

Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Space Partnership Board

Approved for publication on Space Partnership website: 17/3/26

Next review by Space Partnership Board: 31/3/27

Background

The Space Partnership (SP) brings together industry, academia and Government stakeholders to work on shared priority issues to realise the ambition set out in the National Space Strategy (NSS) and other Government documents to grow the UK space sector. The SP Board is the mechanism to fairly reflect all stakeholders across industry, academia and Government so that these shared priorities can be agreed and tangible proposals developed to benefit all parts of the sector across the UK.

Purpose of the Space Partnership Board

The SP Board brings together equal representation from industry, academia and Government to enable:

- *Shared priority issues* that will address the ambition set out in the NSS to be agreed
- *Collective action* that will enable this ambition to be delivered and grow the UK space sector to be agreed

The SP Board appoints, oversees and advises the independent SP Director. The SP Board provides clear direction when the SP Director puts forward:

- Priorities that have been identified across the sector
- Opportunities for collective action that will involve all stakeholder groups

The SP Director will regularly report progress of the collaborative activities to the SP Board. This will allow the SP Board to monitor progress and by working with their stakeholder group ensure that the collective actions are delivered, so that the ambition of the NSS is achieved.

Composition of the Space Partnership Board

Each stakeholder group (industry, academia and Government) has 3 votes, each held by 1 representative. Each representative of the SP Board is accountable to the whole of the stakeholder group that it represents rather than to any single entity.

SP Board members are expected to:

- Fairly and objectively reflect the views of the whole of the stakeholder group they represent
- Champion the agreed shared priorities and collective actions within the stakeholder group that they represent while being accountable to the full stakeholder group

To ensure that there is a transparent mechanism for views to be put forward to the SP Board, the representatives are from cohering organisations within the stakeholder group. As a result, the representatives are by role, rather than ad hominem, however each representative is expected to reflect the wider views of the stakeholder group that they represent rather than their organisation.

The 9 voting representatives by role are:

Stakeholder Group	Industry	Academia	Government
<i>Representative</i>	UKspace Chair	SPAN Co-Chair	UKSA Deputy Director (Strategy)
<i>Representative</i>	UKspace SME Forum Chair	SPAN Co-Chair	MoD Head of Space Policy
<i>Representative</i>	Satellite Finance Network Chair	SUN Chair	DBT Head of Aerospace & Space Exports

9 votes will be cast for all decisions, meaning that the voting representatives are expected to attend every SP Board meeting. If they are unable to attend they must either:

- Nominate a Deputy to attend the meeting and vote on their behalf
- Allocate their vote to another representative from their stakeholder group

Meetings will be quorate when there are at least two voting representatives from each stakeholder group. Approval requires a voting majority of 5 or more (7:2, 8:1 or 9:0) to ensure that no stakeholder group's view can be excluded.

Permanent Attendees

Permanent attendees are agreed representatives from organisations delivering elements of the NSS ambition who are invited to every SP Board meeting and expected to actively contribute to discussions:

- Satellite Applications Catapult Chief Executive Officer: John Abbott
- UK Research & Innovation (UKRI) Space Programme Director: Amber Vater (interim)
- UKspace Vice Chair: currently Ben Stern
- ADS VP Space: currently Kata Escott

To ensure that the Board is equally representative of industry, academia and government, UKRI and Catapult do not have a vote as they represent a range of stakeholders. If one of the Industry Board members is unable to attend, they may choose to allocate their vote to the UKspace Vice Chair or ADS VP Space.

Observers

At the request of either individual SP Board members or the SP Director, Observers may be invited to attend SP Board meetings to: bring a wider perspective, increase transparency and provide expertise on specific topics. Observers are allowed to contribute to the discussion, although do not have voting rights to ensure that the SP Board remains equally representative of industry, academia and Government. Observers will be disclosed in the agenda to enable SP Board members to highlight any potential conflicts of interest. If none are raised ahead of the meeting, it is assumed that the Observers are approved and allowed to freely take part in the meeting (although not vote).

Working Group

Each Board member may nominate a representative to the Working Group to:

- Support the SP Director to prepare for the Board meeting, including ensuring that the views of their stakeholder groups are reflected in the Board papers
- Approve operational activities (eg quarterly reports), so that they can be shared as information with the Board, improving the efficiency of Board meetings.

The Working Group generally meets twice between Board meetings to: 1) consider the upcoming agenda and 2) review the draft papers. Minutes will not be produced.

Independent Chair

The SP Board Chair is independent of the three stakeholder groups and non-voting. The SP Board Chair will:

- Speak on behalf of the SP Board when necessary
- Mediate between the different stakeholders in an open, objective and transparent way
- Ensure 9 votes are cast for every decision taken and that the majority is 5 or more for approval to be given
- Work with the SP Director to: agree the agenda and supporting papers required; ensure during meetings that there is sufficient opportunity for parties to contribute to the discussion before decisions are made, yet keeping the meeting to time.

The current Independent Chair, Tim Bestwick, was appointed in February 2024, following a competitive recruitment process. The Chair will have a 3-year fixed term.

