Disabled People’s Organisations Coalition (DPO Coalition)

Charter (working draft 24 May)

Whakataukī: Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi

With your food basket and my food basket the people will thrive.

**Purpose**

1. The DPO Coalition exists to increase the collective impact of DPOs to achieve Disability Rights in Aotearoa New Zealand as defined by the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and associated documents.
	1. Our role is mandated by the UNCRPD and recognised by Government.
	2. We are directed by our DPO members.

**Te Tiriti O Waitangi**

1. Our work is guided by Te Tiriti O Waitangi as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand.

**Vision**

1. Full achievement of Disability Rights equality in Aotearoa New Zealand.

**Values for working together**

1. Our values for working together are:
	1. Respect people – Nothing about us without us.
	2. Collective effort – Engaging equally with others to achieve more.
	3. Inclusion – Embracing diversity, understanding and valuing others’ perspectives.
	4. Integrity – Principled advocates who address issues openly and honestly.
	5. Empathy – Looking out for each other, being kind.
	6. Evidence – Use of evidence to maximise value.
	7. Sustainability – Adequate resources to deliver our role.

**Functions**

1. The DPO Coalition brings DPOs together to deliver six core functions:
	1. Work together with all disabled people to improve our collective lives by influencing improvement in society and government services.
	2. Work with Government in partnership under UNCRPD Article 4.3 to implement Disability Rights. We are the agency for direct access to the collective and informed voice of disabled people for input and advice into Government policy and decision-making.
	3. Deliver Disabled People Led Monitoring under UNCRPD Article 33.
	4. Deliver the Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM) with the Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman.
	5. Grow Disabled Peoples’ leadership capability and capacity.
	6. Secure sustainable funding for DPOs and the DPO Coalition.
	7. Maintain a legal form and funding structure that is fit fot purpose.

**Membership**

1. To be a Member (DPO) of the DPO Coalition, an organisation must meet the DPO Attributes and maintain this (assessed annually).
2. The DPO Coalition has defined a set of DPO Attributes based on the UNCRPD.
3. An organisation can apply to join by following the application process.
4. Coverage of the diverse disabled population is taken into account when making decisions on membership.
5. An organisation that does not meet all DPO Attributes may be accepted as a Member and provided time to address this, on a case by case basis.
6. Each Member will put forward one governance representative (usually their President or Chair) and one management representative (usually their Chief Executive or General Manager). Each Member will maintain continuity of representation as far as possible. Each Member’s representatives must:
	1. declare their interests so that any conflicts (including perceived conflicts) can be assessed and actively managed.
	2. conduct themselves appropriately. Guidance is included at Appendix 1. Failure to do so introduces reputational risk for the DPO Coalition and puts Membership at risk.
7. Information provided to Members is often sensitive or confidential and provided in trust.
8. Each Member is accountable for treating information appropriately and for immediately raising issues or risks.
9. Email groups are used to manage communications within the DPO Coalition. A list of email group recipients is kept so that information circulation is known.
10. Organisations that we deal with are given details of information circulation as required to maintain trust.

**Mandate**

1. The DPO Coalition can only act according to the wishes of its DPOs. Each DPO gets their mandate from their members – disabled people. All DPOs are expected to:
2. Actively engage their members and their wider disability community to effectively bring forward the views and voice of disabled people.
3. Have effective ways to poll the views of their members.
4. Put forward suitable disabled people as representatives and/or technical experts.
5. Keep members informed of DPO Coalition activity and provide ways to access the detail of what is happening.

**Working with others**

1. Actively engage and influence other organisations, particularly Government agencies, to deliver our purpose. This includes:
2. Maintaining a strategic approach to relationships to maximise impact.
3. Early engagement to ensure maximum value for disabled people.
4. Co-creating strategies and plans relevant to disabled people.
5. Co-governing activity.
6. Involving disabled people as representatives and/or technical experts.
7. Seeking and including the views of DPOs and the DPO Coalition in key documents and advice e.g. a DPO comment paragraph in Government papers.
8. Securing reasonable accommodations and fees for work done as part of business-as-usual.

**Strategy and Workplan**

1. The DPO Coalition Strategy sets out how we will deliver our purpose and functions over the next three to five years.
	1. Co-design is encouraged as a base principle for effective collaboration and partnership.
2. The Workplan sets out actions required for the next 6 to 12 months including:
3. DPO Coalition work.
4. Work in partnership with Government.
5. Relationships being maintained and developed.
6. How each area of work is governed.
7. Timeframes for reporting and decision-making.
8. Resourcing arrangements.
9. Completion reports to close a project, and how the activity will be maintained over time.

**Key Contacts and Representatives**

1. Key Contacts are selected (by vote) for a main topic or area of work. The role:
2. Is usually selected from around the DPO Coalition table.
3. Is the first point of contact for the DPO Coalition to connect with another organisation.
4. Leads discussion at DPO Coalition meetings.
5. Oversees DPO Coalition Representative roles to ensure they are operating effectively. Any issues are raised to the DPO Coalition for attention.
6. DPO Coalition Representatives are selected (by vote) from the disability community to represent the DPO Coalition. DPO Coalition Representatives must:
7. declare their interests before appointment so that any conflicts can be assessed.
8. meet the expectations set out in *Expectations of DPO Coalition Representatives on other Groups* including providing a regular Update Reports.

