

Terms of Reference (ToR)

EBRAINS Industry Expert Group

1. Purpose and Strategic Alignment

The EBRAINS Industry Expert Group is established to strengthen the strategic interface between the EBRAINS Research Infrastructure (RI) and the private sector. Its primary purpose is to ensure that EBRAINS services, technologies, and innovation pathways remain aligned with industrial needs, emerging markets, and evolving regulatory environments. Fostering a diverse global community, promoting knowledge transfer, and accelerating the translation of research into new brain-based technologies and therapies are key strategic objectives of the EBRAINS RI that assert the need for the establishment of the Industry Expert Group.

The Industry Expert Group supports these long-term strategic objectives of the EBRAINS RI by providing independent and impartial advice on how EBRAINS can maximise its impact beyond academia, strengthen innovation uptake, and develop sustainable engagement with industry.

A particular focus of the Industry Expert Group is to support EBRAINS in addressing several strategic questions that are central to the future development of the infrastructure, including:

- Long-term sustainability models for EBRAINS services and infrastructure
- Development of paid service models
- Increasing the adoption of EBRAINS services by start-ups, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and neurotechnology and medical companies
- Identification of services and capabilities that are particularly valuable for industrial users
- Establishing a solid framework of training and capacity building resources that assist private sector users on the utilisation and personalisation of EBRAINS services
- Improving market visibility and industry awareness of EBRAINS capabilities

Through these activities, the Industry Expert Group contributes to ensuring that EBRAINS remains a globally relevant digital research infrastructure supporting neuroscience, digital health, artificial intelligence, and neurotechnology innovation.

2. Establishment and Continuity

The Industry Expert Group is initiated within the framework of the EBRAINS 2.0 project.

During the lifetime of the EBRAINS 2.0 project, the Industry Expert Group will advise the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership Board on matters related to industry engagement, innovation uptake, and sustainability strategies.

Following the completion of the EBRAINS 2.0 project, the Industry Expert Group is expected to be maintained as a permanent advisory body within the governance framework of EBRAINS

AISBL, where it will advise the EBRAINS Management Board and continue to provide industry perspectives to EBRAINS-coordinated activities.

During the lifetime of EBRAINS 2.0, the Industry Expert Group operates with a flexible and adaptive character, via regular exchanges with the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership Board, allowing it to respond to evolving industry needs and project priorities.

With the transition of the expert group in the framework of EBRAINS 2.0 to the governance of the EBRAINS AISBL, the Group will adopt a more formal structure in line with an Advisory Board. A chair will be appointed at this stage, with responsibilities including coordinating the Board's work, agreeing agendas with the EBRAINS Management Board, and upon request representing the Board in interactions with EBRAINS governance bodies.

This transition ensures continuity of strategic industry advice while supporting the long-term development and sustainability of the EBRAINS Research Infrastructure.

3. Mandate

The mandate of the Industry Expert Group is to provide independent and unbiased, strategic advice on matters related to industry engagement, innovation uptake, and the development of sustainable services and business models.

The Group acts as a strategic sounding board and provides insights into market developments, industrial needs, and technological trends relevant to EBRAINS activities.

The Industry Expert Group has no executive authority and does not participate in formal decision-making within EBRAINS 2.0 and EBRAINS AISBL governance structures. Its recommendations are advisory in nature. Discussions within the Industry Expert Group and with the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership board fall under Chatham rules.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Members of the Industry Expert Group are expected to:

- Provide independent and strategic advice on industry engagement and innovation pathways
- Contribute insights on market needs, industry trends, and regulatory developments
- Advise on the development of sustainable service models and potential paid services
- Support the identification of services and capabilities that are of relevance to industrial users
- Suggest the integration of new services and tools into the infrastructure to cover emerging industrial needs
- Facilitate dialogue and collaboration between EBRAINS and relevant industrial sectors, including capital investment institutions
- Contribute to discussions on technology and knowledge transfer, entrepreneurship, and public-private partnerships
- Give advice on existing and potential use cases

5. Membership

The Industry Expert Group will consist of up to 6 members drawn from relevant industrial sectors including, but not limited to:

- Digital health and medical technologies
- Neuroscience and neurotechnology
- Artificial intelligence and data science
- High-performance computing, cloud, and data infrastructure
- Robotics
- Pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors
- Clinical environments, including clinicians and representatives from hospitals, clinical research organisations, and translational medicine settings

Selection Criteria: Members of the Industry Expert Group serve in a personal capacity and are selected based on their expertise, professional experience, and their ability to contribute with strategic and relevant perspectives to the mission and activities of EBRAINS.

In the selection process, the following criteria will be considered:

- **Relevant expertise and experience** in industry or innovation ecosystems related to fields such as neuroscience, neurotechnology, digital health, artificial intelligence, data science, high-performance computing, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, or related sectors.
- **Strategic insight** into industry trends, technological developments, neurotechnology markets, and opportunities for collaboration between research infrastructures and industry.
- Good knowledge of innovation-related instruments and programs offered by the EC and technologies maturity assessment.
- **Ability to contribute actively** to the work of the Board, including participation in meetings and engagement in discussions and recommendations.
- **Complementarity of expertise**, ensuring that the Board collectively reflects a balanced range of perspectives and competencies.
- **Diversity considerations**, including sectoral diversity, representation of different types of organisations (e.g. large companies, SMEs, start-ups), and where possible geographical and gender balance.

Final selection of members is made by the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership Board to ensure strategic alignment with EBRAINS priorities and an appropriate balance of expertise within the Board.

6. Nomination and Appointment

Members of the Industry Expert Group are appointed by the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership Board during the EBRAINS 2.0 project.

