



ADVANCE Independent Scientific Advisory Group (ISAG) Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The ISAG is a group of advisors who agree to provide scientific and strategic guidance to – and support for – the ADVANCE Study.

2. Remit

The remit and work programme of ISAG encompasses:

Science

- Providing advice on ADVANCE's scientific objectives
- Evaluating ADVANCE's scientific outputs in terms of quality, quantity, impact, and profile.

Strategy

- Providing advice on ADVANCE's strategic plans.
- Providing advice on sustainability, fundraising, and enrichment of the Study.

Support

- Provide a referral function for the ADVANCE Project Board to review complex, controversial or disputed proposals for access to data and samples, or for disputed strategic decisions.

3. Membership

- 3.1 The Chair of ISAG will have the responsibility for the timetable, agenda and conduct of ISAG meetings; for maintaining a record of proceedings and for producing reports of meetings for the ADVANCE Project Board and ADVANCE Charity. The ADVANCE Project Board will support the Chair in these responsibilities.
- 3.2 Members of ISAG will be scientists, clinicians, researchers and lay members with appropriate experience in fields relevant to ADVANCE. Members will be selected from across the UK and international research (clinical and academic) communities and other relevant organisations to ensure ISAG is diverse in ethnicity and gender and representative of the ADVANCE study and funder's evolving research priorities. The ADVANCE Project Board will be responsible for selecting, appointing, and renewing all members, including the Chair.
- 3.3 All members, including the Chair, will declare any relevant personal, academic, professional or business interests on an ongoing basis and, in particular, will declare any such interest prior to the consideration by ISAG of an item to which such interest relates. The Chair, supported by the PI/Project Manager shall be

responsible for the proper management of conflicts of interest. Members may be excluded from the consideration of specific items in which they have an interest where this is necessary to avoid unmanageable conflict or the appearance of it.

- 3.4 A quorum exists when at least half of the members are present. It is expected to have 10-12 members with a minimum of 6 attending each meeting.
- 3.5 Members are currently appointed for the period of the ADVANCE renewal grant (December 2026). Alterations to membership can occur during this period subject to individual member circumstances, though the expectation is that a 3-year term is adhered to. All memberships will be reviewed by the chair at the end of the current appointment period. Failure to attend or comment on the proceedings of 2 meetings without reference to the Chair shall constitute grounds for ending the membership at the Chair's discretion. At the end of the first 3-year term some members will be extended to allow for a gradual transition of the Group rather than a complete change.
- 3.6 Members are invited as individuals based on their knowledge, expertise and experience in specific areas and are not attending as formal representatives of their employing organisations. Members are expected to fully understand and enact the recognised duties and responsibilities of their role.
- 3.7 As a member leaves the group a replacement will be sought by the Project Board to ensure continuity.
- 3.8 A representative from the ADVANCE charity will be invited to attend ISAG meetings as an observer.

4. Meetings

- 4.1 ISAG meets regularly as the need arises, roughly once every six months either online or in person, but at least annually. The Chair of ISAG is responsible for chairing the meetings. Administrative support for the meetings will be provided by ADVANCE.
- 4.2 Meeting documents will be sent out via email at least one week prior to the meeting. It is expected that members will come to the meetings fully prepared to participate, or if unable to attend then any input will be provided to the Chair in advance of the meeting.
- 4.3 Members are expected to deliver on actions in a timely manner.
- 4.4 Minutes of all meetings will be documented by the administrative support provided by the ADVANCE Study and reviewed and approved by the ISAG chair before distribution.
- 4.5 Reasonable travel/subsistence expenses will be reimbursed for face-to-face meetings.

5. Minutes and Reporting

5.1 The minutes of the meetings are circulated to all ISAG members, Project Board members and the chair of the ADVANCE Charity.

6. Constitution

6.1.1 These terms of reference were endorsed by the ADVANCE project board on 30th May 2024.