



AUSTRALIAN
COUNCIL
FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

ACFID Community of Practice Guidelines for Convenors



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AN INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE?

A Community of Practice (CoP) is a group of people who come together to share, learn and work. They are held together by a common interest in a body of knowledge and are driven by a desire to solve problems together and contribute to the ongoing development of that body of knowledge.



“Communities of Practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly”

In a Community of Practice, learning is driven by the challenges and achievements that members face in their work, and a meaningful Community of Practice occurs when the learning changes what happens in practice. It is important for members to be active practitioners who can both benefit from and contribute to the Community and implement the Community's ideas in their own practice. Learning in a Community of Practice goes beyond simply transferring knowledge from the knowledgeable to the less knowledgeable. It involves a continuous cycle where members generate ideas, apply them in practice, and reflect on their effectiveness. The stories they share about their experiences and outcomes

serve as valuable learning resources for the entire Community, fostering ongoing learning and improvement over time.

WHY ARE COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE VALUABLE?

Both individuals and organisations benefit from the collaborative, supportive, and innovative environment that Communities of Practice create. In an ever-changing world, staying up to date with current best practice can be challenging.

Many aspects of a person's role compete for limited time. Whilst the internet serves as a quick repository of information and new research, it does not take into account the subtle nuances of particular contexts - for this we need Communities of Practice.

Communities of Practice help to forge connections among people across organisational and geographic boundaries and can even create bridges across silos in business units and projects.

Table 1: Benefits of Communities of Practice

INDIVIDUALS	ORGANISATIONS	ACFID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice / skill development • Networking • Problem solving • Support and motivation • Innovation • Develop leadership skills • Awareness of wider issues in the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge sharing • Improved performance • Employee engagement • Innovation • Working collaboratively for increased impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice / skill development across the sector • Sector collaboration • Build a united voice • Source of experts • Targeted communication

FUNCTIONS OF A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Communities of Practice are different to groups of people brought together for a specific purpose such as a project. They are united by ongoing learning and sharing. They may perform timebound tasks together, but this does not define the Community.

As CoP members come from varying organisations, backgrounds, the mere fact they bring differing perspectives and practice to a CoP is part of its strength.



“The trust members develop is based on their ability to learn together: to care about the domain, to respect each other as practitioners, to expose their questions and challenges, and to provide responses that reflect practical experience”

There is a wide range of functions or activities that a Community of Practice can provide, as outlined in table 1.



Table 2: Functions of a Community of Practice

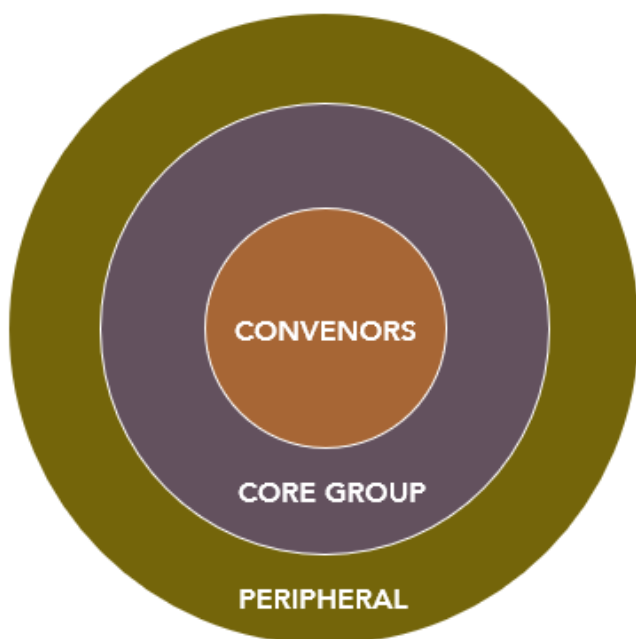
FUNCTIONS	EXAMPLES
CONVENES AND CONNECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings people together from different organisations and geographic locations • Provides a space to network
PROBLEM SOLVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we...?
CREATES RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could we develop together to assist our jobs? • What knowledge do we want to formally record? • Should we update the Practice note on this?
AMPLIFIES INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you all seen the latest report released? • Are you aware of this event coming up?
REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has anyone encountered this issue before? • Does anyone have a template on this?
EXPERIENCE SHARING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has anyone experienced this before? What did you do in response?
ENHANCES COLLABORATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shall we make a joint submission? Would anyone like to join this project?
INCREASES KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have brought in an expert speaker today on a specific topic
REUSES, SHARES ASSETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I did a presentation on that last week; you are welcome to look at my slides. • We have a template on that which you can use.
MAPS KNOWLEDGE AND IDENTIFIES GAPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who knows what, and what are we missing?

THE STRUCTURE OF A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Communities of Practice can look different in varying situations; however, most follow the basic structure:

- **Convenors:** One or more people that coordinate the functions of the group.
- **Core Members:** Those members that actively participate.
- **Peripheral Participants:** Those members who receive the information the group is sharing and only rarely contribute.

Figure 1: Basic CoP Structure



TYPES OF COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE PARTICIPATION

Whilst engagement in a CoP is important, participation will not be equal among members and does not need to be.

Membership of a CoP is voluntary and rarely the person's main activity or job in their role, so participation will reflect this dynamic.

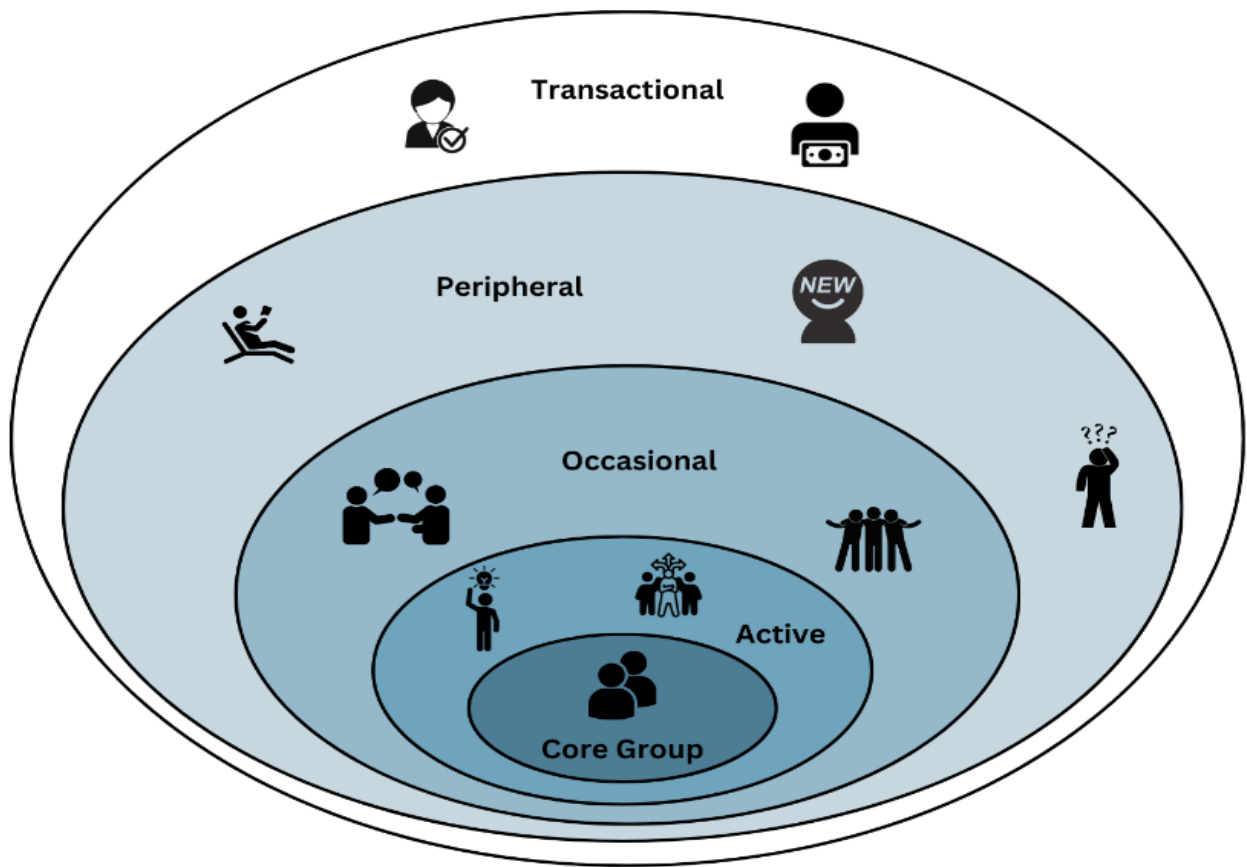


"In a healthy Community there is usually a flow of people moving across the levels of participation"

As a Community of Practice matures, and at different points in time, there may be further differentiation in how participants engage as follows:

- **Core Group:** The engine room with Convenors sharing the role
- **Active Participants:** practitioners that are engaged and committed, sometimes forming a "Steering Committee"
- **Occasional participants:** members who participate selectively when something is of special interest to them.
- **Peripheral participants:** people who belong to the Community lightly, either because they are still newcomers or because they do not have as much personal commitment to the practice, but want to keep informed
- **Transactional participants:** outsiders who interact with the Community occasionally to receive or contribute something without being members themselves

Figure 2: Types of CoP Member participation



“It’s important to remember that different participants will have different needs and capacities. For a healthy Community of Practice, focus on the engagement of core, active members rather than always trying to engage the peripheral members. This will keep energy high and in time, draw in more members”

ACFID'S COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

STRUCTURE AND TYPES

ACFID moved from “working groups” to Communities of Practice in 2016. This shift allowed the communities themselves to have control over their purpose, agenda and internal administration.

ACFID's Communities of Practice can form around a wide variety of knowledge domains, which generally fall under one of three categories:

- Thematic (eg Gender Equity CoP, Locally Led Action CoP)
- Operational Functions (eg Human Resources CoP, Finance CoP)
- Geographic regions (eg Africa CoP, Myanmar CoP)

LEVELS OF COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ACTIVITY

As with the nature of all Communities of Practice, individual ACFID CoPs have different levels of activity over time. There may be periods when a CoP is meeting regularly, has high levels of attendance and engagement from members, and may take on ambitious workplans. There may be times when attendance and engagement is lower, meetings are less often, and agenda items are limited to updates and information sharing between members. There may even be periods where a CoP has no Convenors, doesn't meet, with members just posting occasionally on the Communities Platform. This movement between states of dormancy, limited activity and high levels of engagement is not unusual in the life cycle of a CoP.

The screenshot shows the ACFID Communities Platform interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, EVENTS, COMMUNITIES (highlighted), CODE OF CONDUCT, ACFID CONNECT, and RESOURCES. Below the navigation bar, there is a breadcrumb trail: Home / Profile / My Communities. A yellow highlight is over the 'Join / Leave a Community of Practice' link. Below the breadcrumb trail, there is a link to 'Go to Communities Platform'. The main heading is 'My Communities'. Below this heading is a table with three columns: Community, Roles, and Member since.

Community ↑	Roles	Member since
Human Resources	Member	01/03/2023
Locally Led Action	Member	04/05/2023
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)	Member	04/05/2023
Myanmar	Member	08/05/2023
Nepal	Member	27/02/2023
Papua New Guinea	Member	04/05/2023
Racial Justice	Member	04/05/2023
Safeguarding	Member	11/07/2022
Small Member	Member	08/05/2023
Urban	Member	08/05/2023

ACFID SECRETARIAT SUPPORT PROVIDED TO COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

<p>Enable: ACFID sees CoPs as a key part of ACFID’s architecture and is committed to enabling CoPs to function effectively through providing enabling infrastructure, building capacity, sharing lessons and facilitating linkages. If requested, ACFID will facilitate access to government or other stakeholders as required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MYACFID Communities platform • Initial CoP set up and architecture • Guidance on how to use the platform • Assistance with technical issues • CoP Convenor training and guidance • Templates for CoP Administration • Support to engage government and other stakeholders
<p>Inform and Consult: ACFID recognises that much of the sector’s expertise in both policy and practice is located within the Communities and therefore will consult with CoPs on an as-needed basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication of key sector emerging priorities and consultation • Guidance on how to align CoP projects with ACFID’s strategic priorities
<p>Managing Risk: ACFID encourages CoPs to communicate with ACFID about their work, particularly where it may involve sensitive or controversial issues. In such cases, ACFID may provide guidance and work with an individual CoP to institute communication protocols which are specific to that situation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication of work back to ACFID as required • Support for sensitive issues
<p>Work with to deliver: ACFID may ask a CoP or some members of a CoP to undertake a specific piece of work on ACFID’s behalf. In such cases, ACFID will provide additional support to the CoP, including either staff time or budget or both.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time-bound tasks that feed directly into ACFID’s programs of work • Dedicated ACFID Staff Member as required/requested (to note, ACFID Secretariat staff may join CoPs and CoP meetings for their own learning/engagement, and this may not be in a formal way to represent the Secretariat)
<p>Promote: ACFID can promote the work of CoPs through its public communication platforms. This can include posting a blog written by a CoP, sharing tools and other resources developed by CoPs via the Code Good Practice Toolkit and ACFID Resource Library, profiling and engaging expert practitioners from CoPs at conference and other events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of CoP through ACFID communication channels as required (at required and requested of the CoP) • Delivery of plenary and concurrent sessions at ACFID National Conference

CREATING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A new Community of Practice can only be established with ACFID's approval. A new Community should have a clear purpose and a unique focus which cannot be addressed by an existing Community or a sub-group of an existing Community.

