



Alliance Council's terms of reference

Purpose of the Alliance Council

The Alliance Council is delegated by the Alliance Members to carry out the work of the Alliance, in line with the set strategic directions.

Objectives of the Alliance Council

The Alliance Council will oversee the implementation of the work plan, consider reports from the Alliance Secretariat and the Alliance Advisory Groups, establish internal Alliance Council Working Groups, and develop recommendations for the consideration of the Alliance Members in regard to future directions and projects.

The Alliance Council will also consider applications for membership of the Harmony Alliance.

Membership of the Alliance Council

The Alliance Council will comprise fourteen members, including nine elected members representing the three constituencies, four appointed ex-officio members and one appointed independent Chair:

- Four (4) elected positions for national, state-wide, and local organisations representing migrant and refugee women in Australia;
- Four (4) elected positions for national, state-wide, and local organisations working for the advancement and inclusion of migrant and refugee women in Australia;
- One (1) elected individual identifying as a woman from a migrant or refugee background who, in a personal capacity, is making a substantive contribution for the advancement and inclusion of migrant and refugee women in Australia, and who is not a representative of any member organisation;

- Four (4) ex-officio, appointed positions for national peak organisations representing migrant and refugee women and/or organisations working for the advancement and inclusion of migrant and refugee women in Australia. Migration Council Australia, as an auspicing organisation for the Alliance, will be one of the three ex-officio members; and
- One (1) appointed independent Chair.

Each of the elected positions will be elected by their respective constituencies within the Alliance Members, through a democratic election process facilitated by the Alliance Secretariat. The Alliance Governance Committee will oversee and conduct the elections to ensure transparency.

Alliance Council members will be elected for a term of two (2) years, with a possibility to re-nominate for election for a further two-year term.

The four ex-officio positions—held by Migration Council Australia, Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network, Refugee Council of Australia, and Settlement Council of Australia—are ongoing and ensure the continuity of the Council membership.

The Chair of the Alliance Council will be appointed for a term of two (2) years, with a possibility of extending the term by another two (2) years.

In the event of the resignation of an elected member of the Alliance Council within the appointed term, casual vacancies may be filled through the appointment of members by the Alliance Governance Committee to serve until the end of the term.

Inaugural Council

To provide for the initial establishment of the Alliance, the inaugural Alliance Council will be fully appointed for the first two (2) years. The organisations co-sponsoring the establishment of the Alliance, with Migration Council Australia as the lead organisation, will form the inaugural Alliance Council, with the composition balanced to represent the identified constituencies and ensure a broad coverage of jurisdictions, ethnicities and policy and service provision areas.

The members of the inaugural council will be as follows:

- Four (4) elected positions for national, state-wide, and local community organisations representing migrant and refugee women in Australia:
 - United Muslim Women Association
 - African Women Australia
 - Tongan Association of Canberra and Queanbeyan
 - Australian National Committee on Refugee Women
- Four (4) elected positions for organisations working for the advancement and inclusion of migrant and refugee women in Australia:

- Settlement Services International
 - Access Community Services
 - inTouch
 - Multicultural Youth South Australia
- One (1) elected individual identifying as a woman from a migrant or refugee background who, in a personal capacity, is making a substantive contribution for the advancement and inclusion of migrant and refugee women in Australia, and who is not a representative of any member organisation:
 - Ms Khadija Gbla
- Four (4) ex-officio appointed positions for national peak organisations representing migrant and refugee women and/or organisations working with and for migrant and refugee women:
 - Migration Council Australia
 - Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network
 - Refugee Council of Australia
 - Settlement Council of Australia
- One (1) independent appointed Chair:
 - Ms Maria Dimopoulos

Following the first two (2) years, the nine (9) elected positions will be elected by the respective constituencies from within the Alliance Members through a democratic election process facilitated by the Alliance Secretariat. The members of the inaugural Council can nominate for election for a further two-year term. The Alliance Governance Committee will oversee and conduct the elections to ensure transparency. The timing will allow for the strengthening of Alliance membership and ensuring the broadest possible representation.

Chair

An independent Chair will be proposed for consideration by Migration Council Australia as the lead consortium organisation with responsibility for the fulfillment of contractual obligations. The appointment will be made in consultation with the Alliance Council.

The Chair can be appointed both from within and outside the Alliance Members. If appointed from within the membership of the Alliance, once the appointment is made, the individual can no longer serve as a representative of the Alliance member.

The Chair will provide leadership and direction to the Alliance Council.

The Chair of the Council serves as the Chair of the Alliance.

The Chair is aware of and ensures the Alliance fulfills its governance responsibilities by:

- Complying with applicable laws;
- Conducting all business effectively and efficiently;
- Ensuring accountability for its performance.

Deputy Chair

Deputy Chair may be appointed from the membership of the Alliance Council to progress the work of the Alliance Council in the Chair's absence.

Conflicts of interest

All Alliance Council members are required to act in the interests of the Alliance at all times. It is expected that Alliance Council members will be mindful of potential conflicts of interest (or the likely perception of a conflict) and declare to the Chair of the Alliance Council a potential or actual conflict of interest as soon as they become aware of it. The Chair of the Council, in consultation with the Alliance Governance Committee and the Secretariat, will be responsible for managing declared potential or actual conflicts of interest.

Meetings of the Alliance Council

Alliance Council meetings will be convened on four occasions each calendar year. There will be two face-to-face meetings and two teleconferences. The precise timing of each meeting will be decided by the Chair and the Alliance Secretariat, in consultation with the Alliance Council.

Quorum for Alliance Council meetings will be constituted by the Chair, or Deputy Chair in the Chair's absence, plus four (4) other Alliance Council members from at least two (2) constituency groups.

In principle, it is envisaged that the Alliance Council will operate by consensus. Minutes of Alliance Council meetings will be recorded by the Alliance Secretariat. In the interests of transparency and to facilitate consultation with community groups, communiqués summarising the key outcomes of the meetings will be published on the Alliance's website.

Council related expenses

Wherever possible, expenses are to be funded by the Council member's respective organisation. However, a reasonable amount will be contributed by the Alliance Secretariat to support Alliance Council members who are unable to pay travel expenses. Any allocation of funds by the Alliance Secretariat for the purpose of supporting travel costs will be subject to the availability of funds. If a Council member intends to claim expenses associated with Alliance business, prior confirmation must be sought and received from the Alliance Secretariat. Alliance Council members claiming expenses are required to keep receipts and submit a written payment request to the Alliance Secretariat.

Working and advisory structures

The Alliance Council may establish the following working and advisory structures, as necessary and appropriate:

- Alliance Advisory Groups – external advisory mechanisms comprising appointed individuals to provide specific perspective or advice to the Alliance Council, the Alliance Members and the Alliance Secretariat on a particular issue and related projects. The Alliance Advisory Groups may be established for a limited or an indefinite term, depending on the relevant objectives.
- Alliance Council Working Groups – internal working mechanisms comprising selected members of the Alliance Council to provide oversight or guidance on a particular area of work and related projects. The Alliance Working Groups may be established for a limited or an indefinite term, depending on the relevant objectives.