



Members Council Charter

Background/ Purpose

The Members Council (the Council) is an advisory Committee to the Landcare Victoria Inc. Board (the Board) and is established to provide the Landcare community in Victoria with a mechanism to collaborate, share information, network and form a common view on issues facing the sector.

The Council is designed to be representative of Landcare Victoria Inc. (Landcare Victoria) members and bring together landcarers who are diverse in the roles they fulfil, the issues they deal with and the personal skills they have.

The Council has the capacity to collaborate and reach deeply into the broader landcare membership as required, when specific skills or experience is needed on matters relating to the sector.

The Members Council forms an integral part of Landcare Victoria (refer to Figure 1 below).

The **Members Council Charter** sets out the operating principles of the Members Council of Landcare Victoria and describes the Members Council's role, responsibilities and structure.

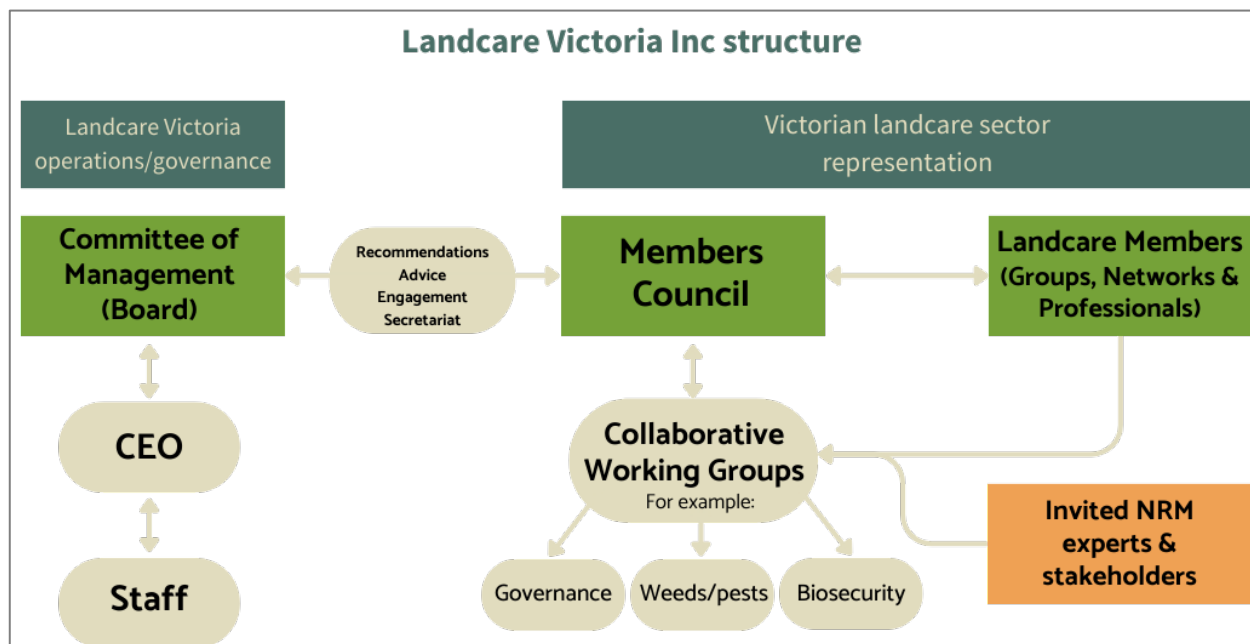


Figure 1. The Members Council as part of the Landcare Victoria Inc structure.

1. Roles and Responsibilities of the Members Council

The Members Council as a collective body:

- Will act as a representative Council for the Landcare sector in Victoria and in that capacity, advise the Board on sector strategies, initiatives and issues
- Should develop work priorities, and as required, establish working groups to address issues or pieces of work and nominate chairs to these groups and reporting frameworks
- Share local and regional issues and act as a conduit between community landcare and

Landcare Victoria for ideas that directly relate to the effectiveness of landcare in Victoria, particularly as they affect multiple groups

- Understand the broader work of the landcare sector and Landcare Victoria, liaising with their local groups and networks, to enable effective communication and representation with members
- May, from time to time, be asked by the Board to carry out research or information gathering projects
- Is part of Landcare Victoria's policy response/policy development work, either directly or by linking in other appropriately skilled people

2. Council Membership

To maximise representation and input from the broader Landcare sector, membership composition will include the following:

