



Useful Information for Working Party Chairs

A view from a volunteer



“As a Fellow of the IFoA, I have been actively involved in volunteering for many years, including research Working Parties. In my experience, a well run Working Party can deliver a high quality end product which adds to the reputation of the members of the Working Party as well as the IFoA as a whole.” **Patrick Kelliher**

This resource is designed to guide you through establishing a Working Party and to provide guidance on the principles of the IFoA's [Governance Manual](#) and [Volunteer Information Pack \(VIP\)](#).

The IFoA are on hand to provide you with support or guidance at any point.

Board approval for Working Parties (WP)

The first step in setting up a Working Party is to seek approval by an IFoA Board/Committee, be it the Board or Research Sub-committee for a practice area or another Board.

When setting up a Working Party, the most relevant Board/Committee should be identified for the purposes of approval and reporting progress (see Annex 5, page 39 of the [Governance Manual](#)). The proposal should cover:

- The need for the research/WP, what gaps in knowledge is the research seeking to address, what questions it is seeking to answer, how addressing these falls within the remit of the IFoA and is consistent with the IFoA strategy/corporate plan.
- Deliverables (e.g. sessional paper/conference paper/Blog/IFoA Communities post/Survey) and target delivery dates.
- Any engagement with external parties (e.g. ABI, Society of Actuaries, Universities, Policy makers).
- Any expenses which the WP expects to incur and seek reimbursement from the profession.
- Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for their approval. Contact the Engagement Team if you require any support.

Practice Boards liaise with each other and the Communities Research Manager to ensure that a Working Party is not duplicating effort elsewhere; and will monitor the progress of the Working Party to plan sessional meetings, conferences, and other ways to disseminate the research.

Planning

It is important that Boards/Committees are kept up to date on progress so that they can plan sessional meetings/conferences.

- The Working Party should report back on progress made to the relevant Board/Committee at least quarterly via their allocated 'shadow' [a member of the Research Sub-committee] who, along with the Executive, supports the WP
- The Communities Research Manager also has visibility of how all Working Parties and other research projects are progressing
- Ideally, the Working Party should have milestones of tasks and when these are supposed to be finished by, against which progress can be assessed
- Expenses – please see the volunteer expenses policy in section 7.2 (page 26) of the [VIP](#)
- Finally, don't be afraid to ask your IFoA Executive if they can help

Volunteer recruitment and selection

It is important for the volunteer recruitment process to be fair and transparent so all actuaries and other volunteers with the relevant skills can have a chance to join the Working Party.

- Having got approval for the Working Party and identified needs in terms of volunteer numbers, contact Engagement Team to kick-start the recruitment process
- The Volunteer recruitment flowchart can help you understand the steps in the process, while the selection panel guidance note can help in the selection of members
- In assessing members, bear in mind not just their skill set and personal attributes but also whether they will be able to commit the time necessary

It is also important to assess any potential conflicts of interest e.g. whether they are working on similar research for their employer and/or for commercial gain. If you have any queries please contact the Regulations Team at IFoA.

Meetings

- To ensure meetings achieve their goal, there should be an agenda for every meeting setting out what is to be discussed and time allotted for discussion
- The Chair should ensure the meeting keeps to the agenda to prevent meetings over-running and/or failing to cover what is required
- Minutes should be kept – at a minimum this should include actions agreed and their owners along with details of those attending to help with claiming CPD. This also provides an important audit trail with regard to compliance with competition law and conflicts of interest, e.g. if a member has had to remove themselves from a meeting due to conflicts this should be recorded
- In running meetings, the Chair should be conscious of the IFoA values and behaviours, and in particular, the need to listen and ensure everyone present can contribute. You may also find Tips and Hints No1: Chairing Meetings to be helpful. You can view this in the [VIP](#) Appendix 1, (page 30)

Reporting and delivery

It is important that Boards/Committees are kept up to date on progress so that they can plan sessional meetings/conferences.

- The Working Party should report back on progress made to the relevant Board/Committee at least quarterly via their allocated 'shadow' [a member of the Research Sub-committee] who, along with the Executive, supports the WP
- Ideally, the WP should have milestones of tasks and when these are supposed to be finished by, against which progress can be assessed
- If it looks like the WP is falling behind and may not deliver in time, this should be raised immediately as for instance sessional meetings may need to be re-arranged
- While disappointing, if a WP looks like it will not deliver, it is better to wind it up sooner rather than later, to avoid more volunteer time being wasted

Collaborating with third parties

Contact your IFoA Executive who will be able to guide you on collaborating with third parties.

We hope you find this helpful and you may also like to view the below resources.

- [VIP](#)
- [Governance manual](#)
- [IFoA Communities](#)
- [IFoA Blog site](#)
- [Virtual learning Environment \(VLE\)](#)

To discuss any aspect of the above please contact the [Engagement Team](#) who will be happy to help you or put you in contact with the most appropriate person within The IFoA.