

Terms of Reference (ToR) for the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group

1. Background to AIMPACT fund

On 29 August 2019, the Government of Ascension Island designated a fully protected MPA covering its full 445,000 exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The protected area extends from Mean High Water Springs to the Exclusive Economic Zone limit at 200 nautical miles (nm), and is closed to all commercial extractive activities from 12-200nm. Within the inner 12 nautical miles, sustainable recreational fishing can take place in accordance with the Ascension Island MPA Management Plan (ratified 2021) and Inshore Fisheries Strategy (agreed 2022) and Business Policy, which is in the process of being developed and agreed.

A long-term supporter of Blue Marine Foundation, Peter Lürssen donated the £2 million to establish the 'Ascension Island Marine Protected Area Community Trust' (AIMPACT) to be run by Blue Marine for the purpose of taking steps to realise the socio-economic benefits of the Ascension Island Marine Protected Area (or "MPA") for those living in Ascension.

2. The AIMPACT Project Advisory Group position in the governance structure

Three groups are involved in the AIMPACT governance structure: the Ascension Island Government, the AIMPACT Committee (responsible for management of the fund), and the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group. The AIMPACT Committee is a sub-committee of the Blue Marine Foundation Board of Trustees. The Trustees of Blue Marine authorise the AIMPACT Committee Members to make investments and expenditures within the purpose of the fund. The AIMPACT Committee will inform AIG how much money is available in the current financial year. This will occur at the start of April 2022 and during the same period in each subsequent year. AIG in consultation with and the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group will submit projects via the project application form for consideration and approval by the AIMPACT Committee.

2. Composition

The AIMPACT Project Advisory Group, in compliance with the AIMPACT fund, is composed representatives from each of the following organisations/ sectors:

- AIG Administrators office representative (Deputy Administrator) - Chair
- AIG finance rep
- AI council representative
- Education representative (Head teacher)
- Environment representative (Conservation staff member)
- Community representatives

The AIMPACT Project Advisory Group members remain in office until withdrawal or resignation or for the duration established by the members at appointment. The members can be withdrawn at any time by decision of the majority of members, providing there is just cause. Election/re-election of the Group members will occur once per year.

3. Role of the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group

The role of the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group is as follows:

- Publicly announce when funding is available and applications open for project proposals, ensuring all community members are aware of the opportunity and giving at least two weeks for submitting project proposals.
- Ensure that Project proposals for the AIMPACT fund fall into at least one of four categories:
 - Community
 - Education
 - Environment
 - Heritage
- Select project proposals within these four categories and that meet the AIMPACT criteria which:
 - Support at least one of four overriding objectives above;
 - Are most likely to bring long-lasting and widespread benefits to the Ascension Island community;
 - Stand the highest likelihood of being successfully completed.
 - Are not detrimental in any way to the environment or the principles of the Ascension MPA
- Present the list of selected proposals to Blue Marine (CEO and directors) to sign off on the projects.
- Follow up with successful project applicants to initiate the projects and to ensure project applicants provide photos and update on project completion.
- Ensure all projects display signage acknowledging funding was provided due to the Communities global contribution to ocean protection through the Ascension Island Marine Protected Area.
- Assist with resolving any issues that may arise.
- Use influence and authority to ensure the AIMPACT fund is successful and fulfils its objectives.
- Communicate about the AIMPACT fund in their organizations and to the Ascension community.

To note:

- More than one application can be approved from a group, however preference should be given to spreading the division of the fund to a range of community groups
- Project proposal can be carried over to be considered in a following years fund allocation if not successful in the current round

4. Responsibilities of the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group Chair

The AIMPACT Project Advisory Group Chair is the Deputy Administrator. Should they be unable to attend a meeting, (To be confirmed) will serve as Chair.

The responsibilities of the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group Chair are as follows:

- Arrange community messaging (press, email etc) to inform community members when the fund is open for project proposals.
- Arrange meetings of the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group to assess project applications and select projects for approval.
- Set the agenda for each meeting.

- Ensure that agendas and supporting materials are delivered to members in advance of meetings.
- Encourage broad participation from members in discussion by calling on different people.
- Ensure the meeting fully reviews each proposal against the criteria set out in 3 above.
- End each meeting with a summary of approved projects and send list to Blue Marine (CEO and directors).
- Share regular reports on AIMPACT spend on community projects with the community.
- Follow up with consistently absent members to determine if they wish to discontinue membership of the group.
- Finds replacements for members who discontinue participation.

5. Responsibilities of the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group members

Individual the AIMPACT Project Advisory Group members have the following responsibilities:

- Encourage/assist community members/groups with submitting project proposals to the AIMPACT fund.
- Meet with community members to discuss project ideas.
- Actively participate in Advisory Group meetings through attendance, discussion, and review of project proposals and provide their knowledge/feedback on the AIMPACT project proposals.
- Understand the goals, objectives, and desired outcomes of the AIMPACT fund and Ascension Island MPA.
- Take a genuine interest in the Ascension Island MPA outcomes and overall success.
- Act on opportunities to communicate positively about the Ascension Island MPA and the AIMPACT fund.
- Support open discussion and debate and encourage fellow AIMPACT Project Advisory Group members to voice their insights.