Scientific Committee
Terms of Reference

Committee Name

Thoracic Oncology Group of Australasia (TOGA) Scientific Committee (SC), hereafter referred to as 'SC'.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the SC is to determine the scientific portfolio of the group through endorsement of submitted clinical trial concepts and research proposals, and oversighting activities of the working groups and research panels.

Responsibilities

The primary responsibilities of the SC are as follows:

- Reviewing clinical trial concepts submitted to TOGA and providing necessary approvals to progress with further development (see APPENDIX 1). This includes designating proposed clinical trial concepts as TOGA-led, TOGA-endorsed or not to proceed further as TOGA studies.
- Encouraging submissions of clinical trial concepts from TOGA members.
- Oversighting the NSCLC, SCLC/mesothelioma and other thoracic cancer working groups, and the preventative and quality lung cancer care, supportive care and translational research review panel(s) (See APPENDIX 2 for proposed TOGA Organisational Structure)
- Setting the priorities for the TOGA scientific program.
- Adherence to, and revision of the TOGA clinical trial concept endorsement policy.
- Reporting on activity to the TOGA Board of Directors
- Reviewing scientific documents, including but not limited to, position statements or manuscripts seeking TOGA endorsement.
- Biennial review of the of the SC ToR and endorsement policy and recommendation to TOGA Board of Directors for approval
- Other matters delegated by the TOGA Board of Directors.

Members of the SC may also be invited to become involved in other activities including, but not limited to, membership of TOGA Committees and/or Working Groups, involvement in fundraising initiatives or review of awards.

Membership and terms

Members of the SC will be appointed to relevant positions by the TOGA Board of Directors with the exception of the TOGA Board of Directors – Chair and TOGA Board of Directors – Scientific Chair, who hold ex officio positions on the SC. All SC members must be TOGA members.

The SC will have a minimum of 15 members and a maximum of 32 members. At least 65% of members must be directly involved in clinical trials and/or patient care in thoracic cancers. Every effort will be made to ensure SC appointments represent the multidisciplinary nature of the TOGA membership.

Position	Elected/appointed	Voting position
Chair, TOGA Board of Directors	Ex-officio	Yes

Position	Elected/appointed	Voting position
Scientific Chair, TOGA Board of Directors	Ex-officio	Yes
Advocacy chair, TOGA Board of Directors	Ex-officio	Yes
SC Chair	Appointed	Yes
Deputy SC Chair	Appointed	Yes
SC Past chair	Ex-officio	No
Radiation Oncology Representative	Appointed	Yes
Surgery Representative	Appointed	Yes
Nursing Representative(s)	Appointed	Yes
NZ representative	Appointed	Yes
Early career representative(s)	Appointed	Yes
Regional/Rural/Remote representative(s)	Appointed	Yes
Early NSCLC co-chair(s)	Appointed	Yes
Advanced NSCLC co-chair(s)	Appointed	Yes
SCLC, mesothelioma and other thoracic cancers co-chair(s)	Appointed	Yes
Supportive and palliative care panel co- chair(s)	Appointed	Yes
Translational Research Panel co-chair(s)	Appointed	Yes
Consumer representative(s)	Appointed	Yes
CTC representative- Lung lead	Ex-officio	Yes
CTC representative- Statistician	Ex-officio	Yes
CTC translational research lead	Ex-officio	No
CTC Early career fellow(s)	Ex officio	No

SC members will serve terms of 3 years and up to 3 consecutive terms, except in the newly established committee where one third of the appointed members will retire after 2 consecutive terms, if one third of the committee members have not already been replaced since the establishment of the committee.

SC terms are exclusive of parental and long periods of personal leave. If leave exceeds a period greater than 3 months, SC members are to inform the SC chair and TOGA Executive Officer prior to

planned leave or as early as possible when the leave is unexpected. This period will be calculated into SC members' terms accordingly.

The SC may also appoint up to two co-opted members who contribute a particular skill or expertise area that is required within the SC. Co-opted members have voting rights and will serve on the SC until their expertise is no longer required or terms expire under the same term conditions of SC members.

The TOGA Executive Officer, the CTC Lung Research Development lead, and Lung Clinical Trials Operations lead (or appropriate delegates) will attend the meetings but are not members of the committee and are not entitled to vote.

