

Library & Archives NT Aboriginal Advisory Group: Terms of Reference

1. Background

The Aboriginal Advisory Group (Advisory Group) was originally established as a specific advisory group to provide feedback on the implementation and operation of the *Protocol for Access to Northern Territory Government Records by Aboriginal People Researching their families* (Protocol).

The Protocol was originally developed in October 1997 to assist Aboriginal people (or their accredited agents) researching their families to access the Northern Territory (NT) Government (NTG) records.

The Protocol provides for a collaborative approach to this issue. Signatories to the Protocol include the NTG, NT Stolen Generations Combined Reference Groups, KARU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care Agency and the Central Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (CAACCA).

The Advisory Group was previously coordinated by the NT Archives Service (NTAS). In September 2019, the NTAS merged with the NT Library to create a new branch, Library and Archives NT (LANT). LANT has a wide range of collections and programs of relevance to Aboriginal people, in addition to facilitating access to NTG records.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Advisory Group is to:

- facilitate the provision of access to records for Aboriginal people (or their accredited agents) primarily engaged in Stolen Generations research, in line with the Protocol;
- facilitate the accreditation of Stolen Generations researchers under the Protocol; and
- provide advice to LANT, the Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture (Department) on other matters relating to LANT Aboriginal collections, services and programs.

3. Membership

The Advisory Group will consist of:

- two representatives from Link-Up organisations (one representative from NT Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation in Darwin and one representative from the Central Australian Aboriginal Advisory Congress in Alice Springs);
- two community members (one from the Top End and one from Central Australia); and
- two representatives from the Northern Territory Public Sector, including at least one representative from LANT.

4. Nomination and Appointment Process

Nominations for the community membership positions on the Advisory Group will be sought through advertisements and on the Departmental website. Key stakeholders and organisations may also be invited to nominate a representative.

Nominations for the community membership positions will be by an Expression of Interest (Eoi).

Eois must demonstrate the contribution that the nominee can make to the Advisory Group, including but not limited to:

- a commitment to assisting Aboriginal people affected by historic policies of separation;
- required skills, expertise, knowledge or experience in Aboriginal history, with a specific focus on Stolen Generations matters;
- an understanding of the issues, policies and process required to facilitate the provision of access to records to Aboriginal people, for research purposes;
- demonstrated ability to work with, and represent, a diverse stakeholders with a range of values, interests, backgrounds and expertise;
- ability to facilitate and promote the dissemination of information to stakeholders; and
- ability to commit the required time to the Advisory Group to fulfil its purpose.

Representatives from Link-up will be nominated by the Link-Up organisations.

Representatives from the NTG will be selected via internal administrative processes.

Recommendations for the membership positions and the position of Chairperson for the Advisory Group will be submitted by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), to the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Culture for selection and appointment.

5. Roles

The role of the Advisory Group is to:

- provide advice to LANT on the operation and review of the Protocol;
- provide advice to LANT on programs and services affecting Aboriginal people; and
- assist in the dissemination of information relating to LANT services to Aboriginal people to the community.

The role of the Chairperson of the Advisory Group is to:

- advise members of their roles and responsibilities as members;
- conduct meetings to foster effective consideration of issues referred to or raised by the group;
- set meeting dates, location and agendas for meetings;
- ensure accurate reporting of the advice and recommendations of the group is provided to the CEO and the Minister annually, or upon request; and
- nominate an alternate Chairperson in the event that the Chairperson elect cannot attend a meeting.

6. Terms of Appointment

All Council members must adhere to the NTG Board Handbook which supports the work of all NTG Boards and Committees. The NTG Board Handbook provides practical advice to Board members in relation to their duties and responsibilities, the legislation that affects them, and their relationship with Government and other stakeholders.

Members of the Advisory Group will be appointed for a three year term.

Members of the Advisory Group are not remunerated.

7. Operating Arrangements

The Advisory Group will meet twice per annum, once in Darwin and once in Alice Springs. Teleconference facilities will be provided. Out of session meetings may be convened by the Chairperson, or upon request by Advisory Group members.

The Department will provide Secretariat support to the Advisory Group and will assist the Chairperson to organise meetings, prepare agendas and record and distribute minutes.

Representatives from Link-Up organisations or the NTG may nominate an alternate to attend meetings in their place if they are unable to attend a part or the whole meeting. The alternate has the same participating and voting rights as the member for the duration of the meeting.

A meeting quorum shall comprise half the members of the Advisory Group, including at least two non NTG representatives.

Members shall declare conflicts of interest and inform the Chairperson immediately if a matter comes before the Advisory Group that may have a personal or financial interest.

Each member of the Advisory Group can request, via the Chairperson, to invite a non-member to attend meetings as observers or spokespersons on specific matters.

8. Reporting

The Advisory Group is required to annually report to the CEO, the Department and the Minister, or as required.

9. Implementation and Review

This Terms of Reference is effective until June 2023.

A periodic review of the Terms of Reference must be undertaken.