



CifA

**Chartered
Institute for
Archaeologists**



CifA Working Groups guidance

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CifA Working Groups guidance

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CifA Working Groups guidance

A. Purpose of this guidance document

Thank you for being part of a CifA Working Group. Whether you're new to a Working Group or have volunteered with one in the past, this guidance will help support you in your role.

Building on CifA's Regulations governing Area and Special Interest Groups, Networks and Working Groups this guidance covers your key responsibilities, how decisions are made, useful resources, and who to go to for help during your time on a Working Group.

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. Working Groups explained

Working Groups are created to tackle specific projects or issues where focused input is needed. They are set up in response to a current need such as a particular resource requirement or task. They exist for a limited period until the work is complete.

Unlike other Group types, volunteering on a Working Group is usually based on relevant skills or expertise. Volunteers may be brought in for their specialist knowledge or experience, and involvement can be flexible depending on the needs of the project.

Working Group examples could include

- drafting Standards and guidance documents on areas of professional practice
- developing or updating resources such as CifA toolkits
- research and information gathering by surveying members, collating data or mapping existing practice
- identifying and promoting ways to embed CifA resources within a specialism
- exploring emerging issues in archaeology and developing resources to improve knowledge or understanding

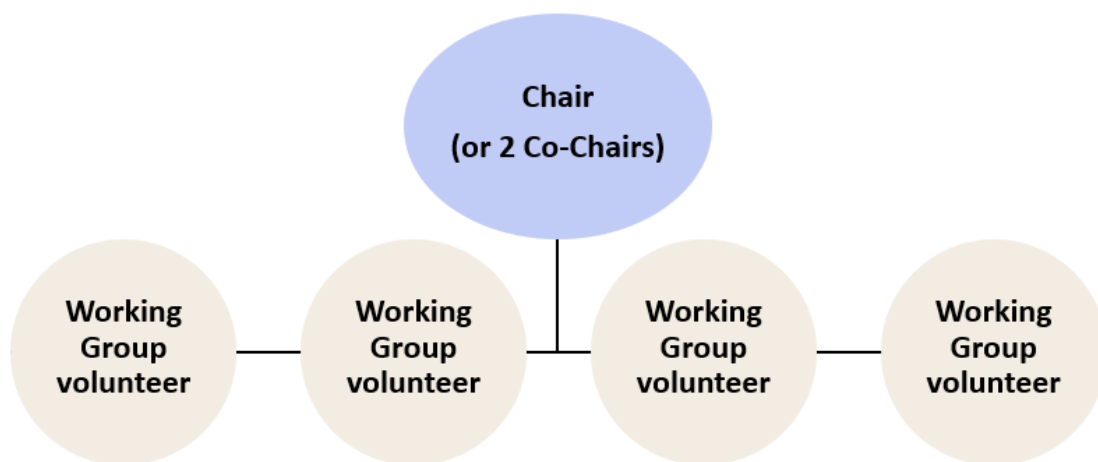
If you're invited to be part of a Working Group, it's because your input is needed for a specific piece of work.

D. Working Group volunteer roles and structure

Each Working Group should appoint a Chair (or two Co-Chairs) to lead and coordinate the work, set agendas, track progress and act as the main contact with CifA staff. Chairs also ensure the Group work remains focused, works respectfully in line with CifA's [dignity and respect statement](#) and may share updates with members.

Working Groups usually include one or two Chairs and at least three additional volunteers. Each person on a Working Group will bring their own relevant skills and will all work to achieve the Group's objectives.

Time commitment varies by project and may change over its duration.



E. General expectations for Working Group volunteers

We appreciate the time and effort you are contributing to support a focused piece of work that will benefit the wider profession. This Working Group has been created with a specific task and timeline in mind and will conclude once the agreed objectives have been achieved.

To keep things simple and effective, the Group should only include the people needed to get the work done. Having too many members can slow progress and make coordination harder.

Working Group planning

At the start of a new project, the Working Group should hold an initial meeting to complete the Working Group proposal document. This proposal should outline the issue the Group is aiming to address along with the key stages in the project.

The proposal document completion involves listing the key tasks involved, the person leading and the delivery date. This helps CifA staff to factor in support required in advance and know who to contact regarding specific areas of work. The Working Group Chair is not required to be the leading person for each area of work if there is another person with suitable expertise.

Working Groups are not expected to deliver events unless it's directly related to their task. An example of this would be running a workshop or consultation session as part of the project plan. In most cases these activities would be suggested rather than required.

Working Group membership communication

It is recommended that each Working Group considers how it will share its findings or final product with the wider CifA membership. CifA staff can support with sharing articles in CifA's Update bulletin, hosting an online discussion or webinar, or sharing reports.

You may also find it helpful to provide occasional updates to keep members informed of progress. These might take the form of brief email bulletins or blog-style updates shared with the membership.

Keeping in touch with CifA

Working Group Chairs should keep in contact with relevant CifA staff to update on the progress of the Group and ensure that project stage and review points are being met and ensures you have the support needed to meet the objectives.







Where possible, CifA staff should also be updated if Working Group volunteers leading on key tasks change, challenges arise, or there are issues with timescales. Keeping in touch means staff can provide practical help such as organising meetings and sharing updates with members, as well as advising on processes or promoting the work if required.

F. Working Group volunteer meetings

There are no fixed requirements for how often Working Group volunteers should meet or how long meetings should be. We recommend that the Working Group volunteers agree a meeting schedule early on based on the scope and urgency of the project. This helps ensure steady progress, timely decisions and good communication throughout.

You don't need to record full minutes from each meeting. A short list of agreed actions with names assigned to each task is enough to keep things on track and make sure follow-up actions are clear.

G. Tips to help you run a Working Group

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|---|--|
|  | Define exactly what the Working Group is trying to achieve and make sure you have a clear outcome such as a report, toolkit or professional practice paper. This will help you to focus on a goal and know when you have achieved it. |
|  | Establish clear start and end dates and break the project down into manageable stages. Deadlines for the key milestones can help you to remain on track. |
|  | Involve people with the relevant knowledge, experience or interest in the topic and make expectations clear from the start so everyone understands their role and responsibilities. |
|  | Keep meetings short and purposeful with clear agendas and action points. Keep the end goal in sight and avoid getting sidetracked by unrelated discussions. |
|  | At the end of the project, clearly present your findings or outputs in a format that's easy to use and understand. CifA staff can help you to plan ways of disseminating the information in a suitable way which suits the Working Group members. |
|  | Don't do it all alone. CifA staff can help with Group 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. Working Group completion and closure

Because Working Groups are created to tackle specific time limited tasks, they are formally closed once their project or objective has been completed.

CifA will ensure the outcomes and valuable contribution by the Working Groups are shared with the wider membership where appropriate.

I. Thank you

Thank you for volunteering as part of a CifA Working 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.