



AICRO

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Title

Establishment, Operation and Termination of AICRO Working Groups

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AICRO Working Groups

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Guideline History

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01		New Guideline	NA
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03			02

Background and References

AICRO's complexity is increasing as the number of members grows and new activities are taken on. Several strategic topics of interest for AICRO inspire initiation, discussion and interaction with external entities by AICRO working groups (WG). A uniform approach as to the handling of WGs is of utmost importance in order to guarantee the effective and efficient operation of WGs. Defined procedures regarding AICRO WGs are seen as indispensable to guarantee the successful delivery of outcomes generated by AICRO WGs.

References:

1. AICRO Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

1. Purpose

This Guideline specifies the procedure for the establishment, the management and operation as well as the termination of AICRO Working Groups.

2. Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Term	Explanation
AICRO Individual	Employee of a CRO which is an AICRO member
AICRO (Member) Representative	A AICRO individual who is nominated by a AICRO member to represent the member within AICRO (company delegate).
WG Chair	Any AICRO individual who chairs a WG. A WG chair is either the WG initiator, a AICRO individual nominated by the Consiglio Direttivo (CD) or has been elected by the WG.
WG Co-chair	Any AICRO individual elected by the WG to act as the deputy of the WG chair.
WG Initiator	Any AICRO individual who takes the initiative to set-up a AICRO WG. The WG initiator is usually the default first chair of the WG unless decided differently by the CD.

Abbreviation	Explanation
CD	Consiglio Direttivo
FtF	Face to face
GA	General Assembly
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TC	Telephone Conference
WG	Working Group

3. Scope

This Guideline applies to all AICRO individuals who are participating in the establishment, management and operation or termination of AICRO WGs. In addition, this Guideline applies to all applicants for WG membership, be it during the time of establishment of the WG or be it at a time point when the WG is already operating.

4. Responsibilities

WG Chair	WG lead, selection of WG members, setting up WG meetings, ensures predefined goals are met.
WG Co-Chair	Supports the WG chair in all aspects of the WG work. Acts as the deputy of the WG chair at all times, in particular in situations when the chair is absent.
WG Initiator	Consults with the CD regarding the establishment of a new WG. Upon endorsement of the new WG by the CD, the initiator usually takes on the role of the first chair of the WG unless decided differently by the CD.
WG Member	Actively supports the defined scope of work of the WG in order to reach the predefined goals in an effective and efficient way.
CD	Provides consultancy regarding the need, the setting up, the management and operation as well as the termination of a AICRO WG.
AICRO Secretariat	Supports the WG regarding the distribution of WG material to the AICRO representatives and is responsible for the uploading of WG information onto the AICRO website as well as for archiving of WG material after the termination of a WG.

5. Procedures

Establishment of a AICRO Working Group

5.1.1. Initiation of a AICRO Working Group

Any AICRO individual is encouraged to come forward with an idea for a new WG and shall propose the topic to the CD. After endorsement by the CD and as a general rule, the initiator (the AICRO individual) is entitled to set-up the WG and by default becomes the first WG chair. However, the CD reserves the right to appoint a different first chair of the WG for reasons that are well thought through and carefully discussed within the CD. The WG chair prepares a document which describes the planned goals and activities – possibly including approximate timelines - of the proposed WG (WG statement). This document is forwarded to the CD for review. After discussion of the document (as deemed necessary), the statement is endorsed by the CD. A WG statement template can be found in the AICRO website.

The WG chair writes an invitation letter (WG statement usually as attachment to the invitation letter) containing his/her contact details and timelines for the application of potential WG members.

The invitation letter together with the attachment is sent by the WG chair to the AICRO secretariat for distribution to all AICRO representatives. For a sample invitation letter, see the AICRO Document Library.

The AICRO representatives are expected to distribute the material within their organisation (individual CRO).

In order to be able to present the WG in the public domain for any interested parties / potential WG members, the WG chair writes a short summary of the goals and planned activities (including timelines, if available) of the WG which he/she forwards to the CD for review and approval. The approved summary is sent by the WG chair to the AICRO secretariat for uploading the information onto the open area of the AICRO website.

5.1.2. Working Group Member Selection and Termination of Membership

Any AICRO individual is entitled to apply for WG membership (external advisors/experts see 5.1.3).

