



Research Committee Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference set out the purpose, authority, responsibilities and membership of the National Disability Research Partnership (NDRP) Research Committee. The NDRP Board will review and endorse the Terms of Reference at least once a year, or in response to significant changes.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the NDRP Research Committee is to provide advice and recommendations to the NDRP Board on:

- the strategic and policy framework for research funded by the NDRP;
- the quality and transparency of the NDRP's funding processes;
- research to be funded by the NDRP through open and targeted funding rounds;
- funding to strengthen research capacity including fellowships;
- commissioned research funding proposals and projects;
- monitoring and revising the NDRP Research Agenda over time;
- how to influence external funding agencies to invest in disability inclusive research
- how to influence key stakeholders such as universities and government, to strengthen disability inclusive research capacity; and
- knowledge translation strategies to support the uptake of evidence produced through the NDRP research program.

2. Authority

The Research Committee will take advice and recommendations from NDRP management and independent review panels and provide advice and final recommendations to the Board. The Board holds ultimate decision-making power.

Board of Directors authority

- Final approval of NDRP strategic and policy framework for research.
- Accept recommendations from Research Committee and give final approval for award of research funding.
- Commission strategic advice from Research Committee as needed.

Research Committee authority

- Monitor, review and make recommendations to the Board on the award of research funding.
- Accept advice from Independent Review Panels on research funding application.

- Provide advice to NDRP management on the research capacity strengthening program, evidence to action and research translation initiatives.

Independent Review Panels

- Review research funding applications and provide advice to Research Committee.
- Note: Each panel will consist of external reviewers, subject matter experts and at least one Research Committee member.

NDRP Management

- Develop drafts of NDRP strategic and policy framework for endorsement.
- Implement endorsed strategic and policy framework.
- Coordinate research funding program.
- Provide advice on research proposals.

3. Responsibilities

The Research Committee will:

- Provide the NDRP with independent, strategic advice that supports a contemporary, responsive and beneficial disability research program.
- Oversee the NDRP strategic and policy framework for research. The framework will include research funding rounds (including criteria for assessing funding applications), targeted research, commissioned research, and capacity strengthening initiatives such as fellowships and scholarships.
- Provide assurance to the NDRP Board that research funding processes are established and adhered to for quality and transparency including due diligence with respect to managing conflicts of interest in funding decisions
- Monitor and make recommendations about the NDRP Research Agenda, including recommending priority areas to inform funding rounds and monitoring policy trends and emerging issues for the disability community.
- Monitor, review and make recommendations to the Board on:
 - the award of research funding through grant rounds;
 - the award of targeted research funding
 - commissioned research programs with funders such as governments, philanthropic funding
 - the award of fellowship funding
 - the award of scholarships and stipends
- Track, at a high-level, the implementation and impact of the NDRP research programs.
- Provide advice to NDRP management on the research capacity strengthening program, evidence to action and research translation initiatives.

4. Committee membership

The Committee will consist of two Directors of the NDRP Board (one of which will Chair the Committee), and up to 10 external members with expertise in disability research, research funding and governance, advocacy, and/or public policy.

Members will be appointed to the research committee with the aim of bringing a diversity of perspectives and experiences, including:

- At least half (50%) of members should be people with disability.
- At least half (50%) of members should have expertise in research, with a mix of career stages, disciplines and methodologies including qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Intersectional representation, including at least 15% (two members) First Nations people.
- Advocacy experience: At least 15% (two members) should be disability advocates (e.g. employed by or on the board of a Disabled People's Organisation or a Disability Representative Organisation).
- At least 15% (two members) should have expertise in public policy.
- Members from culturally and racially marginalised backgrounds, and LGBTQIA+ communities.
- Gender and geographical diversity.

Appointments to the Research Committee are made by the Board following an open expression of interest process facilitated by NDRP management.

Members of the Committee who are not NDRP Board Directors will be invited to contribute their views as experts rather than representing the views of their organisations.

5. Committee skillset

As a whole, the Committee should have a breadth and depth of skills and experience, including:

- understanding and/or experience of high quality of research methods and processes, including ethical conduct in human research.
- experience in applying one or more of the NDRP principles:
 - high quality collaborative research by and with people with disability,
 - valuing knowledge of people with disability in research,
 - strengthening disability research capacity,
 - sharing research findings to influence policies and practices.
- knowledge of research funding processes such as those of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and Australian Research Council (ARC).
- demonstrated knowledge of disability strategies and policies, and debates, as they relate to the NDRP Research Agenda.
- Knowledge and experience of applying research findings into policy and practice.
- expertise in public policy
- understanding of intersectional issues for people with disability, and particular cohorts that can be excluded from inclusive research.

6. Meetings

The Committee will meet at least four times a year, or more frequently as circumstances dictate, particularly around key funding dates and in the first year of operation. The Committee will meet no more than eight times a year.

A quorum of any meeting will be half plus one of total committee members, including at least one Director of the NDRP Board.

7. Term

The initial term for members of the Research Committee is two years. Members can nominate for a second term.

8. Conflict of interest

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 start of the meeting, and be prepared to excuse themselves from the discussion if required, in line with the NDRP Conflicts of Interest and Related Parties Policy.

9. Remuneration

As set out in the NDRP Director Remuneration Policy, sitting fees will be paid to Committee members who are not Board Directors at a rate of \$300 per meeting. This rate covers preparation and reading for the meeting. If Committee meetings scheduled by the NDRP are longer than two hours Committee members will be paid an additional \$150 per hour.

See Director Remuneration policy for more detail.