

The APPN Advisory Board met in June 2024 to undertake a review of its governance. In considering the various business models applied across the NCRIS community and following consultation with the APPN Lead Organisation and the Stakeholder Consultation Group, the APPN Advisory Board recommended that the APPN continue operating under a Lead Organisation model (refer to attached APPN Governance Chart). The updated APPN Governance Protocol was formally endorsed by the APPN Advisory Board on 21 August 2024.

The APPN Lead Organisation (the University of Adelaide) and Host Organisations (hereafter referred to as Host/s) agree to work together according to the following governance arrangements from 1 October 2024. The Lead Organisation may amend this APPN Governance Protocol from time to time by providing written notice to each of the Hosts.

### 1. Organisational culture

Each Host agrees to commit to the ideals of NCRIS and a one-APPN culture to ensure the APPN provides collaborative, efficient and effective operation as a national infrastructure facility, in a manner that provides a basis for investment confidence by all Hosts.

### 2. Governance and duties

The APPN's governance structure is comprised of an Advisory Board, the APPN CEO, a Senior Host Infrastructure Representative and a Node Director at each of the participating Hosts.

#### APPN Advisory Board

While the Lead Organisation is ultimately accountable for the successful delivery of the NCRIS Head Agreement, the governance of APPN has been delegated to an independent, skills based Advisory Board, appointed by the Lead Organisation.

The APPN Advisory Board comprises representation from the Lead Organisation, the APPN CEO and up to six independent members (including the Chair) and is guided by an APPN Advisory Board Charter (Charter). The Charter sets out the role of the APPN Advisory Board in:

- (a) determining the overall vision, direction, development, assurance and performance of the APPN;
- (b) shaping the policies of APPN with respect to any matter;
- (c) recommending the appointment of the APPN CEO to the Lead Organisation,
- (d) undertaking continuing evaluation of the APPN CEO's performance and
- (e) considering matters of succession and continuity for the roles of APPN CEO; and

- (f) governing the APPN in a way that promotes the proper use and management of public resources, promotes the achievement of the purposes of APPN and ensures financial sustainability, including through appropriate systems of reporting, risk oversight and internal controls.

As at 1 July 2024, the APPN Advisory Board comprises the following members:

Independent members	Ron Sandland (Chair) Cathrine Harboe-Ree Jeremy Burdon Lynne McIntyre
Lead Organisation Representative	Michael Goodsite
Ex-officio member	APPN CEO (Richard Dickmann)

The APPN Advisory Board members must act in the best interest of the APPN and its stakeholders as a whole at all times.

#### APPN CEO

The Lead Organisation employs the APPN CEO to perform duties and functions as set out in a position description endorsed by the APPN Advisory Board. The APPN Advisory Board has primary responsibility for the selection of an appointee, and the appointee must also be acceptable to the Lead Organisation and the Commonwealth.

The APPN Advisory Board uses its best endeavours to ensure that the APPN CEO acts in accordance with the position description.

The Hosts acknowledge the importance of the APPN CEO acting in an impartial manner. The Parties agree that the APPN CEO will follow the reasonable directions of the APPN Advisory Board, provided they are not inconsistent with the APPN CEO's terms of employment. If there is any inconsistency between the directions of the APPN Advisory Board and the terms of employment, then the APPN CEO must immediately notify in writing the Chair of the APPN Advisory Board the details of such an inconsistency.

The role of the APPN CEO is to:

- conceive, shape and implement the APPN strategy;
- report to the APPN Advisory Board on APPN programs and projects;
- implement the decisions of the APPN Advisory Board;
- monitor the performance of the APPN;
- be responsible for preparation of written reports to be delivered to the Commonwealth in accordance with the Grant Agreement;

- ensure that the Grant Funds are managed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement, that the Hosts produce the required financial records and that financial statements are prepared for the APPN Advisory Board;
- give direction to the work of each Node Director or their equivalent, including through supervisory arrangements applicable at Hosts, the work of Node Directors;
- generate new opportunities for the APPN;
- promote the APPN; and
- be responsible for any such other duties as required by the Lead Organisation in consultation with the APPN Advisory Board.

