Community of Practice

Terms of Reference

# Background

A Community of Practice (CoP) is defined as: “A group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.”[[1]](#footnote-1) CoP’s are usually informal, self-organising, and span across departments with members distributed throughout an organisation.

To that end, the purpose of this < FUNCTION > Community of Practice is to create a structure that allows our staff and contractors to promote best practice and build common capability in <FUNCTION> across the organisation.

# Objectives

The objectives of the CoP will vary over time, but will include:

* To identify, gather, and seek agreement on <FUNCTION> community requirements;
* To provide a forum for the cooperation of activities where <FUNCTION> adds value to existing initiatives;
* To identify linkages and opportunities for collaborative strategic and technical projects and to coordinate the delivery of <FUNCTION> projects;
* To report on progress and provide updates of projects and programmes that have <FUNCTION> components;
* To advise other bodies in the organisation on matters relating to <FUNCTION>, and on cross-cutting issues of interest to the CoP;
* To provide an informal point of contact for organisational staff on the specific benefit or interest area that affects <FUNCTION>.

# Membership and Structure

Membership of the CoP is open to all business areas with an interest in <FUNCTION> or that shares similar interests, goals, and or objectives.

The CoP will be an hour-long monthly physical meeting, with teleconferencing (where available) for remote members. There is a standing agenda which outlines 5 main sections to each meeting;

1. New Members Introduction;
2. Current Department Initiatives Roundtable: Where each member has 1 minute to describe what they are currently working on and how members can help each other;
3. Focus Presentation: A 20 minute presentation (as planned by the CoP chair) on a specific topic of interest. This presentation may be from CoP members, other staff or external SME’s;
4. Open Discussion / Lean Coffee: 20 minutes allocated to an open (but still moderated) discussion on any important topics;
5. Future Agenda and Next Meeting Timeframe.

All members are expected to share their expertise, and any documents or other resources they have which they think will be useful to all members.

The responsibility of CoP Chair will rotate between members each meeting. The chair is responsible for:

* Facilitating group discussion to ensure that communication is appropriate and respectful;
* Developing the agenda and/or objectives for the subsequent CoP meeting;
* Sending out regular messages to all CoP members about the next meeting/activity.

\* Unless otherwise agreed, any costs arising from activities under the CoP will be borne by the Member or participant that incurs them, and will be subject to the availability of funds, personnel, and other resources.

1. Étienne Wenger, "Communities of practice: A brief introduction" [↑](#footnote-ref-1)