



**FUTURE OF ORBOST  
& DISTRICT  
PROJECT**

# **Future of Orbost Project Governance Group Terms of Reference**

## Contents

1. Background.....	3
2. Purpose .....	3
3. Key Principles .....	3
4. Membership .....	4
4.1.1. Project Control Group.....	5
4.2. Membership diversity and collective capability.....	5
4.3. Membership appointment process .....	5
5. Membership Responsibilities.....	6
5.1. Chairperson .....	6
5.2. Executive Support.....	7
6. Meeting details.....	7
7. Amendment, modification, or variation .....	7

## 1. Background

Good governance underpins successful project management, and a revision is required considering the Local Development Strategy of the Future of Orbost (FoO) project moving into Stage 2 implementation, and some of the recommendations of the recent review.

Place-based initiatives like the FoO project, which are sponsored by government, reflect '*different ways of sharing decision-making influence, control and accountability*'<sup>1</sup>. The intent here is to support a responsible, inclusive, and sustainable governance and decision-making framework that enables transparent and accountable practices and promotes community participation, with a view to establishing community-led decision-making bodies beyond the lifetime of the project.

This document therefore supersedes the Terms of Reference (ToR) of May 2022 that were in place for Stage 1 and pays particular attention to the decision-making requirements of Stage 2 of the FoO project.

The ToR describe local governance arrangements, noting that other levels of governance and co-ordination are currently under consideration, and may require further fine-tuning to ensure alignment.

Given the focus of the project, particular consideration is given to place-based governance<sup>2</sup>.

## 2. Purpose

The role of the Future of Orbost Governance Group (FoOGG) is to:

1. Endorse and maintain oversight of Future of Orbost project plans (including 90-day work plans, Stakeholder Communications and Engagement Plans, and Risk Management Plans).
2. Consider barriers and challenges and as appropriate escalate through other co-ordination and higher tier governance mechanisms.
3. Approve budget forecasts in relation to allocation of Stage 2 uncommitted funds available for further facilitating and supporting the progression of innovation opportunities (from Innovation Working Groups) and shorter-term sectoral development opportunities (from Concept Pool).
4. Consider and approve proposals for progressing innovation opportunities (through Innovation Working Groups) and shorter-term sectoral development opportunities (Concept Pool) from the Stage 2 uncommitted funds.
5. Endorse proposals (from Innovation Working Groups) and shorter-term sectoral development opportunities (Concept Pool) from funds available through the Community Development Fund and other funding sources.

Endorsement will provide assurance to DEECA that an application for the Community Development Fund or the Transition Fund is aligned with the Local development Strategy. Alignment with the Local Development Strategy is a requirement for applications to the Community Development Fund and is looked upon favourably for applications to the Transition Fund.

6. As considered appropriate, provide letters of support for other project proposals seeking funding/investment that are aligned with the purpose and higher-level goals to which the FoO is contributing.

## 3. Key Principles

- Diversity and inclusion/representative of the Orbost and District Community/ies;

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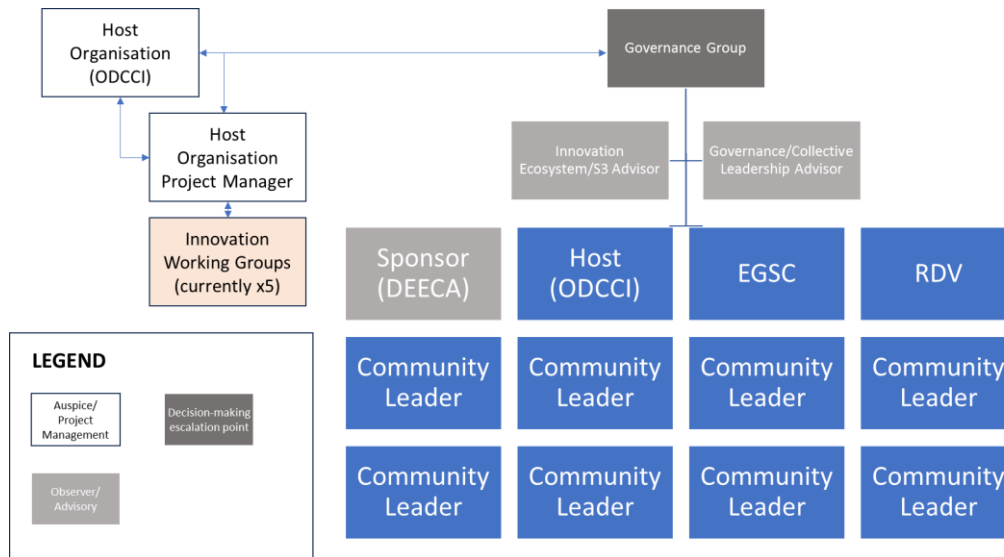
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vic.gov.au/framework-place-based-approaches/place-based-approaches-action>

