

2.1 Limited affiliation During an active term, the Member may accurately describe themself as a RIFOR Affiliated Researcher or use other wording expressly approved by RIFOR in writing. This affiliation means that RIFOR has accepted the Member into its research membership program after reviewing identity and research-purpose signals.

2.2 No broader credential Membership is not employment, appointment to faculty, a degree, accreditation, professional licensure, ethics or institutional review board approval, peer review, publication acceptance, grant sponsorship, immigration sponsorship, or endorsement of any research claim, product, treatment, investment, or political position.

2.3 No authority to bind RIFOR The Member may not sign contracts, make commitments, solicit funds, issue statements, or act as an agent or representative on RIFOR's behalf.

2.4 No guarantee of recognition RIFOR does not guarantee that a journal, repository, conference, funder, employer, government body, or other third party will accept or recognize the affiliation or email address.

3 Services

3.1 Included services During the active term, RIFOR will provide the services confirmed in writing, including a RIFOR-managed email address, a hosted personal researcher page with the visibility selected by the Member, a membership confirmation, and reasonable administrative support related to those services.

3.2 Changes and maintenance RIFOR may make reasonable technical, security, or operational changes. RIFOR will not materially reduce the core paid service during the current term without offering a reasonable substitute or a prorated refund for the affected unused period.

3.3 Availability Services may be interrupted for maintenance, security incidents, provider failures, abuse response, or events beyond RIFOR's reasonable control. RIFOR does not promise uninterrupted delivery or permanent retention of email or profile files.

4 Research profile and static content

4.1 Member content The Member retains ownership of original text, images, citations, and static files they submit. The Member grants RIFOR a non-exclusive, worldwide, royalty-free licence during the term to store, reproduce, format, cache, and publicly display approved content solely to provide and promote the Member's profile and the RIFOR service.

4.2 Static files If approved by RIFOR in writing, the Member may submit HTML, CSS, images, and other approved static assets. JavaScript, executable code, server-side code, tracking pixels, credential collection, payment forms, deceptive interfaces, malware, and unauthorized third-party content are prohibited. RIFOR may sanitize, reject, or remove files for security, legal, accessibility, or reputational reasons.

4.3 Accuracy and corrections The Member is responsible for keeping public claims, affiliations, publication links, and contact details accurate. RIFOR may require evidence, labels, corrections, or removal. The Member may request correction or removal by contacting info@rifor.org.

4.4 Publicity choice RIFOR will publish a profile only with the Member's express written choice. The Member may later request that a public profile become unlisted or private, subject to reasonable processing time and residual search-engine or archival copies outside RIFOR's control.

5 Email service

5.1 Permitted use A RIFOR email address is for the Member's legitimate research and professional communications. It must not be presented as proof of employment, licensure, academic rank, ethics approval, or RIFOR endorsement.

5.2 Prohibited use The Member must not use the service for spam, purchased lists, harassment, impersonation, fraud, phishing, malware, unlawful content, bulk campaigning, misleading medical or financial solicitations, infringement, or activity that harms RIFOR's systems, domain reputation, providers, or other members.

5.3 Security The Member must use a strong unique password, protect devices and credentials, and promptly report suspected compromise. RIFOR may temporarily restrict an account when reasonably necessary to protect users or systems.

5.4 Storage and export The mailbox quota and any retention or backup terms will be confirmed by RIFOR in writing. Following ordinary expiration or termination, the Member will have thirty days to access and export mailbox content. The Member remains responsible for retaining copies of important messages. RIFOR may delete mailbox content after that export period.

5.5 Forwarding and address retirement At the Member's request, RIFOR will forward incoming mail for ninety days after ordinary expiration or termination to an external address confirmed by the Member. Forwarding is provided on a reasonable-efforts basis and does not guarantee delivery by third-party providers. After that period, the RIFOR address will reject incoming messages rather than silently accept them. While RIFOR controls the rifor.org domain, RIFOR will not assign the former Member's address to another person. RIFOR may immediately restrict access, omit or end forwarding, and reject incoming messages when suspension or termination results from fraud, abuse, unlawful conduct, account compromise, or a material security or domain-reputation risk.