The application should be executed in writing, usually via email directed to the WG chair. Along with the application (e.g., motivation letter), a short biography of the applicant should be provided in order to enable the WG chair to form an opinion on the suitability of the applicant, especially if there are many applicants from one company.

During the process of setting-up the WG, the first WG chair is entitled to select the founding members of the WG. In case an application is submitted at a time when the WG is already operating, the WG chair presents the application to the full WG and asks for comments on the application and the applicant. However, the WG chair is entitled to decide on the acceptance of the applicant after careful consideration of the input by the WG members. In case of rejection, reasonable

grounds shall be communicated to the applicant by the WG chair, preferably in writing.

Whenever a WG member wants to leave the WG, the member should inform the WG chair accordingly.

In case a WG member is missing WG meetings three consecutive times without informing the WG chair, the WG chair is entitled to exclude that member from the WG and formally terminate the membership. This will be done in writing, usually by email, with cc to CD. The WG chair informs the WG about the WG member leaving the WG and prepares an update of the WG members list. The updated list has to be forwarded to the AICRO secretariat for AICRO website updating.

As a general rule, WG membership of one company should be limited to two individuals from that company. Exceptions are possible and should be justified by the WG chair. In case of more than two applicants from one company the WG chair is entitled to perform a selection process on the basis of the submitted application.

There are no strict rules regarding the minimum number of WG members, however, the WG chair should carefully consider the actual number in terms of being representative for AICRO and also in terms of available capacity for reaching the set WG goals.

All accepted members are listed as WG members and are published on the AICRO website in the respective section for the WG (open area).

5.1.3. External Advisors to a Working Group

The WG chair, together with the WG members, and in consultation with the CD, decides whether an external subject matter expert should be associated with the WG. This decision should not be done during the set-up of a WG (and therefore by the first chair alone), but only after establishment of a WG when the full WG agrees that an external advisor would be of benefit for the WG.

External experts are not necessarily attached to any AICRO member and are not considered WG members. They are considered advisors to the WG and are listed as such on the AICRO website in the respective WG section (open area) after they have been asked for respective approval (publishing the expert name on the AICRO website in the respective function as WG advisor).

5.1.4. Appointment of a Working Group Co-Chair

In order to guarantee continuity and a smooth operation of the WG, it is encouraged that the WG elects a co-chair as soon as possible after the inception of the WG. No formalities are required other than a majority vote after asking the full WG for volunteers. The WG co-chair supports the WG chair in all aspects of the WG work, in particular when the WG chair is absent. The WG co-chair becomes the deputy of the WG chair and is listed as such on the AICRO website in the respective WG section (open area).

5.1.5. Election of a WG Chair

The initiator of the WG usually becomes the first chair of the WG (exceptions possible, see 5.1.1.).

Whenever a chair wants to or has to step down from that position, the chair shall inform the CD immediately. It is the responsibility of the full WG to elect a new chair. No formalities are required other than a majority vote after the co-chair has asked the full WG for volunteers for the WG chair position. The former chair (if possible) or the co-chair informs the CD about the election outcome. The new chair shall present him/herself to the CD. The CD endorses the new chair, however reserves the right to appoint a different chair. This will remain the exception and has to be carefully thought through and discussed within the CD and possibly also with WG members.

Should there be a time gap between the former chair leaving the WG and the new chair being elected, the nominated co-chair is automatically acting as the chair during that period. The acting chair should see to it that the election is taking place as soon as possible.

In case the co-chair is elected as new chair a new co-chair needs to be appointed according to 5.1.4.

Any material which needs to be handed over from the former to the new chair shall be prepared by the former chair and/or the co-chair.

The former chair and/or the co-chair and the new chair arrange for a smooth hand-over of material, information, etc.

The former chair is encouraged to support the new chair as long as support is deemed necessary and possible by the former chair. The co-chair is also responsible to support the new chair.

5.2. Management and Operation of a AICRO Working Group

5.2.1. Working Group Meetings

WG meetings can be held as telephone conferences (TC) or face to face meetings (FtF).

