### **Terms of Reference 2024**

The Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing (the Collaborative Centre) exists to drive ground-breaking change to Victoria’s mental health and wellbeing system and ensure people receive better mental health and wellbeing support through collaborating and learning together. Consistent with the Royal Commission’s vision for a more adaptive and integrated health system, the Collaborative Centre has an important role in translating the existing knowledge base and the evidence of lived experience and clinical wisdom into improvements in the quality of mental health treatment, care and support for all Victorians.

The [*Translational Research Strategy 2024-2027*](https://www.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-10/VCCMHW_Translational-Research_FA-1-web.pdf) (the Strategy) aims to bridge the gap between research innovation and practice, facilitate connections within and between parts of the mental health and wellbeing system and improve lived experience engagement and leadership in research. The Strategy will be supported by annual action plans that provide a more detailed overview of research activities and work programs that align with the Strategy.

The Translational Research and Innovation Advisory Panel (TRIAP) supports the Collaborative Centre and its Co-CEOs to implement the Strategy and accompanying action plans, to ensure alignment between research activities and the strategic goals, 3-year focus area, work pillars and the implementation principles outlined in the Strategy.

## **Purpose**

TRIAP is a skills-based advisory panel whose purpose is to provide expert advice to the Co-CEOs of the Collaborative Centre to inform decision-making aligned to the Strategy and associated action plans. TRIAP will ensure the Collaborative Centre’s research activities are assessed impartially, transparently and without commercial advantage, pursuant to the Collaborative Centre’s legislated functions set out in the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022 (Victoria).*

## **Role**

TRIAP will support implementation of the Strategy, overseeing the work pillars and action plans. TRIAP will also monitor alignment of Strategy implementation and impact with the new outcomes and performance framework (when published by the Victorian Government).

As part of Strategy implementation, TRIAP’s activities will include:

1. reviewing the merit and alignment of strategic research proposals and other initiatives aligned with the Strategy that are supported by the Collaborative Centre
2. impartially evaluating applications for Translational Research Internships, PhD Scholarships and Postdoctoral Fellowships offered by the Collaborate Centre to embed research translation into service delivery
3. providing input into specific initiatives, such as the review of content for the Collaborative Centre’s new Knowledge Sharing Platform, or practice guides to support workforce education and professional development.

## **Membership and Appointment**

TRIAP engages with the Collaborative Centre’s team and the Board through the Co-CEOs or their delegates via the Secretariat. TRIAP is not delegated any legislative functions and is not authorised to exercise any power or make any decision for, or on behalf of, the Board or the Collaborative Centre. The TRIAP Chair advises the Co-CEOs of TRIAP’s advice and recommendations.

### **Terms of Membership**

1. TRIAP members are appointed by the Co-CEOs of the Collaborative Centre for a period of up to two (2) years, commencing from the date of appointment.
2. TRIAP membership will comprise:

* a Chairperson
* a Deputy Chairperson
* up to 10 additional panel members.

1. A member who is absent from three (3) consecutive TRIAP meetings, without forwarding an apology, will be assumed to have resigned.
2. A TRIAP member wishing to resign from their position may do so at any time, on the provision of three (3) weeks' written notice to the TRIAP Chair, setting out the member’s intention to resign.

### Membership

1. Membership will comprise individuals who demonstrate significant translational research expertise external to the Collaborative Centre.
2. Half the TRIAP roles are designated lived experience roles, this includes individuals with:

* lived experiences of mental ill-health, psychological distress, addiction, and/or trauma
* those with lived experiences as a carer, family, supporter or kin of someone with experiences of mental ill-health, psychological distress, addiction, and/or trauma.

