



CifA

**Chartered
Institute for
Archaeologists**



CifA Networks guidance

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CifA Networks guidance

A. Purpose of this guidance document

Thank you for being part of a CifA Network. Whether you're new to a Network or already volunteering, this guidance will help support you in your role.

Building on CifA's Regulations governing Groups, this guidance covers your key responsibilities, how decisions are made, useful resources, and who to go to for help.

If you have questions or require support, please [email CifA staff](#).

B. Introduction and Group types explained

CifA Groups exist to support the professional development, interests and engagement of CifA members by creating communities built around shared areas of interest and expertise. Whether a Group is shaped by a particular specialism, region, or experience, they provide platforms to share ideas, promote archaeology, network and develop new ways of doing things.

The following four types of Groups can be formed

Area Group	Special Interest Group	Network	Working Group
geographical such as a country, region, or county	specific subject interest or area of technical expertise	subject interest, area of technical expertise, discussion topic, job role or career stage	specific piece of work or output

While each type has its own way of working and engaging with members, the overarching aim is the same: to benefit members by sharing good practice, building professional connections, developing skills, and contributing to sector-wide standards as set out in CifA's three-year plan.

All group activities should provide value for members and be shaped around members' needs. As a volunteer, your involvement helps ensure that your Group's work is driven by members, connecting archaeologists with professional communities.

Groups check list

The checklist outlines the main outputs and actions expected from each type of CifA Group. The full version is available in the [Groups toolkit](#).

Activity	Area or Special Interest Group	Network	Working Group
AGM with optional conference	Yes	No	No
Regular meetings	Yes	Yes	As required
Meeting actions recorded	Yes	No	Yes
Informal online/in person events	Yes	Yes	No
Formal online/in person CPD	Yes	No	Optional
Bulletins or newsletters	Yes	Ad hoc	On completion
Three-year plan	Yes	No	No
Annual report	Yes	Yes	Yes
Group supporters to join for a fee	Yes	No	No
Member positions required	Minimum 5 members	2 facilitators	1 Chair or 2 Co chairs
Advisory Council representative	Yes	No	No
Obtain policy opinions and proposals	Yes	No	No
Knowledge-Hub use	Optional	Optional	Optional
Time/task limited	No	No	Yes

C. Networks explained

Networks bring together individuals with shared subject interests, areas of technical expertise, discussion topics, job roles or career stages with a focus on collaboration and good practice and enable members to create stronger working partnerships.

They plan inclusive and accessible activities and host opportunities for people to come together, such as online discussions, awareness weeks, shared learning opportunities and Network socials.

Networks are a benefit exclusive to CifA members and non-members cannot join. It's important to consider the value this member benefit offers when promoting or developing your Network activities.

D. General expectations for Networks

We value the time and effort you contribute to supporting networking within the profession. To help you get the most out of your role and to ensure the Network runs smoothly we've outlined a few key suggestions to keep everything running effectively.

Network meetings and CPD

To keep Networks active and meaningful, CifA recommends holding at least three informal meetings or tea breaks each year online. These can cover topics or concerns or just be a general space for open discussion. The main purpose of these is to offer members a space to share ideas, ask questions and stay informed about developments in the profession.

We recommend scheduling Network meetings for the year in advance to help people plan their attendance. CifA staff can help find dates and times which avoid clashes in the CifA events calendar, as well as appropriate for the volunteers and attendees.

Network activities are normally carried out online to reach a wide range of members and to make

engaging with the Network accessible to as many people as possible. CifA can host these meetings for you on Microsoft Teams and can also help manage the meeting on the day. We can also help advertise to Network members in advance.

There is not a formal structure for holding a CPD session, but examples of Network activities could include

- tea breaks which have little structure but a specific area to discuss to guide networking
- peer support sessions with problem solving discussions among members
- testing ideas by discussing new approaches or projects before they are developed further
- raising awareness by highlighting issues or themes that might otherwise be overlooked
- informal CPD sessions where members are invited to speak about issues/ or topics
- Ask the Network drop in sessions which members attend with questions for Network specialists

If a Network have a formal CPD idea, this can be passed onto our Events Manager who can be reached via conference@archaeologists.net to consider.