<sup>2</sup> [Capability framework for place-based governance | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/capability-framework-for-place-based-governance); [Chapter Seven: Collaborative governance | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/chapter-seven-collaborative-governance)

- Accountability to the community;
- Respect, trust, and honesty;
- Transparency;
- Collaborative impartial/evidence-based decision-making;
- Building capability and capacity for sustainable place-based governance and community-led decision-making beyond the project.

#### 4. Membership

The following diagram describes the FoOGG and key relationships.



Each of the critical stakeholders (DEECA as the sponsor and the Chamber as the host) plus East Gippsland Shire Council (the local government authority which also has carriage of place-based development and socio-economic development initiatives) will nominate a suitable candidate to the FoOGG. Regional Development Victoria will also be invited to nominate a representative. It is expected that government representatives will be familiar with and be ‘accomplished’ in the capabilities described in the Victorian Public Service Capability Framework for place-based governance.<sup>3</sup> In addition to supporting the purpose described above in Section 2, a key role of the government representatives will be to support escalation requirements and ensure that appropriate co-ordination and co-operation arrangements are in place across various levels and functions of government and public sector agencies.

In addition, 6 community members reflecting the diversity and capability of the community will be appointed to the FoOGG. Two additional community members, to make a total of 8, may be required to ensure the Principles (Section 3 above) are realised. These appointments will be through an open ‘Expression of Interest’ (EOI) and the selection process outlined below. It is recognised that whilst community members will bring diversity in skills, experience and connections, the development of a range of new capabilities associated with place-based development and place-based governance may need to be supported.

The FoOGG should include specialist non-decision-making advisors as required to support the required capability requirements. In the initial stages consideration should be given to advisors with specialist skills in:

- Smart Specialisation (S3), and/or

<sup>3</sup> [VPS Place-based capability framework \(content.vic.gov.au\)](http://content.vic.gov.au)

- Place-based governance, and/or
- Collective/Ecosystem Leadership

DEECA and 'advisors' will not have a role in formal decision-making.

The Project Manager will provide executive support to the FoOGG and have no decision-making responsibilities.

All positions on the FoOGG are unfunded and/or voluntary roles – noting that participation of some members may relate to their employment or other contractual obligations.

#### **4.1.1. Project Control Group**

The FoO project and its governance will also be supported by a Project Control Group (PCG). This will include a representative/s of the Host and Sponsor, and the Project Manager. The PCG will meet more regularly to monitor the project plan and delivery against the Funding Agreement. It will play a key role in ensuring co-ordination and escalation processes are in place to support the FoOGG.

#### **4.2. Membership diversity and collective capability**

Place-based approaches, such as the FoO project, require '*deep engagement and collaborative governance structures that engage across sectors and with a diverse cross-section of the community*'<sup>4</sup>.

It is essential that community diversity is represented with particular attention to:

- Age
- Gender
- Socio-economic demographic
- Cultural
- Industry sectoral experience
- A range of relevant capabilities

A Diversity/Capability Matrix for the FoOGG project will support the selection process.

Key personal attributes include self-awareness, having an open mind, respecting diversity of thought, embracing continuous learning, and a deep commitment to impartially serving the best interests of the community.

It is expected that all members will have access to email and will have digital literacy to support electronic communications.

#### **4.3. Membership appointment process**

Community members wishing to express interest must obtain a copy of the FoOGG Terms of Reference.