1. It is intended that lived experience membership will comprise equal ‘consumer’ and ‘carer, family supporter and kin’ representation.
2. TRIAP will seek representation from diverse communities and priority populations impacted by intersecting layers of oppression, as articulated by the Strategy in the 3-year focus area. This includes First Nations people and communities, those who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), LGBTIQA+SB communities, neurodiverse/neurodivergent communities, people with addiction, people with experience of homelessness, women and gender-diverse people, and those impacted by sexual and/or family violence.
3. TRIAP is led by a Chair and Deputy Chair, with one of the roles designated as a lived experience appointment.
4. TRIAP membership includes one (1) designated member from each of the Collaborative Centre’s lead partner organisations, the Royal Melbourne Hospital and the University of Melbourne, as well as one (1) designated member from the Collaborative Centre’s reform partner, the Victorian Department of Health.
5. Individuals who are members of another Collaborative Centre board, committee, or advisory panel (e.g., the Lived Experiences Advisory Panel [LEAP]) are not eligible to be members of TRIAP.
6. A member of the Collaborative Centre’s Board will have the option to attend each TRIAP meeting as an observer to ensure alignment with strategic objectives. The attendance of a Board observer is not required for quorum.
7. The Collaborative Centre’s Co-CEOs, or their delegates within the Translational Research Team, will have the option to attend TRIAP meetings to ensure alignment with strategic and operational objectives. The attendance of the Co-CEOs or their delegates is not required for quorum.
8. Additionally, the TRIAP Chair may invite individuals with specific expertise to attend meetings to inform decision-making. These attendees may include other representatives from the Collaborative Centre including from staff, the Board and LEAP.
9. If a vacancy occurs during a member's current appointment, the vacancy may be filled by interview with suitable candidates from the original expression of interest process. The interview panel will comprise the Co-CEO (Clinical/Academic) or their delegate, the TRIAP Chair or Deputy Chair and an additional representative with lived experience. If no suitable candidates are appointed, a casual vacancy will be advertised and appointed through a new expression of interest process.
10. If a vacancy arises in one of the designated roles for the Collaborative Centre’s lead partners, the respective lead partner may lead the interview and selection process to appoint a suitable replacement. Potential candidates will initially be identified from the original expression of interest process. If no suitable candidates are identified, a casual vacancy will be advertised and appointed through a new expression of interest process.
11. The TRIAP Chair will inform TRIAP members of any newly appointed members or other changes to membership.

## **Responsibilities**

### Members

TRIAP members must act consistently with:

1. relevant legal requirements
2. the Terms of Reference
3. all relevant policies (including conflict of interest and privacy policies); and
4. the TRIAP working agreement.

The working agreement will outline ways of working, safety considerations and an approach to conflict resolution. The working agreement will be developed through a collaborative process involving panel members.

TRIAP member responsibilities include:

* using professional, research, and lived expertise to provide advice to the Collaborative Centre and its Co-CEOs
* attending all scheduled meetings
* working collaboratively with other TRIAP members to consider and discuss a broad range of perspectives in a constructive and respectful manner
* engaging with the Collaborative Centre’s staff and Board in a respectful and constructive way.

### Chair

1. The responsibilities of the Chair are to understand TRIAP's Terms of Reference and coordinate efforts to meet, uphold the Terms of Reference, and consult with the Collaborative Centre’s staff.
2. The Chair must have a thorough understanding of the Strategy, including strategic goals, 3-year focus area, work pillars and implementation principles.
3. The Chair will coordinate TRIAP meetings including:

* working with the Secretariat to set the meeting schedule, finalise the agenda, minutes and papers and ensure minutes accurately reflect TRIAP decisions
* facilitating efficient organisation and conduct of TRIAP meetings, including active participation of all TRIAP members, directing discussion to ensure the effective use of time for key issues, and conducting meetings in a collaborative, welcoming, safe, accessible and productive way
* ensuring TRIAP has the necessary information to facilitate effective decision-making
* organising out-of-session or additional meetings if required
* guiding and promoting the ongoing development of TRIAP members
* inducting new members and ensuring they are familiar with the Terms of Reference and the Strategy
* reviewing TRIAP activities and reporting to the Co-CEOs and Translational Research Team.

### Deputy Chair

The Deputy Chairperson will support the Chair in leading TRIAP and fulfilling their responsibilities. In the Chairperson's temporary absence, the Deputy Chair is expected to assume the roles and responsibilities of the Chair.

### Secretariat

TRIAP will be supported by a Secretariat provided by the Collaborative Centre. This support will include:

* preparing meeting agendas and papers
* taking minutes
* disseminating information to TRIAP members
* arranging for external attendees to join and present at TRIAP meetings as required
* arranging external facilitation as required
* providing other support as required by TRIAP.

## **Meetings**

1. TRIAP meetings will be held once every two (2) months or more regularly during periods of increased workload. The Collaborative Centre prefers that TRIAP meetings are conducted in person; however, video conference or hybrid attendance may be made available as flexible attendance options. The final decision on the method of attendance is made by the Chair.
2. The Secretariat will communicate the date, time, and venue of TRIAP meetings via email to all TRIAP members, two (2) weeks prior to a scheduled meeting.
3. TRIAP members who are unable to attend a meeting must communicate an apology to the Secretariat in advance of the meeting.
4. TRIAP members may be required to review meeting material(s) prior to a scheduled TRIAP meeting. The Secretariat will provide TRIAP members with documentation requiring review one (1) week prior to a scheduled meeting.
5. The duration of TRIAP meetings is two (2) hours. Longer or shorter meeting times may be negotiated between the Chair and the Co-CEOs or their delegates.
6. The TRIAP quorum consists of the Chair (or Deputy Chair) and five (5) other members. TRIAP meetings are to be cancelled or postponed if the quorum is not met.
7. TRIAP members may be invited by the Co-CEOs or members of the Translational Research Team to contribute to additional activities outside of monthly meetings, such as through working groups, however involvement in these activities is optional. Invitations to participate in these activities will be facilitated by the Chair.

