
Terms of Reference

OAA Advisory Groups

Approved: November 24, 2022
Review Date:

Purpose

From time to time, the OAA requires input from members and other professionals on initiatives and programs that are issue-specific—that is, a specialized body or knowledge, skill, or expertise is required to address the matter.

In order to respond to these initiatives in an effective, efficient, and nimble manner, the OAA has established subject-specific Advisory Groups comprising individuals that possess specific subject matter knowledge, skill, or expertise. There may also be individuals who are invited to be an individual Advisor, or asked to be part of an existing or new Advisory Group, based on specific knowledge and expertise. For example, advisory groups may be focused on, but not limited to, climate action and sustainability, long-term care; housing affordability; building codes, and regulations.

The Advisory Groups and/or Advisors will be available to Council, the Executive Director, and OAA staff on request to provide input on OAA initiatives, programs, and issues.

Description – OAA Advisor

Advisors meet or are consulted only when initiated by the OAA and do not meet independently or for other OAA business. OAA staff maintains a current list of Advisors who may be called on to participate as part of a group or independently. Advisors may be asked to attend meetings, respond to requests for input and feedback, review and respond to documentation, attend events, and fulfil other requests.

Description – OAA Advisory Group

An Advisory Group exists for the purpose of supporting and advising OAA staff, Committees, or Council for a limited time on the subject(s) or topic(s) in question, as specific needs arise. The Group may also be mobilized for the purposes of providing insight into current trends in the profession or future matters of concern or consideration.

An Advisory Group is not a committee of the OAA or Council.

Advisory Groups do not meet independently or for other OAA business. OAA staff maintains the list of subject specific Advisory Groups and will confirm these groups annually to the Council. Members of each group will be confirmed annually and new members sought periodically.

An Advisory Group will be mobilized through staff based on a specific need. Input from the Group may be sought through an organized meeting format, or individually in writing, or via email as requested by staff.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Advisors Individually or as a Group

Advisors have the following responsibilities:

- Make best efforts to be available for consultation calls and meetings, and respond to inquiries on a timely basis;
- Review and provide feedback on draft documents;
- Adhere to the rules of conduct, confidentiality, and conflict of interest guidelines set by the OAA;
- Advise the OAA on a timely basis if the Advisor is no longer available to serve as Advisor; and
- Speak only on behalf of the Group or OAA if specifically delegated to do so.

OAA Responsibilities:

- Requests will not be made with unreasonable expectations for response time, turnaround, or availability; if urgent, reasons for the urgency will be communicated.

Advisory Group Composition and Duration

- At the discretion of the OAA, an Advisory Group may comprise OAA staff and subject matter professionals who may be OAA members or non-members (Advisors); or other parties at the discretion of the OAA.
- Advisory Groups may or may not have a chair or project lead to guide them. This is at the discretion of the OAA. If one is required, the chair or project lead may be a member of staff or a member of the Group.
- An OAA Advisory Group is constituted for a specified period—up to one year. If the Group is to be renewed for another year, the OAA will reconfirm each Group member's agreement to continue to serve with the Group.

Requests for Advisors may be advertised to the membership via *OAA News* and other appropriate outlets, or sourced directly based on need. Attempts will be made to ensure a good cross-section of OAA members are engaged as Advisors based on several factors, including experience, practice size, client segment served, and geographic location, as well as ensuring inclusion of diverse, underrepresented voices in the spirit of an equitable profession reflective of Ontario.

Other Duties and Responsibilities

Work Plan

For an extended engagement, the OAA will provide a timetable or work plan to ensure Advisors are aware of the nature of commitment, number of meetings, deadlines, and milestones for the initiative.

Reporting

The OAA may request that an Advisory Group prepare a report on its findings or advice, with support from staff. The Committee will review its mandate and Terms of Reference every two years with a view to refreshing and reconfirming its focus and that its mandate continues to align with the OAA's Vision and Mandate and current strategic plan. The Committee shall advance any proposed modifications of its Terms of Reference to OAA Council for approval.

Staff Coordination and Support

OAA staff support to Advisors and Advisory groups is provided by staff designated by the Executive Director.

As noted, staff will assist in the facilitation and coordination of the work of the advisory group and, in most cases, will be responsible for drafting of original content for the group's review. Staff will be accountable for scheduling meetings, preparing briefing notes, and taking notes on the group's input.