**Meetings**

1. A schedule of meetings (face to face) is set at least 6 months in advance according to the workplan.
2. An interests and conflicts process is in place and followed at every meeting.
3. A Secretariat supports the meeting with: Agenda and papers; minutes; actions and follow-up and other activity and advice as required.
4. Each DPO provides a Chair of the meeting on a six-meeting rotation.
5. The next Chair is known by meeting four so that they can prepare for the role.
6. The role does not extend outside the meeting.
7. If the Chair is not present, the DPOs present vote a Chair from the representatives present.
8. The role of Chair of the meeting is to ensure that:
9. the meeting is run effectively to the Agenda and that all DPOs have equal opportunity to input.
10. decisions reached are accurately recorded in the minutes.
11. sign out correspondence arising from the meeting (as Chair of the meeting, not in their own DPO role).
12. Meeting fees are paid including preparation time.
13. Reasonable accommodations are provided.

**Decision-making**

1. Decisions are by consensus at a meeting or by email.
	1. Each DPO must have a mandate from their organisation for each decision taken. If they do not have a mandate, they must propose a timeframe that allows them to get a mandate.
	2. If consensus cannot be achieved, even after efforts to modify the decision to achieve consensus, the issue returns to each DPO for attention as appropriate.
2. A vote may be required to achieve a DPO Coalition view or to select a representative:
3. Information requirements and timeframes are agreed to allow each DPO to prepare for the vote.
4. A convenor is selected to run the vote (usually the Meeting Chair). If the vote must be run between meetings, the Secretariat runs the vote.
5. If the vote must be confidential, the Secretariat or an independent convenor is selected to run the vote.
6. Each DPO has one vote and decisions are by majority.
7. Interests must be declared and any conflicts managed appropriately
8. Decisions by email between meetings are recorded in the minutes of the next meeting.

**Communications**

1. Key messages are circulated after each meeting to DPOs and stakeholders as agreed.
2. A Communications Strategy is agreed and active.

**Funding and Sustainability**

1. The UNCRPD includes an obligation on Government to fund DPOs sustainably. DPO Coalition will seek funding contracts with Government and our partner organisations that:
2. Cover the costs of DPOs and DPO Coalition to deliver their role.
3. Are long enough to support effective planning and decision-making.
4. Provide for growth and fluctuations in activity.

**Finance**

1. Budgets for DPO Coalition activity are held and managed on behalf of the DPO Coalition by a lead DPO or by the Office for Disability Issues.
	1. The nature of each arrangement is recorded in a memorandum of understanding.
	2. The DPO Coalition governs the contracts (as advisor to the fund holder).
	3. Each DPO is responsible for invoicing for their expenses related to Membership of the DPO Coalition and payment for participation in project work.

**Documentation and Records**

1. A full record is kept of meeting discussions and decisions.
2. A set of key documents is maintained, accessible by Member DPOs. This includes an Induction Pack.

**Continuous Improvement**

1. Continuous improvement is achieved through:
2. Regular reflection and review of progress and lessons learned.
3. Feedback from partners and stakeholders on performance and areas for improvement.
4. Adopting best-practice approaches from other organisations and collectives.
5. An annual reflection and review process at individual and collective levels to discuss progress, identify lessons and agree improvements.

**Review**

1. This Charter will be reviewed every two years or more regularly by agreement.

**Appendices:**

* Appendix 1 – Guidance on Conduct of Member Representatives.

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Individuals representing each Member DPO on the DPO Coalition are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the following expectations:

1. **Respect** – Act in a fair and respectful manner and follow the agreed processes.
2. **Confidentiality** – Keep DPO Coalition papers and discussions confidential (including all papers circulated by other parties as part of DPO Coalition work), unless a minuted decision allows release.
3. **Communication** – Use only the agreed DPO Coalition communications for wider distribution.
4. **Continuity** – Ensure continuity of representation as far as possible within each DPO’s governance and management arrangements. This includes succession planning and proper hand-over.
5. **Interests and Conflicts** – Declare all interests that may be relevant to the DPO Coalition and keep this current so that the DPO Coalition can assess and manage any conflicts that may arise (including perceived conflicts).
6. **Transparency** – Ensure that the DPO Coalition is aware of all information relevant to effective delivery of their role.
7. **Background** – Ensure that representatives on the DPO Coalition are briefed on past and current DPO Coalition work and supported as required so that they can fully contribute.
8. **Preparation** – Ensure that representatives prepare for meetings, including taking issues to their governing bodies, and if required to their members, to establish a DPO position to bring to the DPO Coalition discussion. Have processes in place to consider and come to a DPO view on DPO Coalition issues.
9. **Contribute** – Ensure that your representatives contribute to discussions so that your DPO’s views are heard. Allow space for other representatives to similarly contribute.
10. **Personal views** – Preface any personal comments that have not been mandated by your DPO with “This is a personal comment …” so that the status of the comment that follows is clear.
11. **Decision-making** – Make your DPO’s position clear including recording any dissenting views in the minutes.
12. **Decisions** – Act in accordance with decisions made by the DPO Coalition. If a DPO is unable to act on a DPO Coalition decision, they need to raise this with the DPO Coalition as soon as possible. Each DPO retains their autonomy to conduct their business in other areas outside the work of the DPO Coalition.
13. **Priorities and Agenda** – Follow agreed processes to set priorities and agenda items.
14. **Delivery** – Ensure that your DPO and representatives complete work assigned by the DPO Coalition. Raise any issues or risks in a timely manner.
15. **Best people** – Identify the best people for DPO Coalition Representative roles. Raise any issues that may assist their being available (such as time commitment, payment or other costs).
16. **Key contact** – If appointed to act as key contact for a priority area or project on behalf of the DPO Coalition, conduct this role from the perspective of the DPO Coalition, not from any other role.
17. **DPO Coalition Representative** – If your DPO has sponsored a DPO Coalition Representative, ensure that they follow the requirements set down for DPO Coalition Representatives.
18. **Fees and Expenses** – Accurately invoice for fees and expenses related to DPO Coalition work done. Make the information available for review if the DPO Coalition decides this is required.
19. **Review** – Contribute to reflection and review sessions in a free and frank manner.

END.