

# Terms of Reference

**ATSE**

## ATSE Forums

<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Director, Policy and International Affairs</b>		
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## 1. Introduction

The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering Limited (ATSE) advocates for an Australia that thrives as an innovative, globally competitive nation which embraces technology for economic growth while ensuring social cohesion and environmental wellbeing.

We are a Learned Academy made up of almost 900 Fellows elected by their peers. We bring together Australia's leading experts in applied science, technology and engineering to provide impartial, practical and evidence-based advice on how to achieve sustainable solutions and advance prosperity.

ATSE operates as an independent, non-government, not-for-profit organisation, registered as a company limited by guarantee and also as registered charity with deductible gift recipient status.

The purpose of this Terms of Reference is to document the objectives, responsibilities, composition and administration of the ATSE Forums Committee. Any defined terms in this Terms of Reference have the same meaning as in the ATSE Constitution.

## 2. Objectives

The primary objectives of the Forums provide a platform for Fellows to contribute to key issues, enabling Fellows to support ATSE's influence of national debates and policy, driving change.

## 3. Responsibilities

ATSE's Forums are established under the Constitution and work within the framework of ATSE's strategic priorities, and in accordance with relevant policies and protocols set by the Board, to:

- Develop trusted, evidence-based, future-focused positions and advice to support advocacy and to influence policymakers and the public, by initiating and providing timely input into ATSE policy work – for example projects, submissions, reports, statements, explainers, media briefings, expert advice to government, workshops and events.
- Engage Fellows with related interests and areas of expertise in discussion and debate, and provide opportunities for enrichment and improvement of knowledge and understanding.
- Collaborate with other Forums, Divisions, the International Strategy Group, and expertise outside the Forum to take a cross-disciplinary approach to solving complex problems.
- Working with the Secretariat, inform external stakeholders, industry leaders and other experts about the Academy's strategic priority activities.

Forums undertake the identification, debate and prioritisation of important emerging issues within their policy domain and plan their work to ensure strategic impact. Forums achieve this through:

Quarterly Forum leadership group meetings (held at the discretion of the Forum leadership), with additional meetings as needed ensuring a Quorum for Forum Leadership group meetings of no less than half of the leadership group including at least the Chair or a Deputy-Chair

- Full Forum virtual meetings – at least once per year, preferably at the end of the calendar year
- Identifying Annual Forum priorities, via the Forum leadership in consultation with forum members, to support the Policy Steering Group to set whole-of-Academy priorities
- Contributing as required to policy artefacts (such as ATSE position statements, research reports, communication pieces, workshops, papers, webinars, etc.) to promote ATSE's strategic agenda
- Supporting strategic consideration of all ATSE policy project proposals through the Forum leadership group and Policy Steering Group

Forum members may propose projects to further the work of the Forum, via the ATSE Policy Project Proposal template. Project proposals should first be evaluated by the relevant Forum leadership group/s, and then by the Policy Steering Group.

#### 4. Composition and Tenure

- a) Any Fellow can self-nominate to join or leave any Forum as a member or reference member, by informing the Secretariat.
- b) Members are Fellows who are interested in the work of the forum but does not identify as having specific expertise in this field
- c) Reference Members are Fellows with an interest in the work of the Forum and expertise in the Forum's scope, and are willing to be contacted to provide that expertise in the work of ATSE and the Forum
- d) Non-Fellows may be invited to be guests of the Forums, subject to approval by the Forum Chair and Deputy Chairs, to expand expertise areas of the Forum as required.
- e) Lists of Forum membership are to be made available to Forum leaders on request.
- f) Each Forum is led by one Chair and up to two Deputy Chairs. At the discretion of the Forum's leadership group, Forums may be led by two Co-Chairs. The Chair(s) of each Forum becomes a member of the ATSE Policy Steering Group and Assembly. If unavailable for a meeting of the Policy Steering Group or Assembly, the Forum Chair may designate one of the Deputy Chairs as their delegate to that meeting.
- g) Each Forum's leadership group should meet the Academy's required gender balance for all committees, being: 40% women, 40% men, and 20% persons of any gender.
- h) Chairs and Deputy Chairs must be fully financial fellows.
- i) Forum Chairs may serve two consecutive two-year terms in any one position, and a maximum of three consecutive terms in two or more positions.
- j) Forum elections for the Chair and Deputy-Chair roles will be held annually, with no more than half of all Forum leadership groups changing over in any given year.
- k) Professional staff will call for nominations for Forum Chair and Deputy Chair no less than one month prior to the election. Fellows may self-nominate or be nominated by other members of the Forum with their consent.
- l) If more than one nomination is received for the role of Chair, or more than two nominations for the role of Deputy Chair, the positions will be put to an election. Any member of the relevant Forum is eligible to vote.
- m) In the event of a casual vacancy occurring in the positions of Chair or Deputy Chair of a Forum, the leadership team of that Forum will work with the ATSE Secretariat to fill the vacancy by facilitating an expression of interest (EOI) process from the forum members. EOIs will be provided to the Policy Steering Group for a decision.
- n) Newly elected Forum Chairs will join the Forum leadership group from the time of their election, and become Chair after confirmation of the ATSE Board.
- o) The Chair may invite other Fellows to join a Forum's leadership group to expand its capacity, diversity and representation, up to a maximum of six (6) Fellows total on the Forum leadership group. Fellows may self-nominate to be considered for the leadership group, or be referred by the leadership team or staff.
- p) Forum leadership groups are to comply with ATSE's Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

#### 5. Engagement

- a) Forum leadership groups are expected to actively seek to engage expertise across the Fellowship, and particularly newly-elected Fellows.
- b) Forum leadership groups can achieve this through:
- c) Supported by the staff, developing an engagement plan for each year, to be attached to the Forum's annual priorities
- d) Actively reaching out to Fellows who have specific skills, experience or networks that may be valuable for a certain piece of work, or a working group
- e) Actively making contact with relevant new Fellows and inviting them to participate in the work of the Forum
- f) Working with staff to ensure open and regular communication with Forum members
- g) Sponsoring activities through which Fellows have opportunities to enrich their knowledge, keep their expertise current, and contribute to the Forum's work

## **6. Conflicts of Interest**

- a) Where an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest arises in the context of Committee activities, Members must disclose this to staff immediately.
- b) Once the conflict of interest has been appropriately disclosed, the Committee will decide on appropriate treatment or further action depending on the scope of the conflict, which may include the conflicted Member(s) recusing themselves from all discussions and decisions related to the issue.
- c) Staff will maintain a Register of Interests, which will be appended to each meeting pack.

## **7. Review Terms of Reference**

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years to ensure alignment with the requirements of the Academy. Review recommendations will be submitted to the ATSE Board for approval.