- The Members Council will comprise a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 30 individual members
- The Members Council will provide for up to two Community Member Representatives and one Professional Member Representative from each of the 10 Catchment Management Regions in Victoria
- Members should have experience and expertise in landcare
- Members Council nominees can be any individual landcarer registered with Landcare Victoria or any landcare professional. Candidates for the Members Council shall be nominated by the voting delegate of a Member Group in the relevant region (which may include their own group) and seconded by a voting delegate of another Member Group in the same region
- Nominations can occur at any time and must be made in writing and approved by the Board
- Members Council members are appointed for up to three years in line with the election cycle. Members nominated part way through an election cycle will serve the remaining portion of the term. Members are eligible for re-appointment at the end of their term
- Resignations can occur at any time and must be made in writing
- A current member can nominate a proxy, to cover approved extended leave of three or more meetings in a row. The proxy will be appointed for the time of the approved leave and will need to fill the same position as the member on leave (e.g. a professional member must appoint a professional proxy)
- The Members Council may decide to invite any person to contribute to any meeting, business or project of the Council where specific skills, experience or diversity are needed
- The Chairperson(s) of the Members Council will be chosen by the Council and be appointed at the first meeting following the Landcare Victoria AGM for a period of 12 months. They will:
 - Chair Members Council meetings;

- Liaise with the Board on behalf of the Members Council; and
- In collaboration with the Members Council:
 - Lead creation of Members Council meeting agendas; and
 - Facilitate development of the Council's annual priorities, in collaboration with the Landcare Victoria secretariat and a Board representative

3. Responsibilities of Council Members

As representatives on the Council, each Council Member should:

- Raise issues or matters of interest from the broader Landcare Victoria membership
- Provide a considered opinion on matters discussed by Council and seek to understand others' opinions in Council
- If a member misses three consecutive meetings, their membership will be revoked, unless a leave of absence has been granted or apology(ies) provided. The position vacated can then be filled as outlined under **2. Council Membership** (dot point six)
- Actively respond to correspondence from Landcare Victoria and other Council representatives
- Declare any Conflicts of Interest in line with the broader Landcare Victoria policy

Participation in the Members Council is voluntary. Where possible, Landcare Victoria will endeavour to support subsidise costs to attend key events or in-person meetings.

4. Meetings

- The Members Council will meet a minimum four times per year, or more as determined by the needs of the Council
- Meetings will be held to accommodate as many representatives to attend as possible, which may include in-person or online, evening sessions or other
- The Chairperson will lead Members Council meetings. If the Chairperson is not present, the meeting will elect another representative to chair the meeting
- The agenda will be prepared by the Chairperson in consultation with the Council and with support from the Landcare Victoria staff member secretariat
- A meeting will achieve quorum if 50% of the Council membership is in attendance

5. Decision Making

The Members Council will, from time to time, need to make decisions on sector strategy and initiatives, as well as any recommendations presented to the Board.

- On matters requiring a decision, a majority vote will be required (by show of hands, ballot or other method as determined by the Chairperson)
- A quorum is required for decision-making and for recommendations to pass
- All recommendations from the Members Council require approval from the Board

6. Collaborative Working Groups

- Proposals for collaborative working groups that will be wholly volunteer led and managed, without support from Landcare Victoria staff, will be considered and endorsed by the Members Council
- Proposals for collaborative working groups that require support from Landcare Victoria staff will need to be endorsed by the Board via a recommendation from the Members Council
- All collaborative working groups will be established via a Members Council endorsed Terms of Reference

7. Reporting

- Minutes of all Members Council Meetings will be taken by the Landcare Victoria staff member secretariat role, or in their absence, a nominated Members Council member
- Minutes of all Members Council collaborative working group meetings will be taken by a nominated working group member. A report based on group activity will be presented at the next Members Council meeting. Minutes will be made available to Landcare Victoria if required
- The Members Council Chairperson (or another Members Council representative if the Chairperson is unavailable) will have the opportunity to report on meeting activities, advice and recommendations of the Members Council at the next Landcare Victoria Board meeting

8. Support

Landcare Victoria will provide secretariat support for the Members Council wherever practicable. This includes:

- Logistical support with Council meetings, forums and other events or activities
- Communications to Council members and to Landcare Victoria members as appropriate
- Policy background and information as applicable for issues under consideration
- Technical support to endorsed collaborative working groups at the request of the Members Council Chairperson, with approval of the Landcare Victoria Chair
- Communicating minutes of meetings and other reporting on Council activities to the Landcare Victoria Board in consultation with the Members Council Chairperson
- Funding of Members Council events and initiatives will be at the discretion of the Board

9. Review Date

The Members Council will review this Charter and make recommendations for endorsement to the Landcare Victoria Board as required. The next scheduled review is due November 2026.