Network communications

Networks are encouraged to send occasional email bulletins in between meetings to encourage participation and keep members up to date with relevant topics or opportunities that may arise.

To meet GDPR requirements, all emails to Network members are sent by CifA staff on your behalf. Just send your content to us via groups@archaeologists.net and we'll take care of setting it up and sending it out.

We can also set up a dedicated Knowledge Hub page for the Network to communicate directly with members. Training will be provided.

E. Network volunteer contact

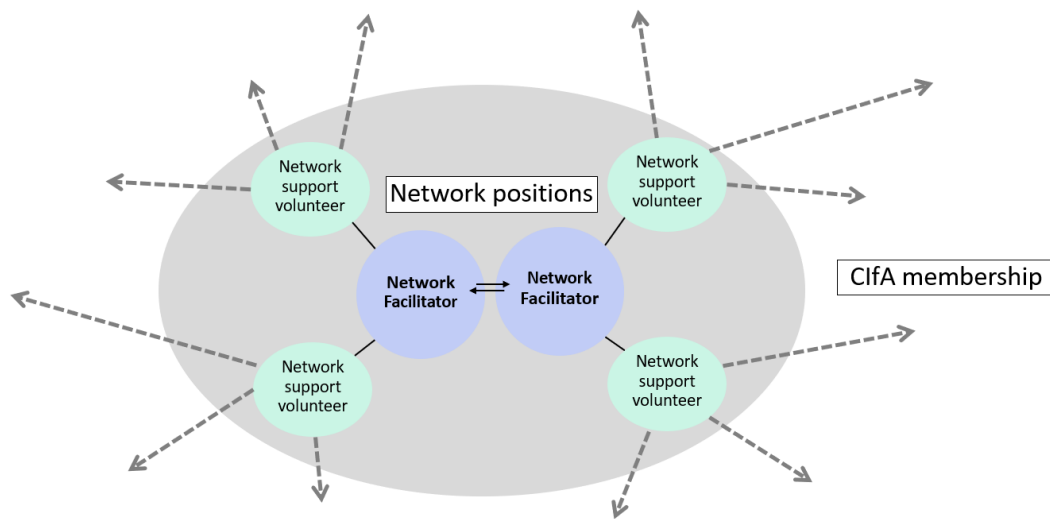
We recommend that Network Facilitators keep in contact with one another and meet at least twice per year to check in on activities and to discuss ideas for future Network meetings. These discussions don't have to be long or formal, as sometimes a short catch-up to plan is all that's needed.

There is no requirement to produce full minutes, but it might be helpful to keep a simple record of agreed actions and list who is responsible for them. This helps make sure that tasks do not get missed.

F. Network volunteer roles and structure

Two Facilitators should be named to help organise meetings, manage online discussions and ensure that all activity aligns with CifA's [Statement on Dignity and Respect](#). These roles can be rotated annually if needed. The Facilitators take the lead in planning and delivering informal activities such as discussion sessions, networking opportunities or professional development events and ensure the Network remains active and relevant to its members. They also act as the main link between the Network and CifA staff.

Additional Network Volunteers can support Facilitators to help with event planning, communication and follow-up tasks like note taking or sharing resources if required. They may also help with outreach by suggesting topics for discussion and sharing ways for people to get involved.



G. Tips to help you run a Network

✓	Be clear about what your Network aims are. Is it raising awareness, building community of specialists or providing a forum for discussion? This will help you get the right people involved and taking part in Network conversations.
✓	Try and ensure your activities are welcoming and easy for people from all backgrounds to join in.
✓	Share stories, celebrate successes and highlight ways people can get involved. Share what your Network is proud of and has achieved with the CifA membership so they can understand more about your work via CifA's email update.
✓	Encourage participation including for short periods of time. Make it easy for people to contribute, such as writing a newsletter article, hosting a social event, sharing a story or updating the Networking's Knowledge Hub space. Be proactive in involving new people and helping them to shape the Network outputs.
✓	Don't do it all alone. CifA staff can help with Network promotion, planning, events, advice and so much more. Other Groups might also have good tools or templates you can utilise. Reach out on Knowledge Hub with collaboration offers or advice requests.

H. Thank you

Thank you for volunteering as part of a CifA Group.

If you have any questions, need support in your role, or want to explore opportunities to get more involved, CifA staff are here to help.