### Senior Host Infrastructure Representative (SHIR)

Each Host will nominate a Senior Host Infrastructure Representative (SHIR), such as the DVCR, PVCR or authorised nominee, or equivalent position in non-academic organisations, that will represent the Host in relation to the Host's financial commitment to the APPN via the provision of cash co-funding and other in-kind support.

The SHIR will represent the Host's involvement in APPN Activities during discussions with state governments and other funding bodies and, if relevant, will ensure that co-funding is procured from those additional sources.

From time to time, the SHIR may be required to review additional funding plans and give input to strategic plans for the further development of APPN within its Host.

### Node Director

Each APPN Node is led by a Node Director or equivalent. Node Directors report to the APPN CEO with regard to APPN activities, and to a nominated line manager at the Host for administrative purposes.

Whilst each Node Director is responsible to their Host organisation for meeting that organisation's directions and requirements, they are also responsible to the APPN CEO for the satisfactory operation of their individual Node and its contribution to the overall and collected interests of the APPN.

If there is a disagreement or conflict between the APPN CEO and a Node Director, the matter should be discussed with the Node Director's line manager in the first instance, after which it can be escalated to the Chair of the APPN Advisory Board and, if necessary, the Lead Organisation with a view to resolving any disputes as outlined in clause 26 of the Host Agreement (Alternative Dispute Resolution).

Node Directors are appointed by their local Host. The APPN CEO will be involved in the selection of the appointee and their appointment must be acceptable to the APPN CEO in consultation with the APPN Advisory Board. Any particulars or changes to the employment of the Node Director, e.g. change in loading, expectation of serving business activities for

both the Host proper and the APPN, must be approved by the APPN CEO, with input from the APPN Advisory Board.

The Node Directors are required to:

- act on the directions given by the APPN CEO as required;
- provide support for the APPN CEO and contribute to annual business and project planning processes and performance monitoring processes;
- work collaboratively with the APPN CEO, and each other, and support activities across the APPN;
- prepare reports for the approval of the APPN Advisory Board;
- be responsible for their individual Host staff and resources; and
- represent the APPN to third parties and other stakeholders. This includes expectation of representing APPN broadly, not just their individual Host.

### APPN Stakeholder Consultation Group

In order to ensure transparent reporting of implementation progress and future plans, and to receive regular input from each Host and other key stakeholders, a APPN Stakeholder Consultation Group will be formed comprising:

- the Node Director from each Host;
- the Senior Host Infrastructure Representative (SHIR) from each Host;
- one nominated representative from each of the major direct funding bodies, including the Commonwealth of Australia as represented by the Department of Education and the Grains Research Development Corporation (GRDC);
- APPN CEO; and
- Chair of the APPN Advisory Board.

The APPF Stakeholder Consultation Group will be:

- convened by the APPF CEO; and
- chaired by the Chair of the APPF Advisory Board.

The APPN Stakeholder Consultation Group must meet at least twice a year during the Term. The agenda will be proposed by the APPN CEO at least two weeks prior to any scheduled meeting for comment by the APPN Stakeholder Consultation Group members.

### CIIC – Commercialisations, Investment and IP Committee

The CIIC will be established by the APPN CEO in consultation with the Chair of the APPN Advisory Board.

The CIIC reports to the APPN Advisory Board and is responsible for the annual review of registered IP, assessing major investments (including the Strategic Initiatives Fund) and advising on commercialisation opportunities. Terms of reference for the CIIC will be established by the APPN Advisory Board in due course.