Communities of Practice are member-led. To establish a new Community of Practice you will need at least one convener (preferably two), with the backing of your agency and a potential mass of participants drawn from across several agencies. ACFID can assist with the establishment in a number of ways, from assisting with convening at the start, to finding participants and promoting the CoP.

To establish a new CoP:

- Contact ACFID through cops@acfid.asn.au or the relevant ACFID staff member you have been liaising with.
- Provide the proposed name and reason for initiating the CoP. Describe the need for the new CoP.
- If approved, the CoP will be set up in our platform, and we will work with the conveners regarding its launch.

REACTIVATING A DORMANT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

At various times some CoPs go through periods of dormancy, where there may be no Convenors, or the existing Convenors haven't had time to facilitate meetings or discussions with the CoP.

If there is interest in the CoP membership for a Community to become more active, ACFID members can contact ACFID (cops@acfid.asn.au) asking about its status and flagging that there are staff interested in taking up a Convening role to help reactivate the CoP.

ACFID will assist in identifying and connecting with the most recent Convenors, and/or putting a call out for others interested in playing a role in reactivating the CoP and supporting logistics for reactivation.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MEMBERSHIP

Communities are primarily vehicles for staff from ACFID Member agencies to share, learn and collaborate. Currently, CoP membership is only open to staff from ACFID Member agencies - either Full Members or Affiliate Members.

Non-members, such as DFAT staff, managing contractors, independent consultants and academics are permitted to be invited to CoP meetings as guest speakers/contributors; however, they will not be permitted to join the "Communities Platform" where the CoP forums are contained.

ACFID member agency staff can join and leave any CoP, by their own volition. To do so, they need an account on MYACFID that is correctly linked with their organisation. A work email address must also be used when possible.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE CONVENORS

CoPs are required to select one or more member as Convenors. Convenors must be staff within a Full or Affiliate Member organisation. ACFID strongly recommends that CoPs appoint at least two co-Convenors to share the responsibility and ensure continuity when one Convenor is absent.

The Convenors of the Community are responsible for:

- Chairing meetings
- Planning Meeting Agendas
- Facilitating communication within the group

- Managing relationships with external stakeholders e.g. guest speakers;
- Acting as the point of contact with the ACFID Secretariat;
- Introducing new members to the work of the CoP;
- Participating in ACFID Convenor Roundtables (once or twice a year); and
- Risk management, including abiding by ACFID standards.

Convenors who are starting in the role or stepping down from the role should notify ACFID on cops@acfid.asn.au so that our database and the CoPs platform can be updated accordingly. In the first instance all efforts will be made by the resigning Convenor and existing CoP members to find a replacement for the position. In the second instance ACFID may support the process of finding a replacement Convenor. ACFID staff should not be convenors of a Community of Practice, unless required when establishing or reinvigorating a CoP.

PARTICIPATING IN A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

An individual's level of participation and engagement in a CoP is self-selected and self-managed and hence ACFID recognises and accepts that participation will vary across and within groups.

Individual participation is defined by following characteristics.

- Membership is voluntary;
- Members can belong to more than one CoP;
- Members are accountable to themselves and the group;
- Members can vary their level of participation. Whilst some group members will drive group content and action, others may observe from the sidelines. Other participants may choose to engage at different times or on particular initiatives or projects depending on their own workload/capacity.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ETIQUETTE AND COMMUNICATION

ACFID CoP members can engage with each other at any time they wish on our online platform called "Communities". For each CoP, this platform provides:

- The names of the Convenors for the CoP
- A forum to house discussion threads
- A resource library to store documents
- Events associated with the CoP, such as meetings - with an ability to download to your calendar.
- Private messaging between individuals in the CoP.
- The ability to set notifications so you are aware when someone has posted to a discussion.

All discussions or content that is stored within "Communities" is only visible and accessible to the members of the CoP. CoP members should respect the confidentiality of each other and not share information outside of the CoP unless permission has been granted.

Each CoP may determine the frequency of meetings and whether they are online or in-person. Most CoPs, at a minimum, meet every quarter online. Communities may choose to hold face-to-face meetings on occasion, but ACFID funding is not available to support these. CoPs are welcome to use ACFID's boardroom for meetings, subject to availability.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND BRANDING

As individual groups and in aggregate, CoPs will be branded under ACFID's name, e.g. 'ACFID's Communities of Practice' and the 'ACFID Safeguarding CoP'. However, for any external facing work undertaken by a CoP such as letters to DFAT, case studies/guidelines for external distribution, events etc, CoP's cannot use ACFID's name unless explicitly requested/approved by ACFID's CEO or his/her delegate.

CLOSING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

CoPs can exist for as long as their members or ACFID wish for them to exist. ACFID will periodically check whether CoPs are or intend to continue functioning, including through monitoring CoP communications. If a CoP has been completely inactive (no meetings or discussions/posts by members) for a significant period of time, ACFID will close the CoP.



COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FACILITATION: A detailed guide for Convenors

LEADING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: THE ROLE OF THE CONVENOR

Whilst Communities of Practice do form their own sense of momentum, it does take some effort to keep them going and there are administrative tasks that need to be carried out by the group. This is where the role of the Convenor comes in. It's important to have a minimum of two Convenors to share responsibilities. This helps maintain momentum in the absence of one of the Convenors. According to their level of confidence and preferences, convenors may share roles of chairing, planning agendas, preparing slides, administering breakout rooms, taking notes, etc.

SHARING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ROLES

Not all tasks are solely the responsibility of the Convenor, and members of the CoP itself can be tasked to provide additional support. For example, you may have a rotating chair or minute taker. You may form a subgroup to conduct an activity and report back to the main CoP. You may ask other CoP members to organise a meeting or event or speaker.



“Taking on the role of leading a CoP is voluntary, but you don't have to do the heavy lifting on your own! A CoP is only as good as the members make it!”

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES WITH PARTICIPATION

There are various situations when these layers of participation may require intervention.

- The core group never changes and becomes stagnant (see ['Bringing on New Convenors'](#) and ['Bringing in New Members'](#)).
- The less active/occasional participants don't volunteer to assist the core group with other functions within the CoP (see ['Sharing CoP Roles'](#)).
- The core group holds important 'practice based' discussions amongst themselves instead of with the rest of the Community (see ['Communication within a CoP'](#) and ['Encouraging Engagement'](#)).
- Members are mainly on the periphery and not engaging because they feel unwelcome, or do not know how and when to engage. (see ['Welcoming Members'](#) and ['Encouraging Engagement'](#))

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

There are a number of principles that lead to a successful and sustained Community [5].



01 DESIGN FOR EVOLUTION

A CoP may start simply and build over time. Initial meetings may focus on getting to know each other and establishing the way you work. Once trust and engagement are established, more complex activities can be introduced. You may decide to split off into subgroups to work on particular projects, or ACFID may have a requirement to engage you as subject matter experts to feed into a strategic sector issue.

02 CREATE A RHYTHM

The tempo of connection is important. Meetings should reflect a rhythm that members can rely on. We are after a steady, strong rhythm that gives the CoP a sense of liveliness. Too fast will cause members to reduce participation as they are overwhelmed. Too slow and your Community will feel sluggish and it will be hard to motivate the group.

03 CONNECTION

Creating a rich opportunity for people with similar interests to gather and connect. If meaningful, connections made in the group will extend beyond the boundaries of the group and provide long and valuable professional and personal relationships.

04 INSIDE AND OUTSIDE

Whilst ACFID's CoPs are closed to non-members, there is much value in bringing in diverse perspectives. Encouraging guests to join meetings as appropriate can be a great way to diversify meetings and discussions.

05 PURPOSEFUL PRACTICE AND LEARNING

The group provides tangible ways to take insights or new ideas and put them into practice both in the group and in day-to-day work, using the group to share and reflect on learning and refine practice. Topics brought to the group are relevant, useful for day-to-day application, and speak to individual interests and real challenges faced by leaders and practitioners.

06 SHARING AND REFLECTION

Psychological safety, which allows for vulnerability, brings people in groups closer together. As members share personal stories about what's working (and what is not) and reflect on their learning, a powerful action learning loop is put into practice. Ensure the CoP remains a place where members feel safe to share.

06 SHARING AND REFLECTING

Ensure the CoP remains a place where members feel safe to share.

05 PRACTICE AND LEARNING

Look for tangible ways to put new ideas into practice.

04 INSIDE AND OUTSIDE

There is value in bringing in diverse perspectives. Encourage guest participation



01 DESIGN FOR EVOLUTION

Start simply and build over time

02 CREATE A RHYTHM

A strong, steady rhythm creates liveliness.

03 CONNECTION

Meaningful connections will extend beyond the CoP.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Communities of Practice may benefit from having a Terms of Reference to clarify their objectives, scope, membership, roles of Convenors, working methods, etiquette and communication and processes for planning.

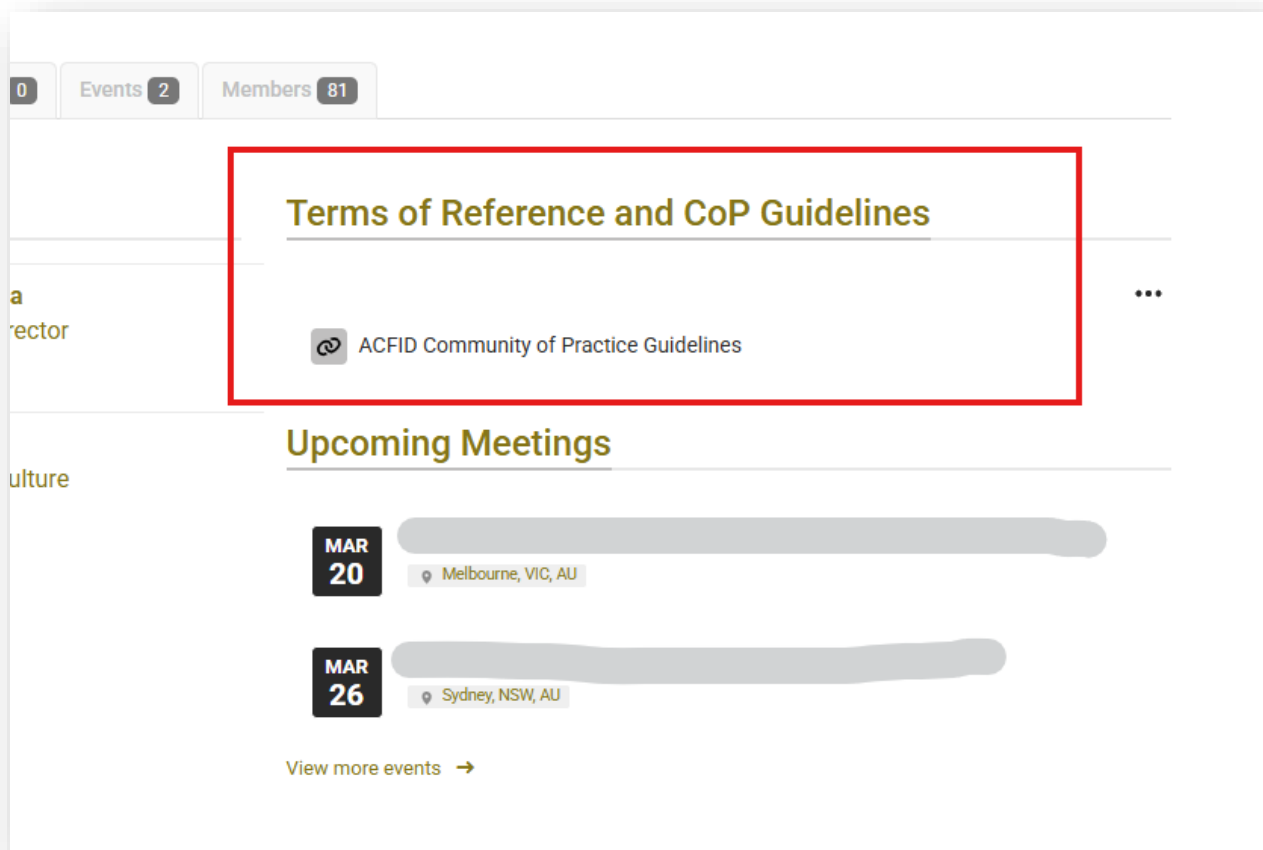
Convenors are provided with a suggested template for a Terms of Reference, that can be used. A CoP ToR does not need to be lengthy or detailed but should provide enough information

for those interested in joining the CoP and give some guidance to Convenors and members about what will be in and out of scope of the Community's functions.

