

# GENOMICS AUSTRALIA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Terms of Reference – December 2025

## Purpose

Genomics Australia's mission is to:

Provide national leadership, coordination and expertise to support the better integration of genomics into the Australian health system in a person and family-centred, culturally safe, efficient, effective, ethical and equitable way.

Genomics Australia will do this through:

- Leading on addressing complex health genomics issues
- Providing expert health genomics advice on issues that have national significance
- Conducting projects to give effect to the National Health Genomics Policy Framework and Implementation Plan
- Providing a national and international presence in health genomics
- Informing the Australian public about health genomics and giving stakeholders a focal point for government engagement and communications.

The purpose of the Genomics Australia Advisory Council (Advisory Council) is to provide advice to the Australian Health Genomics Commissioner (the Commissioner) on the following:

- Genomics Australia's strategic direction and priorities
- Health genomics matters that will assist the performance of the Commissioner's role to guide the work of Genomics Australia and provide advice to the Australian Government.
- Any other matters on which the Commissioner requests the Advisory Council to provide advice.

The Advisory Council will not have decision-making powers.

The Health Chief Executives Forum (HCEF) will oversee the implementation of the National Health Genomics Policy Framework and Implementation Plan, assisted by an intergovernmental committee made up of representatives of the federal, state and territory governments. In relation to the National Health Genomics Policy Framework and Implementation Plan, the Advisory Council's purpose is limited to providing advice to the Commissioner on Genomics Australia's approach, where Genomics Australia has a coordination or implementation role agreed by all governments.

## Membership

The Advisory Council will be chaired by the Commissioner and comprise up to 13 members, appointed for a two-year term. Members are required to have expertise, qualifications or experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Genomics
- Healthcare Advocacy
- Lived Experience

- Diagnostic and Clinical Practice
- Ethical, Legal and Social Implications of Health Genomics
- Health Policy and Health Systems
- Industry and Health Technology
- Medical Research

At least one member of the Advisory Council will identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This will ensure the lived experience of a First Nations person is included in the advice provided by the Advisory Council.

Membership will include one Commonwealth representative as well as two state and territory representatives. The state and territory representatives will be nominated through the Health Technology and Genomics Collaboration, which reports to HCEF.

Additionally, as the Genomics Australia First Nations engagement mechanism is still under development, the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) will provide a First Nations representative on the Advisory Council. This will ensure the input of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people until the formal engagement mechanism is in place. This representative role will also include a proxy provision.

Excluding government and First Nations representatives, members will be appointed following an EOI process based on their individual expertise, qualifications or experience and will not represent an organisation or jurisdiction.

Advisory Council members must not use their position to promote or advance personal or professional interests related to their external engagements or appointments.

Attachment A: Membership List

## Schedule of Meetings

The Advisory Council will meet up to four times per year, with each meeting lasting up to three hours. Meetings will generally be held virtually via videoconference (up to two hours) with one full in-person meeting (up to three hours) scheduled annually. Members may also be consulted between meetings on specific matters as required.

A forward schedule of meetings will be developed, noting that flexibility may be required.

## Meeting Agendas and Minutes

Agenda papers will be provided to Advisory Council members five business days prior to scheduled meetings. Members will be expected to have reviewed the agenda papers prior to attending meetings to promote comprehensive and constructive discussion.

The agenda for each meeting is set by the Commissioner. Advisory Council members may nominate items for discussion by notifying the Secretariat via email at least 15 business days prior to the scheduled meeting. All proposed agenda items are subject to review and require authorisation from the Commissioner before being included in the meeting agenda. Urgent items outside this timeframe may be considered as needed.

Meeting minutes will be prepared by the Secretariat and will provide a concise summary of decisions and actions. Once cleared by the Chair, minutes will be circulated to members — typically within two weeks of the meeting.

## Secretariat

Secretariat support and meeting documentation will be provided by Genomics Australia staff.

The secretariat can be contacted at [GAAC@health.gov.au](mailto:GAAC@health.gov.au).

## Out-of-Session

The Chair may request members to consider specific matters out-of-session when the issue cannot be deferred until the next scheduled meeting. In such cases the secretariat will circulate relevant information for members review and feedback. A summary of the discussion and outcomes of any out-of-session matters will be documented in the meeting summary of the next scheduled Council meeting.

