Alamo Regional Data Alliance
Steering Committee Charter

I.   Background

The Alamo Regional Data Alliance (ARDA) is a vibrant network of data professionals, leaders, and change-makers who share the common belief that individuals and organizations throughout the community should be informed by timely quality data when making decisions that impact their lives or the lives of those they serve.

In early 2016, 40-50 data professionals and consumers from various fields came together to discuss the current state of data management in our community and to determine next steps to building a more robust data culture. As a result, a small all-volunteer working group formed to explore the possibility of establishing a community-wide people-centered data collaborative. Spending over six months developing the vision, mission, guiding principles, and governance model for the Alamo Regional Data Alliance, this small group became ARDA's Interim Steering Committee (ISC).

II.   Core Statements

Mission
To collectively support the Alamo Region in implementing and strengthening the policies and programs needed for data-driven decisions to be made throughout the community.

Vision
To improve the lives of people in our region by establishing and supporting a culture of data-driven action.

Guiding Principles
ARDA has adopted the following guiding principles centered on community, collaboration and trust:

Community: ARDA is community-driven and driven by the community.
- has a positive impact on the community as a whole, not a select few
- is responsive to local emergent issues and needs
- is led by a diverse group of representatives elected by the community

Collaboration: ARDA believes collaboration and inclusivity cultivate innovation and action.
- is connecting disparate groups to uncover common needs, foster creative solutions, and maximize impact
- has balanced representation among membership, leadership, and stakeholders

Trust: ARDA builds trust through transparency and respect.

Approved 8/28/2019

- is open and public in membership and process
- is respectful of and sees the value in all contributions, past and present

III.   Purpose of the Steering Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Steering Committee (SC) is to (1) represent members; (2) coordinate projects; and (3) provide leadership. The SC will use open channels of communication to seek continual engagement and review; and will encourage innovation as a means to accomplish goals and address change. It is intended that the SC leverage the experiences, expertise, and insight of key individuals in key organizations positioned to provide guidance and support for management and implementation of the vision.

Role of the Steering Committee

- take responsibility for the vision, feasibility, project coordination and achievement of outcomes
- ensure the scope aligns with the requirements of the membership
- provide staffing entity with guidance on related issues
- ensure effort and expenditure are appropriate to member expectations
- address issues that may impede progress towards goals
- help balance conflicting priorities and resources
- encourage appropriate response to emergent issues that may compete with the vision
- reconcile differences in opinion and approach and resolve disputes arising from them
- develop and adopt a broad communications strategy
- report on progress
- participate in in-person and between-meeting discussions and decisions/votes
- establish ARDA workgroups and communicate with workgroup leads about projects

Selection of the Backbone Staffing

The Steering Committee will discuss and develop a scope of work that summarizes the overarching goals, key performance outcomes, timeline, budget and evaluation process. The SC will evaluate the staffing agency's performance annually to ensure that the agency is the appropriate fit for ARDA's needs and are satisfying the expectations outlined in the scope of work. No staffing agency representatives shall be present during the decision-making process related to the procurement of the staffing entity. The SC may issue solicitations for backbone staffing without an express assurance that a certain, reasonable amount of funds are available for and will be committed to it; therefore, the SC is responsible for ensuring that the work is still accomplished regardless of funding availability.

Role of the Backbone Staffing

Approved 8/28/2019

The Steering Committee has agreed that with clear division of roles and responsibilities, paid staffing support will accelerate progress. It should be noted that roles and responsibilities are not static and that the outline below should be considered neither exhaustive nor fixed.

- have a broad understanding of project management
- check adherence of goals and activities to standards of best practice, both within the organization and in a wider context
- develop work timelines for strategies, incorporating shorter-term milestones
- set up and staff meetings and other communications with members and target groups
- measure and communicate agreed-upon indicators of progress
- record and maintain notes/minutes from meetings and between-meeting discussions and decisions
- serve as central point of contact for public inquiries on activities and progress
- facilitate discussions and set up voting mechanisms

Role of the ARDA membership

At large members are individuals who expressed an interest to participate in ARDA. All members should keep their contact information up to date annually so that we can communicate about news and elections for the Steering Committee. The SC is empowered to act on behalf of the ARDA membership.

IV.   The Steering Committee Practices and Processes

Meeting Schedule and Process

The Steering Committee will meet monthly and as needed. Agendas will be distributed at least three business days before the meetings. Meeting minutes will be distributed to committee members within five business days of each meeting. All corrections to the minutes must be submitted by the end of the subsequent meeting.

Meeting agendas, minutes and other documentation will be stored on the ARDA website. It will enable committee members to consult with one another and spark ideas about collaboration opportunities. Wherever possible, the planning documents will be posted and shared with the SC.

Meeting Agenda

At each meeting, a work status will be reported to the SC by the staffing agency using an agenda outline such as the following:

- Welcome and recap previous meeting
- Review current work status

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- Project updates
- Workgroup updates
- Discuss next steps
- Membership updates
- Adjourn

Decision-Making Practices

The two types of decisions considered by the Steering Committee are binding decisions and non-binding decisions.

