POLICY PARTNERSHIP ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (PPSTI)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Preface

The Terms of Reference of this Sub-fora are established in accordance with agreed APEC rules and principles.

Background

The initial policy direction of the APEC Industrial Science and Technology Working Group (ISTWG) was set by APEC Economic Leaders, and has been since guided by APEC Ministers responsible for Science and Technology (S&T). In 2005, the SOM Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE) was established as a part of APEC reform. In 2012, APEC Senior Officials agreed to broaden the mandate of ISTWG to include issues of innovation policy development by transforming ISTWG into the Policy Partnership on Science, Technology and Innovation (PPSTI) to intensify cooperation among the relevant stakeholders, including government, the private sector, and academia. PPSTI's mandate is dependent on the SCE. The SCE forwards PPSTI recommendations as appropriate, to APEC Senior Officials, Ministers, and Leaders.

The PPSTI is APEC's primary forum to engage actors involved in joint scientific research and the technology inception, dissemination, and commercialization cycle, with both its competitive commercial sectors and non-profit elements. The PPSTI is uniquely positioned to identify, assess, and make recommendations to address challenges and opportunities to support science, technology, and innovation (STI) growth and development in the APEC region. While other working groups focus on specific areas (e.g., health, digital technologies, etc.), the PPSTI looks at structures, systems, policies, and practices that support and advance STI broadly, as well as priority areas identified by the forum.

Strategic Focus

The PPSTI will foster STI cooperation including through collaboration between government, academia, the private sector, and other APEC fora. It will continue to be guided by the Putrajaya Vision 2040, and the Aotearoa Plan of Action through three economic drivers: Trade and Investment;' Innovation and Digitalisation; and Strong, Balanced, Secure, Sustainable, and Inclusive Growth.

In 2024, the SCE conducted a review of PPSTI and granted it a four-year renewal with the direction to "…increase the quality of projects, for example by exploring mechanisms to avoid duplication of topics and increase the impact of project outcomes through multiyear projects. The PPSTI will work to implement SCE's directions and further the objectives set out in the ToR, in accordance with the scope of work of APEC, by:

- Supporting innovative, strong, balanced, secure, sustainable, and inclusive growth for member economies, the region, and the global economy;
- Enhancing member economies' STI capacity; and
- Helping strengthen collaboration and build human capacity to address global issues and emergencies.

The PPSTI will pilot a three-year Mission Oriented Innovation Policy (MOIP) approach to strategically focus PPSTI's work, exchange STI best practices and lessons learned, and develop up-to-date initiatives with active participation from relevant stakeholders (see MOIP Pilot Terms of Reference for further information).

Objectives

The PPSTI's objectives are derived from and contribute to the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 and subsequent Leaders' commitments on envisioning an open, dynamic, resilient, and peaceful APEC community by 2040, for the prosperity of all our people and future generations, including those with untapped economic potential. PPSTI will help to create policies that support openness, transparency, reciprocity, and foster competition.

The PPSTI will aim to:

- Ensure economies' STI capacity building on relevant matters, including but not limited to the development of human capital and infrastructure, and nurturing competitive policies;
- Develop an environment that enables cross-border STI cooperation and encourages market-based STI policy, to support commercialization, strengthen STI capacity, promote investment in cutting-edge technologies, and facilitate STI cooperation among member economies.
- Encourage the sharing of knowledge, challenges and opportunities, best practices, success stories, and lessons learned across industry, academia, and governments to support regional, and individual economy's STI plans and strategies, stimulate STI cooperation and promote the dissemination and commercialization of innovative technologies;
- Provide an avenue for networking among researchers –including those with untapped economic potential and subject matter experts across borders to build capacity, and stimulate the exchange of knowledge and information, as well as to develop networks and platforms of STI stakeholders, and strengthen multilateral STI projects and programs for sustainable growth.

In pursuing these tasks, the work of the PPSTI will be guided by the priorities and principles of PPSTI's ten-year Strategic Plan as well as its annual work plans, which support the overarching APEC guiding documents and initiatives set forth by Leaders. PPSTI may also consider potential mechanisms to evaluate the impact of science and innovation cooperation within APEC to better inform policy recommendations.

