



Gladstone Healthy  
Harbour Partnership

## **Independent Science Panel Terms of Reference**

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## 1. Purpose of this document

The Independent Science Panel Terms of Reference (ToR) describes the process for the ongoing provision of independent scientific advice to the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership (GHHP) through the GHHP Independent Science Panel (ISP).

## 2. Background

GHHP is an independent body made up of local stakeholders representing the community, industry, science, government, statutory bodies and management sectors with a shared interest in the health of Gladstone Harbour. The guiding principles of the Partnership are open, honest and accountable management, annual reporting of the health of the Gladstone Harbour and opportunities for improvement where necessary, based on rigorous science and strong stakeholder engagement.

GHHP defines and tracks the health of the Gladstone Harbour by developing a whole-of-system report card ( <http://ghhp.org.au/> ). This process is informed by open, transparent and independent peer-reviewed science, through an ISP. The role of the GHHP ISP is to ensure that the environmental, social, cultural and economic challenges of policy, planning and opportunities, as they relate to achieving the GHHP vision, are supported by credible science. This is a review and oversight role, where the nature of project work carried out by collaborators or consultants on behalf of GHHP to develop and monitor report card indicators, is guided by advice from the ISP. The outputs of that work are critically reviewed by ISP members before it is used as part of producing the annual GHHP Report Card.

The GHHP ISP was formed in February 2013 after GHHP's establishment in August 2012. The GHHP ISP membership is appointed by an Independent Chair (ISP Chair) and is guided by and responsible to the GHHP Partnership and Management Committee.

The GHHP science program commenced in 2013. It has passed through three (3) key phases: the design phase (in 2013), the pilot phase (in 2014) and an operational phase that has been ongoing since 2015. The ISP's role is a support function enabling the achievement of GHHP's objectives.

The ISP maintains a critical role in achieving ongoing improvement in the Gladstone Harbour Report Card through designing and implementing projects to develop new, locally relevant indicators and critically reviewing data interpretation before use in report cards.

## 3. Role

The role of the GHHP ISP is to provide independent scientific advice on the GHHP-endorsed Gladstone Harbour Report Card. This includes advice on the following:

- the full suite of indicators to be included in the report card, including any subsets of indicators to be included each year;
- the monitoring program to support the report card;
- the synthesis work required to ascertain report card grades and to ensure the appropriateness and independence of the grades;
- the continued development of the Gladstone Harbour Model and other modelling and prediction frameworks that will be used by the GHHP to underpin advice to policy, management and regulatory agencies, industry and other stakeholders;
- research projects (if required) to improve the Gladstone Harbour Report Card and understanding of key processes in maintaining the health of the Gladstone Harbour;
- monitoring improvement plans that may be needed to improve the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the Gladstone Harbour Report Card, its monitoring program and/or the Gladstone Harbour Model;
- how the findings might be interpreted and communicated to a wider audience; and

- other pertinent independent scientific advice when requested by the GHHP Management Committee.

## 4. Responsibilities

The key responsibilities of the GHHP ISP are as follows:

### 4.1 Scientific Quality Assurance

The GHHP ISP will ensure that any recommendations provided regarding opportunities for improving the Gladstone Harbour Report Card are based on scientific activities that are designed, conducted, coordinated, integrated and peer-reviewed in accordance with best practice in the scientific community. This includes encouraging collaborators and consultants carrying out ISP-recommended science projects to publish their work in independent peer-reviewed journals, to confirm its scientific rigour.

### 4.2 Effective Scientific Communication

The ISP will support stakeholder decision-making through the provision of, and access to, synthesised knowledge and information and robust decision support tools. To the best of its capability, the GHHP ISP will ensure that a common science consensus/recommendation on any issue in relation to Gladstone Harbour will be presented to the GHHP Management Committee through the ISP Chair. The ISP Chair will work with the GHHP Management Committee to facilitate:

- project identification and development in order to fill data gaps and develop new indicators if deemed necessary;
- analysis of results;
- the means of communicating the health of the Gladstone Harbour to the wider community in the report card; and
- continued improvement in the process of constructing and delivering the report card.

