

Important Information for Current or Prospective Executive Committee Members

Last review date: 13 October 2020

1. Document Purpose

This document aims to clearly outline the roles, responsibilities and expectations of those who serve on the AAEE NSW Executive Committee. It also provides background and useful information on the purpose of both the Association and the Executive Committee.

All Executive Committee nominees will be asked to read and consider this document prior to nominating for an Executive Committee position. Prospective members will be required to indicate their agreement to adhere to all parts of this document as a requirement of their nomination.

2. About AAEE NSW

Since 1976, the Australian Association for Environmental Education NSW Chapter (AAEE NSW) has worked collaboratively with a range of stakeholders to promote education for sustainability in NSW.

AAEE NSW is:

- the NSW professional association representing those with a passion for education for sustainability (EfS), both in paid and voluntary capacities, from all sectors and industries;
- part of a national AAEE organisation that represents environmental and sustainability educators across Australia. Our activities complement and extend what is being done nationally;
- responsible for providing high quality EfS services to members in New South Wales including our biennial state conference, grant projects, support of regional networks, awards, scholarships and the delivery of programs like Sustainable Schools NSW and Take Me Outside NSW;
- a not-for-profit, incorporated, member-based, non-government organisation that is guided by our vision, mission, core principles and strategic priorities; and
- committed to promoting and using Make the Change: A Framework for education and engagement for environmental sustainability 2014- 2021 to help achieve this Strategic Plan

Our Vision is “Through education and engagement, enable individuals, communities and organisations to prioritise a quadruple bottom line approach in decision making and value, protect and conserve our environment for current and future generations.”

Our Strategic Priorities are enabling and supporting high quality education for sustainability, leadership and advocacy, and continual improvement of member services.

Our Strategic Plan 2018-2021 details the identity, vision, mission, core principles, strategic priorities and goals of the organisation from July 2018 to June 2021. You can read the full plan at <https://www.aaensw.org.au/about-us/strategic-plan>. This plan is due to be reviewed in 2021 and the Executive Committee will have a key role in this review.

Each quarter we report on the progress we have made on our three strategic priorities. You can see these reports at <https://www.aaensw.org.au/about-us/reporting>

3. About the Executive Committee

In general terms, the Executive Committee is responsible for managing the affairs of the association, in accordance with [our constitution](#) and the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*.

The role of the Executive Committee includes:

- managing the association's financial affairs and maintaining its financial viability
- ensuring the AAEE NSW acts in accordance with its objects or purposes as outlined in our constitution
- ensuring the association meets all legal and governance requirements
- providing strategic input and direction as required

Executive Committee meetings are web-based, and regionally-based members are encouraged to nominate. In 2020/21, Executive Committee meetings will likely occur every 8 weeks and be 2 hours in duration (usually on a Monday evening, from 6pm – 8pm).

The Executive Committee consists of:

- at least three ordinary Executive Committee members
- the office-bearers of the Association including the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary (detail on the role of each of these office bearers is outlined in our [Constitution](#)).

Executive Committee members are elected at the annual general meeting (AGM) of the Association and hold office until immediately before the election of committee members at the following AGM (12 months). Executive Committee members are eligible for re-election and there is no maximum number of consecutive terms for which a committee member may serve.

All Executive Committee members must be current, paid members of AAEE.

The details of our sitting Executive Committee are promoted on our website at <https://www.aaeensw.org.au/committee>. Those successfully appointed to the Executive Committee will be asked to provide a photo and short bio to be added to the page.

4. Formal Responsibilities of Executive Committee Members

Associations Incorporation Act 2009

Executive Committee members have specific functions and governance responsibilities under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* (the Act), including (but not limited to):

- disclosing an interest in a matter that conflicts with the performance of their duties
- ensuring information obtained as a committee member is not used dishonestly
- ensuring their position as a committee member is not used dishonestly
- carry out his or her functions for the benefit, as far as practical, of the association and with due care and diligence
- ensuring that the association does not incur debts that are not expected to be repaid
- ensuring that the association does not do any act with intent to defraud
- complying with any additional duty set out in the constitution
- overseeing the good governance of the association including the holding of lawful AGM's and submission of all required reporting documentation
- ensuring all documents in their possession that belong to the association are not misused during, or at the cessation of, their term of service.

You can read more about the role of committee members in the management of an association at <https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/associations-and-co-operatives/associations/running-an-association/management-committee>

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Registration

AAEE NSW intends within the 20/21 period to apply to the ACNC to become a registered charity to access the many benefits associated with such endorsement.

If we are successful in this, all Executive Committee members would be considered Responsible Persons and would be held to a range of standards and checks. This would include carrying out the [duties of a responsible person](#) and submitting a range of personal details about each Executive Committee member to the ACNC as part of our application. Executive Committee members names would also be publicly available through the ACNC website.

All nominees to the Executive Committee should ensure they understand these implications as part of their nomination for the Executive Committee. You can find out more about being considered a 'responsible person' at <https://www.acnc.gov.au/tools/factsheets/responsible-persons-board-or-committee-members> and the duties of a responsible person at <https://www.acnc.gov.au/for-charities/manage/governance-standards/governance-standard-5-duties-responsible-persons/what-are>.

5. General Expectations for Executive Committee Members

While we acknowledge that all members of the Executive Committee are volunteers, a certain level of commitment is expected from members in addition to the formal responsibilities outlined above.

As such, Executive Committee members are expected to:

1. Attend at least 66% of Executive Committee meetings (e.g. four of the six meetings in the 2020/21 period of service) and in all cases, provide an apology to the Secretary or President prior to the meeting if they cannot attend a meeting.
2. Prepare as fully as possible for each meeting and voice their perspectives on each issue about which they have a particular interest and expertise. Accessing pertinent materials in Drop Box (or other file access process as instructed) is an important part of this process.
3. Respond in a timely manner to any out-of-session emails to the Executive Committee email group where comment or feedback is sought.
4. Put forward items for consideration at a meeting where relevant or useful for the progression of the Association. This involves sending an email to the Secretary at the time of preparation of the agenda and preparing any necessary paper in advance.
5. Be involved in the advocacy undertakings of AAEE NSW where they have knowledge of the issue and can add value. Suggestions about where we need to make our views known are important too. In order to meet this expectation, Executive Committee members might:
 - Draw the Executive Committee's attention to matters of concern where advocacy is required/warranted that they are aware of.
 - Raise such matters in meetings and encourage an appropriate AAEE NSW response.
 - Be prepared to join specific time-limited working groups that are developing responses to sustainability/education issues, where they have a contribution they can make.
 - Become active in placing the perspective of AAEE NSW forward as much as possible.

6. Application and Review of this Document

It is the President's role to follow-up where members of the Executive Committee are not meeting their agreed obligations under the above guidelines. This will be sought to be done in a conciliatory and respectful manner acknowledging the voluntary nature of the role, and the shifting circumstances and capacity Executive Committee members may experience.

Where matters are required to be dealt with formally, any relevant process outlined in the AAEE NSW [Constitution](#) will be followed. This document should be reviewed prior to each AGM by the outgoing Executive Committee and any updates or alterations made as agreed by the committee.