Priorities

The PPSTI Strategic Plan will guide PPSTI's activities. The plan will adopt a flexible approach to complement the annual PPSTI priorities, determined each year in consultation with the host economy.

In line with the work done by its three sub-groups, the PPSTI will:

1) *Sub-Group A - Strengthening STI Capacity:* To enhance the scientific research and development capabilities of APEC economies, fostering a culture of innovation and excellence that drives sustainable and inclusive growth.

2) *Sub-Group B - Promoting Enabling Environment for Innovation:* To establish a vibrant and collaborative ecosystem that supports the development and commercialization of innovative technologies within the APEC region.

3) *Sub-Group C - Enhancing Regional STI Connectivity:* To strengthen regional STI networks and connectivity, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange among APEC economies.

PPSTI member economies, among others, will work towards better engaging the private sector, academia, and non-government representatives to continue to identify and assess targeted areas for strengthening regional collaboration, and enhancing knowledge sharing on STI and STI policies. Relevant activities to advance these priorities can include workshops, seminars, forums, policy dialogues, joint research, the establishment of new networks, and PPSTI guidelines, principles, and policy recommendations. PPSTI will work regularly with other APEC sub-fora, and APEC Centers, to strengthen cross-fora cooperation, and reduce duplication of efforts within APEC.

Cooperation with Regional and International Bodies and Alignment with International Frameworks

The activities under the PPSTI shall be conducted in alignment with existing frameworks for STI and will strive to be designed to complement and strengthen STI related work already taking place in regional or multilateral organizations. The PPSTI's work will be aimed at developing a more coherent regional perspective for articulation in other international STI bodies. To enhance closer regional cooperation, member economies will endeavour to:

- Encourage economies to pursue regional cooperation, and explore practical options to reduce over regulation the negative impact of different regulatory requirements on regional STI collaboration.
- Consider, where appropriate, joint action with international fora towards shared objectives; and coordination of the PPSTI's work with, and draw upon the expertise and experience of regional, and international bodies, complementing their work in the development and review of STI.
- Identify, where appropriate, areas for alignment with existing frameworks and review, on a regular basis, member economies' activities, to align them with frameworks and activities undertaken by regional and international bodies as well as other APEC fora and centers as appropriate;
- Ensure that the PPSTI's work is known and recognized among relevant regional and international bodies.

Membership

The PPSTI is open to all APEC member economies. Participation of non-members shall be guided by the principles and procedures outlined in the APEC Guidelines on Managing Cooperation with Non-Members.

Member Economy Delegations

Delegations from member economies to the PPSTI meeting may consist of representatives of governments, academia, private sector, research institutions, as well as identified experts. The Head of Delegation will be a government representative from a member economy.

Leadership and Sub-Structures

The PPSTI Governing Board will consist of a Chair, two Vice Chairs and a representative from the private sector to serve as the Principal Advisor.

Chair

The nominee for Chair of the PPSTI shall be a government or government affiliated [1] representative and will be selected from the representatives of member economies' delegations for a two-year term.

Vice Chairs

The Vice Chairs shall be nominated by government or government-affiliated representatives. One will be selected from representatives of member economies and will serve for a two-year term, and the other Vice Chair will be a representative of the current hosting economy and will serve for a one-year term.

Terms for the Chair and selected Vice-Chair will be staggered whenever possible.

Principal Advisor

The selection process for the Principal Advisor, who will serve in a personal capacity, will be an open and transparent process. The appointment will be endorsed by the representatives of member economies' delegations. The role of the Principal Advisor is to serve as the interface with the private sector and to support PPSTI in leveraging ABAC's initiatives and expertise. The term of the Principal Advisor will be two years, with the possibility of serving for up to two terms.

