



**APEC Human Resources Development Working Group  
Friends of the Chair on Promoting Disability Policies  
Terms of Reference**

**Introduction**

1. In May 2023, the APEC Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) held a high-level policy dialogue to review policies and programs that strengthen education and economic opportunities for persons with disabilities. Participants resolved to enhance cooperation in APEC, implement inclusive policies, empower persons with disabilities, guarantee equal access to education and employment, and celebrate their unique talents and abilities in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth in the region.
2. The *HRDWG Detroit Non-Binding Principles and Recommendations for Equality and Inclusion in Education, Training, and Employment* (the “Detroit Principles”), endorsed in HRDWG and the Senior Officials Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE) on July 7 and October 6, 2023, respectively, reaffirms APEC-wide commitment to promoting equality and inclusion among persons with disabilities.

**Goal**

3. In the absence of existing structures to advance the Detroit Principles with respect to disability policies, a Friends of the Chair (FotC) is established within the HRDWG to provide subject matter expertise. The FotC serves as a forum to strengthen collaboration among members and the HRDWG’s three networks (the Capacity Building Network, the Education Network, and the Labor and Social Protection Network), and with other sub-fora to promote sound disability policies.

**Objectives**

4. The FotC seeks to:
  - address challenges faced by persons with disabilities in APEC economies by developing and implementing projects and policy recommendations.
  - foster awareness of disability across APEC economies.
  - promote and coordinate collective actions among member economies.
  - share best practices and lessons-learned with APEC members.
  - Seek to utilize projects to generate strategic recommendations for the FotC.
  - make recommendations to the Lead Shepherd on how to further integrate disability issues into the HRDWG agenda and into its networks’ plans of action.

## **Priorities**

5. The FotC will:
  - develop a work plan including strategies to support HRDWG engagement on disability for 2024-2025
  - decide on a mechanism for evaluation of activities identified in the work plan and report annually on progress to the Lead Shepherd and, through the Lead Shepherd, to the SCE Chair.

## **Membership**

6. All member economies are invited to join the FotC and contribute to its work; participation is voluntary. Member economies are especially encouraged to nominate stakeholders in the disabilities community to join and participate in the work of the FotC. FotC will inform non-participating members of its work through regular updates and the HRDWG annual report. Members can join or withdraw at any time by notifying the FotC leadership.

## **Leadership**

7. The FotC operates within the HRDWG and reports to the Lead Shepherd. The SCE Chair approves the establishment and renewal of the FotC. The FotC has two Coordinators who share the responsibility of managing the FotC equally. The Coordinators are appointed by the Lead Shepherd among candidates nominated by participating economies. The host economy may nominate a third Coordinator who shares management responsibilities with the other two Coordinators. The term of the Coordinators expires with that of the Lead Shepherd.

## **Duration and Renewal**

8. The FotC will have a life span of no more than one calendar year. A review of achievements against outputs will be undertaken at the end of the year and reported to SCE Chair. This reporting will serve as the basis for the SCE Chair's renewal of the FotC for the subsequent year. The FotC will cease to exist upon reaching the end of its one-year term unless renewal is explicitly approved by SCE Chair.

## **Decision Making**

9. All decisions made by the FotC shall be consensus based among participating economies.

## **Meeting Arrangements**

10. The FotC will meet twice a year or as agreed by the FotC. Meetings can be organized virtually, hybrid, or in-person. One of the meetings should coincide with the HRDWG Plenary.