6 Research responsibility and sensitive work

6.1 Member responsibility The Member alone is responsible for research design, methods, data, analysis, conclusions, disclosures, legal compliance, and communications. RIFOR does not supervise the research merely by providing membership or infrastructure.

6.2 Human, animal, medical, and regulated work Membership does not authorize research involving humans, animals, clinical care, medical devices, biological materials, controlled goods, classified information, or other regulated activities. The Member must obtain all legally and institutionally required approvals before conducting or representing such work.

6.3 No treatment or safety claims The Member may not use RIFOR services to imply that RIFOR has validated a diagnosis, treatment, safety claim, or clinical recommendation.

7 Identity, integrity, and disclosure

7.1 Identity The Member must not provide false identity information, fabricated credentials, misleading affiliations, fake citations, or material omissions in response to a reasonable verification request.

7.2 Integrity The Member must distinguish evidence from hypothesis, correct material errors, disclose relevant conflicts, and avoid plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, and deceptive manipulation of authorship or citations.

7.3 Artificial intelligence The Member remains accountable for all submitted and published content, including content produced or revised with artificial intelligence. RIFOR may request disclosure of material AI use when necessary to assess integrity or provenance.

7.4 Scientific conduct The Member must use best reasonable efforts to follow generally accepted standards of scientific and scholarly conduct applicable to their field. The Member must accurately distinguish established evidence, prevailing consensus, material disagreement, and the Member's own hypotheses. A Member may challenge a consensus in good faith, but must not knowingly misrepresent a disputed or speculative claim as established fact or consensus.

8 Fees, term, and renewal

8.1 Fee and payment The Member will pay the fee stated in RIFOR's written approval in full before activation. Taxes, if applicable, are added as required by law. No payment is due until the Member has had an opportunity to review the complete agreement and correct the membership information. If RIFOR cannot activate the approved services, RIFOR will refund all amounts paid.

8.2 Term and activation The initial term is twelve months from the service activation date unless RIFOR's written confirmation states otherwise. The service activation date is the date on which RIFOR first issues the Member's account credentials.

8.3 No automatic renewal Membership does not renew automatically. RIFOR will send a renewal offer before expiration, and renewal occurs only after the Member affirmatively accepts and pays the renewal fee.

8.4 Discounts and referrals A founding-member or referral credit applies only when confirmed by RIFOR in writing. Credits have no cash value, are not transferable, and cannot reduce fees below zero.

9 Privacy and records

9.1 Purposes RIFOR may collect and use information reasonably necessary to assess eligibility, verify identity and research signals, administer membership, provide email and profile services, prevent abuse, keep financial and operational records, respond to requests, and comply with law.

9.2 Public information Only information expressly approved for publication in the application or a later written confirmation will be intentionally published by RIFOR. Public publication links and professional identifiers may be verified against public sources.

9.3 Service providers and location RIFOR may use service providers, including providers located outside Canada, for hosting, security, email delivery, payments, analytics, and records. Information processed in another jurisdiction may be accessible to authorities under that jurisdiction's laws.

9.4 Access and retention The Member may request access to or correction of personal information, subject to lawful exceptions. RIFOR will retain information only as reasonably necessary for the stated purposes, legal obligations, disputes, fraud prevention, and security, then securely delete or anonymize it.

9.5 Privacy contact Privacy questions, access requests, withdrawal of optional publication consent, and complaints may be sent to info@rifor.org. Withdrawal does not affect processing already lawfully completed and may prevent continued delivery of a requested service.

10 Suspension and termination

10.1 Member termination The Member may end membership at any time by written notice. Fees are non-refundable after activation except where required by law, where RIFOR's written confirmation provides otherwise, or where RIFOR terminates without cause. The Member may request profile removal at any time.

10.2 RIFOR suspension RIFOR may immediately suspend access when reasonably necessary to investigate security risk, unlawful conduct, deception, prohibited email activity, infringement, or a credible risk to people, systems, or domain reputation.

10.3 Termination for cause RIFOR may suspend or discontinue the Member's right to use RIFOR email, profile hosting, affiliation, and other infrastructure for a material breach, including a material violation of Sections 6 or 7, that is not cured within ten days after notice. RIFOR may act immediately for fraud, impersonation, serious illegality, malicious conduct, repeated or deliberate scientific misrepresentation, or conduct that creates a material and urgent safety, security, or domain-reputation risk.