The CoP ToR can be updated by Convenors (with input from CoP Members) on an as-needs basis.

You will find each CoPs ToR on the community's home page (see the image below).

If you would like to update the ToR, please contact us at cops@acfid.asn.au.

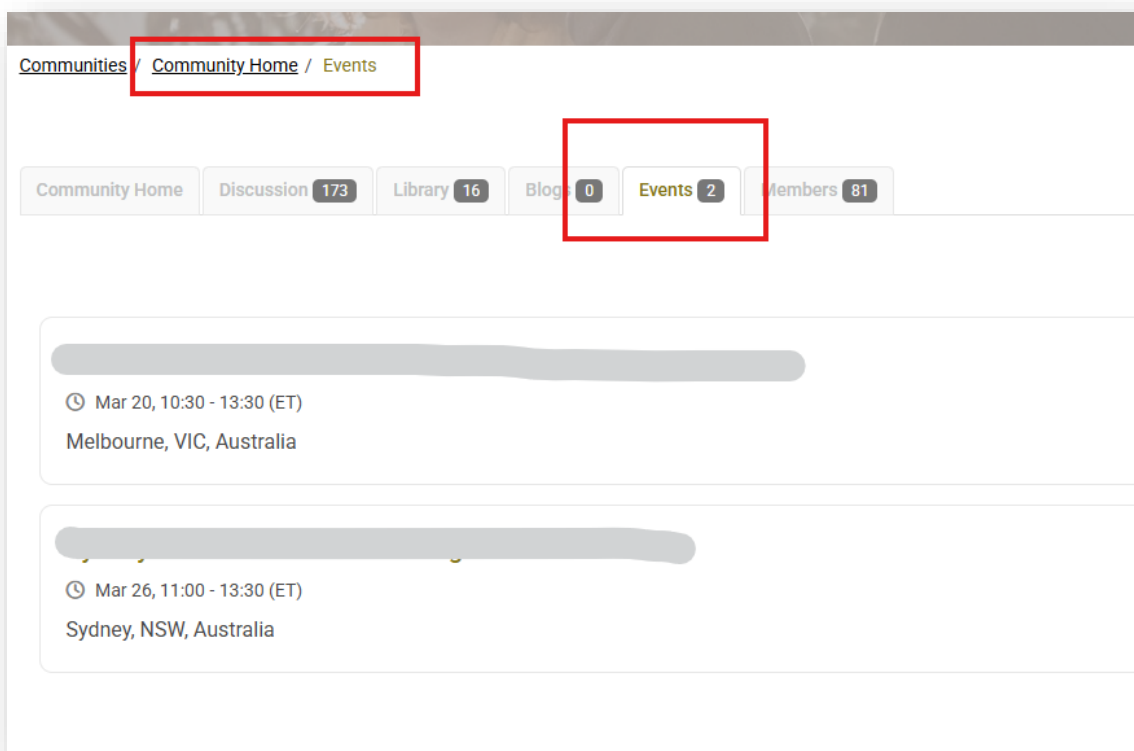


HOLDING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MEETINGS

The following steps may be followed when planning, running and following up after CoP Meetings:

Big Picture Planning for your CoP Meetings

- Connect with other Convenors. Plan how and when the Convenors will plan meetings - will you have a Teams chat, a regular planning meeting in your calendars, taken turns to plan meetings etc? You may include your ACFID Secretariat focal point in this planning too, so they can contribute to agenda items and planning when appropriate.
- Plan the date, time, duration of the meeting. Some CoPs use a regular schedule and timing so CoP members can anticipate meetings (e.g. Last Friday in the month at 10am, or once a quarter on a Tuesday morning).
- Please ensure you check the dates and times of other upcoming meetings listed under 'Communities homepage' under 'events' to avoid any scheduling overlaps or conflicts.
- Once you set up the meeting, it will be displayed automatically on the Communities homepage.



Planning Individual Meetings

- Plan the meeting agenda (see “Agenda Setting”). If you have an ACFID Secretariat focal point in your CoP, you may want to check with them to see if they have any updates to include in the agenda. You may want to leave space for Any Other Business (AOB) raised by members in the meeting itself.
- Set a meeting event in the Communities Platform (see How To Guide) which will send an invite out via email/calendar invite to all CoP members.
- Make an announcement in the CoP Platform alerting members to the meeting, its modality (and location and/or links to join), calling for agenda items and/or informing them of the meeting agenda if any items are already planned. You may want to add to this discussion thread closer to the date with reminders about the meeting, or updates when you have a finalized agenda.

Running the Meeting

- Decide if the meeting will require minutes to be taken or not. If minutes are required, decide who the minute taker will be, or call out for a minute taker at the start of the meeting.
- If the meeting is online, start the meeting early with the other Convenors. Ensure you are online for the meeting at least a few minutes early so you can test the sound and do any last-minute planning for the meeting.
- Start by introducing yourself and other Convenors, and with an Acknowledgement of Country.
- If online, encourage members to have their cameras on if possible.
- Provide an overview of the agenda, finishing time, and anything else members should expect/be prepared for in the meeting.
- If there are a small number of participants, you may take time for everyone to verbally introduce

themselves at the start of the meeting. If not, encourage them to post their name, organisation and location in the chat.

- You may want to include a short icebreaker to help people connect and engage before you move into the main agenda.
- Be clear about if you will be recording any parts of the meeting, and if any parts shouldn't be recorded. Ensure everyone on the call is aware if you are recording the meeting.
- Help those presenting in the meeting (guest speakers, members presenting agenda items) keep to time, by letting them know at the start of their agenda item how long they have, with a reminder when they reach time.
- At the end of the meeting, call for agenda items for the next meeting and/or remind members.
- Share the time and date for the next meeting, or if it's not set yet, let members know when and how it will be announced.

Following up the Meeting

- If you would like the meeting recording made available to CoP members, connect with ACFID to post the meeting to ACFID's Youtube channel.
- Make a post in the CoP's platform following up from the meeting. You do not need to take and share detailed minutes, but posting a few sentences summarising what happened in the meeting, any links or resources shared, a recording of the meeting (if there is one), thanking members for participating, and informing them of the next meeting date, will help keep the rest of the CoP in the loop of what has been happening, and encourage participation in future meetings.



Credit: ACFID Conference

AD HOC MEETINGS

As well as scheduled meetings, there may be situations which require an ad-hoc meeting of a Community of Practice. For example:

- Request for consultation or discussion with DFAT personnel (e.g an Ambassador requesting consultation)
- Need for timely discussion/consultation on a DFAT submission or policy
- Coordination on an in-country humanitarian or political situation
- Visit to Australia from CoP-relevant individuals or organisations.

Meetings for these situations may be called out of session from planned meetings by Convenors or ACFID Secretariat staff. If Convenors need support with meetings such as these (e.g if they are not available to chair, or need help preparing), they are encouraged to contact their focal point at the Secretariat, or CoPs lead at cops@acfid.asn.au.

BRINGING IN NEW MEMBERS

A new CoP or a re-activated CoP may seek to increase membership. Strategies that can be utilised include:

- Posting in The Weekly E-newsletter about upcoming meetings and events.
- Hosting an ACFID Connect (webinar open to all ACFID members) that will draw the interest of new people that you can then invite to join the CoP
- Requesting ACFID Secretariat to send out information about the CoP via their relevant email lists.

For support in any of these strategies, contact your ACFID Secretariat focal point, or email cops@acfid.asn.au.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

Staff from ACFID's member organisations can join and leave CoPs as they wish, with no requirement to notify ACFID or the convenors. Whilst this reduces administrative burden, it does run the risk of having new people feel lost within meetings and not knowing what is expected of them. It is suggested that each CoP implement a method to identify and welcome new CoP members.

Suggestions to do this include:

- Develop a welcome post that is pinned to the top of your forum on ACFID's CoP platform "Communities". This should direct new members to the CoP TOR and workplan stored within the CoP library.
- Open meetings by welcoming any new members.
- Allocating the task of inducting new members to someone within the CoP. This role is responsible for creating forum discussion threads directed to

new members and offering to assist with helping them settle into the CoP.



COMMUNICATING WITHIN A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A key principle of ACFID Communities of Practice is that discussions, meetings and activity of a CoP should be accessible to all members of that CoP. The ACFID Communities Platform provides a space for a CoP to share and keep information; to have discussions between members; and to announce meetings.

If sub-groups, or working groups form as offshoots of existing CoPs, their existence and meetings should be regularly announced on the CoPs platform, so they remain visible and accessible to the broader CoP.

Other methods and platforms of communication (such as whatsapp groups and email lists) are discouraged as:

- They will exclude some members of a CoP (new members can join at any time).
- If the CoPs platform is not being used, new members will find a CoP with no recent activity and assume there is little reason to engage.
- CoP members will be confused at the different ways CoPs are operating. By using the CoPs platform, there is a consistent method for members to engage with multiple CoPs.

If external stakeholders reach out to CoP Convenors for consultation, input or to share information, this should be conveyed to the CoP membership as a whole, either through an agenda item in a meeting, or in a discussion post.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

Your CoP may at times have some engagement with the Australian Government, e.g. DFAT, DFAT

Post/Embassies/High Commission, DCCEW, or Ambassadors. This may include the CoP inviting government stakeholders to speak/present in CoP Meetings; Government departments requesting input on policies or work they are doing; consultations; submissions; briefings on CoP members' work, etc.

The ACFID Secretariat is tasked with supporting and facilitating a coordinated approach to engagement between ACFID members and the government. The Secretariat is also aware of the range of engagements that is happening with the government across ACFID and its CoPs, working groups, committees and board.

For these reasons, CoP Convenors are requested to keep the ACFID Secretariat informed and involved when communicating with the government on behalf of a CoP. Communicate with your focal point at the ACFID Secretariat, or with the CoPs lead (cops@acfid.asn.au) before initiating engagement, and keep them copied in any emails with government staff. If government staff reach out to you, bring the ACFID Secretariat into the communication. They will be able to alert you to any strategic issues to be aware of or include and also be able to alert other parts of ACFID of your engagement to maximise impact, avoid duplication, and ensure the sector has a consistent approach and messaging.

To note, if you have engagement with the government as part of your role with your own organisation, separate from your role as CoP Convenor, be aware of potential overlap in your communication, and ensure you make it clear when you are engaging as an ACFID CoP Convenor, and when you are engaging as a representative of your own organisation.

ENCOURAGING ENGAGEMENT

It can be challenging convening a CoP when there is low attendance or low energy in meetings.

Below are a range of strategies to encourage engagement in meetings:

- Have an ice-breaker activity at the start of a meeting.
- Encourage participants to leave their cameras on during the meeting.
- Have smaller breakout groups at the start for members to introduce themselves in some more detail.
- Use Mentimeter surveys, polls or call out for responses in the chat to engage those not confident to speak.
- During discussion time go into smaller breakout groups, then bring key points back to the plenary.
- Have some good pre-prepared questions around agenda items that are specifically designed to stimulate responses and meaningful conversations
- When the agenda is shared, alert members to what they should prepare for the meeting (e.g that they need to be ready to share an organizational tool, or share a challenge or achievement)
- Use Google Slides for members to add their ideas to, vote on priorities, add sticky notes during the meeting.
- Have a short survey or feedback at the end to hear how members found the meeting, and suggestions for future meetings.

SHOWCASING YOUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

CoPs are encouraged to showcase the meetings and work they have done and that are upcoming. Opportunities to do so include:

- Short announcements in The Weekly e-newsletter in the “Communities Corner”. Announcements need to be submitted by Friday afternoon to be included.
- Hosting an “ACFID Connect” event for broader ACFID membership. This may be a panel of CoP members or guest speakers on a specific topic sharing good practice or discussing topical issues. An ACFID Connect event generally needs at least one month to organise and promote.
- Hosting a plenary panel or concurrent session at the annual ACFID Conference. Expressions of Interest for conference sessions are generally sought in April/May.

To take up any of these opportunities, contact your CoP focal point at the Secretariat, or email cops@acfid.asn.au

BRINGING ON NEW CONVENORS

CoPs and their Convenors are encouraged to proactively plan ahead for transitions in Convenors, noting though there is generally no urgency for Convenors to step down if they are still willing and able to continue in the role (as it can be difficult to find volunteers for new Convenors). However, it is better to bring in new Convenors before existing Convenors lose energy and capacity to convene, and before they leave their organisations, or change roles.

Some strategies CoPs can utilise for Convenor transitions include:

- Staggering changes in Convenors. If there are two to three Convenors, bring in one new one at a time so there can be handover of CoP knowledge and history.
- Having a planned rhythm to bringing on new Convenors - e.g. At the end of each calendar year one Convenor steps off, and a new Convenor steps on.
- Doing a call for CoP members interested in Convening and giving them a period where they can "shadow" the existing Convenors to see what the role entails, and build their confidence in stepping into the role (or, to not take on the role if they do not feel up to it).
- Having a larger Convening group that includes CoP members who want to support the CoP but may not have the confidence to chair and lead meetings. These individuals may be able to support planning and logistics of the CoP, and over time build the confidence to take on full Convenor duties.