Procedures for Nominations and Appointments

A SC position becomes vacant if the representative –

- ceases to be a member of TOGA; or
- concludes their term
- resigns his or her office by notice in writing given to the SC Chair; or
- is removed from office by the TOGA group

A description of SC positions due to become available or currently available for nominations will be broadcast by email to general members. Members will be provided with the process and deadline for nominations. At least one (1) TOGA member may nominate any general member of the group to serve as a SC member, as these positions become available. Nominations will be in writing and signed by the nominee and the proposing member/s. Nominations must be complete and received at the designated office by the advertised deadline. If insufficient nominations are received to fill all SC vacant positions further nominations shall then be called for the unfilled positions. Following close of the specified nominations period, the TOGA Board of Directors will appoint suitable nominees to vacant positions.

If the SC chair is not appointed to a subsequent term, he/she will fill the past chair role for the next term. Following this the past chair may stand for nomination for another position. Other SC members who are not appointed to an additional term, may stand for a position the next time nominations are opened.

Responsibilities of office bearers and other SC roles

The SC chair shall chair all meetings and report to the TOGA Board of Directors as required. If the chairperson is absent and the deputy chair is unavailable too, the TOGA Board representative will assume the role of chair for that meeting. The SC chair is responsible for reporting on the TOGA clinical trial program at SC meetings. The TOGA Board Director, Scientific Lead, is responsible for informing the TOGA Board of Directors on SC activities.

The Deputy Chair of the Scientific Committee supports the Chair in leading the committee's activities and ensuring the effective review and endorsement of research concepts and studies. Their responsibilities include assisting in meeting facilitation, providing scientific and strategic input, helping to oversee the integrity and consistency of review processes, and stepping in to chair meetings or represent the committee when the Chair is unavailable. The Deputy Chair also contributes to setting

priorities and fostering collaboration across TOGA's research and working groups. The Deputy Chair may be required to fulfil working group co-chair responsibilities when the co-chair/s of a working group are unavailable or unable to fulfil their role such as due to conflicts of interest. The Deputy SC Chair may hold a working group co-chair role when newly appointment as Deputy SC Chair until a suitable working group co-chair has been identified.

Working group and Panel co-chairs are responsible for ensuring duties of working groups are met (see Working Group Terms of Reference), and report activity and recommendations to the TOGA SC.

Representatives of various disciplines, including consumer advocate roles, offer the unique viewpoint of their represented area when clinical trial concepts or research proposals are evaluated.

SC members should use their best endeavours to promote and protect the standing and reputation of TOGA, notwithstanding that tensions and disagreements will arise, and members should commit to participation in resolution processes as defined in the governance framework.

SC members are required to be fully prepared for each meeting, having read the documents, and to make every reasonable effort to attend and contribute to each meeting. Members who fail to attend three SC meetings in a row, without adequate explanation, may be replaced, at the discretion of the TOGA Board of Directors.

Members are advised that their names, official positions outside the SC, relevant expertise and biographical details may be included on SC documentation, including online publications. Details beyond names will be given to each member to review before publishing on an open forum.

Meetings

The SC will meet as required by teleconference or videoconference and face-to-face but no less than four times per year. Face-to-face meetings are usually held in conjunction with:

- Open Working Groups meeting
- Annual Scientific Meeting

Reasonable notice shall be given of meetings through the formal publication of a forward meeting schedule. The Chair may call additional meetings or alter meeting dates and frequency as necessary to address any matters arising.

Quorum will be reached when at least 50% plus one (1) of the voting positions are present and represented by at least one SC member from each position. If within 15 minutes from the time scheduled for the meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be dissolved and stand adjourned to another time and place as the Chair may determine or matters will be dealt with by circulating resolution.

Working Group (WG) and Scientific/Medical expert SC members may nominate a proxy during extended periods of leave (greater than 3 months). The recommended proxy must be a TOGA member and part of the relevant WG or expert in the relevant area. The inclusion of a proxy to the SC is subject to the SC Chair approval, who may also delegate the selection of a proxy if the recommendation is not suitable.

In general, the SC will adopt a consensus approach when establishing recommendations, where a majority of members agree, with the remainder content to give way. Any objections are to be noted in the minutes. If a decision does require voting, and the vote is tied, the Chair will have the casting vote.

At least annually, the SC will hold an 'open' meeting where any TOGA member can attend. These meetings will be announced to the membership by email and serve as an update to the membership on relevant items that the SC may have addressed or be addressing.