The community membership appointment process will be according to a formal 'Expression of Interest' process. An Expression of Interest will comprise the following:

- A letter, of no more than one page, to the Project Manager including contact details;
- The letter will include the signed endorsement of 2 other community members and their contact details;
- All submitted prior to the stated deadline.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.vic.gov.au/framework-place-based-approaches/place-based-approaches-action>

The selection process will comprise the following:

- The Project Manager will receive and acknowledge receipt of letters expressing interest.
- The Project Manager will request the completion of an online form (or verbal equivalent) to gather information relating to a diversity/capability matrix;
- The Project Manager will assess Expressions of Interest and information gathered using a diversity/capability matrix.
- The Collective Leadership/Governance Advisor (or suitable substitute) will independently assess the Expressions of Interest and information using a diversity/capability matrix.
- The Project Manager and the Collective Leadership/Governance Advisor (or suitable substitute) will confer and recommend the agreed mix of candidates for community representatives including the number required (minimum 6, maximum 8).
- Interviews may be conducted where data collected is insufficient to form an agreed recommendation.
- Recommendations will be considered and endorsed by host and sponsor.
- Feedback for candidates will be available upon request from the Project Manager.

The appointment of the Chairperson

- The Project Manager will assess Expressions of Interest and online information using a diversity/capability matrix.
- The Collective Leadership/Governance Advisor (or substitute) will independently assess the Expressions of Interest and the online information using a diversity/capability matrix.
- The Project Manager and the Collective Leadership/Governance Advisor (or substitute) will confer and recommend the most applicable candidate/s for Chairperson.
- Interview/s will be conducted.
- A recommendation will be considered by the host and sponsor and submitted for endorsement by the FoOGG meeting at the first meeting.

All appointments will be for the remaining duration of Stage 2 of the FoO project (September 2025) but may be extended according to the ongoing needs of the project. Should a vacancy occur, every effort will be made to fill the vacancy through the same process.

## **5. Membership Responsibilities**

The general responsibilities of the members are to:

- Attend at least 80% of meetings, where possible, in person;
- Always act in good faith;
- Declare any pecuniary or conflicts of interest that might arise;
- Support the agreed Communications and Engagement and its key messages.

### **5.1. Chairperson**

The responsibilities of the Chairperson are to ensure cohesiveness and effectiveness of the FoOGG. This includes (but is not limited to) ensuring:

- Meetings are conducted in accordance with agendas and decision-making requirements in an effective and efficient manner;
- The voices of all FoOGG members are heard and respected;
- Shared understandings of project purpose and processes;
- Discussion points are distilled to identify points of agreement and points for further clarification and/or discussion/debate;

- Consensus-based decision making (as far as possible);
- Ensuring clarity of resolutions associated with formal decision making;
- Resolution of any conflicts that might arise;
- A culture of constructive inquiry;
- Continuous learning for developing collective capabilities underpinning place-based governance;
- Reflection and identification of opportunities for improving meeting effectiveness and efficiency.

## **5.2. Executive Support**

The PM will be responsible for working with the Chairperson to develop the agenda and ensure that appropriate papers are prepared to support effective oversight of the FoO project and to support effective decision-making. The PM will also be responsible for the timely preparation and distribution of minutes which concisely and accurately capture key decisions (and any key discussion points not contained in papers) and items for follow-up (Action-register).

## **6. Meeting details**

A meeting rhythm (timing, duration and frequency) will be agreed with the members.

Meeting agendas and supporting papers will be distributed in advance (ideally at least 7-days).

A meeting quorum will be 50% + 1.

Decisions should be made by consensus. In the event that consensus cannot be achieved, votes will be cast.

In the case of an even vote, the chairperson will exercise a casting vote.

Where decisions are required outside of agreed meeting dates, these will be through 'resolution/s by notice' via email using the 'copy all' function.

As required, meetings will provide opportunities for building collective capabilities that enhance place-based governance and its related requirements.

## **7. Amendment, modification, or variation**

These Terms of Reference may be amended, varied, or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by FoOGG members, and in accordance with the emerging and ongoing needs of the project and/or sustainable place-based governance and community-led decision-making.