



ACSA WORKING GROUP PROTOCOLS

This document outlines the process for the creation and operation of Working Groups of the Australian Citizen Science Association Incorporated (ACSA). The document includes three sections:

1. Background
2. Working Group formation
3. Operating procedures

1. BACKGROUND

The Australian Citizen Science Association Incorporated (ACSA) is founded on principles of inclusiveness and collaboration. ACSA welcomes the formation of Working Groups which will build networks of shared interest, activities and practice.

ACSA Working Groups will operate under the overarching ACSA governance framework to support the values, approach and strategy of ACSA – and seek to foster an inclusive, inspiring and collaborative citizen science community in Australia.

The purpose of ACSA Working Groups is to help implement ACSA Strategic Goals, priorities and actions around a specific action or area of interest/focus - whether that be a particular citizen science typology, ACSA strategic action, citizen science issue, or community of practice. Working Groups may be time bound in their activities.

ACSA's Strategic Goals:

Participation	Partnerships	Practice	Impact	Platform
Encourage broad and meaningful participation in citizen science	through facilitating inclusive and collaborative partnerships	and a community of best practice, knowledge and tools	to ensure the value and impact of citizen science and its outputs are realised	enabled by ACSA as an effective, trusted and well recognised organisation and hub for citizen science in Australia.

ACSA's priority areas for 2019 - 2020 include but are not limited to:

- Supporting the third National ACSA **Conference** (October 2020)
- **Impact** evaluation and assessment of benefit and value of citizen science in Australia
- Citizen science **communities of practice** – e.g. health, data, Universities
- Building external partnerships and **sponsorships** to ensure financial sustainability
- Supporting development of **resources** for the best practice of citizen science

2. WORKING GROUP FORMATION

ACSA may call for the formation of Working Groups and membership via its website, email list or social media. Alternatively, groups of individuals who may wish to establish an ACSA Working Group are encouraged to speak with a member of the ACSA Management Committee.

The following sets out the process for Working Group formation:

2.1 Make an Application

An application should be submitted to the ACSA Management Committee to establish an ACSA Working Group. The application should include a description of:

- the objectives or aims of the proposed Working Group, including any relevant background information;
- the proposed structure or membership of the Working Group (e.g. chair, vice-chair, period of positions etc) together with details of any individuals forming part of the group;
- how the Working Group proposes contributing to or aligning with the ACSA Strategic Plan, including an overview of the activities the Working Group plans to undertake, and
- any collaborations with existing groups or organisations with similar aims.

2.2 Feedback, Formation and Dissolution

The ACSA Management Committee will consider the application and provide feedback where required on the application its proposed approach. ACSA may recommend consolidation of Working Groups if multiple applications in similar areas are received. An ACSA Management Committee member will be appointed to the Working Group as a liaison.

Following review, the ACSA Management Committee will notify the Working Group applicants on the success or otherwise of their application and whether a Working Group may be formed under the auspices of ACSA. The Working Group will need to operate according to the Operating Procedures outlined in section 3 of this document and any other protocols/requirements as advised in writing from the ACSA Management Committee.

The ACSA Management Committee may form, reform, or cease a Working Group at its discretion.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Working Group may be dissolved by the ACSA Management Committee where it has achieved its purpose for establishment, it has become unproductive, it can no longer maintain its membership, or it no longer services the priorities of ACSA.

2.3 Working Group Management

The Working Group should have at least a Chair, and may establish a Working Group management group responsible for ongoing liaison with and reporting to the ACSA Management Committee and Secretariat, as well as coordination of Working Group activities and engagement.

The Working Group Chair must be a current member of ACSA, and where possible it is recommended that other members of the Working Group be current ACSA members.

3. OPERATING PROCEDURES

The following sets out the Operating Procedures for ACSA Working Groups.

3.1 Workplan:

Working Group will:

- develop a simple workplan with clear actions and timelines, set within the scope agreed upon with the ACSA Management Committee and consistent with the ACSA Strategic Plan;
- work together within the Working Group to implement the actions set out in the workplan;

- establish and oversee any subgroups required to assist in the development and implementation of the workplan;
- be collaborative and supportive, in line with the ACSA vision promoting diversity in citizen science, and actively seek opportunities to share ideas, connect and collaborate across disciplines, institutions, and community boundaries; and
- ensure that Working Group activities reflect ACSA Values.

3.2 Meetings

- The Working Group will agree on a regular meeting schedule, at a frequency sufficient to meet timelines.
- Meetings may be held in person, by telephone or other online platforms (e.g. Skype) at the Working Group members' expense or with support from a suitable sponsor.
- Working Group decisions should be made by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be made by a majority. A quorum of four members must be present to make decisions.

3.3. Reporting & Communication

- The Working Group should provide written activity reports to the ACSA Management Committee at least every three months, providing details activities, outcomes achieved, plans made, and any issues faced by the Working Group. Such reports need be no longer than two pages.
- The Working Group Chair should regularly liaise with the ACSA Secretariat.
- Working Group members should maintain and respect any confidential information they may receive in the course of their work on the Working Group.
- The Working Group should use communications, key messages and brand consistent with ACSA communication plans and protocols as advised from time to time and liaise with the ACSA Secretariat around newsletter contributions, social media and website contributions.

3.4. Financial and legal

- The Working Group may not enter into any contracts or financial commitments without written approval from the ACSA Management Committee and Secretariat.

3.5. Insurance

- Only Working Group members who are also ACSA Members and operating within this Protocol may be covered by ACSA's relevant director's insurance (noting certain acts or omissions may not be covered by insurance e.g. intentional breaches of the law, fraudulent or other criminal activity or obtaining illegal remuneration or acting for personal profit).

3.6. Code of conduct

- Members of the Working Group should disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any real or apparent conflicts of interest in connection with their Working Group involvement. The disclosure of any conflict of interest (real or apparent) must be made as soon as possible after the member becomes aware of the conflict, and such disclosures are to be recorded by the chair of the Working Group, and the ACSA Secretariat notified.
- Members should act honestly, in good faith, with a reasonable level of diligence and care and in the best interests of ACSA.
- The Working Group can represent that it is an ACSA Working Group but the Working Group members should not represent themselves as having authority to act on behalf of ACSA, bind ACSA to any course of action or commit ACSA funds.
- Disputes or conflicts that cannot be satisfactorily resolved within the Working Group will be referred to the Chair of the ACSA Management Committee to determine the appropriate outcome/action.

Disclaimer: ACSA may review and amend these Protocols following the initial establishment and operation of Working Groups.