Meeting agenda

Any SC, the Consumer Panel (CP) Chair, or Board Director can submit a request for an item to be included on the SC agenda. All papers pertaining to the request must be submitted to the Executive Officer no later than twenty-one working days prior to the forthcoming meeting for consideration by the Chair. Except with the express permission of the Chair, late papers and tabling of papers will not be accepted. The inclusion of an item on the meeting agenda remains at the discretion of the SC chair.

An agenda for each meeting will be prepared by the TOGA Executive Officer in consultation with the SC Chair. All attempts will be made to circulate the agenda seven days prior to the meeting and may include, but is not limited to:

- Declaration of conflicts of interest
- Acceptance of previous meeting minutes
- Actions from previous meeting
- Ratification of any decision made out of meeting
- New clinical trial concepts including recommendations from working groups
- Resubmitted clinical trial concepts including recommendations and summaries of reviews from working groups, CAP, supportive care, health economics and Quality of Life reviews as appropriate
- Additional reports from working groups as needed
    - NSCLC
    - SCLC/mesothelioma/other thoracic cancers
    - Supportive and palliative care panel
    - Preventative and Quality Healthcare
    - Translational research panel
- Current clinical trials- items of significance
- Dates of next meetings
- Other business

Meeting minutes and communications

The TOGA Executive Officer or delegate will prepare draft minutes of each SC meeting or out of meeting decision/activity.

The draft minutes, including actions arising from each meeting, are to be reviewed and approved by the Chair as soon as practicable following the meeting. Once the draft minutes are reviewed by the Chair, relevant actions will be circulated to SC members and communications arising from meeting can be prepared (e.g notification to PIs who submitted clinical trial concepts), and circulated subject to approval by the Chair.

A copy of the draft reviewed minutes and any communications will be included in the agenda papers for the next meeting for ratification by the SCjh

Activities outside scheduled meetings

From time to time, there may be a requirement for review of items or decisions to occur outside scheduled SC meetings. These reviews will be conducted via electronic means and be notified by the TOGA Executive Officer. Once a quorum is reached, a decision can be enacted. If a selected group is designated to review an item (e.g respiratory physicians to review proposal relevant to their area of practice), then quorum will be 50% + 1 of this selected group. Items reviewed or decided out of meeting will be placed on the next agenda for ratification and captured in the meeting minutes. Members should observe required timeframes for out of meeting reviews and decisions.

Reporting

The SC will report on its responsibilities and activities through the TOGA Board Director- Scientific Chair to the TOGA Board at scheduled TOGA Board of Directors meetings, or more frequently if required. The SC reports to the TOGA membership through 'open' SC meetings held at least annually. TOGA will also endeavour to provide a summary of key points from each SC meeting in the TOGA members' newsletter.

In pursuit of its responsibilities, the SC will receive reports as necessary from the TOGA Operations Executive committee, the TOGA Executive Officer, the CP, the working groups and review panels to ensure maintenance and monitoring of SC responsibilities.

Budget and expenses

The cost of administration for the SC will be managed by the TOGA Executive Officer. A budget shall be established to provide for at least one face to face meeting per annum.

Participation in the SC is voluntary and, where possible, all approved reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed with any necessary travel/accommodation arranged by TOGA.

Confidentiality and conflict of interest

SC members will complete the TOGA Confidentiality Statement (APPENDIX 3) upon appointment and a Declaration of Interests annually and update as needed. Members with an interest to declare in relation to new topics will make a declaration prior to the discussion. For more information, refer to TOGA Declaration of Interest Policy. SC members are required to keep all matters confidential unless disclosure of matters discussed is required for the effective oversight of the activity.

