

'Agriculture, Water and Environment Research Institute Advisory Board'- Membership and Terms of Reference

Section 1 - Establishment

Background

(1) Charles Sturt University (the University) aims to:

- a. maintain its position in the top five Australian universities for graduate outcomes based on employment and salary,
- b. embed a culture of excellence across all aspects of the University's operations, and
- c. achieve significant and sustained growth in research, development and innovation income in our chosen areas, delivering high impact outcomes for regional Australia which is recognised for excellence internationally with the overarching aim of consolidating the institution so that it is demonstrably more resilient and sustainable by the end of the decade.

(2) The University has endorsed an ambitious research strategy that will be principally achieved through three research institutes:

- a. Agriculture, Water and Environment,
- b. Cyber Security and Data Science, and
- c. Rural and Regional Health.

(3) The establishment of the Agriculture, Water and Environment Research Institute (the Institute) at Charles Sturt University builds on strengths and draws on strong connections with the Rural and Regional Health and Cyber Security and Data Science Research Institutes, and will deliver internationally leading research at the intersection of the rural and regional, big data, health and agriculture.

Purpose

(4) The role of the Agriculture, Water and Environment Research Institute Advisory Board (the Board) is to provide advice to the Vice-Chancellor regarding the strategy and operation of the Institute to ensure the Institute's research is of the highest quality, that the Institute produces high impact outcomes both regionally and nationally, and that the Institute has a sustainable future.

(5) The Board is an independent advisory board established by the University to provide guidance and recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor on the strategic direction of the Institute. The Board will also play an important ambassadorial and representative role for the Institute.

Section 2 - Glossary

(6) For the purpose of this document:

- a. Act - means the [Charles Sturt University Act 1989](#).
- b. Board - means the Advisory Board of the Agriculture, Water and Environment Research Institute.
- c. Council - means the University Council established under Part 3 of the Act.
- d. External person - means a person other than a member of the academic or general staff of the University or an undergraduate or graduate student of the University, as set out in section 8A of the Act.
- e. Foresighting Committee - means the Foresighting Committee established by University Council.
- f. Research Advisory Council - means the Research Advisory Council of Charles Sturt University.
- g. Institute - means the Charles Sturt University Agriculture, Water and Environment Research Institute.

Section 3 - Membership

(7) The members of the Board are:

- a. an external Chair appointed by the Council on the recommendation of the Foresighting Committee,
- b. the Vice-Chancellor, and
- c. between 7 and 10 external members appointed by the Foresighting Committee.

(8) The following positions have right of audience and debate at Board meetings:

- a. the Academic Director of the Institute
- b. the Executive Director of the Institute
- c. the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
- d. the Chief Operating Officer
- e. the Executive Dean, Faculty of Science and Health

(9) External members will be appointed for a three-year term and may seek reappointment for a further term (maximum two terms).

(10) Members of the Board are expected to be active contributors. Absence from three consecutive meetings of the Board for which reasonable notice has not been given and is not excused by the Board will result in the position being deemed vacant.

(11) The Board membership should strive to achieve gender and diversity balance, skills-balance, and First Nations representation in the membership.

(12) The skillsets and attributes required collectively of the Board (Appendix 1) and the founding external members of the Board (Appendix 2) are set out in the [appendices associated with this document](#).

Section 4 - Functions and responsibilities

Guiding principles

(13) The Institute will:

- a. be of world-class standard, globally competitive and recognised as a national research leader in agricultural, water and environmental issues,
- b. achieve a balance in representation between differing interests of agriculture, water and the environment,
- c. build on the University's strong reputation for research in agriculture, water and environment, to further improve ERA and EI assessments,
- d. significantly grow external investment in research in agriculture, water and environment,
- e. undertake research that is ethical and appropriate to First Nations people, communities and organisations including First Nations representation and appropriate governance,
- f. undertake research that addresses clearly defined challenges and that demonstrably leads to improved and sustainable outcomes for industry, governments and communities,
- g. be strategic, sustainable and create foundations for the long term,
- h. be collaborative with selected partners and stakeholders, and integrate with teaching, and
- i. operate to best practice ethical standards.

Committee responsibilities

(14) The principal responsibilities of the Board are to:

- a. provide advice on the strategic direction for the Institute, including on how the Institute can fulfill its guiding principles,
- b. provide advice on activities that will lead to an enduring and successful Institute,
- c. identify and report on research linkages and opportunities,
- d. assist in the provision of financial, political and strategic support to the Institute,
- e. assist in the development of strong collaborative links (national and international) with relevant industry, the community, government agencies, other universities and research centres,
- f. oversee the implementation of best practice in strategic planning, research and financial management,
- g. provide advice on potential funding and translation paths, activities and strategies for the Institute,
- h. assist the Institute to maintain high visibility, partnerships and collaborations, and reputation in research, industry, government and public domains,
- i. assist the Executive Leadership Team to define the initial roles for the Academic Lead and Executive Director of the Institute and provide advice on the recruitment process,
- j. to report to the Research Advisory Committee on:
 - i. activities of the Board,
 - ii. performance and progress reporting of the Institute, and
 - iii. other matters referred by the Research Advisory Committee, the Academic Lead or Executive Director of the Institute, or the Vice-Chancellor.

Section 5 - Meetings

Quorum

(15) A quorum is a majority of the membership.

Meetings

(16) The Chair may approve for the whole, or any part, of a meeting of the Board the attendance of other persons, for the purpose of providing advice or consultation to the Board.

(17) The Board shall meet at least four times a year and six times a year during the establishment phase.

(18) The Board may meet at other times.

Agendas and minutes

(19) Agendas are circulated to the Board one week prior to the meeting.

(20) Agendas and minutes for the meetings of the Board will be prepared by the Institute using the Council templates.

Related expenses

(21) External members of the Board may be eligible for a per diem and out of pocket expenses through reimbursement.

Conflicts of interest

(22) Where a member has a perceived or material conflict of interest, they must declare this to the Chair and at the Board meeting prior to discussion to the item of business.

Variations

(23) Variations to the terms of reference and/or membership of the Board must be approved by the Foresighting Committee.

Review of performance

(24) The Foresighting Committee will review the performance of the Board annually.

(25) The Foresighting Committee will review the operation of the Institute the first year and then every three years thereafter.

Review of these terms of reference

(26) The Foresighting Committee will review these Terms of Reference after the first year and then every three years thereafter.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	1st November 2021
Review Date	1st November 2022
Approval Authority	University Council
Approval Date	1st November 2021
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
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