Position Brief
Committee Chair
Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI)
Research Advisory Committee
Background

Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI) is supported through a $101.5M grant from the Federal Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to operate for a four-year funding term, with a maximum of seven-year activity period.

The role of AFWI is to drive uplift in vital, transformative national forestry research, development and engagement (RD&E), coordinating and delivering short-, mid-, and long-term Australian-made solutions to national challenges such as: mitigating climate change; decarbonising the economy; increasing Australia's long term domestic wood supply; and creation of new innovative wood and bioproducts.

AFWI is an unincorporated entity. AFWI exists within UTAS governance structures as part of the College of Sciences and Engineering (CoSE). AFWI's activities and expenditure will be overseen by an external advisory Board. The Board's decisions will be supported through advice from the Research Advisory Committee (RAC). AFWI is coordinated from a central headquarters, hosted by UTAS in Launceston. AFWI research will be delivered through three Research Centres spread across Australia. AFWI will also fund projects through an annual national open call. The RAC will receive administrative support through the AFWI Headquarters.

AFWI will put Australia's forest and wood products industries on the front foot, supporting applied research, development and innovation. It will create opportunities for innovation and commercialisation of new knowledge.

Committee Composition and Tenure

The RAC will consist of up to ten, and not less than eight, voting positions, which includes the Chair. The RAC will endeavour to include gender, age and cultural diversity in its membership. The RAC will be supported by four advisory positions filled by a member of the AFWI Headquarters management group (usually the Deputy Director), and the three AFWI Research Centre Leaders.

RAC members are appointed for two-year terms. Members who have completed a two-year term may nominate for a subsequent term.

The full committee will be discharged when the requirements of the Grant have been completed.

Committee Responsibilities

The RAC plays a vital role in the successful functioning of AFWI. The RAC will provide expert advice to the Board on matters relating to forest and forest product research and innovation. The RAC is to ensure that all research undertaken by AFWI is supported by industry. As far as reasonable, all research is to endeavour to maximise the benefit of the broader forestry and wood products industries. Some research may be fundamental in nature, however, it must have an end-user focus.

The role and responsibilities of the RAC may be amended on occasion by the AFWI Board with approval by the UTAS Delegate.

The RAC is required to:

- Review and provide recommendations to the AFWI Board on the AFWI strategic documents created, updated, amended or reviewed after the Research Advisory Committee is established, particularly the elements that are related to research;
- Review and provide recommendations to the AFWI Board on the Research Centres' annual workplans;
- Review and approve all AFWI research project selection and management processes;
• Review all research projects and recommend selected projects for AFWI Board endorsement; and
• Review and provide recommendations to the AFWI Board on reporting for the Commonwealth.

Committee Chair Responsibilities

The RAC is convened by the Chair of the RAC and at the request of the Board. The Chair reports to the AFWI UTAS Delegate who may delegate some oversight to the AFWI Board.

The Chair will have experience in the forestry and wood products industry and research. The Chair is responsible for leadership of the RAC including:

• Consulting with the AFWI Director and AFWI Board Chair to set the agenda for the matters to be considered by the RAC.
• Facilitating the effective functioning of the RAC including managing the agenda, conduct, and length of RAC meetings.
• Ensuring proper and timely information flow to and from RAC members, the AFWI Board and the AFWI Headquarters.
• Facilitating open, fair, and constructive communications among the RAC members consistent with AFWI Values and the UTAS Behaviour Policy.
• Abide by committee decisions and maintain the confidentiality of discussions and information shared at committee meetings.
• Representing the RAC in communications and engagements; and
• Ensuring the UTAS Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures are adhered to.

Committee Chair Behavioural Expectations

We aim for everyone to have a positive experience at our university, and all staff contribute toward creating a university culture that is safe and supportive, enabling our community to flourish by:

• Treating all others – staff, students and community with fairness, equity and respect.
• Ensuring the workplace is an inspiring and safe place to be.
• Ensuring the workplace is free from harassment, bullying, victimisation, and discrimination.

Required Skills, Knowledge and Experience (Selection Criteria)

The essential skills and experience for the AFWI RAC Chair are:

• Experience as a committee member, preferably with chairing responsibilities of similar scope and agency.
• Relevant experience and an interest in, and an appreciation of, the key challenges and opportunities facing the Australian forestry and forest products industries, particularly in relation to research and innovation needs.
• A proven ability to think through complex issues strategically, innovatively, independently, and imaginatively.

• Demonstrated ability to apply analytical skills, expert knowledge, objectivity, and good judgement.

• Managing Commercial-in-Confidence material appropriately.

• Excellent communication, relationship management, conflict resolution, mentoring and team building and leadership skills.

• Appropriate Tertiary (and preferably post-graduate) qualifications.

Other Requirements/Information

To be eligible for appointment as a Committee Chair, you are required to hold Australian Citizenship, permanent residence, or a valid visa that enables you to fulfil the requirements of this role.

Applicants should not be an employee of the Australian Federal Government or UTAS (other than for the purpose of managing remuneration for their RAC role) and should be free of any business or other relationship that may materially directly benefit from the activities of AFWI.

Some intrastate/ interstate travel.

Committee meetings will ordinarily be held four times per year by electronic means. Two meetings will be to provide recommendations on projects from funding calls, and two meetings will be to progress other business including review of annual workplans from the Research Centres and reporting.

Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the RAC Chair. Attendance at meetings will usually be via suitable electronic means.

The RAC Chair will set the Committee meeting agenda in consultation with the AFWI Director and as appropriate the AFWI Board Chair.

The committee may consider issues out-of-session.

This position may also be eligible to receive a total remuneration package of $22,000 per annum, depending on the successful applicant’s employment arrangements. Total workload for RAC Chairperson is expected to be equivalent to 20 workdays per annum, which includes:

• committee meetings.

• review AFWI project applications and provide recommendations for the Board.

• review and provide recommendations on AFWI documents, including (but not limited to) processes, strategic documents and reporting.

AFWI will meet the reasonable travel cost for any face-to-face meetings or events Committee Members are required to attend and/or other reasonable costs incurred in discharging the duties of the RAC Member.

Additional Information

To find out more about AFWI go to About AFWI.
Learn more
Visit our website to read more, watch videos, and discover your future with the University of Tasmania.

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The intention of this Position Description is to highlight the most important aspects, rather than to limit the scope or accountabilities of this role. Duties may be altered in accordance with the changing requirements of the position.