If you know of a colleague, or anyone in ACFID membership who has an interest in Convening a specific CoP, or in CoP Convening in general, encourage them to reach out to ACFID at cops@acfid.asn.au to find out more about what is involved, and what opportunities there may be for you to Convene a CoP.

HOW TO GUIDE

QUICK LINKS

[CREATING A MYACFID ACCOUNT](#)

[NAVIGATING MYACFID](#)

- ▶ [How do I join a Community of Practice?](#)

[EXPLORING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE \(COPS\) PLATFORM](#)

- ▶ [How can I see which Community of Practice \(CoP\) groups I am part of?](#)
- ▶ [How do I start or join a CoP discussion?](#)
- ▶ [How do I add a CoP meeting/events and check RSVPs?](#)
- ▶ [Where can I find the CoPs Terms of Reference \(ToR\) and guidelines?](#)
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- ▶ [Where can I find the member list of particular CoP group I am in and connect with an individual?](#)
- ▶ [How do I find a contact of a person in CoPs platform?](#)
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- ▶ [Is there a way to receive an email notification of a specific CoP?](#)
- ▶ [How to Add/Update my profile picture?](#)

CREATING A MYACFID ACCOUNT

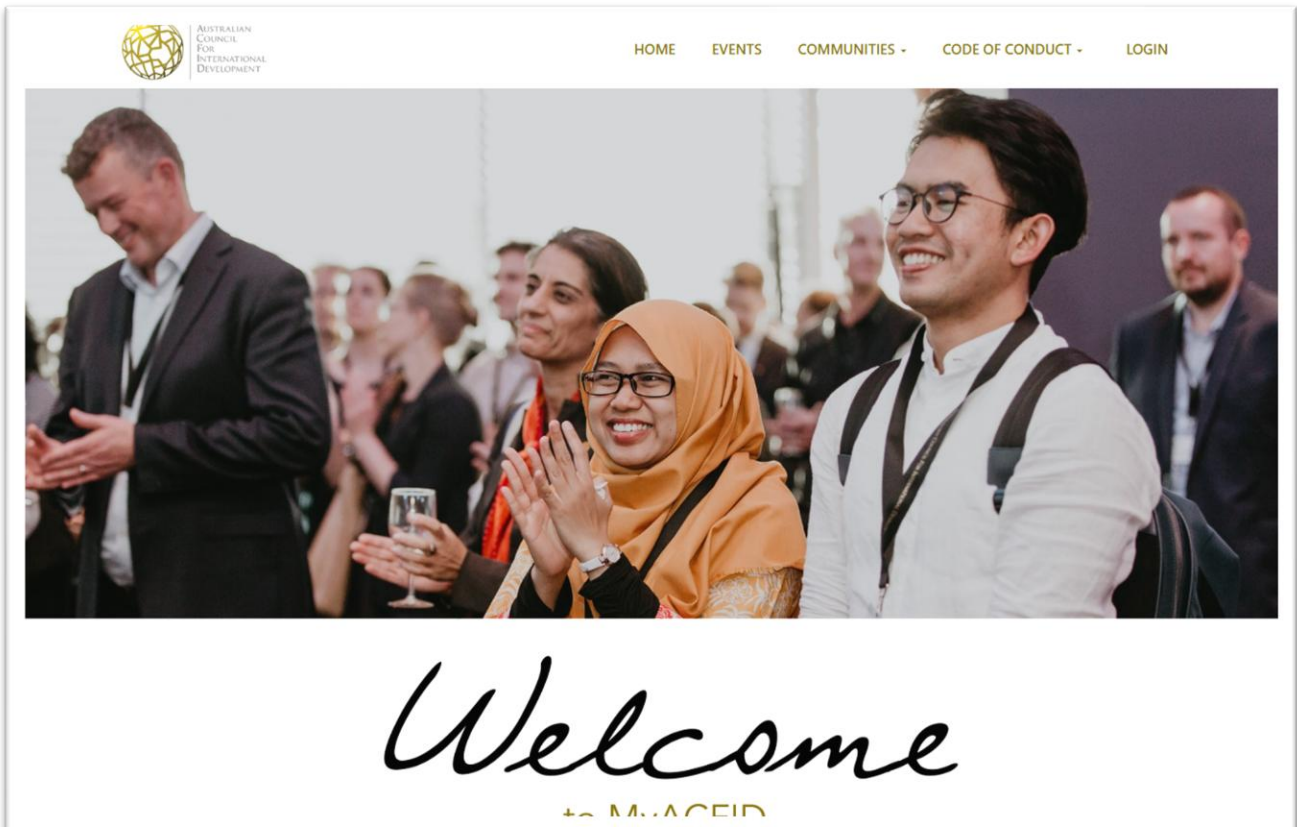
1. Go to the [MYACFID site](#).
2. Click on 'Login', then select 'Sign up now'.
3. Enter your email address and click 'Send verification code'.
4. Check your inbox for an email from 'ACFID Prod B2C Account' containing the verification code.
5. Copy the verification code from the email, paste it into the portal, and click 'Verify code'.
6. Create a password and enter your first and last name.
7. Click 'Create' to complete the process.

After creating your account, it must be linked to your organisation to access Communities of Practice (CoPs) and other resources. *Access is available only to users whose organisation is an ACFID member organisation.*

How to have your account linked to your organisation:

Each ACFID member organisation has a designated Primary Contact (refer to the [MYACFID Primary Contact FAQs](#) for more details). The Primary Contact can assist with linking your account. If you are unsure who your Primary Contact is, please email cops@acfid.asn.au, and we will ensure your account is linked correctly.

NAVIGATING MYACFID



MYACFID is ACFID's member portal that provides access to a range of member benefits. It is always evolving, so additional functions will be added in future. At present, it is primarily used to join Communities of Practice (CoPs), find and register for upcoming ACFID events, and access standards and code reporting. The information below will help you get started and navigate the site.

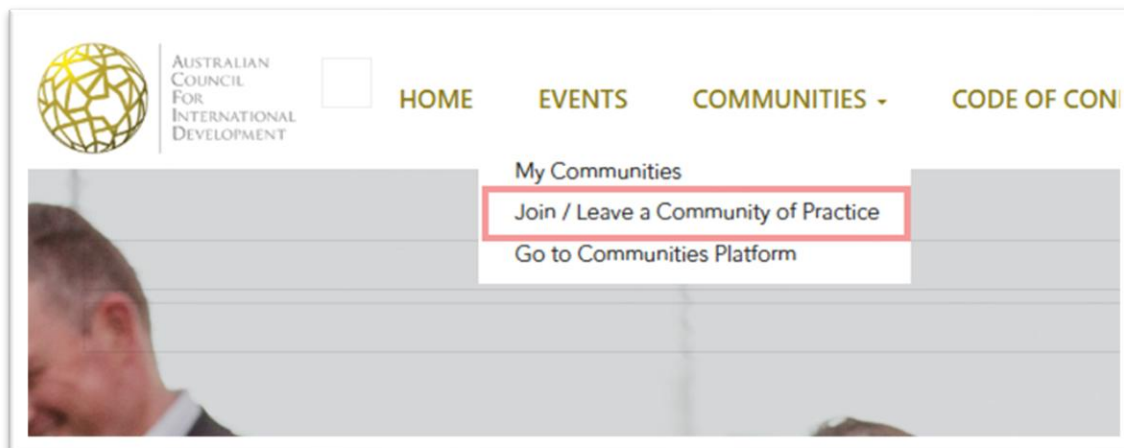
► **How do I join a Community of Practice?**

Once you have successfully registered for [MYACFID](#) and confirmed that your account is linked to your organisation, you can join or leave any Community of Practice you choose.

To join:

- Log in to [MYACFID site](#).

- From the top menu, select 'Communities', then choose 'Join/Leave a Community of Practice' from the dropdown (see image below).
Note: Do not select "Go to Community Platform" if you have not yet joined a CoP, as this will take you directly into the platform. You cannot join CoPs from within the community platform page.



- After selecting Join/Leave a Community of Practice, you will be directed to a page displaying all available CoPs. Locate the CoP you wish to join and click on it.
- On the Community Details page, click the 'Join' button under Registration.



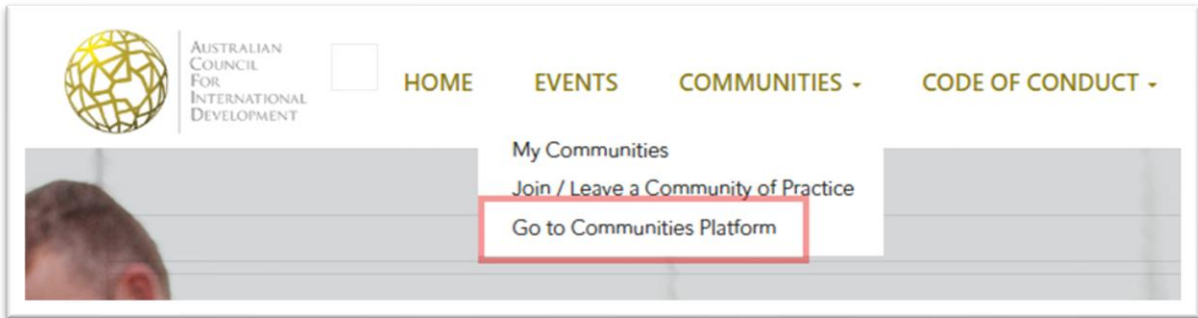
Please note it may take approximately 30 minutes for this to be reflected in your profile.

EXPLORING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COPS) PLATFORM

Access the Communities of Practice via the [MYACFID site](#). MYACFID is ACFID's member portal which is linked to but separate from The Communities Platform.

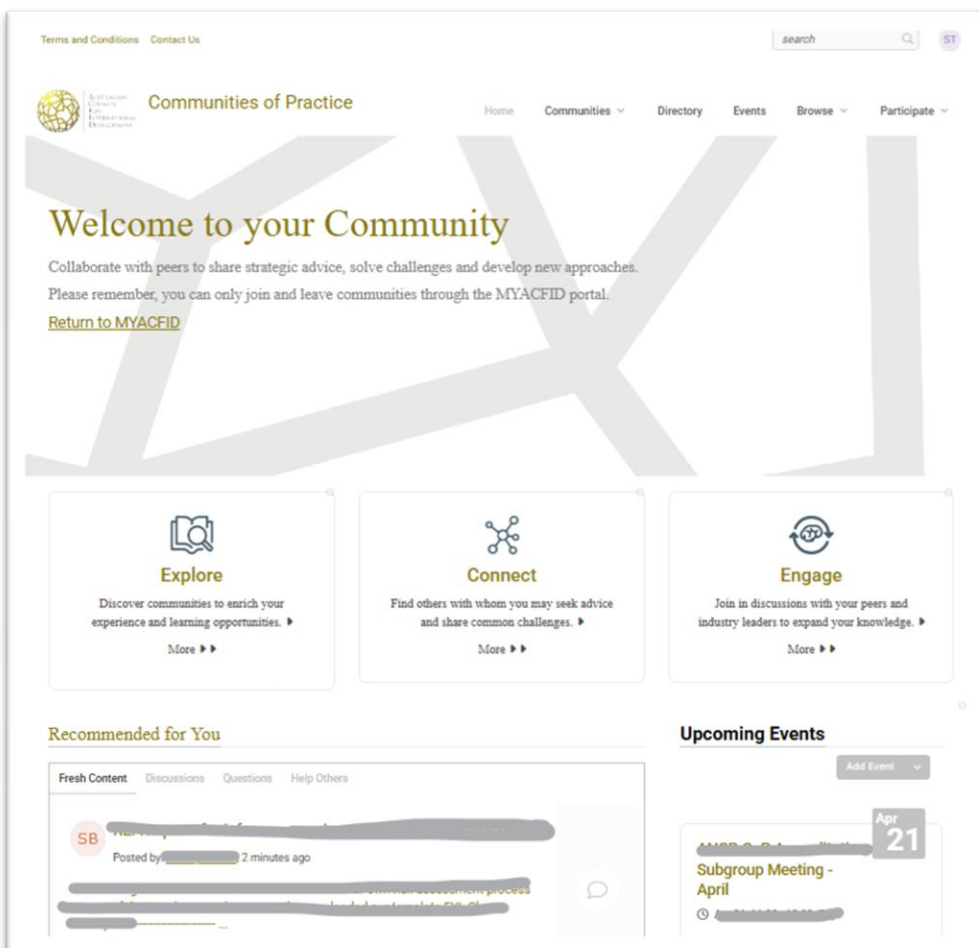
The Communities of Practice is where you actively participate in CoP activities such as discussions, events, and sharing resources. In short, you join CoPs in MYACFID but take part in them through the Communities of Practice Platform.

To access the Communities of Practice platform, go to ['MYACFID'](#) and click 'Login' (top right-hand corner), enter your login details, and 'sign in'. Then go to 'Communities' (top menu) and select 'Go to Communities Platform' from the drop-down list.



