

## **International Stakeholder Panel on Alternative Methods**

AOAC INTERNATIONAL formed the International Stakeholder Panel on Alternative Methods (ISPAM) to develop harmonized, internationally accepted standard validation guidelines for alternative (rapid) chemical and microbiological methods by leveraging global networks of experts to reach consensus on an analytical validation protocol. The goal is to achieve optimal efficiency and avoid duplication of efforts in order to meet regulatory and product safety testing requirements.

This project is driven and supported by AOAC Organizational Affiliates and Contributing Members who participate in the AOAC Research Institute program, which provides independent evaluation of rapid assay manufacturers' performance claims.

The ISPAM as a whole is made up of 60+ member stakeholders who discuss and deliberate recommendations of smaller Working Groups that have been formed and are already working on the issue of harmonization. AOAC has learned that this upfront work saves a tremendous amount of time and focuses the larger stakeholder panel on consensus decision making rather than discussion of issues.

Only about 20 – 25, who are a balanced group and represent stakeholders from industry, government, academia and international organizations, will have voting power to approve or not the recommendations of smaller Working Groups to ensure that the voting members are a balance from the different sectors and countries, so that no one group dominates.