BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RSA SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of the Committee

The Scientific Committee (SC) operates as a sub-committee of the RSA Conference Committee. Its primary purpose is to oversee the academic integrity, clinical relevance, and strategic alignment of the conference program with the RSA's core goals. The SC is responsible for ensuring the high scientific quality, clinical relevance, and integrity of the abstracts submitted for the conference.

To achieve its goals, the SC will engage in scheduled meetings and teleconferences, offer specialised insights to shape the research agenda, and foster productive collaborations with other researchers, policymakers, healthcare professionals, peers, and stakeholders.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Responsibilities

The SC is responsible for the following:

- Abstract Management: Setting grading rubrics, coordinating peer reviews, and evaluating all submitted oral and poster abstracts.
- Establishing transparent criteria for abstract and poster submissions.
- Reviewing, scoring, and accepting/rejecting abstract submissions.
- Allocating accepted abstracts to oral or poster presentation sessions.
- Addressing member requests for services (e.g., reviewing scientific proposals and/or manuscripts)
- Evaluating abstracts for the RSA Conference
- Select abstract reviewers in consultation with the conference chair.
- Contribute to Evidence Corner
- Harmonizing the RSA's research development portfolio with strategic plans, funding priorities, and policy opportunities

2.2 Reporting

The Scientific Committee is appointed by and reports directly to the RSA Conference Committee Chair and the RSA Board of Directors.

The SC chair will convene the SC committee meetings as required and provide a written report to the RSA Board and the Conference Committee on a bi-monthly basis from the time abstracts open until the conference commencement date.

3. Scientific Committee membership and appointment process

3.1 Eligibility

Only RSA members are eligible for Scientific Committee membership. To reflect the multi-disciplinary and regional nature of the Renal Society of Australasia, the committee will comprise 8 to 10 members, inclusive of a Chair.

- Clinical Representation; at least two active renal clinicians representing Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions.
- Academic Representation; at least two senior academics with proven renal research portfolios.
- Early-Career Track; at least two early-to-mid-career renal researchers.
- Conference Committee Chair
- Ex-officio representation by RSA President/Vice President or an assigned Board Director.

3.2 Process

Prospective members can nominate themselves through an Expression of Interest process. Applications are reviewed by the RSA Board, and the Board selects SC members.

3.3 Term of Membership

The membership terms are structured to balance continuity and fresh perspectives. Members are initially appointed for two years, with the possibility of reappointment to maintain a mix of experience and new ideas. Early Career researchers have a slightly longer initial term of three years to support their development and involvement. The Board will review the SC composition, capacity, and participation annually post conference to ensure it remains effective and well-balanced.

3.4 Scientific Committee Chair

The Scientific Committee will be chaired by the Scientific Committee Chair who will provide bi-monthly reports to the Conference Committee Chair from the time abstracts open until the conference commences.

4. Operating Procedures

4.1 Meetings and Decision-Making

The committee meets via online platforms at least four times annually, increasing as needed during the abstract evaluation phase.

Quorum: a majority (50% + 1) of the appointed voting membership must be present to ratify abstracts and decisions are ideally made by consensus. Tie-break votes default to the decision of the Scientific Committee Chair.

4.2 Records

The SC Chair will create the Agenda and appoint an SC member to take minutes. All records will be stored on the RSA SharePoint site, and a link to the SharePoint site will be

the primary method of distribution.

4.2 Conflict of Interest

- Conflicts of interest, including potential and perceived conflicts of interest, will be dealt with under the RSA's conflict of interest policy.
- Members must declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest (e.g., commercial ties, personal involvement in submitted abstracts) at the start of each meeting or prior to scoring.
- Members with a conflict of interest relating to specific abstracts will be recused from discussing and scoring those entries.
- Committee members frequently submit their own research or mentor authors submitting to the RSA conference. Any member listed as an author or co-author on a submitted abstract must declare a conflict of interest via the RSA abstract portal.
- The member will be strictly blinded to that abstract's review process and will be recused from any scoring or session allocation decisions involving it.

5. Guiding Principles

The Scientific Committee will adhere to the guiding principles as outlined in the Board Handbook. Acknowledgements and benefits

To acknowledge their ongoing contribution, the following will apply:

- All SC members will receive an RSA Committee Member discounted fee to the annual conference during their appointment. The percentage of which will be approved annually by the RSA Board.
- Acknowledgment in the RSA annual report and website

6. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated bi-annually.

Date last reviewed: September 2026
Accepted by the RSA Board: 22 September 2026
Next review date: September 2028