THINGS YOU CAN DO IN COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE PLATFORM:

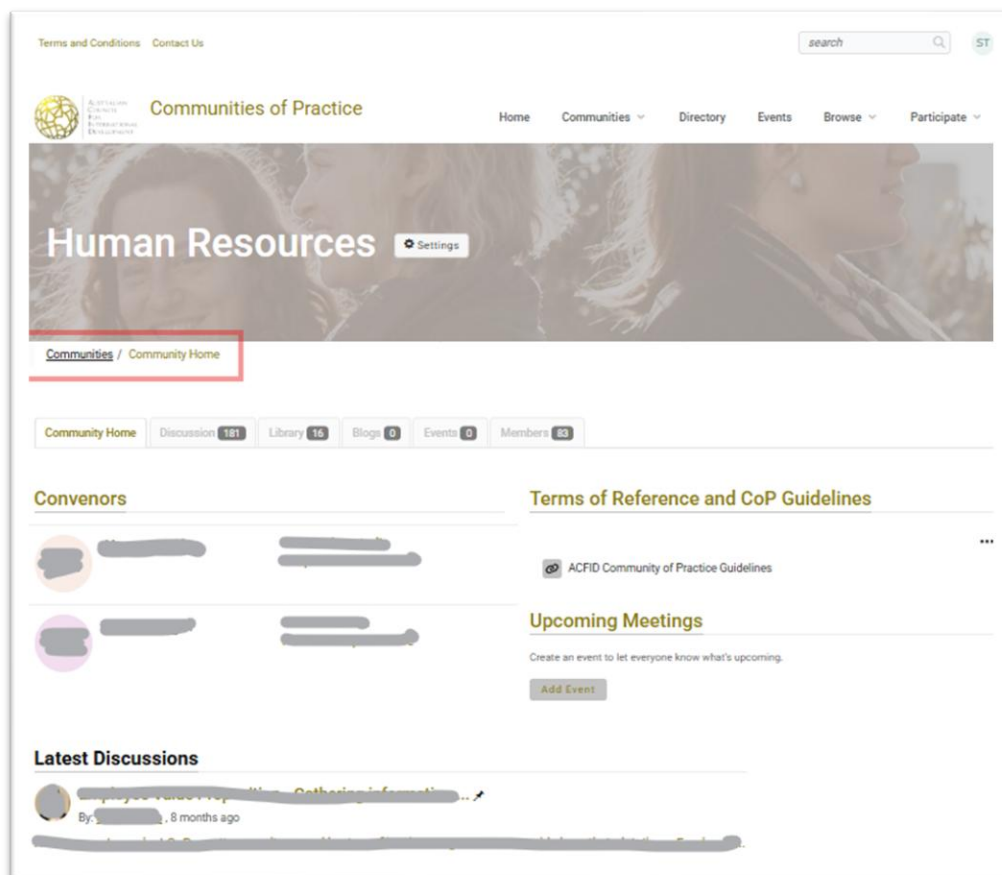
On the Communities of Practice platform, you can actively participate in Communities of Practice (CoPs) by engaging in discussions, connecting with CoP members, and accessing shared resources. You can also view and join CoP events, contribute to community activities, manage your profile, and stay updated through notifications and announcements.



► **How can I see which Community of Practice (CoP) groups I am part of?**

- Go to the MYACFID site: <https://acfid.powerappsportals.com/>.
- Click 'Login' (top right-hand corner), enter your login details, and sign in.
- Navigate to 'Communities' in the top menu and select 'Go to Communities Platform'.
- Click 'Communities' from the top bar, then select 'My Communities'.

Once you are on the My Communities page, select the CoP group you are looking for (for example, Human Resources). This will take you to the **Community Home page** (see image below).

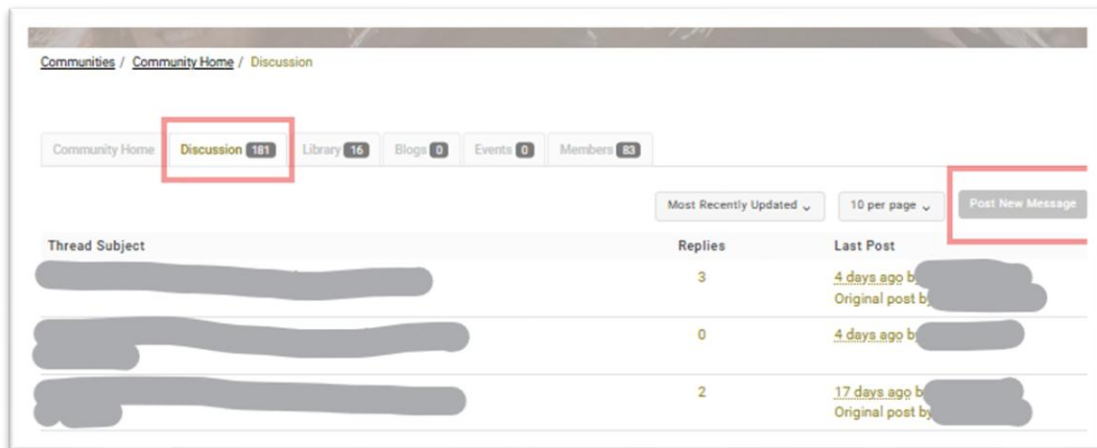


In the community's home page, you can:

- View community members and convenors
- Review Terms of Reference and guidelines
- See upcoming meetings and events
- View latest discussions and join ongoing conversations
- Start a new discussion or reply to posts
- Access shared library resources and documents
- Create or add an event for the community
- Stay updated on recent activity and announcements

► How do I start or join a CoP discussion?

- Go to the Community Home page. ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform > Communities > My Communities > Select the CoP you wish to view).
- Select the 'Discussion' tab next to Community Home.
- You can start a new discussion by selecting 'Post New Message' or reply to an ongoing discussion by opening the relevant thread and clicking Reply.
- You can also schedule and post your responses from here.



Other ways to view and reply to discussions across all CoP groups you are part of:

- Go to the Communities of Practice platform. ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Here you can view the latest ongoing discussions. To respond, click on the discussion you would like to reply to.
- Click the 'Reply' button (top right-hand corner), type your message, and click 'Post'.

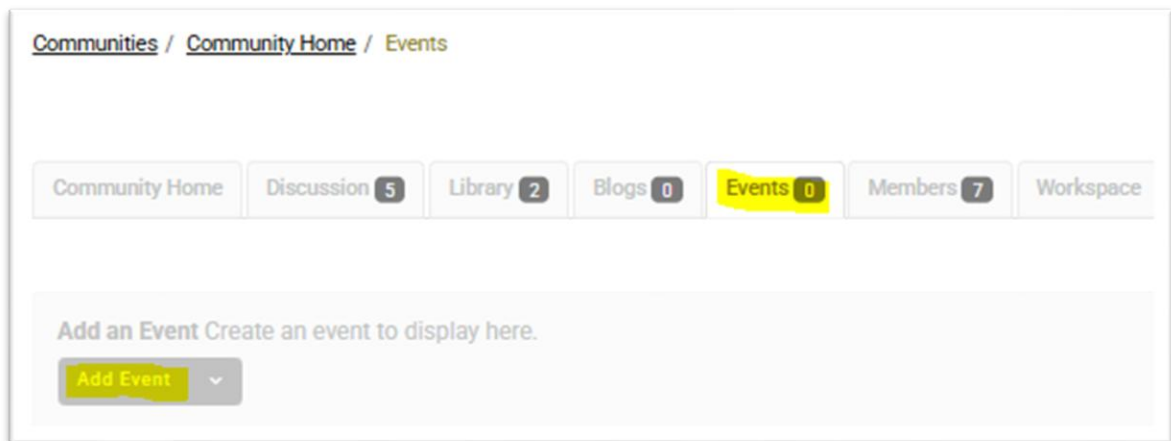
Alternatively:

- Go to the Communities of Practice platform. ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- On the top menu bar, select 'Browse'.
- Click 'Discussion Posts' to view all ongoing discussions in one place.

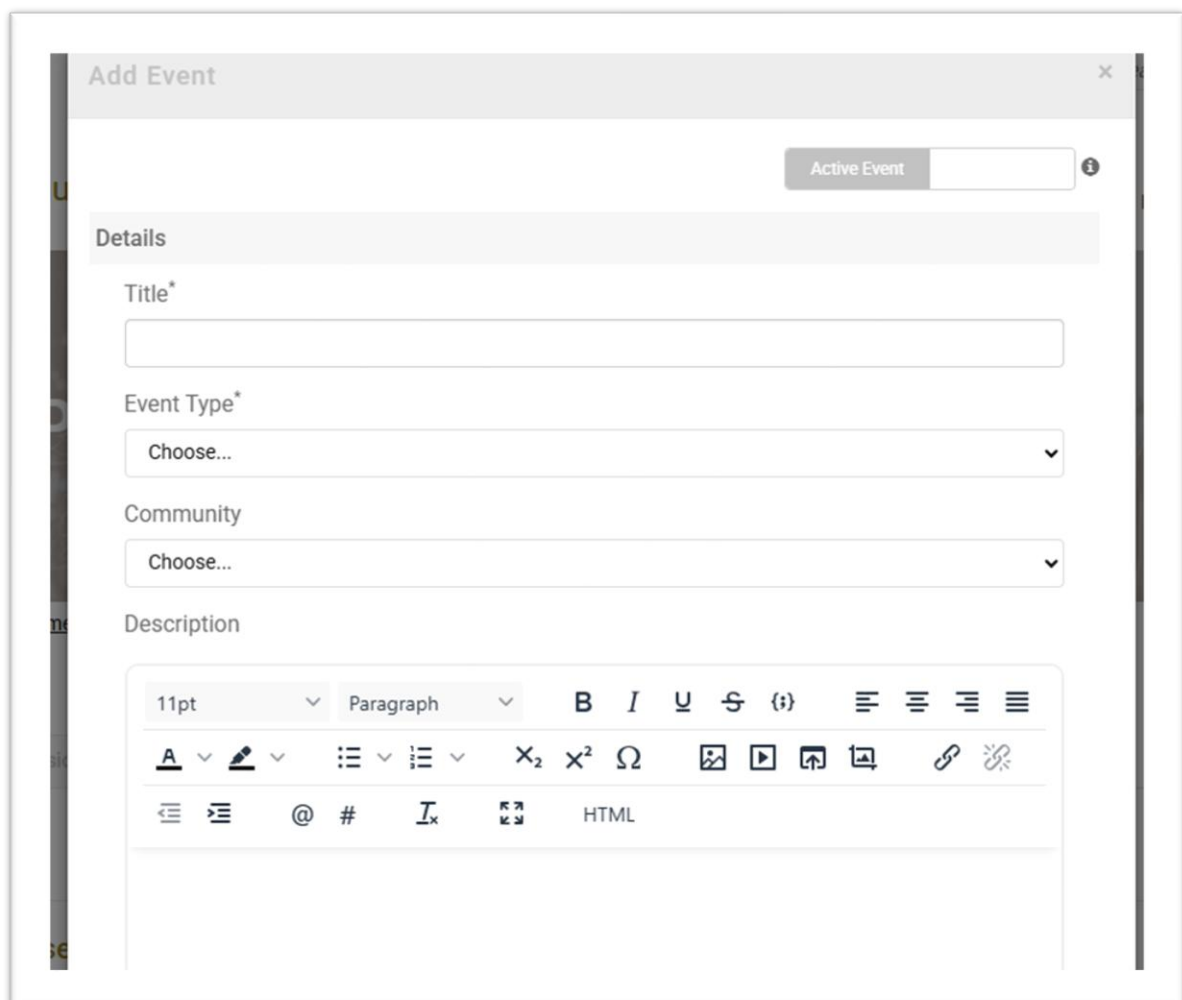
► How do I add a CoP meeting/events and check RSVPs?

This feature is available to CoP Convenors. To promote a CoP meeting on the platform so members can RSVP and save the details to their calendars, you can create and manage the event through the platform by following the steps below.

- Go to the Communities of Practice platform. ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Click on 'Communities' in the top menu bar and go to 'My Communities'. Select the community where you want to set up the event
- Next, click on 'Events' (next to Blogs) and then click 'Add Events'



- Add all your meeting details. For Event Type, select CoPs Meeting - With RSVPs.



- DO NOT insert the meeting or join link in the field labelled 'Optional link for an external website with more details about this event' (see image below).

p

Optional link for an external website with more details about this event.

http:// externalsite.com OR www ❌

[Event Image](#)

[Select Image](#)

- You can insert the link under Location by selecting 'How will people attend this event?' and choosing 'Online'. This will display an option to add the Conference Web Address / URL*. Paste the link (e.g. Teams, Zoom etc) in the field provided (see image below).

Note: When pasting the link, check for and delete any duplicate https:// as it may be automatically added.

Location

How will people attend this event?

