

APDIG Code of Governance

Overview

1. The APDIG Code of Governance is an agreement between the Parliamentary Officers and Non-Parliamentary Members of the Group on the rules under which the APDIG operates and is administered. A copy of this document is made available on the group website (www.policyconnect.org.uk/apdig). The intention of the Code is to supplement the statutory information that the Group provides on its entry in the Register of All-Party Groups, in order to ensure full transparency.

Adherence to Parliamentary Rules on APPGs

2. The All-Party Parliamentary Design & Innovation Group (APDIG) is an all-party parliamentary subject group and abides by the rules and guidelines as laid down in the official booklet of all-party groups compiled by the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

3. The APDIG exists in order to be a forum for open debate between Parliament and the UK's design and innovation communities.

4. The APDIG is open to members of all parties and both Houses.

5. The group must have a minimum parliamentary membership of 20 'qualifying' members at any one time, 10 of which must be from the party of Government, and 10 from other parties. The parliamentary membership does not have an upper limit. No membership subscription fee is charged of parliamentary members of the Group.

6. The agenda of the APDIG is set by its Parliamentary Officers. Officers are elected at least annually at the AGM, which is open to all parliamentarians. Only parliamentarians have voting rights at meetings of the group.

7. The officers of the APDIG have executive authority over the group.

8. The APDIG is also comprised of a non-parliamentary element, in membership of companies working in the design sector. These individuals and organisations do not have voting rights.

Non-parliamentary membership

9. Non-parliamentary membership is open to organisations with an interest in design and innovation in the UK.

a. Contributions from these organisations provide a source of funding that allows the APDIG to maintain a full-time secretariat, run a regular meeting programme, provide a research function for Parliamentary members and maintain a website.

b. The non-parliamentary membership is balanced to ensure that a cross-section of the design community is represented.

c. Non-parliamentary membership offers the group a useful insight into present developments and the views of the design sector in the UK.

i. Non-parliamentary member organisations are invited to send up to two representatives to all group meetings and registered to receive all official group correspondence.

ii. At meetings, non-parliamentary members are asked to participate actively in discussions, whilst recognising that the APDIG is intended as a means of disseminating impartial information and that Parliamentarians have priority in their contributions.

iii. From time to time non-parliamentary members are also invited to provide support for additional resources and meetings that fall outside the standard programme. No editorial influence is conferred by such sponsorship.

Advisory Board

10. The independent advisory board is comprised of senior figures from the public, private and third sectors, including senior figures from central government, local government, the private sector and academic institutions, who share the belief that Parliament has an essential role to play in creating good design policy.

11. The advisory board meets at least once annually with the parliamentary officers to evaluate recent activities and approve the future programme and administration of the group.

Secretariat

12. The APDIG is administered by a full time secretariat, responsible for executing the programme and activities of the group agreed by the Parliamentary Officers.

13. The secretariat and other administrative services are provided to the APDIG by Policy Connect Ltd.

a. Policy Connect is a not-for-profit social enterprise dedicated to stimulating positive change in the UK by generating dialogue and building understanding between key stakeholders on important issues. Policy Connect provides support services to a number of parliamentary groups and other policy-focussed initiatives. More information is available on: <http://www.policyconnect.org.uk/>

b. 'Secretariat and other administrative services' includes provision of: staff who act as clerks to the group; a central support team; project and event management; shared costs of telephone, IT, web and email hosting; financial services; and shared office space external to the Palace of Westminster and other public buildings. From time to time the secretariat is also supported by paid interns.

c. Policy Connect does not set the group's agenda or programme.

Financial Governance

14. The finances of the APDIG are administered as follows:

a. Annual membership subscriptions and any additional sponsorship for the APDIG are managed by Policy Connect, which provides an independent and fully audited framework for the management of these funds. The work of Policy Connect, including that delivered for the APDIG, is overseen by a separate scrutiny committee to ensure the independence and governance of the use of funds.

b. Funds attributed to the APDIG, which is a not-for-profit organisation, are used to cover overheads and operational costs of the APDIG and its work.

c. Policy Connect presents an annual statement of accounts to the Parliamentary Officers of the APDIG.

d. The above arrangement allows the group to share administrative and accommodation costs with other Policy Connect groups.

Other organisations

15. Where possible and appropriate, other relevant organisations are invited to participate in group meetings and resources.

a. Internally to Westminster, APDIG meetings and resources are open to other Parliamentary staff.

b. Externally to Westminster, representatives from other organisations are invited to attend meetings at which their contribution is of relevance to the subject area.

i. As APDIG is intended as a forum for open exchange and discussion amongst Parliamentarians, unless explicitly stated otherwise, meetings are understood to be open (ie not held under Chatham House Rule).

ii. In order to comply with security and room booking regulations of the Palace of Westminster, attendance at meetings must be by invitation of the group.

Endorsement

16. This code of governance is endorsed by the officers and non-parliamentary membership of the APDIG, representing an agreement on how the group operates and is administered.

17. Copies of the code are sent to each non-parliamentary member of the group, and are available on the Group's website: <http://www.policyconnect.org.uk/apdig/about>

Review

18. This code of governance will be reviewed at least every two years at the AGM to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.