### 4.3 Independence of the Science Panel

ISP Members will need to observe the highest standards of impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relation to the advice and information provided to the GHHP Management Committee. The ISP members will not misuse information gained in their roles on the ISP for personal gain or political purpose, nor seek opportunity through the ISP to promote their private interests or those of connected persons, firms, institutions and organisations.

From time to time, the ISP may need to seek expert advice or opinions from experts outside the ISP to ensure they are able to provide the robust scientific advice required. These external experts will also need to observe the highest standards of impartiality and integrity and abide by these ToR.

### 4.4 Enhancement of Research Partnerships through the ISP

The ISP Chair will ensure that collaboration is enhanced in the generation of scientific advice to the GHHP from the ISP or its members. The GHHP ISP will facilitate the links with research partnerships and initiatives (e.g. research alliances and centres of excellence) and other researchers and academics (e.g. Partner's technical staff or subject matter experts) to address scientific and technical key issues identified by the ISP and the GHHP. Leveraging of resources to address research questions will also be facilitated.

## 5. Membership

### 5.1 ISP Make Up

The GHHP ISP can comprise of up to 10 members (including a Chair). The members are nominated by the ISP Chair and approved by the GHHP Management Committee. Membership may include representatives with expertise in one or more of the following:

- water quality;
- ecosystem health;
- marine biogeochemistry;
- marine toxicology;
- decision support tools/modelling;
- discharge chemistry and hydrology;
- marine biodiversity (including fish, crabs, marine megafauna and migratory birds);
- coastal ecosystems (corals, seagrass and mangroves);
- statistics;
- social science;
- economics; and
- report cards.

### 5.2 ISP Chair

The ISP Chair is appointed by the GHHP Management Committee after an open call for expressions of interest for a term that is at the discretion of the GHHP Management Committee. The ISP Chair takes direction from, and is accountable to, the GHHP Management Committee through the GHHP Chair for the execution of GHHP objectives.

The ISP Chair is responsible for:

- championing the integrated and collaborative approach to research and monitoring;
- working with the GHHP Science Officer/s to convene the ISP;
- managing Conflict of Interest issues that may arise among the ISP members; and
- acting as the spokesperson for the ISP.

The ISP Chair may not be a serving member of the GHHP Management Committee but may be an ex-officio member of the GHHP Management Committee.

### 5.3 General Members

The term of appointment of the ISP members is for a period of two (2) years. The ISP Chair provides recommendations to the GHHP Management Committee on the expertise required to ensure open, transparent and independent peer-reviewed science that is maintained for use in the Gladstone Harbour Report Card.

### 5.4 Operational Support

The ISP is supported by the GHHP Executive Officer, Science Officer/s and where required by the GHHP Secretariat. The role of the Science Officer/s is to support the ISP by coordinating the operations and implementing the recommendations and outputs from the ISP (including preparation, synthesis and collation of information). With the ISP Chair, the Science Officer/s is also responsible for progressing the ISP deliverables by overseeing and managing ISP recommended projects, keeping projects on task and reporting any delays or changes in project scope to the GHHP Chair.

## 6. Meetings

The GHHP ISP will meet at least once every quarter (i.e. four (4) meetings in total for the year) and on an as-needs basis as called by the ISP Chair. Notice of at least 10 working days must be given in advance of each ISP meeting. The formats of the meetings will be a mix of electronic and face-to-face

formats. These meetings will enable the ISP to provide recommendations to the GHHP Management Committee.

The ISP will liaise with relevant community and industry groups or GHHP working groups as required to ensure that technical and community knowledge is incorporated into a broader understanding of the harbour and report card issues.

### 6.1 Conduct of Meetings

The GHHP ISP will aim to make decisions by consensus, but a 70% majority will be used in the event of an impasse. It is the responsibility of the ISP Chair to manage the decision-making processes.

### 6.2 ISP Member Remuneration

The ISP Chair and ISP members are funded by GHHP for their time and commitment (see Appendix B for further details).