Online

Country

(Country)

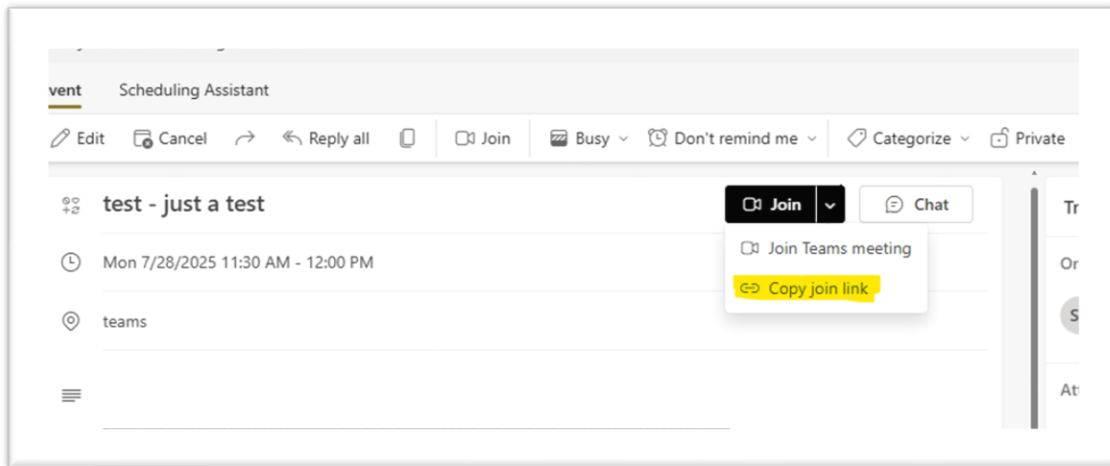
Login Instructions

Conference Web Address / URL*

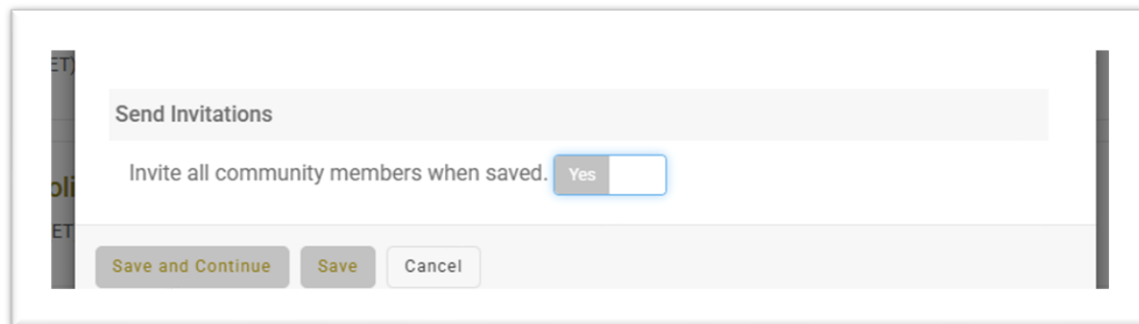
https:// learnwithacfid.com/?red ✓

- When adding a Teams meeting link, please make sure to copy the link as shown in the image below.

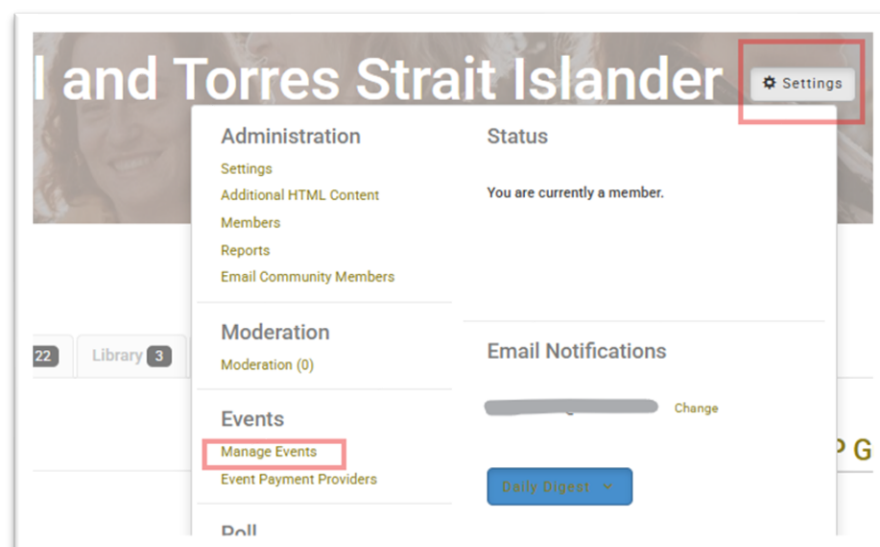
Note: The "Join" drop-down option only appears in the Outlook browser calendar, so be sure to open your invite in the browser to copy the link.



- Under the 'Send Invitations' option, turn on 'YES' against 'Invite all community members when saved' to automatically send the invite to all members.

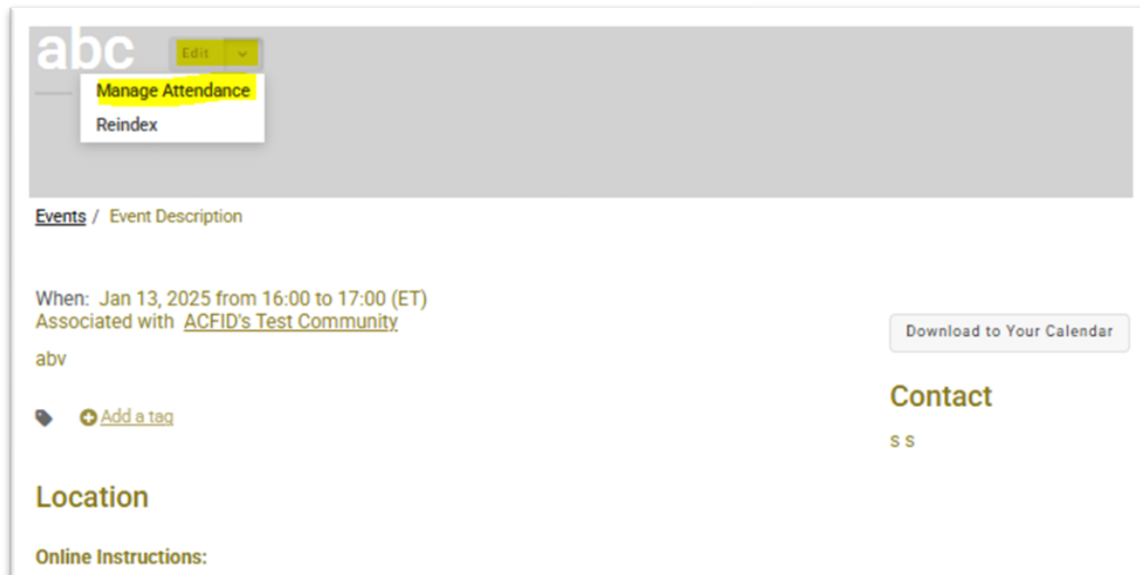


- Once all details are added, click Save to finalise the event.
- To update meeting details after setting it up, go to the Community Home page ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform > Communities > My Communities > Select the CoP you wish to view). Click Settings, then go to Settings > Manage Events where you can edit or delete the event.
Note: updates will only be sent to attendees if you change the date, time, or meeting link. For any assistance, contact cops@acfid.asn.au.



A convenor can also check how many people have RSVP'd for an event:

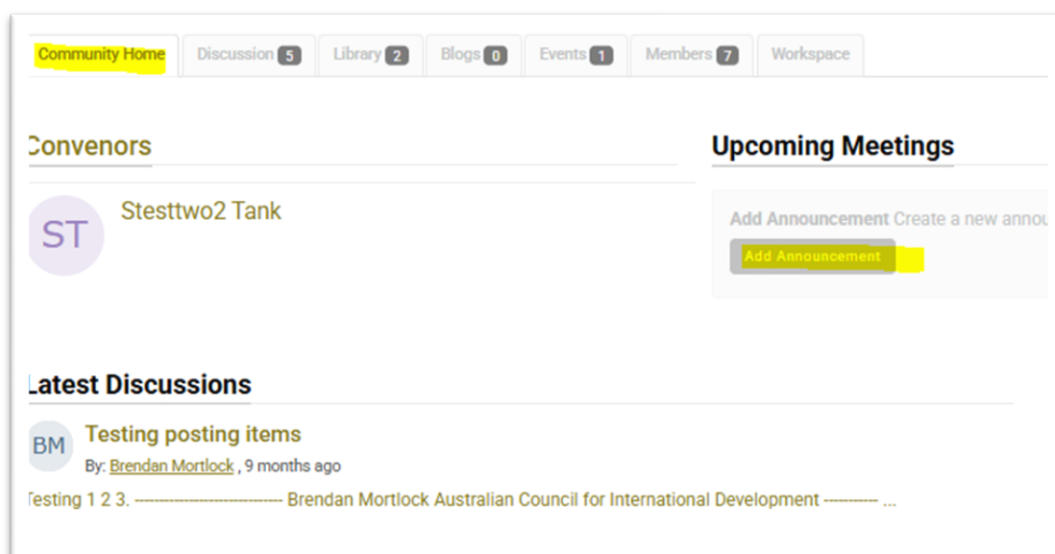
- Click on the event you would like to know about and select 'Edit'.
- From the dropdown menu, click on 'Manage Attendance'.
- This will show you the details of attendees, including who has RSVP'd and who has not.



Please add this meeting link in the "Upcoming Meetings" within your CoP so that CoP members can easily find and view all the upcoming meetings.
Note: This feature can only be accessed by the CoP Convenor.

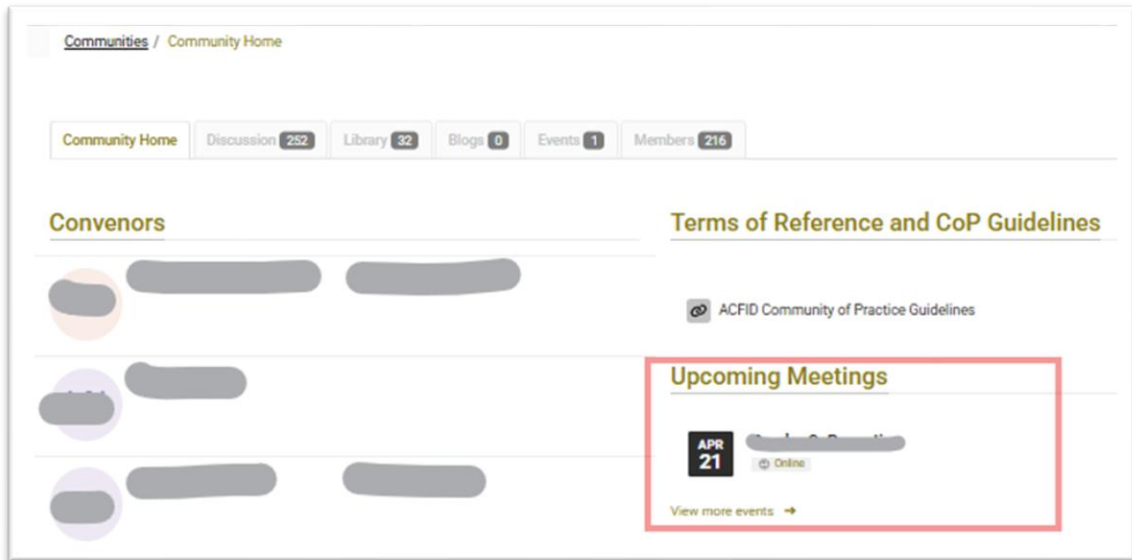
The CoP Convenor can do this by following the below steps:

- Go to the Community Home page. ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform > Communities > My Communities > Select the CoP you wish to view).
- Go to 'Communities Home' and click on 'Add Announcements'. (see the image below)



Where can I view upcoming events/meetings for a specific CoP group?

- Go to the Communities of Practice platform. ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Click on 'Communities', then select 'My Communities', and choose the CoP group you are looking for (for example, Human Resources).
- All upcoming meetings for that CoP group will be displayed on the Community Home page (see image below).

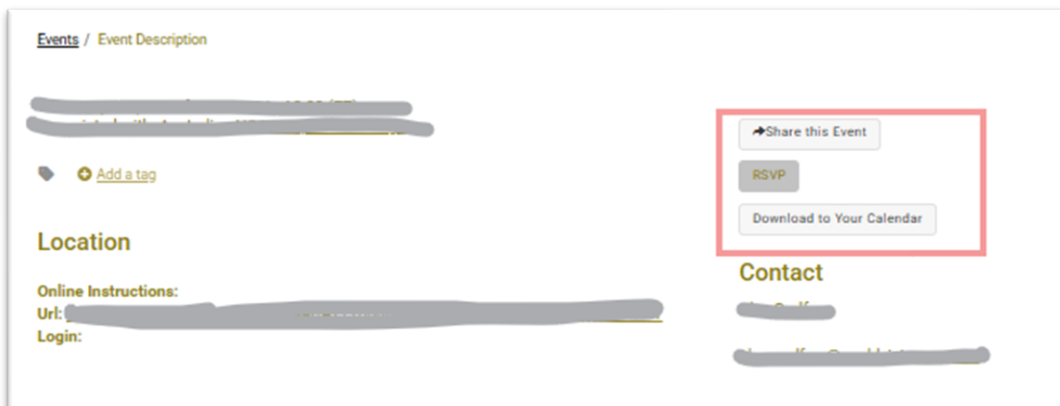


Where can I view all events/meetings?