SP Board Meeting

The SP Board meets 6-8 times per year, generally on a Tuesday, with a reasonable mix of virtual (1.5 hours, starting at 10:00) and in person (2 hours, starting at 10:30) meetings. Future meeting dates are agreed at the end of each year, with any proposed changes agreed at least one meeting in advance.

SP Director is responsible for:

- Convening the meeting and drafting the agenda for discussion with the Chair
- Ensuring the agenda is sent to SP Board members a week before the meeting with the decisions to be taken clearly laid out so that representatives can consult with their stakeholder group to ensure views are fairly reflected
- Sending a short summary of the meeting with decisions taken clearly stated within a week of the meeting
- Convening representative sub-groups of the SP Board as required to consider specific topics as appropriate
- Providing regular reporting on the progress of the agreed collective activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

To assist the Director, Board and Working Group members deliver their roles effectively, their responsibilities have been agreed as:

Role	Responsibilities in the Board meetings	Responsibilities outside of the Board meetings
Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To manage the meetings and ensure Board members deliver on their responsibilities in an appropriate manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and agree agenda with Director
Board Members	<p>On behalf of your stakeholder group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present the long-term ambition for the UK space sector and your collective contribution Contribute to discussions representing opportunities and challenges in a fair and balanced way Provide clear direction to the Director, by highlighting work required, reviewing the annual workplan and ensuring outputs produced fairly reflect your stakeholder group. <p><i>Note: at times you may be asked to give immediate views based on your extensive experience in the UK space sector</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with your community to agree the opportunities and challenges for the UK space sector to inform your contributions at the Board meeting Champion the Space Partnership activities to your community, encouraging them to contribute as appropriate.
Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare agenda & papers for Board meetings (including reporting on SP team activities, sharing insights & information gathered) Summarise the meeting afterwards (Minutes & public summary) Report on progress at the Space Skills Advisory Panel (SSAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Engage</i> knowledge & expertise from across the UK space sector <i>Deliver</i> insights for the SP Board (includes workshops, research & facilitate the SSAP) <i>Operate</i> the Space Partnership (inc team and financial management)
WG members	None (invited to attend to listen to the discussions to assist with their responsibilities outside of the Board meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist Director to prepare papers for Board meetings Brief Board members ahead of Board meeting Approve operational items on behalf of Board members to increase the efficiency of the Board meetings

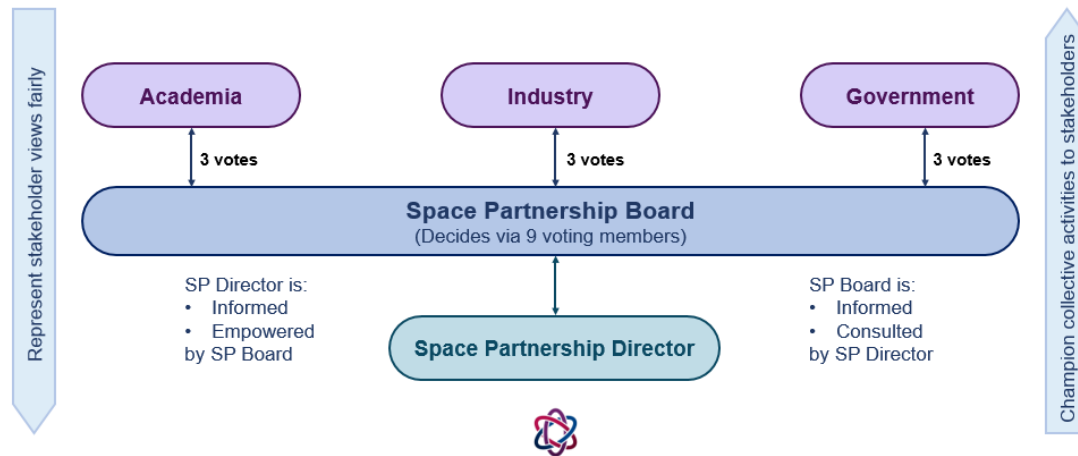
Communication

The ToRs are published on the Space Partnership website along with the names of the representatives from each stakeholder community to enable the wider community to engage with their representatives as appropriate.

Terms of Reference

The representatives of each stakeholder group must deal effectively and efficiently with any engagement, comments and other input from the wider community and shall, as appropriate, raise any issue at the next SP Board.

Diagram to illustrate Space Partnership Governance



Definition of terms

Acronym or Term	Definition
NSS	National Space Strategy
SFN	Satellite Finance Network which represents regulatory and financial concerns for businesses, particularly SMEs across the space sector
SME	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
SP	Space Partnership
SPAN	Space Academic Network
SSAP	Space Skills Advisory Panel
SUN	Space Universities Network
ToR	Terms of Reference
UKspace	Trade association for the UK space industry and includes ADS and techUK representatives on its Board

Version Control

Version	Approved	Comment
1.0	April 2023	Approved ToRs for initial 6 months of SP Board
2.0	October 2023	Updated to: split D-SIT/UKSA vote; rename Standing Observers to Permanent Attendees; Independent Chair recruitment.
3.0	March 2025	Updated: Includes a section on Working Group
4.0	March 2026	Updated: To include UKspace Vice Chair and ADS VP Space as Permanent Attendees; Roles & Responsibilities section