Sub-Groups

The PPSTI has three sub-groups, which help drive work under three key areas, as defined in the Priorities section. Each sub-group will be led by a member economy represent by government or government-affiliated representatives. The leads will serve for a two-year term, with the possibility of serving up to two terms on the same sub-group. It is recommended that sub-group leads hold one key position[2] at any given time. Should a sub-group lead take a key position in the forum, it is recommended that they resign from their sub-group lead position, and the selection for a new sub-group lead would commence. Should the lead economy wish to retain its lead position, it is recommended that the sub-group have a co-lead. Co-leads may also be sought out in other circumstances when support is needed. The call-out for leads (and co-leads when applicable) would happen once the Terms of Reference comes into effect.

Economies will lead and/ or co-lead sub-groups on a rotating basis as follows:

- Economies, including current sub-group leads, may voluntarily express their interest. In the interest of continuity and sharing experience, current leads will have the priority to seek a subsequent second term.
- Priority will be given to voluntary participation; if the number of volunteers is insufficient, additional economies will be invited based on APEC's alphabetical list of member economies[3]. Invited economies will have the option to decline.

[1] A government affiliated representative would be, for example, from an affiliated organization or institute.
[2] Key positions are defined as the PPSTI Chair, Vice-Chair
[3] The alphabetical order identified here: https://www.apec.org/about-us/about-apec will not reset at the beginning of every selection process, but continue from the last name left invited to take on a (co)lead role. It will then restart from the beginning.

- If an economy declines, the opportunity will go to the next economy following APEC's alphabetical list of member economies[4].
- The incoming leads will determine among themselves which sub-group they would like to lead.
- When there is a request for co-leads, economies will be sought as part of the selection process outlined above.
- When a sub-group has a co-lead, the lead and co-lead economies will determine how they will share responsibilities.

Concept Note Review Panel

The Review Panel is made up of economy representatives on a voluntary basis, and membership is open to all economies, annually. Their role is to provide early suggestions to project overseers to strengthen Concept Note proposals (see Annex A).

Meeting arrangements

The PPSTI will meet twice a year during SOM meetings, unless otherwise decided by member economies. The PPSTI will operate on the basis of consensus, and in line with agreed APEC rules and guidelines.

The PPSTI may, as appropriate and with the consensus of all member economies, establish non-decisional subgroups, ad hoc task forces, STI-focused dialogues (e.g., the APEC Research and Technology Program (ART), Policy Sharing Seminars and Public-Private Policy Dialogues (PPDs), workshops, or expert groups that it considers necessary to assist the conduct of its work . The proposals for all the aforementioned engagements will be submitted to PPSTI for endorsement prior to the commencement of activity.

Structure of the Group

Participation at PPSTI meetings includes member economies, endorsed Three-Year-Guests and other endorsed Non-Member Participants.

PPSTI's subsidiary bodies (whether Sub-Groups, affiliated networks, APEC PPSTI Centers, specialized centers, research centers, task forces, ad hoc committees, and/or expert groups) cannot establish new study centers, websites, platforms, substructures or other institutions without approval from the PPSTI, and/ or SCE when applicable or required.

APEC Centers

Reporting to the PPSTI are APEC PPSTI Centers, which are established to support PPSTI's mission. The PPSTI Centers are agreed and approved for a specific period of time and participate regularly in PPSTI meetings to report on their activities and ensure activity alignment with PPSTI goals and objectives. All PPSTI Centers and Networks are subject to the requirements of the APEC Branding Manual, and the APEC Guidelines on the Establishment, Management and Review of Endorsed APEC Centers of the Policy Partnership on Science Technology and Innovation. (See Annex B for the evergreen list of Centres, and Annex C for the APEC Guidelines).

[4] Following the alphabetical order identified here: https://www.apec.org/about-us/about-apec.

Engagement with Other Stakeholders

Research and Academic Institutions, Associations: The PPSTI Chair, in consultation with other PPSTI members, may invite such institutions or separate groups of researchers that member economies believe will add value to the PPSTI process to send observers and/ or advisers to the PPSTI meeting.

APEC Sub-Fora and Multilateral Organizations: The PPSTI Chair, in consultation with other PPSTI members, may invite representatives from other APEC sub-fora, and relevant international bodies to send observers/advisers to the PPSTI meetings. The PPSTI will also take account of the activities of other APEC fora with which its work should be coordinated, and will endeavor to seek out opportunities to engage and collaborate with other on shared priorities and areas of interest, and decrease duplication of efforts across APEC.