## APPN Governance Protocol (as at 1 October 2024)

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### Other APPN Personnel

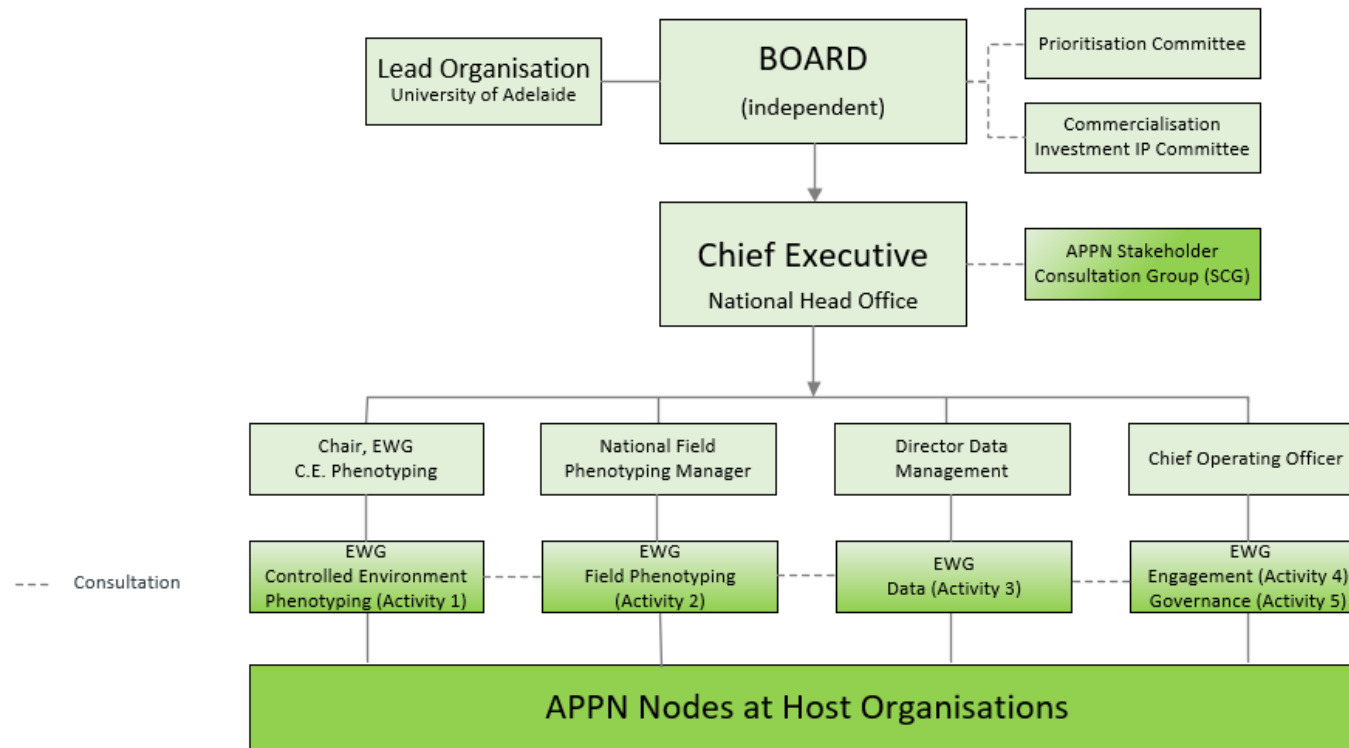
Staffing at each APPN Node is undertaken at the discretion of the Node Directors in alignment with the APPN Node's Budget and with due reference to the skills and experience required to successfully deliver APPN services.

Personnel appointed must be acceptable to the Lead Organisation and/or Commonwealth (refer to clause 7 of the Host Agreement) as well as the Host organisation.

# Attachment

## Governance Chart – Australian Plant Phenomics Network (APPN)

The APPN is a network of National Research Infrastructure enabled by the Australian Government's **National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS)**. We report annually to the Department of Education on the activities and progress in plant phenotyping delivered with our partners to enable and accelerate research and innovation in agricultural production.



EWG = Expert Working Groups  
 APPN Host Organisation input via SCG (PVCR level or equivalent), EWGs (Node level), the APPN Annual Forum  
 Annual events: APPN Annual Forum (all stakeholders)  
 Semi-annual events: SCG meeting, EWG Chairs presentation to Board  
 Quarterly events: Board meetings (incl. National Head Office update); National EWG meetings (CEP, Field, Data, Eng. & Gov)

APPN  
Central level

APPN  
Node level