- Go to the Communities of Practice platform. ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Click 'Events' in the top menu bar.
- Here you can view all upcoming events for the CoP groups you are part of.

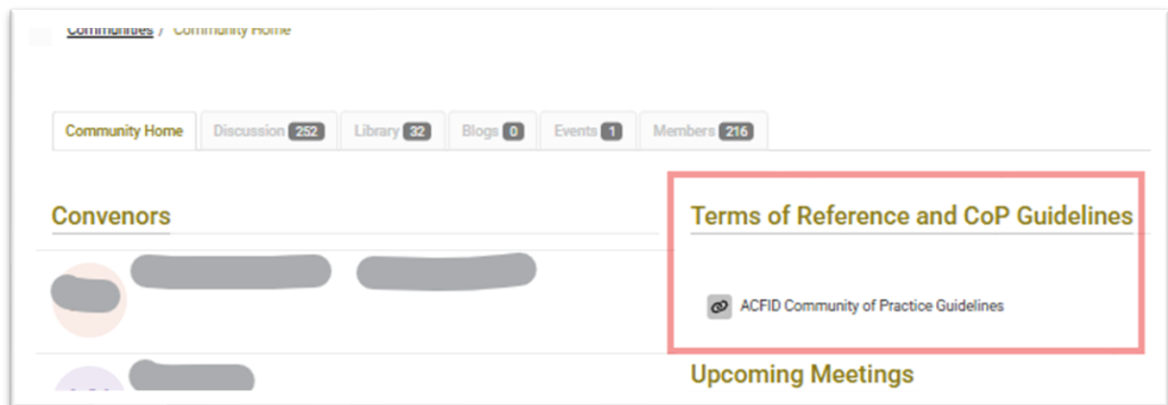
How can I save events/meetings to my calendar?

- Open the event/meeting you would like to attend.
- From the event page, select the option to download or add it to your calendar, or share the event (see image below).



► **Where can I find the CoPs Terms of Reference (ToR) and guidelines?**

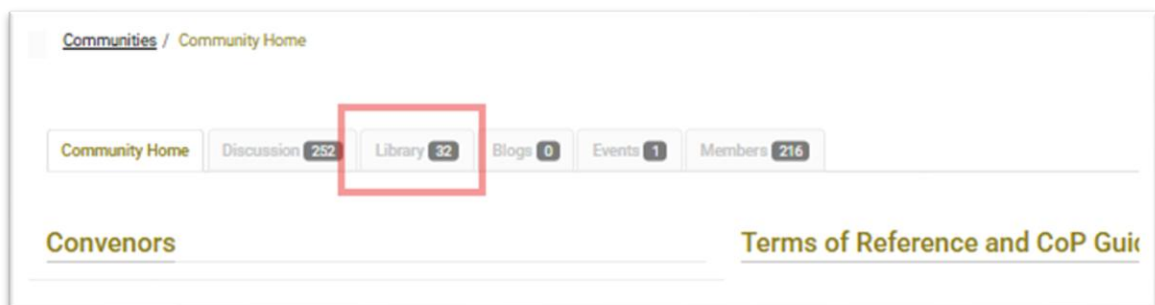
- Go to the Communities of Practice platform. ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Click 'Communities', then 'My Communities', and select the CoP group you are looking for (for example, Human Resources).
- The CoP Terms of Reference (ToR) and guidelines can be found on the community's homepage (see image below).



► **How do I find, upload, and manage resources shared by other members in Library?**

Finding resources shared by members

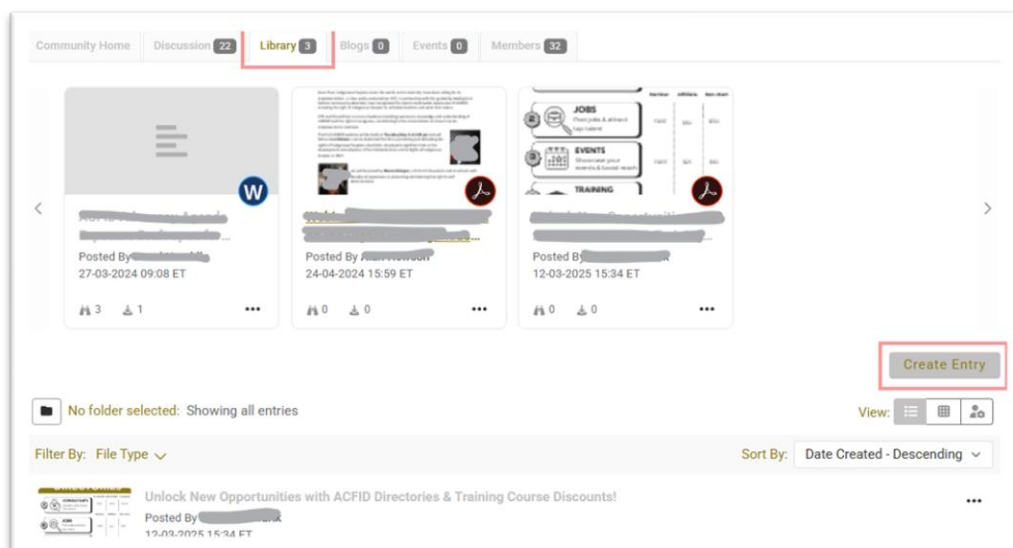
- Go to Community Home Page ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform > Communities > My Communities > Select the CoP you wish to view) and click on the library tab next to discussion.



- All documents and resources shared within that Community will be available there.
- If you are unsure which Community the resource has been uploaded to, use the main search bar at the top of the platform. Enter relevant keywords, similar to how you would search using Google, to locate the resource across all Communities you belong to.
- This page shows all matching discussion threads and library entries for your search results.

How do I upload a file to the library?

- If you would like to upload a document, then go to the library ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform > Communities > My Communities > Select the CoP you wish to view > Library) and click on 'Create Entry'.



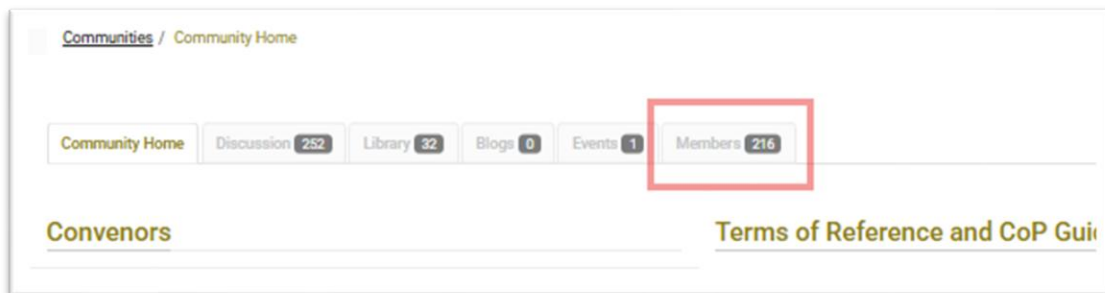
- Enter a title for the document and add a description if required (optional).
- Select the Library you want to upload the resource to and choose a folder if applicable (optional).
- Choose an 'Entry Type'. In most cases this will be 'Standard File'. Please ensure you comply with copyright and licensing requirements when uploading content.
- Select 'Next', then upload your file.
- Select 'Next' if you wish to add tags or further describe the resource. Otherwise, select 'Finish' to complete the upload.
- Each step must be completed before moving on to the next stage of the upload process.
- The platform supports a wide range of file types, including:
 - Word, Excel, and PowerPoint documents
 - PDF files
 - Images
 - Hyperlinks
 - Webinar recordings
 - YouTube videos

Alternatively, you can upload a file by following these steps:

- Go to the Communities of Practice platform ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- From the top navigation bar, select the 'Participate' tab.
- Click 'Share a File' and follow the on-screen instructions to upload your document.

► **Where can I find the member list of particular CoP group I am in and connect with an individual?**

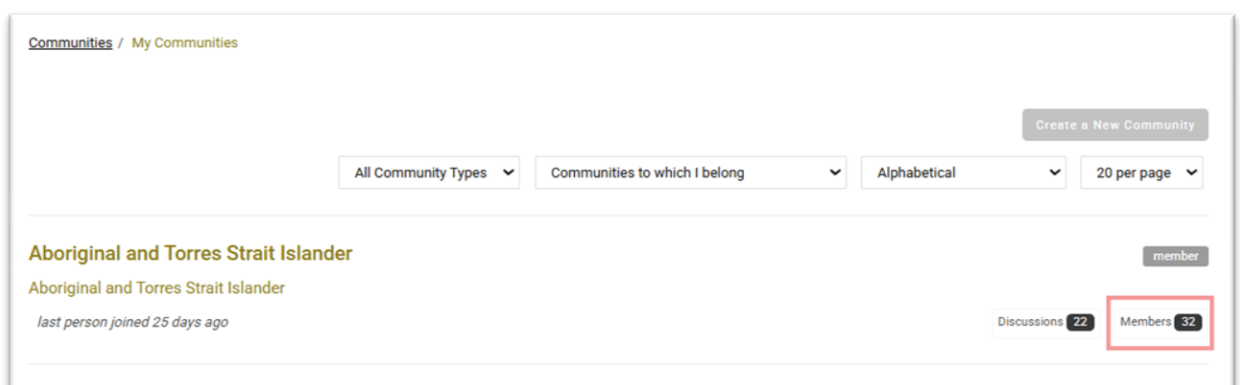
- Go to the 'Community Home' page ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform > Communities > My Communities > Select the CoP you wish to view).
- Click on 'Members' found next to Events tab (eg: 'Members 218' in the image below).



- Click 'Send Message' or 'Add as Contact' to connect with a specific person.

Another way to view the directory of a specific CoP group is via the Communities Platform.

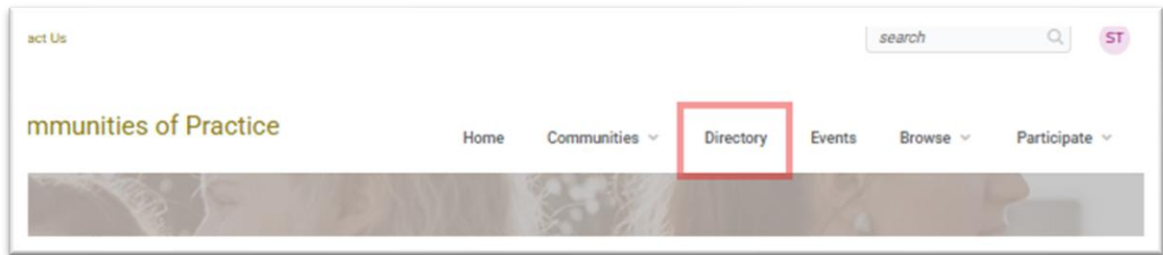
- Go to the Communities of Practice platform ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Click on 'More' under the 'Explore' option.
- Select 'Members' located beside the discussion of the CoP you want to view (eg: 'Members 32' in the image below)



- Click on 'Send Message' or 'Add as Contact' to connect with a specific person.

► **How do I find a contact of a person in CoPs platform?**

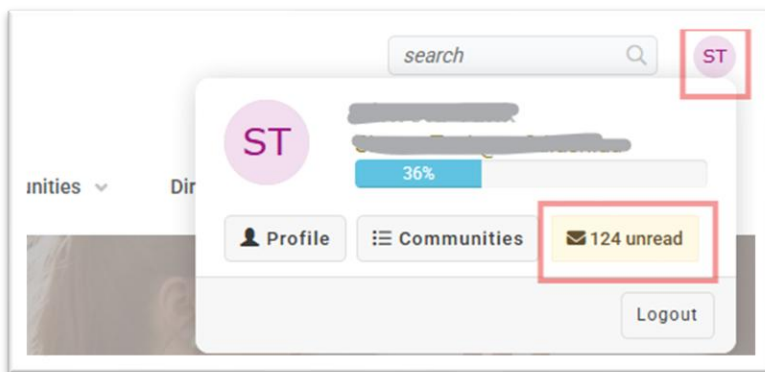
- Go to the Communities of Practice platform ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Click on 'Directory' found on top bar.



- Enter First Name, Last Name or Organisation Name to find a person or list of people in the CoP from organisation and then hit on 'Find Members' button.

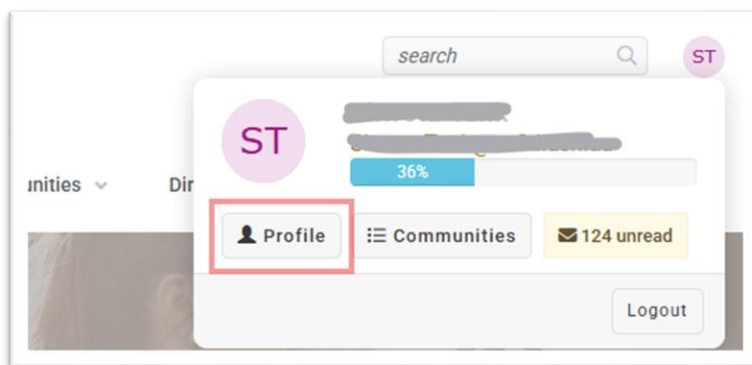
► **How to access your CoPs inbox?**

- Go to the Communities of Practice platform ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Click on your icon, which will be found at the top right hand corner (see the image below). Please click on the 'unread emails'.