Reporting Structure

The PPSTI will report to the SOM Steering Committee for ECOTECH annually through the SCE Fora Report, and to Senior Officials as required.

Fora Review

The PPSTI will evaluate its effectiveness on a regular basis in line with current APEC guidelines. The ToR will be reviewed periodically, in line with direction from SCE, and/ or to address changes in situation, that may bring a need to modify or amend it. As part of recommendation twelve[5] of the 2007 SCE Sub-Fora Review, the PPSTI will be independently assessed every four years according to the Independent Assessment Schedule endorsed by the SCE. The review will evaluate achievements vis-à-vis stated objectives and outputs, as well as a consideration of whether the group should continue to operate.

The 2024 SCE Fora Assessment for PPSTI noted important suggestions from APEC member economies, including recommendations to increase the quality of projects by exploring mechanisms to avoid duplication of topics, encourage cooperation between economies, and with APEC fora, and increase the impact of project outcomes, as well as actions related to the oversight of APEC PPSTI Centers. PPSTI will also continue to enhance its actions related to SCE's 2021 recommendations, including consulting and engaging the private sector, academia, non-government representatives, and other APEC fora, and to work with members to strengthen information sharing and best practices in STI areas.

Quorum

The quorum for PPSTI's meetings constitutes participation from 14 member economies. Decisions can only be made if quorum and consensus are reached. If the quorum is not reached, the meeting may continue, but decisions must be put to the full membership for consideration. Should the PPSTI fail to meet quorum for one meeting, the PPSTI group must notify the SCE Chair. Should the PPSTI fail to meet quorum for two consecutive meetings, or cannot show that it is meeting its mission through robust collaboration and projects, it shall be referred to Senior Officials for a decision on whether it should continue to exist, whether it should change the responsibilities, or whether it should be merged with other relevant sub-fora. The Chair, at the

[5] A multipronged approach to implement recommendation 12, focused on improving working arrangements in a manner across all APEC fora. Independent assessments to evaluate all SCE working groups and task forces and support periodic review processes were included.

mid point of their term, will review past attendance and encourage those economies who have not attend all the PPSTI's meetings to do so moving forward.

Sunset Clause

The next PPSTI term is from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2029. Prior to the expiration of this and any subsequent term, the mandate of PPSTI and its ToR shall be reviewed by PPSTI and the Steering Committee on ECOTECH (SCE), and a recommendation on the continuation of its mandate to be put to Senior Officials for consideration, who will explicitly approve the PPSTI's renewed term.

Reference Documents

- MOIP Pilot Terms of Reference
- APEC Policy Partnership for Science, Technology, and Innovation (PPSTI) Concept Note Protocol

Annex A – Review Panel, Selection Process and Project Monitoring

Review Panel

The Review Panel is made up of economy representatives on a voluntary basis, and membership is open to all economies, annually. The Secretariat will relay a call for volunteers on a yearly basis prior to SOM 1 and Cycle 1. The Review Panel works with the PPSTI Governing Board and the Secretariat to strengthen the Concept Note (CN) review and selection process. by providing feedback to Project Overseers (POs) on their CN Summaries, including on the relevance to PPSTI goals and strategic focus, alignment to PPSTI priorities, and options to reduce duplication. To ensure fairness, members of the Review Panel will not assess CNs that their economy has submitted.

Selection Process

All economies are encouraged to submit project proposals for consideration. Member economies submitting CN proposals will abide by the endorsed *APEC Policy Partnership for Science, Technology, and Innovation (PPSTI) Concept Note Protocol*.

Project Monitoring

APEC-Funded projects will be monitored and evaluated by their lead Sub-Group at each PPSTI meeting. Each Sub-Group will determine its agreed priorities, objectives and key performance indicators, as identified in the Strategic Plan.

Annex B - Evergreen List of APEC PPSTI Centers

Comentado [RH1]: APEC Secretariat: To update based on final outcome for APECTT and AMGS. Administrative step.