10.4 Termination without cause RIFOR may terminate without cause on thirty days' notice and will provide a prorated refund for the unused prepaid portion of the term.

10.5 After termination The Member must stop claiming an active RIFOR affiliation. RIFOR may disable the profile at the end of the applicable notice period. Mailbox access, forwarding, rejection of incoming messages, deletion of mailbox content, and retirement of the address will be handled under Sections 5.4 and 5.5. Sections concerning ownership, responsibility, disclaimers, liability, disputes, and records survive as needed to give them effect.

10.6 Refund administration charge If RIFOR voluntarily grants a refund after terminating membership for cause, RIFOR may deduct a reasonable administration charge only if the amount or method of calculation was disclosed to the Member in writing before payment and the deduction is permitted by applicable law. No administration charge will be deducted where the law requires a full refund or where termination results from RIFOR's failure to provide the agreed services.

11 Intellectual property and names

11.1 RIFOR property RIFOR retains ownership of its name, logo, templates, systems, documentation, and service design. Membership grants only the limited permission expressly stated in this agreement.

11.2 Use of RIFOR name The Member may use the approved affiliation wording and RIFOR email address during an active term. The Member may not alter RIFOR's logo, register confusing names, imply sponsorship, or use RIFOR branding in advertising, fundraising, product promotion, or political campaigning without written permission.

12 Disclaimers and liability

12.1 Service standard RIFOR will provide the services with reasonable care. Except for rights that cannot lawfully be excluded, services are otherwise provided as available without guarantees of publication, recognition, deliverability, discoverability, funding, employment, revenue, or research outcomes.

12.2 Excluded loss To the extent permitted by law, neither party is liable to the other for indirect, incidental, special, punitive, or consequential damages, or for lost profits, opportunities, data, or reputation, arising from this agreement.

12.3 Liability cap To the extent permitted by law, RIFOR's total liability arising from this agreement will not exceed the fees the Member paid to RIFOR during the twelve months preceding the event giving rise to the claim. This limit does not apply where liability cannot lawfully be limited.

12.4 Member responsibility for claims The Member will be responsible for reasonable losses and third-party claims caused by the Member's unlawful content, infringement, fraud, impersonation, prohibited communications, or material breach, but only to the extent caused by the Member and permitted by applicable law.

13 Notices, complaints, and disputes

13.1 Notices Operational notices may be sent to the email addresses in this agreement. Notices of material breach or termination should be sent by email with confirmation of receipt or by another traceable method.

13.2 Good-faith resolution Before starting proceedings, the parties will attempt in good faith for thirty days to resolve a dispute through written notice and direct discussion. This does not prevent urgent injunctive relief or a complaint to a regulator.

13.3 Governing law This agreement is governed by the laws of Quebec and the applicable federal laws of Canada, without depriving a consumer of mandatory protections that apply in their place of residence. Subject to those protections, proceedings may be brought in the courts located in Quebec.

14 General terms

14.1 Entire agreement These terms, RIFOR's written membership confirmation, the privacy policy, and any written service-specific terms form the entire agreement. Marketing statements and informal discussions do not change it.

14.2 Changes A change is effective only if agreed in writing by both parties, except reasonable non-material operational or security updates. A materially adverse change will not apply during a paid term without the Member's agreement unless required by law or necessary to address an urgent security risk.

14.3 Assignment The Member may not transfer membership without RIFOR's written consent. RIFOR may transfer this agreement as part of a bona fide reorganization or transfer of the service, provided the successor assumes RIFOR's obligations.

14.4 Severability and waiver If a provision is unenforceable, it will be limited or removed only to the minimum extent necessary. Failure to enforce a provision once is not a waiver.

14.5 Electronic signatures and copies The parties may sign electronically and in counterparts. Each signed counterpart is treated as an original, and together they form one agreement.

14.6 Language For a Member in Quebec, RIFOR must provide the applicable French version before the Member may expressly choose to be bound by an English version, unless a lawful exception applies.