### Agenda

The Translational Research Team and Co-CEOs will work with the TRIAP Secretariat and Chair to prepare meeting agendas and other relevant documents for TRIAP meetings.

The agenda for each TRIAP meeting will be informed by:

* the minutes of the previous meeting and action items
* key priorities for the Translational Research Team and Co-CEOs in relation to the Collaborative Centre’s research activities
* Project proposals and initiatives, as well as applications for Translational Research Internships, PhD Scholarships and Postdoctoral Fellowships
* any other business relevant to TRIAP’s purpose and role.

Agenda items and topics for discussion and review at TRIAP meetings must be submitted to the Secretariat no later than two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date. The Secretariat will distribute the agenda, reading documentation and any other supporting documentation by email to members, no later than one (1) week before the meeting date.

The Chair may decide if TRIAP will consider late items or defer such items to a following meeting. This includes:

* late agenda items raised after the agenda is circulated
* late supporting documents provided within a week of the meeting
* late agenda items proposed by a panel member during the meeting.

The agenda will indicate if non-TRIAP members will be in attendance at a meeting.

### Minutes

Minutes from each TRIAP meeting will be recorded by the Secretariat to reflect discussions undertaken, decisions made and agreed actions. TRIAP minutes will be provided to the Chair and Deputy Chair for review within one (1) week following each meeting. Following review, the TRIAP minutes will be circulated to TRIAP members as part of the documentation distributed for the next meeting. The meeting minutes are to be endorsed by TRIAP members at the subsequent meeting. Minutes will also be provided to the Co-CEOs and members of the Translational Research Team where appropriate.

Meeting minutes will be securely stored in the Collaborative Centre’s committee meeting software, Our Cat Herder.

### Decision-making

Decisions will be made by a simple majority vote when TRIAP has a quorum. The Chair may call for a vote on any agenda item once it has been fully addressed and discussed. In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair shall assume this role. In the event of a tie, the Chair will have the deciding vote. Should the Chair be absent, the Deputy Chair will exercise the carrying vote. The Board observer and non-member attendees do not have voting power and are not permitted to vote on TRIAP decisions.

Given TRIAP has been established to provide expert advice to the Co-CEOs of the Collaborative Centre, decisions made by TRIAP will be advisory in nature. Notwithstanding this, all decisions will be documented by the Secretariat and entered into the official record.

## **Conflict of Interests**

### In accordance with the Department of Health’s *Conflict of Interest Policy*, TRIAP members must consider the relationship between their private interests, their substantive roles, and their duties as members of TRIAP. In circumstances where a conflict of interest (COI) is identified, a TRIAP member must identify, declare, and manage the COI appropriately. TRIAP members are expected to notify the Chair and the Co-CEO, or their delegates, of any perceived, potential, or actual COI as it arises. Members with a COI must leave meetings during the consideration of any proposal or application related to the conflict and must abstain from voting on the relevant item.

### **Confidentiality and privacy**

1. TRIAP members must treat any information that is received pursuant to their role as strictly confidential.
2. TRIAP members must not use any information received other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of TRIAP.
3. Draft documents cannot be referenced or used by a TRIAP member in any grant application, presentation, thesis or otherwise in a private capacity.
4. For transparency, TRIAP member names, qualification details and current positions will be listed on the Collaborative Centre’s website and the intranet.

## **Remuneration**

In accordance with renumeration standards outlined in the *Appointment and Renumeration Guidelines 2023* (Guidelines) TRIAP members will be remunerated at a rate of $237 per day and the Chair at a rate of $276 per day. Members will be remunerated for one (1) day’s worth of engagement every two (2) months including any readings or preparatory work.

## **Changes to the Terms of Reference**

The TRIAP Terms of Reference may be amended or modified from time to time for compliance or accuracy purposes.

A review and assessment of TRIAP performance will be conducted annually against measures relating to:

* Satisfaction of both TRIAP members and the Collaborative Centre’s Co-CEOs.
* An evaluation of the experiences of TRIAP members, the Co-CEOs, the Translational Research Team and other relevant stakeholders engaged with TRIAP.
* The quality of outputs and the impact of TRIAP’s recommendations.

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