

Oysters Australia – Research, Development & Extension Committee

Terms of Reference

Oysters Australia Limited (OA) is a national body that was formed in 2011 by Australia's community of oyster growers. It is a not-for-profit, unlisted, public company, the Members being the official oyster industry bodies in New south Wales, Tasmania and South Australia, namely: NSW Farmers Association, Oysters Tasmania (OT), and South Australian Oyster Growers Association (SAOGA). The company constitution also allows for an observer from the Queensland Oyster Growers Association (QOGA) to attend board meetings, but this representative does not have voting rights.

Role of the RD&E Committee

The primary purpose of Oysters Australia is to manage a program of research, development, and extension for the benefit of the Australian oyster industry. Under the terms of the Oysters Australia Industry Partnership Agreement (IPA) with the FRDC, an RD&E Committee must be established and maintained to help develop and implement an RD&E Plan.

This committee will:

- Provide guidance to an annual prioritisation process
- Assist in sourcing and developing proposals to address industry priorities.
- Assist in the review of proposals to the FRDC for decision.
- Assist the FRDC in the evaluation of project performance and outputs. For example, each individual project has a requirement to:
 - report in person to the RD&E committee once per year
 - provide milestone reports, which are to be examined by the RD&E Committee
- Promote the extension and adoption of the results of RD&E.
- Where appropriate, communicate the results of its RD&E investments to the wider stakeholder community, including the general public.
- Where appropriate, create domestic - international linkages to maximise the leverage of the RD&E investment
- Provide feedback and recommendations on project applications to the Oysters Australia Board of Directors

Priority projects are summarised in an RD&E Plan, which is a component of the Oysters Australia Strategic Plan - see www.oystersaustralia.org/strategicplan. These priorities are further guided by state-level RD&E strategies, and committee members knowledge and experience.

In performing its duties, the committee will:

- Make decisions by consensus
- Operate with good principles of governance
- Act so as not to create competitive barriers in relation to the provision of RD&E

The RD&E Committee will be Chaired by the OA President, with minutes recorded by the Executive Officer. Video-conference meetings will be recorded but deleted after minutes have been documented.

Membership

The Oysters Australia IPA stipulates that the RD&E committee be made up of the following nominees.

- Representatives from each member organisation of Oysters Australia (6 nominees)
- The Executive Officer of each member organisation of Oysters Australia
- The Chair of Oysters Australia
- The Executive Officer of Oysters Australia
- A representative from the Fisheries Research & Development Corporation (FRDC)
- Appointed discipline experts as needed (OA maintains a [register of discipline experts here](#))
- Additional jurisdictional representatives

To encourage and facilitate succession planning, observers are welcomed.

Nomination Process

Member organisations are required to nominate their RD&E representatives prior to the Oysters Australia AGM every year so that appointments can be endorsed by the Board of Directors. Should member organisations need to change their representation during the year, a motion should be made to the board.

To maintain continuity and committee functionality, the core membership of the RD&E Committee should not change too frequently, and minimum terms of 2 years are encouraged.

RD&E Technical Forum

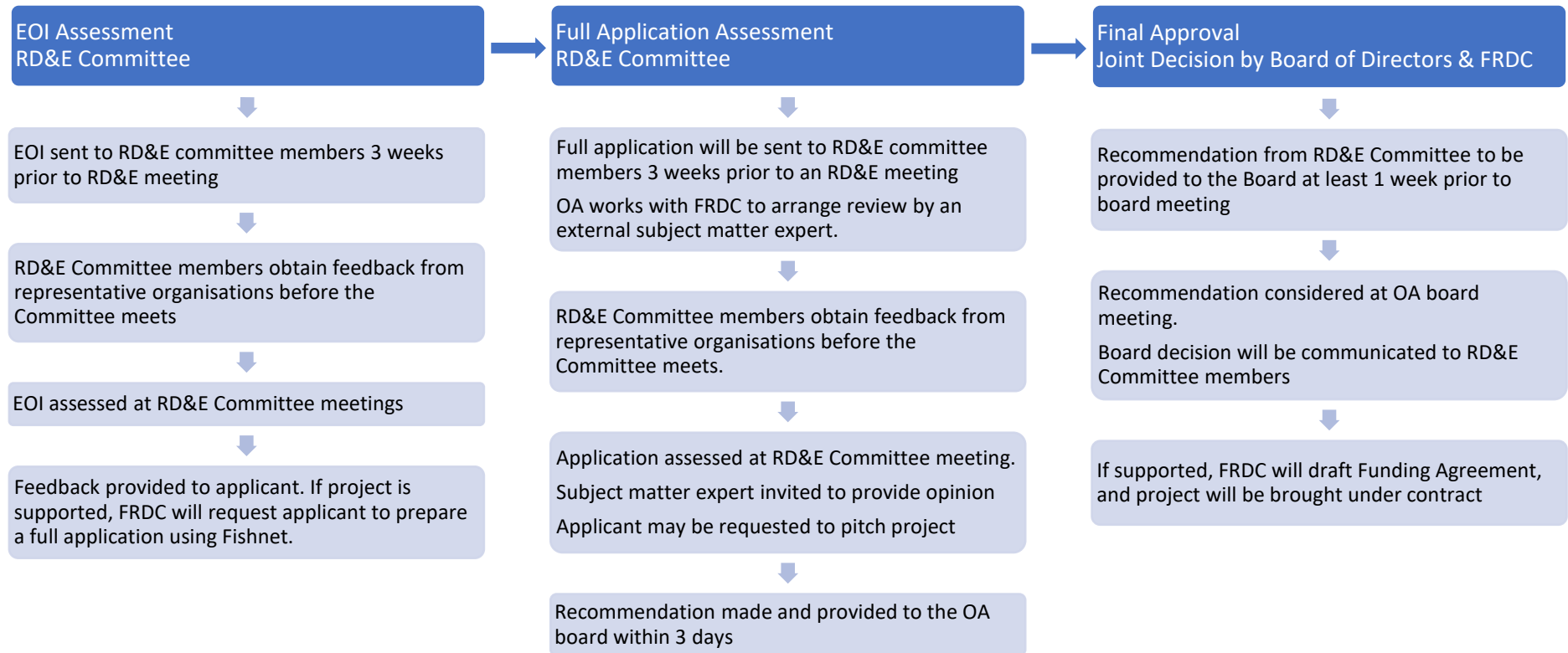
While the core membership and role of the RD&E Committee is guided by the IPA, Oysters Australia has a broader interest in building the capacity & knowledge of those with an interest in oyster research, industry development and extension.

To encourage the sharing of research, as well as drive discussion about new technology and innovation, Oysters Australia aims to host an open oyster RD&E technical forum immediately before the Committee convene to consider project applications.

These forums will provide an opportunity for IPA funded researchers to provide updates and socialise outcomes, and for projects funded outside of the IPA, to be shared and discussed. These forums may be focused on a theme, a geographic region, or the work of a particular university. They may also be used as an information gathering exercise, to gauge the thoughts of the oyster RD&E community.

Notice of upcoming forums will be provided to state research committees, breeding programs, university researchers and others with an interest in oyster RD&E.

Assessment of Project Proposals Against Current Priorities



Assessment Timeframe

As the RD&E Committee meet every 3 months, the timeframe from EOI submission to board decision of a full application is 15-20 weeks. If the project is urgent in nature and time sensitive, the RD&E Committee may consider making an out-of-session recommendation to the OA Board. The lead time for the review of proposals may also be condensed.

It is also recommended that once a year the RD&E Committee review this process and consider changes that improve its effectiveness and shortens the assessment timeframe.