



Terms of Reference for the Policy Committee

Last Updated: December 11, 2020

1. Mandate

The Policy Committee (PC) shall deal with matters referred to the PC by the Governing Council (GC) and by the Advisory Council (AC) as well as those matters identified by PC members. In all instances, the PC shall make recommendations to the GC for its approval, unless the GC has specifically provided the PC with the authority to act on a certain matter or matters on behalf of the GC.

The PC's main purpose shall be to:

- a) Assist the GC and AC to identify, assess, pursue and implement policy related opportunities to ensure that CAN meets its organizational objectives;
- b) Help develop, advise and promote sound policies, procedures and practices related to accessibility, disability, equity, and/or inclusion across the Network; and
- c) Assist the GC to fulfil the Network's commitments to its partner organizations and primary stakeholders regarding policy related issues.

2. Membership

The PC shall be a committee of the GC and shall be composed of no fewer than six and no more than 12 members, with best efforts made to ensure sectoral, regional and other forms of diversity. CAN Advisory Council Members, CAN MOU Signing Authorities, as well as members of the broader community whose knowledge, experience and expertise are deemed to be an asset are all eligible to serve on the PC.

Applications shall be assessed by the CAN National Office and discussed with the Chair of the PC who shall bring a recommendation to the Governing Council for the approval of the inaugural committee members.

PC members shall be appointed for an initial two-year or three-year term and may be renewed for a second two-year term, subject to GC approval.

The Director of CAN's National Office shall also sit on the PC as a non-voting member and shall designate a CAN National Office staff person or an external resource to act as Secretary to the PC.

3. Chair and Vice-Chair

The inaugural Chair of the PC shall be appointed by the Chair of the GC, following consultation with the CAN Application Review Committee charged with the review of all nominations made by CAN partner organizations.

The Vice-Chair of the PC shall be chosen by his or her peers from among appointed committee members.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the PC shall each be appointed for an initial two-year or three-year term and may be renewed for a second two-year term, subject to GC approval.

In the absence of the Chair of the PC, the meeting shall be chaired by the Vice-Chair. In the absence of the Vice-Chair of the PC, the meeting shall be chaired by a member of the committee designated by the Chair or as chosen to chair from amongst his or her peers.

4. Notice and Frequency of Meetings

The PC shall meet in person or by teleconference/webinar at least twice a year at the call of the Chair, and in collaboration with the CAN National Office.

Notice of every meeting shall be delivered, telephoned or sent electronically to each PC member at least 7 days before the meeting is to take place. However, PC members may collectively waive notice of a meeting.

5. Quorum and Voting

A quorum for meetings shall be a majority of the PC voting members then holding office present in person or by telephone or other telecommunication device that permits all persons participating in the meeting to speak and hear each other.

PC members shall seek consensus in formulating their recommendations for the GC. Where such consensus cannot be achieved, recommendations shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast on the question. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chair shall have the deciding vote.

A PC member shall not be entitled to vote by proxy at any meeting of the committee.

6. Reporting

The Chair of the PC, or in his or her absence, the Vice-Chair shall report at each meeting of the GC and AC on committee business since the last meeting of the GC and AC, and on proposed recommendations, if any, for the GC's or AC's discussion or approval.

7. Evaluation

The PC, or the GC on its behalf, shall review the PC terms of reference annually and make recommendations for changes, if any, to the GC. The GC shall consider these recommendations and reaffirm or revise as needed, the terms of reference and or the membership of the PC.

8. Accessibility

In the execution of its duties, the PC will seek to ensure that its meeting venues, whether in person or online, are accessible spaces and that its deliberations, outputs and activities are made available in accessible formats.

9. History

The initial terms of reference were drafted in March 2020 by Special Advisor, Michelle Gauthier, in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Council, Suzanne Blanchard, the Director of the CAN National Office, Boris Vukovic and the Assistant Director of the CAN National Office, Julie Caldwell.

This document was presented to the GC for discussion and approval at its inaugural meeting in September 2020. It will be presented for ratification by the Policy Committee at its first meeting in November 2020.