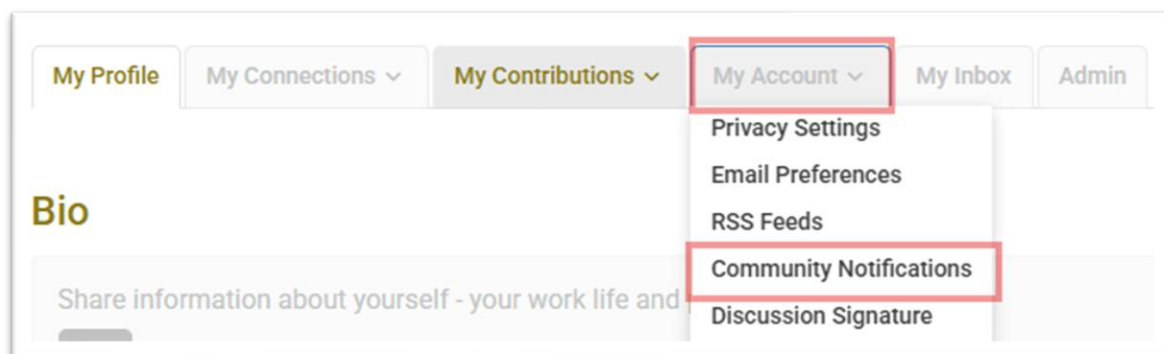


► **Is there a way to receive an email notification of a specific CoP?**

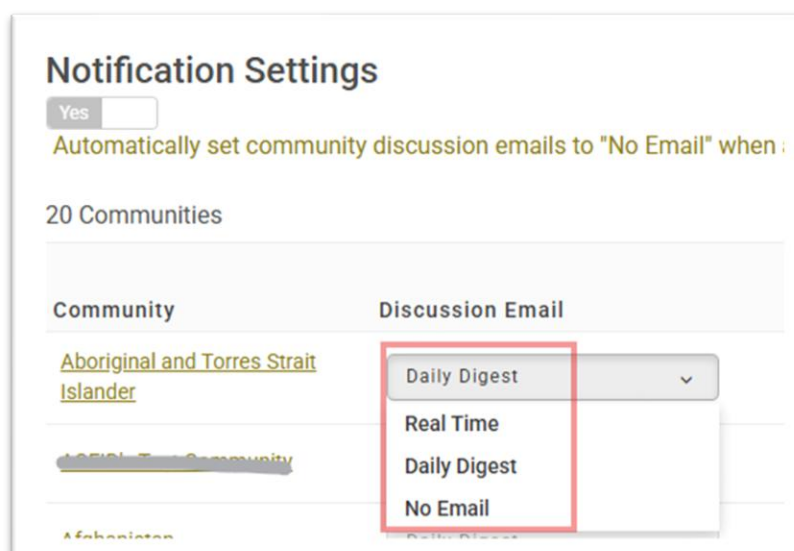
- Go to the Communities of Practice platform ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Click on your icon, which will be found at the top right hand corner (see the image below).
- Once you click on the icon, you will see a drop-down block (see the image below). Click on 'Profile'.



- On your profile, go to My Account, this will give you a drop-down list as shown in the image below and click on 'Community Notifications'.



- Go to the 'Notification Settings' option at the bottom. Select the way you would like to receive notifications (see the image below).



- Real Time - Receive an email each time someone posts to the discussion. This is a great option if it's important for you to reply promptly and stay up to date with conversations in the community.
- Daily Digest - Receive a single email summarising all discussion posts from the previous day. This is a good option for keeping up with activity without receiving multiple emails.
- No Email - Choose this if you do not want to receive notification emails about new discussion activity. This effectively turns notifications off for the community.

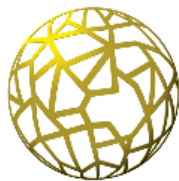
► **How to Add/Update my profile picture?**

- Go to the Communities of Practice platform ([MYACFID](#) > Login > Communities > Go to Communities Platform).
- Click your icon in the top right-hand corner, select 'Profile' from the drop-down menu, then go to 'Action' and choose 'Change Image'.

Note: It is encouraged for all CoP convenors to have a profile picture.



ACFID will be continuing to make improvements to the MYACFID portal as users interact. If you receive error messages when trying to access elements that you believe you should be able to, or if you have suggestions for improvements, please email cops@acfid.asn.au.



AUSTRALIAN
COUNCIL
FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

ACFID Community of Practice Templates and Tool

ACFID Communities of Practice Terms of Reference Template

ACFID XXXXXX Community of Practice

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Text in black is standard guidance for all ACFID CoPs. We recommend keeping this in your ToR.

Text in italics/highlights are prompts - answer some or all of the question to create the content for this section.

BACKGROUND TO ACFID COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

ACFID Communities of Practice (CoPs) are groups of people who come together to share, learn and work together. They are held together by a common interest in a body of knowledge and are driven by a desire to solve problems together and contribute to the development of a body of knowledge. Communities of practice are self-selecting, voluntary, self-managing and collegial. Communities of Practice are organised and run by and for their members. They're responsible for preparing their own plans, organising their own meetings, communicating with each other and following through on agreed actions. They do not need to seek approval to conduct any work unless it is work in ACFID's name.

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

Note: the text below will be used to describe this CoP in the MyACFID portal

**What is your CoP's primary purpose?*

**What specific needs of ACFID Members will your CoP meet?*

**Is there anything "out of scope" that the CoP will steer clear of?*

**Which sort of staff from ACFID members would benefit from joining this CoP?*

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MEMBERSHIP

ACFID CoPs are primarily vehicles for staff from ACFID Member agencies to share, learn and collaborate. Currently, CoP membership is only open to staff from ACFID Member agencies - either Full Members or Affiliate Members.

Non-members, such as DFAT staff, managing contractors, independent consultants and academics are permitted to be invited to CoP meetings as guest speakers/contributors; however, they will not be permitted to join the "Communities Platform" where the CoP forums are contained.

ACFID member staff (and board members) can join and leave this (and any) CoP, by their own volition. To do so, they need an account on MYACFID that is correctly linked with their organisation. A work email address must also be used (unless the member is small and does not have one).

Individual participation in the CoP is defined by following characteristics;

- Membership is voluntary;
- Members can belong to more than one CoP;
- Members are accountable to themselves and the group;
- Members can vary their level of participation. Whilst some group members will drive group content and action, others may observe discussions and meetings from the sideline. Other participants may choose to engage at different times or on particular discussions or projects depending on their own workload/capacity.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE CONVENORS

Convenors must be staff within a Full or Affiliate Member organisation. ACFID strongly recommends that CoPs appoint at least two co-convenors to share the responsibility and ensure continuity when one convenor is travelling.

The convenors of the Community are responsible for:

- Chairing meetings
- Facilitating communication within the group
- Managing relationships and communication with external stakeholders;
- Acting as the point of contact with the ACFID Secretariat if needed;
- Introducing new members to the work of the group; and
- Risk management, including abiding by ACFID standards.

Convenors who take up or step down from a Convening role must notify ACFID's CoP Lead (cops@acfid.asn.au) so that our CoP database can be updated accordingly. In the first instance all efforts will be made by the resigning convenor and existing CoP members to find a replacement for the position. In the second instance ACFID may support the process of finding a replacement convenor.

ACFID Secretariat staff should not be Convenors of a CoP, unless required when establishing or reinvigorating a CoP.

WAYS OF WORKING

- *How often will the CoP have meetings?*
- *Will meetings be online, face to face, use Sydney/Melbourne hubs, or a mix of these?*
- *Will any meetings or parts of meetings be recorded and shared in the Communities Platform?*
- *What will be shared back with members and how after meetings? Eg will you record minutes, or just share highlights and links/resources?*
- *Will you/How will you welcome new members?*

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE COMMUNICATION PLATFORM

ACFID CoP participants can engage with each other at any time they wish on our online platform called the “Communities” Platform. For each CoP, this platform provides:

- The names of the convenors for the CoP
- A forum to post and store discussion threads
- A resource library to store documents
- Functionality to set up events and send meeting invites out to members
- Private messaging between individuals in the CoP.
- The ability to set notifications so you are aware when someone has posted to a discussion.

All discussions or content that is stored within “Communities” is only visible and accessible to the members of the CoP. CoP members should respect the confidentiality of each other and not share information outside of the CoP unless permission has been granted.

To ensure CoP discussions and events are available and accessible to all CoP members, CoPs and their Convenors are requested NOT to use other methods and platforms for communication. While using e.g. email lists, whatsapp groups, teams chat etc may feel more convenient in the short term, they will lead to exclusion of CoP members, confusion over channels of communication, and lack of clarity for ACFID members for how CoPs function. This does not apply to planning between Convenors and small, short-term working groups - they are free to use whatever methods suit them best to plan meetings or undertake short term tasks for the CoP.

SUPPORT FROM ACFID SECRETARIAT

ACFID will provide support to CoPs generally in a number of ways:

Enable: ACFID sees CoPs as a key part of ACFID’s architecture and is committed to enabling CoPs to function effectively through providing enabling infrastructure (MYACFID Communities platform), building capacity, sharing lessons and facilitating linkages. If requested, ACFID will facilitate access to government or other stakeholders as required.

Inform and Consult: ACFID recognises that much of the sectors expertise in both policy and practice is located within the Communities and therefore will consult with CoPs on an as needed basis.

Managing Risk: ACFID encourages CoPs to communicate with ACFID about their work, particularly where it may involve sensitive or controversial issues. In such cases, ACFID may provide guidance and work with an individual CoP to institute communication protocols which are specific to that situation.

Work with to deliver: ACFID may ask a CoP or some members of a CoP to undertake a specific piece of work on ACFID’s behalf. In such cases, ACFID will provide additional support to the CoP, including either staff time or budget or both.

Promote: ACFID can promote the work of CoPs through its public communication platforms. This can include posting a blog written by a CoP, news and updates from the CoP shared in ACFID's weekly e-newsletter for members ('The Weekly'), sharing tools and other resources developed by CoPs via the Code Good Practice Toolkit and ACFID Resource Library, profiling and engaging expert practitioners from CoPs at conference etc.

BRANDING

As individual groups and in aggregate, CoPs will be branded under ACFID's name e.g. 'ACFID's Communities of Practice' & the 'ACFID Safeguarding CoP'. However, for any external facing work undertaken by a CoP such as letters to DFAT, case studies/guidelines for external distribution, events etc, CoPs cannot use ACFID's name unless explicitly requested/approved by ACFID's CEO or his/her delegate.

Permission to use ACFID's name will only be granted for work which aligns with ACFID's strategic/operational priorities. This includes for any formal correspondence to Government and other external stakeholders as well as less formal correspondence at meetings and events.

ACFID may ask a CoP to undertake a particular piece of work in ACFID's name i.e. to function as an Expert Task Group. If so, the CoP or a sub-set of members from the CoP will receive additional resources from ACFID to complete that task.

All requests to use ACFID's name will be managed by ACFID's CoP Lead (cops@acfid.asn.au). ACFID encourages CoPs to retain an open communication with ACFID on exciting initiatives and activities that they're undertaking so that we can cross promote.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE PLANNING

Note: CoPs may use the checklist below to plan ahead for a period (eg annual planning). This planning may be undertaken by the Convenors, or together with CoP members. CoPs may choose to document these plans in this Terms of Reference (to be periodically updated), or elsewhere.

- What are the planned **dates and times** for this year's meetings? (even if tentative)
- Who are possible **external guest speakers** for the coming period? E.g. technical experts, consultants, DFAT staff, DFAT Post staff, other ACFID members
- Who are possible **internal speakers and presenters** (CoP members) for the coming period? E.g. to present on case studies, lead discussions, etc
- What are possible **topics for sharing and learning** in the coming period? E.g. resources, training opportunities, case studies, tools, policies etc.
- Are there any **documents or resources that your CoP may want to create** in the coming period? E.g. submissions to DFAT, guidance notes, consolidated training resources, country-level mapping etc.

- Are there any **internal CoP collaborations** that could be planned for the coming period? E.g. joint projects, joint grants, consortiums, shared consultancies, pooled funding for activities etc.
- Are there any **external collaborations** planned for the coming period? E.g. joint meetings with other CoPs, linking with similar thematic groups outside of ACFID etc.
- Does the CoP plan to engage with the next **ACFID Conference?** E.g. proposing a Concurrent Session, planning a CoP meeting aligned with Conference etc.
- Are there any **events or activities** that your CoP would like to be **shared or publicised** by the ACFID Secretariat? E.g. a webinar/ACFID Connect open to all ACFID members, to seek or share resources with ACFID membership, to invite ACFID members to input into one of your activities?