1. APECTT (APEC Center for Technology Transfer), (China) http://www.apectt.org/
2. APCTP (Asia Pacific Center for Theoretical Physics), (Republic of Korea) https://www.apctp.org
3. APEC CTF (APEC Center for Technology Foresight), (Thailand) https://apecctf.org/
4. ACES (APEC Cooperation for Earthquake Simulation), (Australia, China, Japan, USA) http://aces-apec.org.cn
5. APCC (APEC Climate Center), (Republic of Korea) http://www.apcc21.org/
6. AMGS (APEC Mentoring Center for the Gifted in Science), (Republic of Korea) http://www.amgs.or.kr
7. ACABT (APEC Research Center for Advanced Biohydrogen Technology), (Chinese Taipei) https://www.apec-acabt.org/
8. ACTS (APEC Research Center for Typhoon & Society), (Chinese Taipei) website under construction; will be updated once complete]
9. APEC-VC (APEC Virtual Center for Environmental Technology Exchange),(Republic of Korea) www.apec-vc.com/esten

Annex C

APEC Guidelines on the establishment, management and review of endorsed APEC Centers of the Policy Partnership on Science, Technology and Innovation (PPSTI Centers)

1. Application

1.1. These guidelines apply to institutions endorsed or seeking endorsement under PPSTI to act in the capacity of a PPSTI APEC Center (PPSTI Center).1.2. An institution is acting under the capacity of a PPSTI Center, and may identify as such, only when all of the following are true:

1.2.1. The institution has been established and endorsed according to Section 3, Establishment and Endorsement of a PPSTI Center.

1.2.2. The institution is engaging in activities specifically endorsed through PPSTI and is acting in alignment with the guidelines provided in Section 4, Management of a PPSTI Center.

1.2.3. The institution is not currently disestablished as described in Section 6.

1.3. If an institution is not acting under the capacity of a PPSTI Center as described in Section 1.2, the institution may not identify as a PPSTI Center or use the APEC brand.

1.3.1. When not acting under the capacity of a PPSTI Center, institutions are encouraged to use an alternative title.

1.3.2. If the institutional name of an institution endorsed as a PPSTI Center includes 'APEC' the institution may use the name when not acting in the capacity of a PPSTI Center, however must include a disclaimer that the event or document has not been endorsed by the 21 Member Economies of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation.

2. Objectives and Roles of PPSTI Centers

2.1. PPSTI Centers are established to pursue PPSTI's strategic goal – as laid out the PPSTI Terms of Reference and Strategic Plan – and wider APEC goals.

2.2. PPSTI Centers are specialized bodies, which bring further valued resources and expertise to PPSTI and extend the reach and impact of PPSTI's work.

2.3. PPSTI Centers actively engage in and support the advancement of and cooperation in science, technology and innovation that contributes to regional growth and development.

2.4. PPSTI Centers are encouraged to develop a cooperative alliance to share their information and promote collaborative activities and joint projects.

3. Establishment and Endorsement of a PPSTI Center

3.1. The procedure for an institution to be established and endorsed under PPSTI to act in the capacity of a PPSTI Center will comprise:

3.1.1. The proposing economy/economies will submit a written proposal to circulate electronically to PPSTI for its consideration at least 6 months in advance of a PPSTI meeting. The proposal should address how the institution will align with the Objectives and Roles of PPSTI Centers addressed in Section 2.

3.1.2. If there are no APEC member economy objections, the proposing body will be invited to present at the next PPSTI meeting to field questions.

3.1.3. Endorsement for the establishment of the new PPSTI Center will then be sought from PPSTI members and from SCE.

3.1.4. Upon consensus of both PPSTI and SCE, the PPSTI Chair (on behalf of PPSTI) will send notice welcoming the new PPSTI Center and informing PPSTI members of the new Center.

3.2. Endorsement of a PPSTI Center is not an endorsement of any specific proposed activity. All PPSTI Centers need to follow all guidelines herein to act in the capacity of a PPSTI Center.

