

What is the purpose of the Africa Evidence Network's Reference Group?

The Africa Evidence Network (AEN) is piloting the establishment of a Reference Group (RG) as part of their development, supported by a Hewlett Foundation grant. The idea is that the AEN RG would, in its initial phase, operate as a sounding board that brainstorms ideas suggested by AEN members as captured in the annual survey, providing written and/or oral feedback on the development of the AEN's strategic and operational plans. Participation in the AEN RG is an unpaid position which will last for one year. After this pilot period the AEN secretariat, with support from the AEN advisory group, will reflect on how the RG has contributed over the year and its role going forwards.

What will participating the RG involve?

Members of the RG will need to be willing to meet via conference call once a quarter in March, June, September, and December 2018. The first meeting will take place on either Wednesday 14 March or Thursday 15 March 2018. The meetings will be chaired by the AEN senior manager and members of the AEN secretariat. In addition to discussing priority issues for the AEN, RG members will be required to read the AEN annual member survey, and be prepared to contribute to discussions pertaining the growth of the AEN based on findings from this report.

How will the members of the RG be sought?

We will invite nominations from the AEN advisory group for contacts in early 2018; these recommendations will be invited to apply for a position on the RG. An open call to all AEN members to apply to join the RG will be shared via the AEN newsletter and weekly tweets during the month of February 2018, with interested parties being invited to submit their applications.

How will the members of the RG be selected?

Ideally, the AEN would like to provide 16 places for members of organisations involved in some capacity in evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM) in Africa to join our RG. The ideal distribution of this is illustrated below:

	Government / parliament	Universities / academia	Civil society / NGOs	Think tanks	
North Africa	At least one member	At least one member	At least one member	At least one member	
West Africa	At least one member	At least one member	At least one member	At least one member	
East Africa	At least one member	At least one member	At least one member	At least one member	
South Africa	At least one member	At least one member	At least one member	At least one member	
Total:					16



Reference Group: Terms of Reference

The priority for the AEN is to ensure breadth of representation on the RG both in terms of regions within Africa and sectors that make up the AEN membership¹. Where several applications are received for one organisation or region, the AEN secretariat will select the individual that fits the role most closely. Where there is no clear choice, input will be sought from the AEN Advisory Group. Where no suitable applicants apply for one or more of the 16 roles, we will headhunt suitable applicants through our wider networks outside of the main recruitment cycle. Members of our advisory group, AEN secretariat, and the Executive Committee of Evidence conferences are not eligible to sit on the RG. Additionally, organisations represented in the AEN Advisory Group are not eligible to be represented on RG also; they can however nominate other organisations. The AEN RG members will be confirmed by **Monday 5 March**.

I'm interested – how do I join the RG?

To be eligible to apply for the RG, **AEN members** must work at an organisation **actively involved in EIDM²** and email their completed application form (Annex) to ace@uj.ac.za by **Wednesday 28 February**. Not yet an AEN member? [Join now!](#)

¹ AEN holds the right to select members, not only on their individual suitability, but also to be representative of regions within Africa and sectors within the AEN membership.

² Individuals and the organisations they work for may work as producer/s, user/s or broker/s of evidence.