What is the Architecture Review Board (ARB)?

Q: What is the Architecture Review Board (ARB)?

Purpose

The Architecture Review Board (ARB) serves as a governance body ensuring IT initiatives align with Ecosystem Architecture and ultimately align with MIT IT goals, strategies, and objectives. The ARB’s purpose is to improve the quality of IS&T Products.

- The Architecture Review Board (ARB) defines appropriate IT strategies and ensures development alignment with those strategies.
- The ARB is responsible for defining technical design standards, policies, and principles for IS&T overall.
- The ARB is also responsible for all technical aspects of MIT’s IT portfolio such as providing guidance and approving project architecture (conducting technical feasibility studies), providing technical recommendations on architecture and design (i.e. best practice reviews).

Goals

The goals of the Architecture Review Board (ARB) include the following:

- Improve the quality of IS&T products
- Plan, design, and implement an efficient, effective, and comprehensive architecture for MIT IT Infrastructure and Application
- Establish architecture baseline and develop and maintain target architecture for MIT IT
- Establish and promote architecture best practices
- Create architecture roadmaps
- Lead architecture review process
- Identify new technologies for IS&T
- Support an “Agile Mindset”

Roles and Responsibilities

The key roles and responsibilities of the Architecture Review Board (ARB) include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Role/Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Decision Making  | • Establish architecture roadmaps  
                    • Establish architectural and design principles and best practices  
                    • Evaluate solution designs per best practices; if design is rejected provide recommendations for improvement  
                    • Solicit and consider input from other governing bodies during decision making process  
                    • Document rationale for decision in meeting minutes or other documentation  
                    • Provide input to decisions made by other governing bodies |
| Escalation        | • Escalate decisions beyond their authority to Senior Leadership Team (SLT)  
                    • Recommend a course of action and provide supporting analyses (when decision is escalated to another body) |
| Communication     | • Communicate decisions to SLT and other key stakeholders in accordance with communications plan  
                    • Keep SLT informed of major IS&T architecture decisions |
Ongoing Activities

- Create architecture strategy and roadmap
- Define architecture principles and best practices
- Conduct technical feasibility studies (e.g., review investment proposals)
- Facilitate collaboration across areas to exploit IT synergies and avoid duplication
- Identification of innovation in IT that can help the business (e.g., new technologies)

Ad-Hoc Activities

- Create temporary teams to address specific tasks

FAQ

- What projects go to the ARB?
  - All major projects will have a resource from the ARB support initial planning and design
  - Any project can request design support from the ARB
  - Any project can request a project review during the delivery phase. For technically complex projects, ARB reviews may be scheduled periodically for support and reviews.

- What is my role at the ARB?
  - For major projects, project teams (BA, SA, PM) will work with the ARB Architect for system/solution design guidance and IS&T best practices
  - For Architecture Review meetings, project teams will meet with the ARB

- How do I submit my projects to be reviewed with the ARB?
  - Complete an online ARB Request 3 days prior to the next ARB

- How often does the ARB meet?
  - The ARB meets every two weeks, on Mondays. An interactive Web calendar will be created with all Governance board meetings.

Architecture Review Process (End-to-End)

Membership

The composition of the Architecture Review Board (ARB) primarily includes technical resources from IS&T who reside in the Ecosystem Architecture team. However, ARB will leverage subject matter experts as needed.

The membership of the Architecture Review Board (ARB) consists of individuals identified below.
### Function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role/Level</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Garry Zacheiss</td>
<td>Platform &amp; Systems Integration</td>
<td>Director / Lead Architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair</td>
<td>Mark Silis</td>
<td>Enabling Team</td>
<td>Associate VP of IS&amp;T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Olu Brown</td>
<td>Platform Engagement</td>
<td>Community representative and Data Impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Stephen Turner</td>
<td>IT Ecosystem Architecture</td>
<td>Student Information Systems and Middleware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Dudley Kirkpatrick</td>
<td>IT Ecosystem Architecture</td>
<td>Web Application Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Siobhan Cunningham</td>
<td>Project &amp; Portfolio Management</td>
<td>Admin Systems and SAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Joe Calzaretta</td>
<td>IT Ecosystem Architecture</td>
<td>Learning Management Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Leo Larson</td>
<td>IT Ecosystem Architecture</td>
<td>Student Information Systems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Meeting Frequency and Agenda

The Architecture Review Board (ARB) shall meet every two weeks. During critical time periods, the meeting frequency may be increased to meet program needs. Communications, guidance and information, such as meeting schedules, agendas and minutes will be made available by the Chair or their appointee.

The following high level agenda outlines a potential framework for the structure of the meeting. Please note that each agenda item may not be a topic at every meeting.

- Define IS&T Architecture best practices
- Evaluate potential and in-progress solution design(s)
- Update architectural and design standards
- Review action items
- Open discussion

### Charter

#### Accountabilities

- Establish architecture roadmaps
- Establish architectural and design principles and best practices
- Evaluate solution designs per best practices; if design is rejected provide recommendations for improvement
- Solicit and consider input from other governing bodies during decision making process
- Document rationale for decision in meeting minutes or other documentation
- Provide input to decisions made by other governing bodies

#### Inputs

- Business & IT Strategies
- Project proposals
- New technology developments in the marketplace
- Project Start Architectures
- Supplier ideas / requirements
- Learning / Experiences / Insights from other clients / industries
- High Level Impact Analyses

#### Outputs

- Technology Architecture Vision and Roadmap
- Architectural approval of project proposals
- Architecture policies and best practices
- Technology opportunities
- Recommendations to the SLT

#### Composition

- See detailed Membership page
- On request:
  - Project Teams for Review
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mandate</th>
<th>Escalation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The Architecture Review Board (ARB) serves as a governance body</td>
<td>Escalation point for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ensuring IT initiatives align with Ecosystem Architecture and ultimately</td>
<td>Project Board(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>align with MIT IT goals, strategies, and objectives. The ARB serves</td>
<td>Escalation to: Senior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve the quality of IS&amp;T products</td>
<td>Leadership Team</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Every 2 weeks / Quarterly (Architecture &amp; Innovation)</td>
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