3.3. All aspects of section 3 apply even if the Center is initially endorsed by Ministers or Economic Leaders.

4. Management of a PPSTI Center

4.1. Institutions will represent APEC and act in the capacity of a PPSTI Center only when the specific activity has been endorsed by PPSTI.

4.2. Activities of institutions acting in the capacity of a PPSTI Center will be managed in accordance with all existing relevant APEC Guidelines including:

4.2.1. APEC Guidelines for Managing Cooperation with Non-Members

4.2.2. APEC Publications Guidelines (which includes APEC's Nomenclature Guidelines)

4.2.3. APEC Logo Guidelines

4.2.4. Guidelines for Hosting APEC Meetings

4.2.5. APEC Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines

4.2.6. APEC Social Media Guidelines

4.2.7. Guidebook on APEC Projects.

4.3. All APEC Centers are encouraged to engage with all economies in their activities, and to ensure that their output materials are available in English and can be easily accessed and used by all APEC member economies.

4.4. PPSTI Centers cannot establish new study centers, websites, platforms, substructures, or other institutions without approval from the PPSTI, and/or SCE as applicable or required.

4.5. The activities of PPSTI Centers will primarily be regional (APEC) in scope.

4.6. PPSTI Centers can be sponsored and supported by one economy or by a broad coalition of economies. PPSTI Centers will secure their own human and financial resources, and with the support of APEC as appropriate, prepare adequate environments that support their longer-term involvement.

4.7. Centers should explore partnerships and projects among other APEC Centers and economies.

4.8. Consideration could be given to PPSTI Centers Cooperation Conferences (CCC) being held every two years as an institutional approach to collaborative partnerships with a lead PPSTI Center CCC organizer on a volunteer basis. It is recommended that these events are realized back-to-back with PPSTI Meetings at SOM and/or other PPSTI events.

4.9. Established PPSTI Centers can attend any PPSTI event without guest status. They may attend either as the PPSTI Center or as a member of their economy's delegation. It is the responsibility of the Center's host economy or economies to keep the Center, and the Secretariat informed of Center participation in PPSTI events.

5. Reporting Responsibilities to PPSTI

5.1. It is the responsibility of the Centers to keep PPSTI updated on how they have added and plan to continue adding value to PPSTI, APEC, and the region.

5.2. Centers should endeavour to make presentations at PPSTI meetings annually regarding their vision, plan for action, progress on current activities and outcomes from completed activities, especially CCCs.

5.3. Centers shall provide a brief update to PPSTI every year either as part of the plenary meetings, or as a short, written update (not exceeding 10 pages) shared with PPSTI member economies. They will also submit a PPSTI Center Review Report to the PPSTI Board every 3 years. The Review Report shall address how the institution has previously aligned and will continue to align with the Objectives and Roles of PPSTI Centers addressed in Section 2.

6. Disestablishment of PPSTI Centers

6.1. PPSTI Centers or a representative (e.g. a hosting economy) shall present to PPSTI at least one out of four consecutive PPSTI meetings, which occur on a biannual basis. If not, the institution will automatically lose endorsement as a PPSTI Center. The institution may seek establishment and endorsement again.

6.2. As outlined in 5.3, PPSTI Centers or a representative (e.g. a hosting economy) shall submit a PPSTI Center Review Report to the PPSTI Board every 3 years with a deadline of 31 December of the third year. Failure to submit the report by 31 January (30 days late) will result in a formal notice from the Governing Board. If the report remains outstanding by 31 March (90 days late), the institution will automatically lose endorsement as a PPSTI Center. The institution may seek establishment and endorsement under PPSTI in the future if desired.

6.3. Further, an institution's ability to act in the capacity of a PPSTI Center may be disestablished anytime either (i) voluntarily by the economy or economies that established the Center, or (ii) by PPSTI.

6.4. If the Center has been endorsed by Ministers or Leaders, PPSTI may only move to disestablish an institute as a PPSTI APEC Center and could not move to disestablish APEC Centres affiliated with other APEC sub-fora. Disestablishment of an APEC Center in general would need to be considered and endorsed by SOM.

7. Review of these Guidelines

7.1. PPSTI should review and update these Guidelines every three years or as required by consensus, whichever comes first.