Types of Decisions

- A binding decision refers to any decision made by the committee that establishes a practice, formal recommendation, or formal action by the committee (e.g., approving final documents, etc.).
- A non-binding decision refers to any decision made by the committee that are routine/operational in nature or intermediate to a binding decision and do not establish a practice, formal recommendation, or formal action by the committee (e.g., scheduling and logistics, developing draft documents, etc.).

Collaborative Decision-Making Processes

Binding decisions made by the committee are reached using a majority vote.

1. The decision to be made will be formally introduced to the committee along with the process and timeline for discussion and vote.
2. Through discussion, the committee will determine the items that will be included in the vote (e.g., approve/disapprove or limited set of alternatives for consideration).
3. Each committee member may cast one vote on any binding decision but are not required to do so. A committee member may abstain from a vote with or without cause including an identified or perceived conflict of interest.
4. The vote will close according to the defined timeline.
5. Based on the votes cast, a decision will be made to represent the majority vote and will be communicated to the committee within the defined timeline.
6. If at close there is no majority and members have abstained without cause, the vote will be extended for 2 additional business days. In the case of a tie, the issue will be brought back to discussion before re-opening the vote.

Non-binding decisions made by the committee are reached using simple majority interest.

1. The decision to be made will be formally introduced to the committee along with the process and timeline for each member to submit their input.
2. Based on the input submitted, a decision will be made by staff to represent the majority interest.

3. If routine/operational in nature, the outcome will be communicated to the committee within the defined timeline. If intermediate to a binding decision, the outcome will be included in the subsequent decision-making process.

V.   Steering Committee Budget

General support

ARDA exists to make it possible for many different stakeholders to invest in all or part of a shared *Community Strategy* and get the greatest return from all investments, not to fracture efforts or divert funding from other organizations and coalitions. Neither ARDA membership nor a Steering Committee seat is accompanied by an expectation of a personal or organizational financial commitment. But the ARDA Steering Committee, general membership, and other stakeholders must realize that little to none of the *Community Strategy*, including backbone staffing, can be implemented at no cost.

The *Community Strategy* must be accompanied by a comprehensive high-level budget showing revenues and actual or projected expenses. Projections should be based on sound assumptions like actual current or historical costs or vendor bids. Individual strategies or projects may be accompanied by a more detailed line-item budget. Where dollar figures are available and may be shared, the *Community Strategy* budget should identify local initiatives/investments relevant to each piece of the *Community Strategy* and show how those expenses are covered by different cash and/or in-kind contributions from a variety of sources.

Organizations can financially support the ARDA vision and *Community Strategy* in several ways, including by:

- Aligning some portion of their own internal budget with some part of the *Community Strategy*, so that the organization is directly contributing effort toward ARDA's goals;
- Donating in-kind resources like staff time (including time used for grant administration), office space, data, software license seats, equipment and supplies, printing, or other costs associated with the *Community Strategy*;
- Routinely building support for one of more of ARDA's strategies into grant application budgets and other requests for funding;
- Collaborating with other local organizations rather than competing for data-related grant dollars;
- Identifying and helping secure new/additional funds from new or existing sources like local or national foundations and philanthropists, local or state government, etc.

VI.   Selection of Steering Committee Members

Selection of SC Members

The Alamo Regional Data Alliance's Steering Committee revised and established the composition, eligibility requirements, and term lengths and limits for the Steering Committee, as well as the timeline and process for election and transfer of responsibility.

Composition

The Steering Committee is composed of designated seats by type of organization/affiliation to ensure that it includes a broad range of perspectives and ensure representation of the Alamo Regional Data Alliance's membership. In order to ensure continuity and institutional memory, the terms are staggered when there are two or more seats in a designated single category.

The Steering Committee may vote to change the committee's composition but seats may not be re-designated or eliminated until its full term has expired and no member may be declared ineligible due to changes made during his/her elected term.

The Steering Committee includes a non-voting seat designated for a representative of the selected staffing agency. This seat may not be re-designated or eliminated by the Steering Committee while a staffing agency is active.

The 17 single-vote seats are designated as follows:

Category (seats)	Community Represented
Civic engagement, collective impact nonprofits, local foundations (2-4)	Local foundations and nonprofits whose principal purpose is to aid in activities serving the public good; not intended for agencies organized primarily to deliver direct human services
Academia, journalism, research, technology, all private business (2-4)	-Public and private universities -Research and technology -For-profit enterprises and business Chambers
Human services and utilities (4-6)	-Public and nonprofit agencies organized primarily to provide direct human and social services -Organization that manages community infrastructure or utilities
Local government & quasi-governmental authorities (3-5)	Local elected officials and their staff, and staff of public and quasi-gov agencies
Community member (1-3)	Neighborhood association members, community leaders, grassroots activists, individual consultants and sole proprietors, students

Operationally, the high end of the range serves as grounds for rejecting new appointments in the category. The low end of the range prompts discussion around targeted recruitment if open seats are available.