## 7. Programs and Reporting

### 7.1 Program of Works

Prior to the GHHP annual budget being set, the ISP is to propose a work program for approval by the GHHP Management Committee that defines the projects to be done to support the Gladstone Harbour Report Card and the time frames for completion.

Developing tender scope of works is the responsibility of the ISP Chair and Science Officer/s, with input from other ISP members as required and final approval sought from the GHHP Management Committee.

The GHHP ISP also plays a role in implementing the program of works, including aspects relating to developing the scope of works for the tendering process, tender evaluation and, where necessary, program delivery. The ISP will make recommendations to the GHHP Management Committee for approval.

In terms of tender evaluation, the ISP Chair, GHHP Science Officer/s and any ISP members with appropriate expertise will undertake a review of the proposals and will develop final recommendation(s) for consideration by the ISP (note: all proposals will be available to the ISP). The selection criteria for proposals will be based on 1) addresses the scope of work; 2) value for money; 3) historical performance; 4) best practice approach; and 5) preferred providers. Based on their review of the information supplied, the ISP will recommend a provider and the ISP Chair and GHHP Science Officer/s will seek approval from the GHHP Management Committee to procure the nominated supplier.

### 7.2 Reporting

The ISP Chair will report to the GHHP Management Committee on ISP activities. Meeting minutes and other supporting documents of the ISP will be made available to GHHP Management Committee for approval.

### 7.3 Policies and Procedures

All GHHP policies and procedures must be adhered to in relation to tendering, approving and awarding science projects contracts. The following policies and procedures can be found within the GHHP Policy and Procedure Register available from the GHHP Chair and/or Secretariat:

- Principles for Commissioning Science Projects;

- Procedure for Development of Science Program Projects Scope of Work;
- Procedure for Assessing Science Program Projects Proposals; and
- Process for Approving Final Science Program Project Reports.

#### 7.4 Conflict of Interest

GHHP ISP members should, at all times, adhere to GHHP's policy on managing Conflict of Interest (refer to Appendix A) and sign the Conflict of Interest declaration form (refer to Attachment 1 in Appendix A) annually or as the need arises. Actual or perceived Conflict of Interest should be notified immediately through the identified process.

Potential Conflict of Interest during the tender evaluation stage will be managed using the procedures outlined in Appendix A. Conflicts will be relevant where ISP members are qualified to be involved in the delivery of certain aspects of the program of works, either as a researcher or in an oversight role.

Conflict of Interest assessment will be made by the ISP Chair in consultation with ISP members, circulated as part of the ISP proposal assessment process and included in the recommendation presented to the GHHP Management Committee for endorsement.

The Conflict of Interest Policy will also apply to any external experts that may be providing information or services to the GHHP ISP.

## 8. ISP Obligations

### 8.1 Communication

The GHHP ISP will communicate with the media through the GHHP Chair and/or the GHHP ISP Chair unless a key expert is required. ISP members will not speak on behalf of GHHP or the ISP at any other time.

### 8.2 Safeguarding Documents

The ISP Chair shall ensure that all members will undertake to safeguard the confidential nature of all ISP information, estimates, plans and documents under and pertaining to their involvement. The ISP Chair shall also ensure that all such reports, plans, documents, copyright, etc. shall be property of GHHP and that copies of the same will not be furnished to a third party without specific authorisation of the nominated GHHP representative.

The Science Officer/s will be responsible for ensuring there is an appropriate ISP data and information storage and access policy in place and implemented (Policies to be located in the GHHP Policy Register). The guiding principle will be free and open access to the data and information produced by the ISP whilst safeguarding any confidential data, information, or other contractual arrangements. This is outlined further in the GHHP Governance Charter.

### 8.3 Gaining Management Committee Approval for Funded Activities

The ISP will seek prior approval from the GHHP Management Committee before proceeding with any activities that incur a cost to GHHP. This includes any aspect of the program of works or any workshops relating to GHHP business that are coordinated by the ISP or any of its members.

