

Innovation Working Group - Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The primary purpose of the Innovation Working Groups is developing innovation opportunities that will support sustainable economic development and job creation, diversification and prosperity in the Upper Yarra.

The Innovation Opportunity Innovation Working Groups' core task is to develop, test and refine the propositions for the Innovation Opportunities. Outputs will be a comprehensive document, feasibility studies, business cases, or other appropriate documents to build and support a case for investment and funding for the initiative.

The purpose and output must be established at the beginning of the onset of each Innovation Working Group and all actions outlined as part of the process are reviewed and refined regularly to ensure that the purpose is met at the completion of the project.

2. Membership

Membership will include people with specific interest and expertise in innovating for regional growth and will come from:

- Local businesses and industry partners
- Education & research organisations
- Local community organisations and representatives
- Local, regional, and state government representatives who can provide advice and support on policy settings and project implementation.

Facilitation support is provided by the Project Manager and Project Administration Officer. RMIT will provide advice and support on the Smart Specialisation Strategy methodology used, and the DEECA Forestry Transition team will provide support as project sponsor.

Membership will be recruited via a publicly advertised Expression of Interest process. Appointment will be by approach from the Project Manager, with confirmation by the Local Development Strategy Project Control Group.

The Working Group's initial term will be 12 months, or until the conclusion of its primary project, whichever is shorter. After this period, a review of membership and purpose will be undertaken.

A position is deemed vacant if a member fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without being granted a leave of absence by the IWG.

Where a member decides to relinquish their membership before the end of their term of appointment, they must submit their resignation in writing to the Upper Yarra Local Development Strategy Project Manager outlining the reasons and providing all documentation and information prepared and collated during the course of the project.

3. Role

In undertaking this work, members of the Innovation Working Groups are asked to:

- Contribute and connect relevant expertise to strengthen innovation opportunities
- Bring a collaborative mindset to the work
- Acknowledge that the work involves learning by doing
- Share knowledge of existing and relevant innovations in the Upper Yarra or elsewhere and connect, learn from, and ideally strengthen these innovations

- Draw on local and global research that can enhance innovations

Where required, the Working Group may request in outside expertise and advice to support project development, with support of the Project Manager and by request to the Host Agency, which auspices the LDS grant.

4. Outputs

The Innovation Working Group will be responsible for advancing plans for innovation and economic development proposals that will benefit the community. Outputs may include:

- developing new, or updating previous strategic plans and processes
- business cases
- funding applications for the Victorian Forestry Plan Community Development Fund
- feasibility studies
- research and data collection
- project plans
- gap analyses
- economic assessments
- initiatives that build skills (i.e., training, mentoring and coaching).

5. Decision-Making Process

The Working Group will appoint a chair from amongst membership, or another method as agreed.

A meeting Quorum shall be 60% of members

In general, the IWG will adopt a consensus approach to decision-making. Where a consensus cannot be achieved, decisions will be made by majority vote with the Chair having a casting vote as required.

To vote, an IWG member must be present at the meeting.

IWG does not have a financial delegation, does not hold budget and cannot expend or receive monies.

6. Ways of working together

It is understood that there will be people participating in the Innovation Working Groups who will have specific interests related to the field of innovation and potentially specific activities being stewarded by the Innovation Groups. The following principles and practices will be applied to the work of the Innovation Working Groups:

- Open, respectful, and honest communication
- Declaration of real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest
- Basing all proposal development and recommendations on evidence that is:
 - Substantiated by independent research or advice as a feasible course of action for innovation in the relevant field
 - Technically and financially defensible
 - Socially, environmentally, and economically responsible

A failure of a member to comply with the above may result in the termination of their appointment to the IWG

7. Conflict of Interest

A member of the IWG with a conflict of interest in an item of business to be considered at a meeting must declare this before the item is considered.

A member declaring a conflict of interest must leave the meeting while the item is being discussed and must not vote on the matter being considered.

A failure to comply with the provisions regarding the disclosure of conflicts of interest may result in the member's appointment to the IWG being terminated.

Any Conflicts or perceived Conflicts of Interest may, at the discretion of the Project Manager in consultation with Project Control Group, be managed in such a way to reduce risks to the Project, Council and DEECA.