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Eligibility

These eligibility criteria may be changed by the Steering Committee, but no term may be cut short or lengthened by this change. No member may be declared ineligible during his/her term, but may be declared ineligible for re-election under the revised criteria.

- Steering Committee members must be committed to the Alamo Regional Data Alliance's core statements and to working for the good of the whole region, not just one particular organization, sector, issue area, or neighborhood.
- A General Membership Form affirming commitment and a Steering Committee Application indicating an intent to run are required for one's name to appear on the Steering Committee election ballot.
- Steering Committee members must be at least 18 years of age at nomination.
- Steering Committee members must live in one of the following counties in the San Antonio area: Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Frio, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Medina, McMullen, or Wilson.
- Members occupying a seat designated for an organization type must be employed by an organization for which the seat is designated and will be verified by the steering committee prior to the election. If a member is no longer employed by their designated organization type during their term, the Steering Committee will address the seat representation according to the terms of removal below. At the time of application, applicants will self-identify as to seat category and provide justification. Steering committee will decide eligibility for category based on applicant rationale and charter category descriptions.
- Individuals employed by the staffing agency are ineligible to run for an elected seat.

Term and removal

Members serve two-year terms and may be re-elected twice for a maximum service of six years. A vacancy in a seat with an unexpired term will be filled by the majority vote of the remaining Steering Committee members, after a public announcement of the vacancy and call for self-nomination open to anyone eligible for that seat, with the self-nomination period closing 15 calendar days after the public announcement.

A member may be removed from the Steering Committee for any reason by a vote of three-quarters of the full Steering Committee membership, but the seat designation must remain unchanged.

Officers

At its first meeting the Steering Committee will request nominations for and elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair by simple majority vote of the members present. The officer positions will expire with the individual's ARDA term. The primary responsibility of the Chair is to notify members of meetings, work with the staffing agency to set the agenda and run the meetings, and the Vice-

Chair serves in this role when the Chair is unavailable. The staffing agency will be responsible for writing meeting minutes. An officer may be removed from his/her position by a vote of three-quarters of the full membership of the Steering Committee. Officer positions may be added by the Steering Committee at any time. Procedures and vote requirements for any additional officer positions will be the same as for the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Election

The election process will be electronic and mobile-friendly housed at alamodata.org and administered by the staffing agency. The guiding principles of the initial election process are *trust and transparency* and *engagement and inclusion*. The process is as follows:

- o Candidates self-nominate online for a designated seat type and submit a Membership Application, if not already a member, and a Steering Committee Candidate application
- o A print-friendly ballot is published online
- o Online voting is open for 15 calendar days
- o All members may vote once and must provide a valid email address. The ballot will be confidential and results will only be presented in the aggregate.
- o The candidate with the greatest number of votes for a particular seat wins; a majority is not required. Vote totals will be published online.
- o In the event of a tie, the tied candidates will be notified and given the opportunity to participate in a tie-breaker. If a candidate does not wish to participate in the tie-breaker, the other candidate will be appointed.
- o In order to allow for a tie-breaker or any irregularities, the official results will be announced one week after the poll closes.
- o The staffing agency may remove anyone from the list of documented voters if they did not submit their membership form by the deadline.

Conflict of Interest Policy

The standard of behavior of the Steering Committee is that all staff, volunteers, and board members scrupulously avoid conflicts of interest between the interests of the Alamo Regional Data Alliance on one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding potential and actual conflicts of interest, as well as perceptions of conflicts of interest.

The purpose of this notice is to protect the integrity of the Alamo Regional Data Alliance's decision-making process, to enable our community to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputations of volunteers, staff, and Committee members. SC members should make a verbal disclosure of interests, relationships, and holdings that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. This disclosure will be recorded and updated as appropriate.

Alamo Regional Data Alliance
Steering Committee Commitment Form

As a Steering Committee Member of the Alamo Regional Data Alliance, I agree to:

- Support ARDA's vision:
  - To improve the lives of people in our region by establishing and supporting a culture of data-driven action.
- Adopt ARDA practices and processes by:
  - Adhering to the Steering Committee Charter
- Provide strategic guidance, vision, and oversight for ARDA by:
  - Developing and refining the goals and guiding principles
  - Using data to inform strategic planning
  - Tracking progress of the work using agreed-upon processes
  - Interacting with the staffing entity on strategy and community engagement
- Provide leadership by:
  - Making connections between organizations to ensure coordination and efficiency
  - Serving as a vocal champion of the collective impact effort in the community
- Play an active role by:
  - Participating in-person at the regularly scheduled meetings
  - Reviewing materials prior to meetings and coming prepared for engaged discussion, active listening, and respectful dialogue
  - Committing to complete the elected term

The Alamo Regional Data Alliance intends that the Steering Committee leverage the experiences, expertise, and insight of key individuals in key organizations positioned to provide guidance and support for the management and implementation of the vision. Said organizations do not represent ARDA. These organizations are not required to acquire and allocate resources for ARDA, nor does ARDA exercise any authority over any of these organizations' own resources.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approved 8/28/2019

Printed Name: _____

Approved 8/28/2019