## Appendix A GHHP ISP Conflict of Interest Policy

Public confidence in the integrity of the GHHP ISP is vital to the proper operation of the GHHP. Confidence may be jeopardised if the community perceives a Conflict of Interest. GHHP ISP members need to be aware that their private interests, both financial and personal, could conflict with their ISP duties. It is each ISP member's responsibility to notify the ISP Chair about an actual or perceived Conflict of Interest. It is the ISP Chair's responsibility to decide whether there is a Conflict of Interest and what action should be taken where there is a conflict identified. While avoiding a conflict is best, it is not always practical. The ISP will have processes to ensure that management of conflicts in such situations will withstand scrutiny.

The processes for ISP meetings will be:

- the conflict is declared at each meeting;
- the conflict will be managed appropriately with the ISP member being asked by the Chair to either leave the meeting or to not participate in discussions or recommendations for the relevant agenda item(s). If the ISP member is not asked to leave the meeting, then other ISP members may request specific comment from that member regarding the item under discussion; and
- the GHHP Management Committee is informed about the conflict through the ISP Chair Report highlighting the process used to manage the conflict.

The process for managing Conflicts of Interest when commissioning ISP projects is outlined in this document. The ISP Chair should declare any personal conflict/s to the GHHP Chair as soon as becoming aware. The GHHP Chair will then decide on how this conflict will be managed.

### Principles

The Report of the Committee of Inquiry: *Public Duty and Private Interest* (1979), known as the Bowen Report, sets out the principles that underpin obligations to disclose and manage conflicts in the public sector.

The report recommended a Code of Conduct, which appropriately modified will guide the ISP as follows:

- an ISP member should perform their role impartially, uninfluenced by fear or favour;
- an ISP member should be frank and honest in dealings with ISP colleagues;
- an ISP member should avoid situations in which his/her private interest, whether pecuniary or otherwise, conflicts or might reasonably be thought to conflict with his/her ISP role;
- when an ISP member possesses, directly or indirectly, an interest which conflicts or might reasonably be thought to conflict with his/her ISP role duty, or improperly to influence his/her conduct in the discharge of his/her responsibilities in respect of some matter with which he/she is concerned, he/she should disclose that interest according to the prescribed procedures. Should circumstances change after an initial disclosure has been made, so that new or additional facts become material, the officeholder should disclose the further information;
- when the interests of members of his/her immediate family are involved, the ISP member should disclose those interests, to the extent that they are known to him/her;
- an ISP member should not use information obtained during ISP duties to directly or indirectly gain a pecuniary advantage for himself or for any other person; and
- an ISP member should not solicit or accept from any person any remuneration or benefit for the discharge of their ISP roles over and above the official remuneration.



## Declaration of Interests

### *The purpose of the declaration*

The purpose of the declaration is to ensure that ISP members are aware of any private interests or relationships of ISP members which could, or could be seen, to influence the advice they are giving. These could include personal interests and relationships that could involve real or potential Conflicts of Interest in terms of each ISP member's responsibilities. The completion of a Declaration of Interests form also provides ISP members with the opportunity to consider whether any of their financial or personal interests might give rise to a real or perceived conflict with their ISP role and take action to remove or minimise the potential for that to occur.

### *What should be covered in the declaration*

There is no standard list of items that must be included in a declaration. Rather, it is the responsibility of the ISP member to whom the declaration policy applies, to consider and declare those private interests or relationships that could, or could be perceived, to impact upon the advice they are giving. Factors to be considered in what to disclose include:

- the roles and responsibilities of the ISP; and
- the specific role and responsibilities of the ISP member.

The types of interests and relationships that may need to be disclosed include:

- real estate investments;
- shareholdings;
- trusts or nominee companies;
- company directorships or partnerships;
- other significant sources of income;
- gifts; or
- paid, unpaid or voluntary employment which may impact upon the ISP member's responsibilities

### ISP Chair's responsibilities

While it is the responsibility of each ISP member to declare personal and private interests, it is the responsibility of the ISP Chair to ensure that any Conflict of Interest or other threat to the integrity of the ISP that is identified in the declarations is avoided or effectively managed.