The chair together with the WG decides on the frequency and type of meetings at the outset of the WG activities. Meeting frequency and type can be changed as work progresses and as deemed necessary. As a general rule, monthly meetings should be considered in order to ensure continuous activities and communication. Meetings on demand are supported whenever the chair or the whole WG consider them as beneficial.

It is within the responsibility of the WG chair to set up the meetings.

There should be a meeting agenda circulated in advance.

In case a WG member is not able to attend the meeting, he/she should send a note to the WG chair indicating his/her planned absence.

The WG chair, co-chair or a delegate should write meeting minutes. The format of agenda and minutes is generally free, however the use of the AICRO template is encouraged. Meeting minutes should be distributed within ten working days to all WG meeting attendees for review before they are finalized. The WG chair distributes the final minutes to all WG members (meeting attendees plus absent WG members) as well as to the AICRO secretariat.

The AICRO secretariat is responsible for uploading the minutes onto the respective restricted area of the AICRO website.

It is up to the WG chair whether or not the final minutes will be distributed to the CD. It is encouraged to do so whenever important decisions are taken during a WG meeting, e.g., to present at the AIFA, at a conference or to write a publication. Whenever the public domain is affected the CD should be informed.

5.2.2. Working Group Outcome

Any outcome of a WG's work (presentation, report, publication, any other document) is to be distributed by the WG chair, co-chair or delegate (e.g., author of a document) within the WG until a final version is reached.

The WG chair is responsible to forward the outcome to the CD.

Those WG members who significantly contributed to the outcome shall be recognized in the document either by including them in the list of authors (e.g., in case of a publication or presentation) or by including a special acknowledgement in the document, or by any other appropriate means. It is the full WG decision as to who and in what format contributors should be listed on the outcome document.

The WG chair will present the WG's work in progress and/or outcome in an appropriate document when asked by the CD (e.g., for GAs, or other meetings / events). In addition, the WG chair should keep in mind to inform the CD and AICRO representatives about the WG's working progress on a regular basis. In order to do so, the WG chair should actively request a specific agenda item for the next scheduled AICRO TC/GA. In addition, and as a minimum, the CD will see to it that each WG is represented on the agenda of at least one AICRO TC and on GA. The activities of the WG will also be reported in at least one newsletter per year. These mutual measures should succeed in informing all AICRO members about WG activities.

Any outcome document will be sent to the AICRO secretariat for uploading the document onto the respective restricted area of the AICRO website, however in full respect of publication rights. Whether the outcome should also be made accessible to the public (by uploading it to the open area of the AICRO website) shall be jointly decided by the WG chair and the CD. If an agreement cannot be reached, the outcome shall not be published in the public domain.

5.3. Termination of a Working Group

A WG can be officially terminated either

- when the WG mission is completed
- when there is no interest any more in maintaining the WG
- when the number of WG members is considered to be insufficient (e.g., lack of interest)
- when nobody wants to take over the WG chair after the chair has left the WG
- when, despite interest, the WG is not functioning due to lack of Guideline adherence or other rules which might have been generated within the WG.

The chair communicates and consults with the CD regarding the closing down of the WG and regarding an official date of termination of activities. The decisions should be documented in respective meeting minutes.

The WG chair shall prepare all files (e.g., WG outcome documents, meeting minutes) which should be kept for archiving purposes together with an index.

The WG chair shall hand over these files electronically (e.g., on CD, DVD, USB stick) to the AICRO secretariat for archiving purposes.

Retention period by the AICRO secretariat shall be 10 years after the official closing down of the respective WG.

5.4. Handling of WG Expenses

As a general rule, travel or other expenses need to be pre-approved by the CD (e.g., at a General Assembly and or on demand). In any case, the AICRO treasurer shall be copied.

Invoices shall be prepared by the AICRO individual or AICRO member/partner, i.e. the party who has experienced the expenses, and shall be forwarded to the AICRO treasurer.

For reimbursement of the expenses, the AICRO travel expense form is to be used (Form available in the AICRO Document Library).

The AICRO treasurer shall transfer the money promptly to the invoicing party after checking the invoice/note of expenses for plausibility and correctness and after approval by the CD, if necessary.

6. Supportive Documents

The following supportive documents can be found in the AICRO website:

- WG statement Template
- Sample invitation letter to start up a AICRO WG
- Meeting agenda and minutes template