

Advisory Board for the Independent Evaluation of Age Assurance

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

- The Advisory Board (the "Board") is established to provide strategic advice, guidance and stakeholder perspectives to the project team tasked with independently evaluating age assurance technological solutions.
- The Board will play a key role in ensuring the project is aligned with stakeholder needs, disseminating findings and upholding transparency, integrity and inclusivity in the evaluation process.

2. Objectives

- The Project is to be undertaken independently and impartially.
- The Project Advisory Board will:
 - Represent Stakeholders: Ensure diverse stakeholder interests are considered, including government, industry (providers, intermediaries and relying parties), academia, civil society and consumers, including children and young people under the age of 16.
 - Facilitate Dissemination: Assist in communicating project findings and outcomes to stakeholders, consumers and the broader public.
 - Support Progress: Provide assistance in maintaining the project's progress against its objectives, raising potential risks or challenges and encouraging participation.
 - Provide Challenge: Enhance the project's independence and credibility through challenging the project team.
 - Advise: Offer expert advice to the project team on methodologies, stakeholder engagement and other critical aspects of the evaluation.

3. Composition

- The Board will comprise members selected to reflect a diverse range of expertise and perspectives, including:
 - Government Representatives: Individuals with knowledge of policy, regulation and public administration related to online safety and age assurance.
 - Industry Experts: Representatives from age assurance technology providers and associated industries.
 - Academic Specialists: Experts in fields such as technology, ethics, digital rights and behavioural sciences.
 - Civil Society Advocates: Representatives from child protection organisations, digital rights groups and user advocacy bodies.
- Consumer Representatives: Individuals representing the interests of users, including parents, children and young people or other relevant groups.
- Chairperson: Professor Jon Rouse APM will facilitate meetings, represent the Board and liaise with the project team.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- Board members will:
 - Attend and actively participate in scheduled meetings.
 - Provide independent and impartial advice to the project team.
 - Seek to apply an evidence-based approach to their deliberations
 - Facilitate engagement with their respective networks to broaden the project's reach and impact.
 - Review and comment on key project outputs, such as interim reports and final findings.
 - Uphold principles of confidentiality (if requested) and integrity in all Board activities.

5. Meetings

- Frequency: The Board will meet monthly or as needed to align with key project milestones.
- Mode: Meetings will be conducted in person and virtually.
- Quorum: At least half the members must be present for decisions to be valid.

6. Tenure

- Board members will serve for the duration of the project, which is expected to be 8 months (to June 2025).

7. Confidentiality and Ethics

- Certain Board discussions and documents may be treated as confidential for a limited period (e.g. draft reports).
- Members must declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest in relation to their role on the Advisory Board and must adhere to ethical standards in their advisory capacity.

8. Support and Secretariat

- The project team will provide secretariat support to the Board, including organising meetings, preparing agendas and minutes and circulating relevant materials.

9. Reporting

- The Board will provide regular feedback and formal reports to the project team and may be requested to provide updates to government stakeholders.

10. Review of Terms of Reference

- The Terms of Reference will be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose.