

Advocacy Committee (ADVOC COM)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved by National Council: 20 February 2025

Aims of the Committee:

The Advocacy Committee (the "ADVOC COM") is established to promote and advocate for best practice for the engagement of interpreters and translators, including professional working conditions, ensuring that the organisation's mission is effectively represented in public discourse and policy-making.

Terms of Reference:

- **Disseminate AUSIT's mission** amongst clients, users of interpreting and translation services, other stakeholders, and the public at large.
- **Identify and connect with high-level government officials and policy-makers** involved in the translation and interpreting sector to raise awareness of the profession's roles, status, and the need for fair working conditions.
- **Identify key community forums** (health and legal advocacy groups, refugee health networks, Primary Health Networks, government agencies, NGOs, NAATI RAC, Ethnic Communities Councils) where AUSIT's advocacy efforts can be maximised for the benefit of members. Encourage AUSIT members to represent AUSIT at these forums.
- **Pinpoint relevant interpreter and translator groups** where AUSIT should be represented at the committee or management board level. Advocate for AUSIT representatives to take positions on these boards and prepare them to educate board members on the role of interpreters and translators and how to work effectively with them.
- **Educate relevant boards** about the value of having an AUSIT member on their committee or board to enhance decision-making on topics that involve communicating across cultures via interpreters and translators and strengthen ties with the interpreting and translation profession.

- **Engage and mentor AUSIT members** to become effective advocates, capable of representing the profession on committees and boards, thereby allowing AUSIT to exert greater influence to improve working conditions and professional standing of members at large.
- **Identify other key stakeholders** involved in issues affecting interpreters and translators (e.g., Home Affairs Sustainability Forum, Productivity Commission). Ensure that AUSIT's members' views are strongly and consistently represented on matters related to the profession.

Committee's Composition:

- Chair (AUSIT president or nominee) – must have a good understanding of the landscape of the profession in Australia and work in the field;
- Vice chair – to step in when Chair is unable to preside in a meeting;
- Interpreting practitioner; and
- Translation practitioner.

Terms of Office:

- Chair (if not the AUSIT president) - 2 years, renewable twice (maximum term of 6 years).
- Vice Chair and Members – appointed by the president. Minimum term of 1 year, renewable (maximum of 6 years).
- For continuity, the chair should become a member of the ADVOC COM when his/her term is up, for at least one more year.
- The ADVOC COM should meet at least four times a year (virtually or in person).
- Major decisions must be unanimous and approved by the National Council at one of their monthly meetings.

Reporting:

The Chair of the ADVOC COM (if not the President) reports to the AUSIT President quarterly. If the President is the Chair, s/he will report to the National Council.

General Terms of Reference (applicable to all appointed committees in AUSIT)

- Any and all terms of references are subject to review and change by the National Council at any time, and all members of a committee are bound to those changes. This may include, but not be limited to, terminating or changing membership and dissolving a committee. No change to the terms of references shall give rise to any claim for compensation in any way.
- All committee members are bound to the Constitution and By-Laws of AUSIT and any applicable laws. All committee members undertake to participate regularly in committee meetings, participate in a constructive and positive manner and contribute to committee work outside of the meeting. National Council shall terminate the committee membership of any committee member who fails to adhere to these requirements.
- No committee or committee member shall represent AUSIT or bind AUSIT in any way, unless such authority has been delegated from the National Council in writing.
- Committee members shall not be reimbursed for any costs arising from being a committee member unless prior arrangements have been made in writing with the National Council.
- Any member of the committee is allowed to express an opinion that may or may not be sanctioned by AUSIT, provided they are clear before presenting said opinion that it is a personal opinion, not one yet sanctioned by AUSIT.