8. Meeting Procedures

- A chair will be appointed at the first meeting by members of the IWG. In the absence of the Chair from a meeting, the IWG shall appoint an acting Chair from the members present.
- Attendance at meetings can be in person at the designated meeting place or using electronic technology i.e. Microsoft Teams
- Members can request an item to be included on an agenda by sending the details to the Chair at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting
- Members must submit any apologies to the Chair if they are unable to attend a meeting at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the scheduled meeting (where possible). A proxy cannot be appointed.
- The meeting agenda will be sent to all members five (5) days prior to the scheduled meeting
- Unless otherwise agreed by all members, notice of meetings and supporting documentation will be dispatched a minimum of two (2) days prior to the meeting date.
- In exceptional circumstances, the Chair may allow accompanying reports that were not able to be sent out prior to the meeting to be reviewed at the meeting.
- Minutes, including all attachments and presentations from the meeting, will be circulated no later than five (5) days after the meeting.
- If required additional/ad hoc meetings will be arranged outside of these times at a time convenient to working group.
- There will be formal communication within the group through emails, meeting minutes and related documents.
- Informal communication is also encouraged to build partnerships and effectively implement actions.
- Drafted meeting minutes should be prescribed in the format as per the template below including issues discussed, key discussion points and action items.
- The Chair is responsible for the recording of minutes but may arrange for someone to take meeting minutes on their behalf.
- Draft meeting minutes are to be circulated by the Chair by no later than three days after the convened meeting for review and subsequent feedback.
- Feedback from the Innovation Working Group is to be provided via email correspondence to the Chair by no later than a week after the draft meeting minutes have been circulated.
- The Chair is to collate and review feedback from the Innovation Working Group and finalise meeting minutes to be issued for the record.

- Presentation slides shown during an Innovation Working Group meeting are to be circulated with the finalised meeting minutes to the group.

9. Schedule of Meetings

Unless otherwise agreed by all members, one 2-hour meeting will be held every calendar month.

If required additional/ad hoc meetings will be arranged outside of these times at a time convenient to working group.

10. Confidentiality and Privacy

IWG members are encouraged to freely discuss issues amongst each other, and this is highly valued.

However, members must treat information they receive as confidential, unless otherwise advised, and are expected to comply with the provisions that apply to confidential information contained in Sections 3 and 125 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the IWG.

Documents presented to the IWG will often be in draft format and are not suitable for wider distribution. Members have an obligation not to disclose any materials or information that is not available to the public, unless approved by the Chair.

All discussions should comply with the requirements and principles of the *Privacy Act 1988*.

The failure of a member to comply with the above may result in the termination of their appointment to the IWG.

11. Media Interactions

Innovative Working Group members are not allowed to engage in any of the following without prior approval from the Yarra Ranges Council or DEECA:

- **Media Interviews:** Members should refrain from speaking to the media about matters related to the organisation, projects, or initiatives.
- **Press Releases:** Any official statements or press releases must be coordinated through the designated authority.
- **Public Statements:** Members should avoid making public statements on organisational matters without proper authorisation.

Social Media Posts and Commentary

Members must seek approval before posting or commenting on social media platforms. This includes:

- **Social Media Posts:** Members should not publish any content related to the organisation without obtaining prior consent.
- **Comments and Reactions:** Members should exercise caution when commenting on organisational posts or responding to media coverage.

Approval Process

Working group members seeking approval for media interactions or social media posts must follow these steps:

1. Agree within the Working Group that this is the correct course of action.
2. Provide details about the intended communication (e.g., topic, purpose, audience) to DEECA for approval.
3. Await approval or further instructions.

Local Development Strategy Meeting Agenda

Date:		
Time:		
Venue:		
Attendees:	Name: John Smith	Position: Community Representative

Purpose

To discuss the development of the Local Development Strategy, including reviewing progress reports and providing support to project participants.

Agenda

1. Welcome
 - a. Attendance check and Purpose of meeting
 - b. Ground rules and Terms of Reference
 - c. Members of the community and media
 - d. Minutes and recording of meeting
2. Confirm minutes from previous meeting
3. Progress updates
 - a. Project Manager
 - b. Community Transition Officer
 - c. Chair
 - d. Invited participants from previous meetings
4. Disclosure of enforcement activities
5. Issues for discussion consistent with the role of the [insert group title here]:
 - a. XXXX
6. Proposed further meetings schedule
7. Proposed information dissemination plan
8. Review of key commitments and action items for next meeting
 - a. XXXX

Local Development Strategy Meeting Minutes

Date:			
Time:			
Venue:			
Attendees:	Name: Jane Smith	Position: Community Representative	

Agenda item	Key discussion points	Action	Who	Due date
1.	•	•	•	xx/xx/xxxx
2.	•	•	•	xx/xx/xxxx
3.	•	•	•	xx/xx/xxxx

Local Development Strategy Action Items

Agenda item	Actions		
	Task	Due date	Status
1.		xx/xx/xxxx	
2.		xx/xx/xxxx	

Local Development Strategy

Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form

The Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Form should be used by Local Development Strategy participants to disclose real or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as they become aware of them.

First Name:	
Surname:	
Position within Local Development Strategy:	
Details of Conflict of Interest:	
Date conflict occurred:	
Date conflict was identified:	
Date conflict was reported:	
Details of how conflict will be managed/mitigated:	
Signoff by individual:	
Approval by Project Control Group Chair:	
Approval by DEECA:	