

Australian Microbiome Steering Committee Terms of Reference v1.1

1. Introduction

The Australian Microbiome initiative is a continental-scale, collaborative project aspiring to characterise the diversity and ecosystem services of the microorganisms inhabiting natural Australian ecosystems.

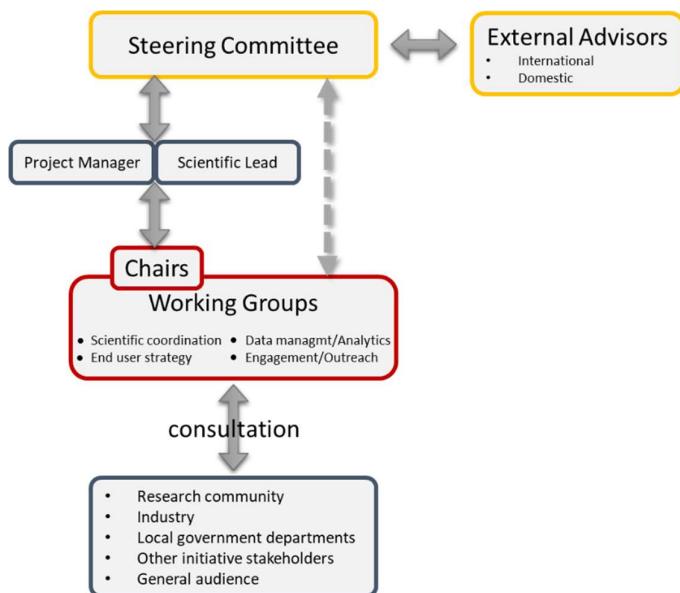
The current core partners funding the establishment of the Australian Microbiome initiative are Bioplatforms, IMOS, CSIRO, and Parks Australia through the Bush Blitz program funded by the Australian Government and BHP. The consortium will seek further investment from other organisations to ensure the totality of the program is funded.

The initiative aims to develop an Australian microbial diversity and genomics resource for management, monitoring, and R&D purposes. The consortium efforts will:

- Sustain and strengthen the Australian environmental microbial diversity and genomic resource
- Engage a broad range of end users
- Enhance functionality to allow translation of the resource to applied outcomes for a broad range of end-users and uses

2. Governance structure

To ensure proper management of the initiative a structure of executive streams have been established as shown in the diagram below. In addition, the initiative will receive input of external advisors.



The working groups are designed to bring together individuals possessing knowledge of the relevant functional areas as well as expertise in disciplines and will act either individually or collectively to undertake assigned tasks and activities alongside an indicated timeframe of completion for deliverables, in order to achieve the project's objectives. Each of the groups will engage in broad consultation of the consortium and provide informed recommendations to the Steering Committee.

The working group(s) may be transient to the completion of specific deliverables.

3. Terms

This Terms of Reference is effective from the start of the framework initiative (1st July 2018) and continues until the expected completion date of the initiative estimated at 30th June 2021 (3 years).

4. Membership

The Steering Committee will include:

Name	
Justin Seymour (Chair)	IMOS
Sue Fyfe	Parks Australia/Bush Blitz
Andrew Bissett	CSIRO
Austen Ganley	University of Auckland
Andrew Gilbert	Bioplatforms Australia
Observer – Sophie Mazard	Australian Microbiome Project Manager

A Steering Committee member can terminate their appointment at any time during the term of the initiative. The departing member must inform the committee of their departure with at least a month notice. Departing members may nominate a replacement member for approval by the Steering Committee.

5. Roles and Responsibilities of the Committee

The Steering Committee provides strategic direction and leadership to the Australian Microbiome Initiative consortium. The Committee ensures the achievement of program objectives by making decisions on matters that impact on the milestones and outcomes agreed in the Australian Microbiome Initiative consortium Collaborative Agreement. Members of the Committee are expected to act in an impartial manner, representing the interest of the consortium above organisational interest. Any conflict of interests of the committee members must be declared.

The Steering Committee is accountable for:

- Providing oversight and guidance to ensure the consortium is working on the agreed scope towards the outlined objectives and deliverables
- Establishing processes for decision making
- Overseeing progress of working groups
- Engaging with external advisors to ensure impact/currency
- Identifying and managing risk for the initiative

6. Meetings

The Australian Microbiome Steering Committee will meet three times a year, or as the Chair deems appropriate. Steering committee meetings should be planned with enough advance lead time to allow all members to be present, however, due to the demanding schedules of all members, there may be times where not all members can be present.

A Steering Committee meeting must have at least 3 committee members for a decision to be made. If the decision pertains to a specific partner's activities, then the representative member for this partner must be part of this quorum. For major decisions where members are absent, the decision needs to be communicated to the absent members through electronic means following the meeting for their check and agreement for full ratification.

7 Reporting

The position of the Steering Committee within the overall Initiative governance structure is shown in the diagram in Section 1. Minutes will be made available on the OSF initiative page (<https://osf.io/w8xpe/>).

7.1 Reports from the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will report:

- Annually to the core funding partners on the progress of the initiative towards the outlined objectives and deliverables
- As deemed appropriate by the chair to the consortium on status of the initiative and interaction with the external advisors

7.2 Reports to the Steering Committee

The Steering committee will receive reports from:

- The Science Lead and Project Manager on the progress of the initiative towards the outlined objectives and

deliverables.

- The Chair(s) of the initiative's working group(s) on updates on the groups' activities

8. Amendment, modification or variation

This Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by Steering Committee members.