Following the transition to EBRAINS AISBL governance structures, future appointments or renewals will be made by the EBRAINS Management Board in line with its statutes.

Initially candidates will be identified through an open call for expressions of interest by

- Self-nomination
- Nominations from EBRAINS National Nodes, the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership Board

The final selection and appointment of members rests with the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership Board to ensure strategic balance and alignment with EBRAINS and project priorities. The opinion of the EBRAINS Innovation and Technology transfer team may be requested along the selection process.

7. Terms of Appointment and Rotation

Members of the Industry Expert Group are appointed for a term of three years.

To ensure continuity while enabling renewal of expertise, terms may be staggered where possible. Members may be reappointed once for an additional term.

Rotation of members should be managed in a way that maintains institutional memory while allowing new perspectives to be introduced.

The Chair, where applicable, is elected by the members of the Industry Expert Group for a term of two years and may be re-elected.

8. Declarations of Interest

Members of the Industry Expert Group serve in their personal capacity and are expected to act with integrity and independence. Each member must declare conflicts of interest by completing an annual Declaration of Links of Interest (DLI) for EBRAINS 2.0. When issues are discussed that may involve a conflict of interest, the affected members should make this known and not participate in other specific discussions. Conflicts of interest can be reported in oral or written form and should be noted in the minutes of the relevant meeting.

9. Working Principles and Decision-Making

The Industry Expert Group operates as an advisory body and develops its recommendations through open discussion and consensus among its members.

As the Industry Expert Group has no executive authority within EBRAINS governance structures, it does not take binding decisions on EBRAINS policies, budgets, or strategic plans. Instead, the Board provides independent strategic advice and recommendations to the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership Board and, following the transition to EBRAINS AISBL governance structures, to the EBRAINS Management Board.

Where consensus cannot be reached, differing viewpoints may be documented and communicated to the relevant EBRAINS governance body.

To ensure transparent and effective functioning of the Board, the following procedural principles apply:

Quorum

The Board may deliberate validly when at least two-thirds (2/3) of its members are present or represented. If the quorum is not reached, it may

- convene another ordinary meeting within 15 calendar days, or
- propose that the matter be decided through a written procedure without a meeting.

Decision-making

Where formal advice or recommendations require confirmation by the Group, these may be adopted by simple majority of the members present.

Blank votes do not count as votes but are considered for establishing quorum.

Written procedure

Recommendations may also be adopted through a written procedure. In such cases, a written proposal including the relevant background information is circulated to all members. The document shall specify a response deadline of at least 15 calendar days.

If no objection is raised within this period, the proposal is considered accepted.

Documentation

Outcomes of discussions and recommendations are recorded in the minutes of meetings. Members may request corrections of factual inaccuracies within 15 calendar days after circulation of the draft minutes. If no objection is received within this period, the minutes are considered approved.

10. Interaction with EBRAINS Governance

The Industry Expert Group maintains regular interaction with EBRAINS governance bodies.

During the EBRAINS 2.0 project:

- The Industry Expert Group will have regular exchange with the EBRAINS 2.0 leadership board members.

Following the transition to EBRAINS AISBL governance structures:

- The Chair (or designated representatives) may be invited to attend meetings of the EBRAINS Management Board.
- Such participation will normally occur at least quarterly

In both cases, the Industry Expert Group may present recommendations and respond to requests for advice from the respective governance body.

Industry Expert Group members do not participate in formal EBRAINS decision-making or voting processes.

11. Meetings

The **Industry Expert Group** will meet quarterly to discuss strategic developments relevant to industry engagement and to formulate advice.

Additional meetings may be convened when necessary.

Extraordinary meetings may be requested by members of the Group and organised at the discretion of the Chair.

Written notice of meetings will be sent to all members:

- at least 7 calendar days in advance for ordinary meetings
- at least 3 calendar days in advance for extraordinary meetings

Calendar invitations will normally be circulated in advance.

During a meeting, additional agenda items may be added with the unanimous agreement of the members present.

Meetings may be held:

- in person
- via tele- or videoconference
- or in hybrid format combining both

12. Expected Deliverables

The work of the Industry Expert Group is expected to result in a number of strategic contributions to EBRAINS, which may include:

- Strategic recommendations to the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership Board and, in the future, to the EBRAINS Management Board
- Input into EBRAINS industry engagement strategies
- Advice on sustainability and service models
- Identification of emerging industrial opportunities and partnerships
- a summary report per year

13. Secretariat & Operational Support

Administrative and organisational support for the [Industry Expert Group](#) will be provided.

This includes coordination of meetings, preparation and circulation of agendas and documentation, preparation of minutes, and general logistical support for the functioning of the Board.

For meetings held in person, EBRAINS will provide appropriate meeting facilities, including a meeting room and catering during the meeting.

[Industry Expert Group](#) members serve on a voluntary basis and do not receive financial compensation or expense allowances for their participation in the Board.

In recognition of their contribution, [Industry Expert Group](#) members benefit from several non-financial advantages associated with their role, including:

- Access to insights into emerging developments in neuroscience, digital health, artificial intelligence, neurotechnology, and high-performance computing relevant to EBRAINS activities.
- Opportunities to engage directly with the EBRAINS research and innovation ecosystem, including leading scientists, technology developers, and infrastructure experts.
- Acknowledgement of their advisory role in EBRAINS communication and dissemination activities where appropriate and visibility as members of the EBRAINS [Industry Expert Group](#) on the EBRAINS website.

14. Review of the Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference may be reviewed periodically by the EBRAINS 2.0 Leadership Board and, following the transition to EBRAINS AISBL governance structures, by the EBRAINS Management Board, to ensure continued alignment with the strategic development of the EBRAINS Research Infrastructure and the evolving role of the Industry Expert Group.