Northern Institute Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Section 1 - Establishment

(1) The Northern Institute Advisory Committee is established under Part 3 Section 15 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003.

Section 2 - Functions and Responsibilities

(2) The Northern Institute supports and advances the University's research capacity and capability to deliver quality and impacy by acting as a catalyst to build capacity in social and policy research that impacts positively on people's lives and aspires to an inclusive, sustainable future for people in Northern Australia and the neighbouring region.

(3) The Northern Institute Advisory Committee acts to assist the Northern Institute's mission to undertake significant and high-quality interdisciplinary research, encourage and support local, national and international partnerships, enable public intellectual commentary, expand regional capacity that leads to research of significance and realise the potential of the region.

(4) The role of the Northern Institute Advisory Committee is to provide overarching advice to the Director, related to the Northern Institute's strategic research directions and connections. This advice will inform the Northern Institute's research planning and development activities, which will be monitored by the Advisory Committee.

(5) The Northern Institute Advisory Committee will:

a. Support the Northern Institute's aim to increase research impact and output;
b. Advocate on behalf of the Northern Institute to external agencies; and
c. Promote the development of the Northern Institute's research capacity.

Section 3 - Membership

(6) Membership of the Northern Institute Advisory Committee will comprise:

a. Director, Northern Institute (ex officio);
b. Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Arts and Society (ex officio);
c. Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection (ex officio); and
d. Up to seven (7) external members.

(7) The Northern Institute Director will invite members to the Committee on the basis of their professional expertise and experience that reflect the research disciplines and directions relevant to the Northern Institute's vision and agenda while representing stakeholder groups such as government, industry, the not-for-profit sector, First Nations communities and organisations, and the University's key partnerships.

(8) Appointed members will be required to sign and agree to the Code of Conduct - Employees before joining the committee.

(9) The Northern Institute Advisory Committee may invite any person, internal or external to the University, to attend specific meetings or agenda items to assist in its deliberations.

Members' attendance

(10) Attendance by members will be monitored by the Secretary. If a member has three consecutive unexplained absences from Northern Institute Advisory Committee meetings the Chair will discuss with the Vice-President Governance and University Secretary their future participation as a member of the committee.

Section 4 - Chair

(11) The Northern Institute Director will appoint a Chair for the Northern Institute Advisory Committee from the external membership. The Chair will be appointed for a term of one year and may be reappointed for consecutive terms.

(12) If the Chair of the Advisory Committee is not present at any meeting, a majority of members present will elect a chairperson for that meeting.

Section 5 - Secretary

(13) A staff member of the Northern Institute will provide administrative support and be responsible for the preparation and circulation of meeting documentation, including the agenda, meeting pack, and minutes, and coordinate communications among the Advisory Committee members.

Section 6 - Term of Office

(14) Northern Institute Advisory Committee members, other than ex officio members, will hold office for up to 2 years from the date of appointment.

(15) A member may be appointed to additional consecutive terms.

(16) An appointed member vacates their office if they are absent, without apology, from three consecutive meetings of the committee.

(17) An appointed member may resign from their position by notifying the secretary in writing.

(18) Ex officio members are members of the committee for the duration of appointment to their position.

(19) On the advice of the Northern Institute Director, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection may terminate an individual's membership of the committee if the Chair determines that their continued membership is not constructive to the operation and functioning of the Northern Institute Advisory Committee.

(20) The Chair is taken to have vacated their office if:

a. they resign by in writing to the secretary;
b. they cease to be a member of the Northern Institute Advisory Committee; or
c. the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection terminates their appointment.

Section 7 - Quorum

(21) At a meeting of the Northern Institute Advisory Committee, a quorum is constituted by 50% plus one of the total membership.

Section 8 - Meetings

(22) The Northern Institute Advisory Committee will meet bi-annually with a minimum of fourteen (14) days' notice.

(23) Matters requiring a resolution or recommendation by the Committee are to be determined by consensus wherever possible. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair will have a casting vote.

Member conduct

(24) Professional conduct of members is expected at all times. The Chair may call members to order as required.

(25) Items of discussion must be treated with confidentiality as appropriate by members.

Section 9 - Agenda

(26) The agenda will be distributed with supporting documentation at least seven (7) days prior to the advertised meeting date.

Section 10 - Minutes

(27) Meeting minutes and action items will be made available within two weeks of the meeting.

(28) The minutes will detail the items under discussion, the main points of the discussion, the resolution reached and the primary reasons for reaching that determination.

Section 11 - Reporting

(29) This Committee must provide a report in a timely manner to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Arts and Society.

Section 12 - Conflicts of Interest

(30) Where a member has an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest regarding an agenda item, they must declare this to the Chair at the commencement of discussion of the item, and be prepared to excuse themselves from the discussion, or the room, if required, as per the terms of the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Section 13 - Non-compliance

(31) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct - Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct - Students.

(32) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(33) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	8th April 2025
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Approval Authority	Research Committee
Approval Date	26th March 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - Charles Darwin University, a body corporate established under section 4 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003. The University is comprised of the various faculties, CDU TAFE, organisational units, and formal committees, including the governing University Council and Academic Board.