## Quorum

Meetings of the Advisory Council will only proceed when a quorum is present. A quorum is defined as a majority of members plus one, which may include individuals formally acting on behalf of members. Meeting dates will be scheduled with consideration given to maximising member availability.

## Proxies

Members must notify the secretariat in writing of their absence at least three business days before a meeting. There is no provision for proxy attendance for members selected for their individual expertise. Government and First Nations representatives may delegate a proxy who should be appropriately briefed and authorised to contribute on behalf of the member they represent. Notice of proxies should be provided to the Chair and the secretariat.

## Invited Subject Matter Experts & Observers

Subject matter experts (SME) may be invited to attend meetings, as agreed by the Chair. SME will provide their expertise and participate in discussion. SME may only attend a meeting when they have signed a Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, Privacy and Secrecy Deed Poll form.

## Sub-Groups

The Advisory Council may establish time-limited sub-groups, as required, to support its work and ensure broader representation of expertise and interests, including from other government agencies and non-government organisations, where appropriate.

Sub-groups will not be established where existing structures already fulfil the intended function, to avoid duplication of effort.

The Advisory Council will oversee the operation of all sub-groups and ensure alignment of purpose, priorities and agendas.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Voice and Views

The Advisory Council will consider the voice and input of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the advice of relevant member experts and the NACCHO representative, appointed to the Advisory Council until a First Nations engagement mechanism is established under Genomics Australia.

## Communications

The Advisory Council will publish communiqués on the Genomics Australia website after each meeting.

## Media Contact

All contact with the media relating to the Advisory Council requires consultation with the Chair and secretariat.

The secretariat will manage any external requests for comment made to the Chair or members. Any information to be released to the media will need to be cleared through the Department's Communications Branch.

## Terms of Reference Review Period

The Genomics Australia Advisory Council Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years.

## Remuneration

Eligibility for remuneration is stipulated under the Departmental Remuneration Framework for Members of Non-Statutory Committees (Remuneration Framework), which is benchmarked off the Remuneration Tribunal Determination.

Individual expertise-based members will be eligible for remuneration at rates based on their qualifications and role type under the Remuneration Framework. Members are eligible for Sitting Fees on official meeting days and Preparation Fees for time spent on

business on non-meeting days. The Chair will be responsible for certifying and notifying the secretariat of the total time claimed by an office holder, including any travel time.

Government members are not eligible for remuneration under the Remuneration Framework.

In accordance with the Remuneration Tribunal (Official Travel) Determination for part-time office holders, remunerated members will be eligible for expenses for travelling within Australia through economy class (Tier 3), accommodation and meal and travel allowances.

Travel and accommodation will be booked by the secretariat in accordance with the Whole of Government policies.

## Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest

The Advisory Council may, on occasion, be provided with confidential material. Members shall not disclose this material to anyone outside the Advisory Council and shall treat this material with the utmost care and discretion. Prior to participating in Advisory Council activities, members are required to sign a Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, Privacy and Secrecy Deed Poll. This form must be renewed annually by all members to ensure continued compliance with confidentiality and conflict of interest obligations.

Proxies for representative members may only attend a meeting if they have signed a Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, Privacy and Secrecy Deed Poll form.

Genomics Australia will take all reasonable steps to advise members of the status of information and/or documents regarding their confidentiality.

Conflict of interest is defined as any instance where a Genomics Australia Advisory Council member, partner or close family friend has a direct financial or other interest in matters under consideration or proposed matters for consideration by the Advisory Council. Members must disclose to Genomics Australia any situation that may give rise to a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest and seek Genomics Australia's agreement to retain the position giving rise to the conflict of interest. Where a member gains agreement to retain that position, the member must not be involved in any related discussion or decision-making process.

## Attachment A: Membership List

### MEMBERS

Ms Tiffany Boughtwood (Chair) Australian Health Genomics Commissioner, Genomics Australia

Ms Kristine Pierce, Consumer Advocate

Ms Robyn Smith, Consumer Advocate

Associate Professor Azure Hermes, Individual technical member

Dr Erin Evans, Individual technical member

Dr Jane Tiller, Individual technical member

Professor Stephen Fox, Individual technical member

Professor Daniel MacArthur, Individual technical member

Professor Nicholas Pachter, Individual technical member

Professor Stephen Robson, Individual technical member

Mr Peter Bligh, Organisational representative

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)

Dr Saras Menon, State and Territory Representative

Professor Keith McNeil, State and Territory Representative

Professor Emily Lancsar, Commonwealth Representative