



This guide provides an overview of the roles of typical Project Steering Committee (PSC) members

**CONTEXT:** PSCs (Sometimes referred to as Project Boards) are established to support the Project Sponsor in their decision-making duties to achieve optimal governance outcomes. PSC members must play a meaningful and pivotal role in the project decision-making process (*note 1*).

## 1. Project Sponsor (*note 2*)

The Project Sponsor is accountable for project success, which includes both delivery performance (time, cost, quality, etc.), and outcome performance (outcomes and benefits). As key decision-maker, they must have the final say on project decisions (within defined delegated authority); otherwise, they are not fully empowered. They lead and advocate for the project, chair the PSC, and select its members. The Project Sponsor must balance stakeholder interests, make decisions, and navigate challenges during the project lifecycle. Their active involvement is crucial in realising optimal outcomes for the project.

## 1. User Representative(s)

The User Representative role is crucial for ensuring that end-users' needs and expectations are accurately represented throughout the project lifecycle. Representing those who will use or operate the final product, service, or asset, they gather and communicate user requirements and advocate for what users need to successfully adopt and sustain the change. User input is essential for effective decision-making, ensuring the project outputs are fit for purpose and meet user needs. A project may have multiple user representatives, reflecting the diversity of user perspectives.

## 3. Supplier Representative(s)

Supplier Representatives ensure that suppliers' interests and issues are accurately represented throughout the project. They manage resource supply, address supplier-related issues, and ensure that products or services meet required quality standards. They provide critical supplier input into decisions and help interpret technical issues for other committee members. If an external supplier is involved, their representative may sit on the PSC, though sensitive matters may be discussed separately.

# Typical PSC Member Roles

(*Note 3*)

## 4. Business Representative(s)

Business Representatives ensure that the project contributes to the strategic objectives and operational needs of the organisation. They represent various business units, providing insights into how project decisions impact overall business operations. Their involvement is important for making strategic decisions and integrating the project smoothly into the business environment. Unlike User Representatives, Business Representatives focus on the project's strategic and operational contribution to the organisation's goals.

## 5. Funding Representative(s)

While the Project Sponsor often represents the main funding party, there are situations where the Project Sponsor does not, or there are multiple funding sources. In such cases, additional Funding Representatives may be needed. They ensure the project remains financially viable and that funds are used efficiently, safeguarding the project's economic sustainability and ensuring compliance with funding conditions.

## 6. Technical Expert(s)

Technical Experts provide specialised knowledge and expertise. They ensure that technical decisions are sound, feasible, and aligned with better practices. They collaborate with other committee members to integrate technical considerations into decision-making and convey complex technical concepts, ensuring the project's technical integrity and success. Different Technical Experts may be involved in the project across its lifecycle.

## 3. Independent Adviser(s)

Independent Advisers provide an objective and impartial perspective. They offer independent insights, constructive challenge, and coaching to enhance decision-making robustness. They may serve as full members or occasional advisers, depending on the project's needs. They can also add discipline and focus to PSC meetings, acting as balancing elements, holding members accountable, and driving an emphasis on delivering outcomes and benefits.

**Notes:**

(1) A previous guide (*Building an Effective Project Steering Committee - Key Selection Considerations*) explored the essential criteria for selecting PSC members.

(2) A series of one-page guides will be progressively released that explore all aspects of the Project Sponsor role.

(3) PSC membership can be augmented with guests on a standing or ad hoc basis. Guests provide important insights and expertise but do not take part in decision-making. The Project Manager does not sit on the PSC as a member but reports to it and typically attends every meeting as a standing guest.