Grievance procedure

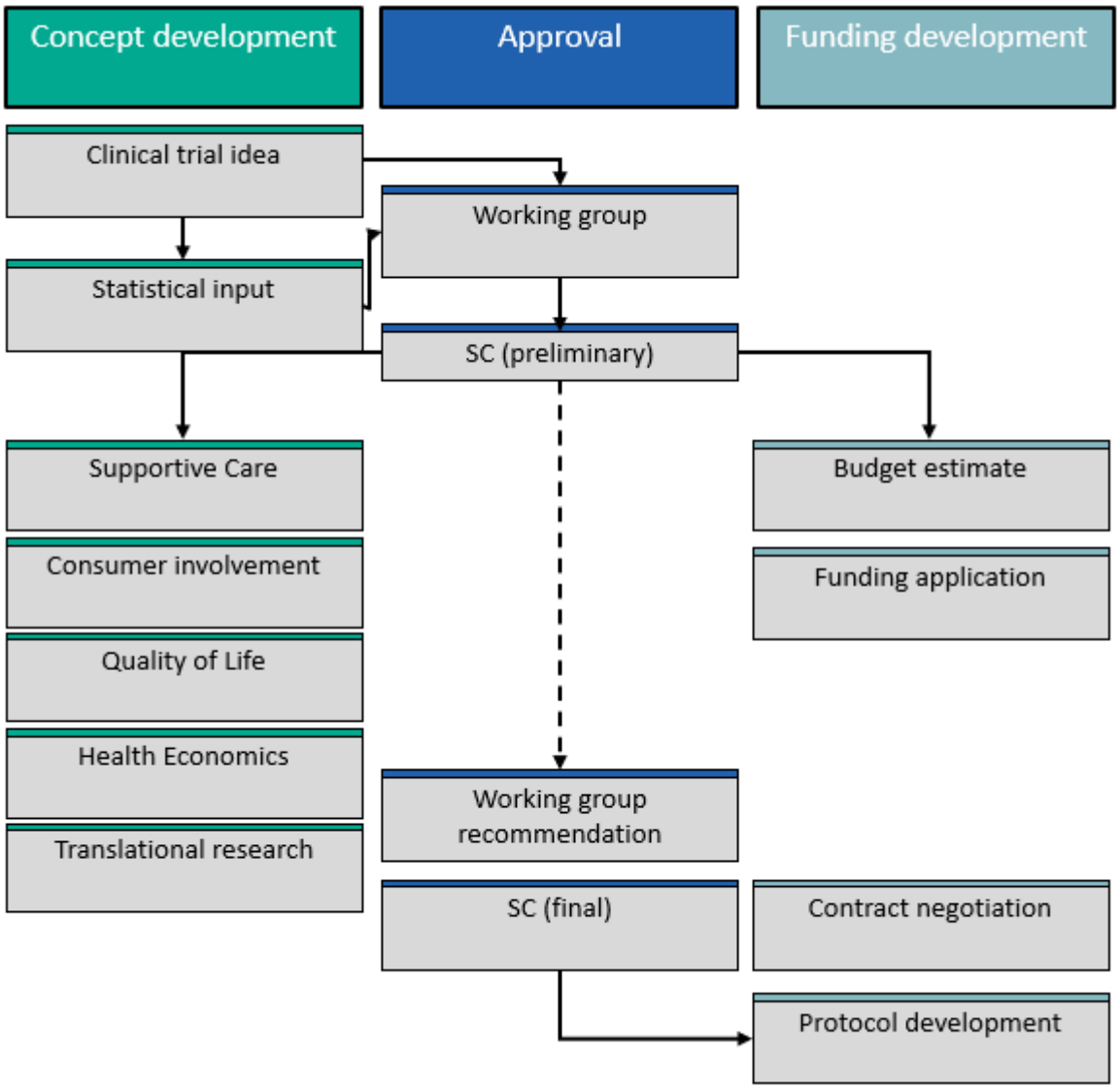
Complaints in relation to the activities and operation of the SC should be made in writing to the Chair- TOGA Board of Directors or, where the Chair- TOGA Board of Directors is considered to have a conflict of interest, to the Secretary of the TOGA Board of Directors or the TOGA Executive Officer. The complaint will be considered by two SC members and one TOGA Board Director, nominated by the TOGA Board Director who receipts the complaint. The decision whether to table the complaint at a SC meeting will be at the discretion of these three nominated members who consider the complaint. Regardless of whether the complaint is tabled at a meeting or resolved out of meeting, the complaint and the outcome of the deliberations should be minuted and communicated to the complainant by letter. The resolution of the complaint should also be recorded in the minutes.

