

SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE 2021 - 2024

Introduction

The Terms of Reference gives the guiding principles on how the Group operates.

SMEWG Strategic Plans set out the Group's vision, mission and priorities, as well as the implementation plan over the relevant period.

Priorities and Objectives

SMEWG priorities and objectives are developed in the four-year Strategic Plan.

Each year the Group establishes a Work Plan comprising deliverables, activities, projects and outcomes aimed at advancing the priorities established in the Strategic Plan.

Structure

Each economy determines the composition of its delegation to the SMEWG. For the APEC SME Ministerial Meeting, Ministers responsible for SMEs should attend.

The Group responds to other APEC reform or review processes as required.

The Group reports annually on progress towards achieving its Strategic Work Plans through the SCE Fora Report.

Leadership

The Chair of the Working Group will rotate among economies in an alphabetical order for a two-calendar year term. Before assuming the position of the Chair, the incoming Chair will undertake the role of a Vice Chair for one year. This is to enable a smooth transition and continuity of the Working Group's priorities and work plan, as well as to allow for the Vice-Chair to understudy the Chair.

The Chairperson, appointed by the Chair economy, must

- I. be competent with all aspects of the Group's activities (SME, ME and internationalisation issues); and
- II. be capable of presiding over all aspects of the Group's meetings and activities, *in accordance with APEC Guidelines for Lead Shepherds/Chairs*.

The Vice-Chair's role would be to:

- I. To chair the Working Group's meetings on behalf of the Chair if the Chair cannot perform his/her duty or in contingency situations; and
- II. To understudy the Chairperson.

The Vice-Chair could be invited to give advice to the Chair on SMEWG-related issues.

Should the incoming economy not be able to provide a Chair to take their turn in the alphabetical order, they are required to announce this at least one (1) year before the commencement of their term and swap its term with the next-in-line economy after them. It means that the former economy remains liable for fulfilling their Chairmanship, after the latter economy served its term.

Meeting arrangements

The Working Group will meet twice per year. The host of the first Working Group meeting of the year shall be rotated in an alphabetical order. The second meeting of the year should take place immediately prior to the SME Ministerial Meeting and the host shall be the APEC Host Economy.

Should the incoming economy not be able to host the first meeting in the scheduled year, they are required to announce this at least within the first half of the previous year and swap with the next-in-line economy after them. It means that the former economy remains liable for hosting a Working Group meeting after the latter economy has done so.

Fora Review

An independent assessment of achievements against stated objectives and outputs of the Working Group will be undertaken every four years. The findings and recommendations from the Independent Assessment will be taken into account when the new four-year Strategic Plan is developed.

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed when necessary upon the consensus of all member economies.

Quorum

Quorum for SMEWG Meetings constitutes attendees from 14 economies. Should the SMEWG fail to meet quorum for two consecutive meetings, it shall be referred to Senior Officials for a decision on whether it should continue to exist.

Sunset Clause

The SMEWG has a term of four years starting from 2021. At the expiration of this and any subsequent term, the mandate of SMEWG and its TOR shall be reviewed by the SMEWG and the SCE and a recommendation on renewal shall be put forward for Senior Officials' approval.

Annex: List of Tentative Chair/ Vice Chair and Host of SMEWG Meetings till 2040

Economy	Vice Chair	Chair
Brunei	2020	2021 – 2022
Canada	2022	2023 – 2024
Chile	2024	2025 – 2026
China	2026	2027 – 2028
Hong Kong, China	2028	2029 – 2030
Indonesia	2030	2031 – 2032
Japan	2032	2033 – 2034
Korea	2034	2035 – 2036
Malaysia	2036	2037 – 2038
Mexico	2038	2039 – 2040

Economy	Host year of 1st meeting
Canada	2021
Chile	2022
China	(hosted in 2019)
Hong Kong, China	2023
Indonesia	2024
Japan	2025
Korea	2026
Malaysia	2027
Mexico	2028
New Zealand	2029
Papua New Guinea	2030
Peru	2031
The Philippines	2032
The Russian Federation	2033
Singapore	2034
Chinese Taipei	2035
Thailand	2036
United States	2037
Viet Nam	2037