This means that he/she will need to be appropriately aware of the contents of ISP member declarations and take appropriate action to ensure it is avoided or effectively managed.

### Frequency of Declaration/s

The declaration will be updated at each ISP meeting or as required.

### ISP Member Proposal Evaluation Conflict of Interest Management Pro Forma

<b>Project code &amp; brief title</b>	ISP member named in proposal as a project participant	ISP member named in proposal with an oversight role	ISP member involved in same institution and affiliated with research group	ISP member involved in same institution	ISP member has personal/professional relationship
<b>Rule:</b>	EXCLUDED	EXCLUDED	CAN COMMENT ONLY	INVOLVED IN DECISION MAKING	ISP CHAIR'S DECISION
<b>ISP Member name</b>					

[Attachment 1: Declaration of Interests – GHHP ISP](#)

This declaration of financial and other personal interests is to be completed annually by each GHHP ISP member.

This declaration is to be forwarded on completion to the GHHP Executive Officer.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**I declare that:**

- I am aware of my responsibilities to disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any Conflict of Interest (real or apparent) in connection with membership of the GHHP ISP and not make improper use of (a) inside information or (b) my duties, status, power or authority, in order to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or advantage for myself or for any other person;
- I have read and understood the GHHP ISP Conflict of Interest policy and guidelines on Declarations of Personal Interests; and
- The attached list at **Annex A** of my private interests and relationships has been prepared on the basis of the particular roles and responsibilities of the GHHP ISP and my particular roles and responsibilities as a panel member.

**I undertake to immediately inform the ISPI Chair of any changes to:**

- my responsibilities, or to the issue or subjects on which I am required to make decisions or give advice; and
- my personal circumstances that could affect the contents of this declaration and to provide an amended declaration/s using this pro forma.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Annex A: Declaration of Personal Financial and other Interests

Please list any private interests or relationships which could, or could be seen, to influence the advice you are giving.

The types of interests and relationships that may need to be disclosed include real estate investments, shareholdings, trusts or nominee companies, company directorships or partnerships, other significant sources of income, private business, employment, voluntary, social or personal relationships that could, or could be seen, to impact upon your responsibilities.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B GHHP ISP Reimbursement Schedule

### Invoices

Please make invoices out to the current host of GHHP, Fitzroy Basin Association following:

Fitzroy Basin Association Inc.  
PO Box 139 Rockhampton  
QLD 4700  
ABN: 30 802 469 401

Email invoices to: [accounts@fba.org.au](mailto:accounts@fba.org.au)

Please note invoices are to be sent for payment no later than 4 weeks after a meeting or workshop. Copies of receipts are required for each invoice item. Travel time is not eligible for reimbursement. For any questions regarding the ISP reimbursement schedule, please contact the GHHP Executive Officer or email the Secretariat at [secretariat@ghhp.org.au](mailto:secretariat@ghhp.org.au)

### ISP Meeting Attendance

Attendance at GHHP ISP meetings: \$150 p/h, excl. GST PLUS Meeting preparation time: a maximum of 4 hours per meeting can be reimbursed (\$600 excl. GST).

### Transport

Economy airfares will be reimbursed. For airport parking, reimbursement will only occur if the parking was cheaper than taxi transport to and from the airport from home or place of work. Taxi fares are only for travel to and from the airport from your place of work or home and to and from the airport to the ISP meeting.

### Accommodation

Up to \$250 per night unless otherwise agreed.

### Meals

Meal allowance is in line with the Host Organisation's policy. The Policy provides the following guidance: meals should not exceed \$30 per meal and alcohol cannot be claimed for. Lunch will be provided at meetings and workshops. A member shall be paid allowances for costs incurred in purchasing additional meals only if the absence from home or workplace is at least 12 hours.

### Sitting Fees

Workshops differ from the bimonthly GHHP ISP meetings and will be less common. \$800 full day (over 3.5 hours) excl. GST and \$400 half day (3.5 hours or less) excl. GST