Review and approval

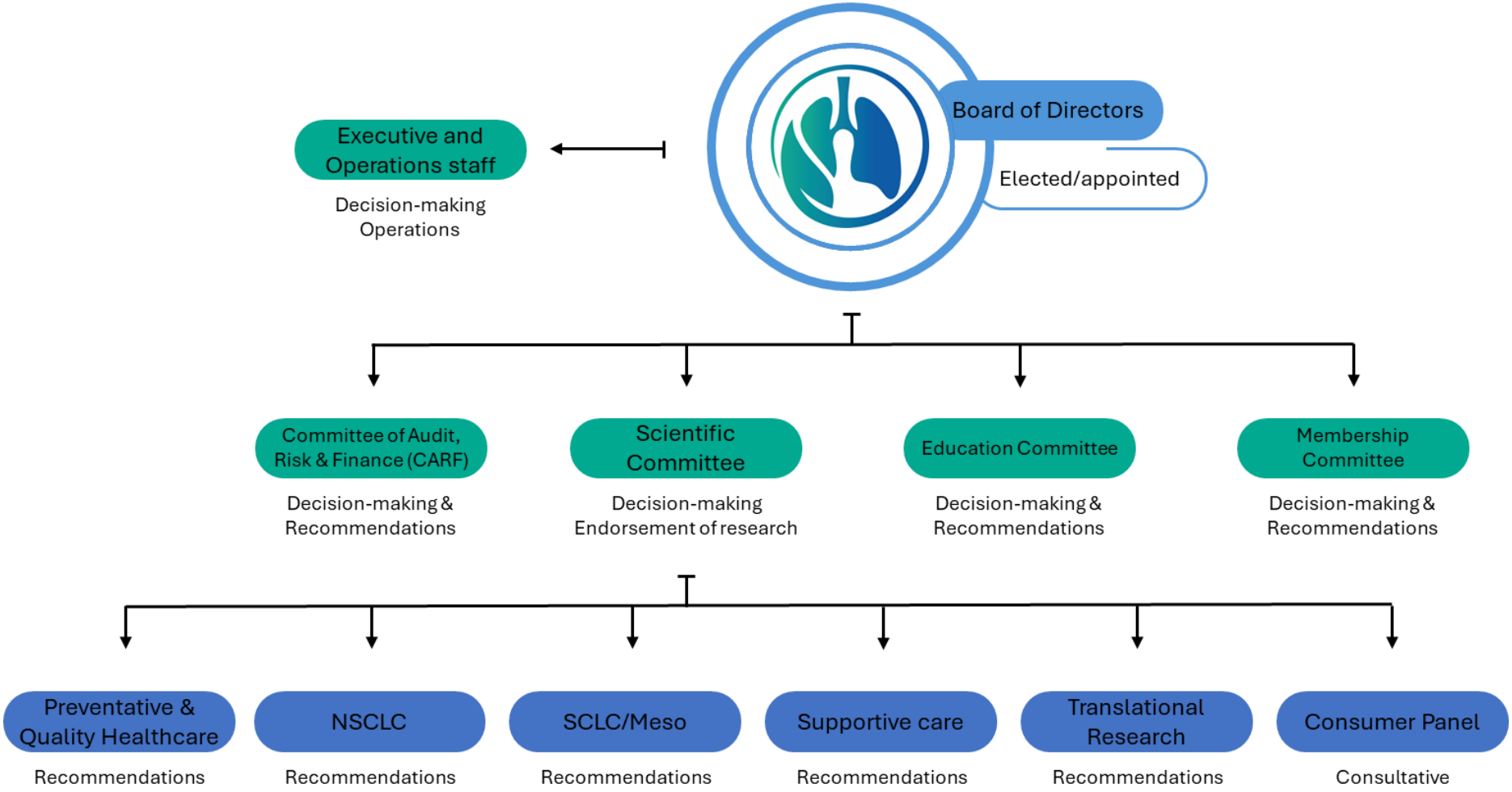
The Terms of Reference for the Committee shall be reviewed by the SC and approved by the TOGA Board of Directors on a biennial basis. Any amendments to the Terms of Reference should follow the same review and approval procedure.

Name of the document	TOGA Scientific Committee Terms of Reference
Version	4.0
Reviewed by and date	TOGA Research Manager, 27 November 2025
Approved by and date	
Approval signature	
Next review date	

APPENDIX 1. Clinical trial concept review, development and approval process



APPENDIX 2. TOGA organisational structure



APPENDIX 3. Confidentiality agreement

(1) I,_____(*name*),

_____(*position*) of,

_____(*organisation)*

_____(*address*),

acknowledge the confidential nature of all activities of the SC, including all discussions, whether by verbal, written or electronic means and all associated documents.

(2) It is agreed that I will not supply details or copies of documents to any third party outside the SC except as outlined in the working group Terms of Reference or agreed to in writing by the SC.

(3) I understand that my obligations under this agreement continue to have full force and effect when I am no longer a member of the SC.

Signature Date: ___/___/___

SIGNED on behalf of TOGA by

Position:

Signature Date: ___/___/___