
CSCCE guide to setting up your special interest group

Congratulations on your new CSCCE special interest group (SIG)! This guide is designed to help you get started as a co-lead, onboard your new group members, and set your group up for success, whatever your goals might be.

All SIGs within the CSCCE community of practice (CoP) are expected to adhere to our [core values](#) and [community participation guidelines](#). Please make sure that your group members know this (e.g., link to the values when hosting a call. We provide a template slide that you can use for this – see below). **You are not permitted to create additional rules without consulting first with CSCCE staff.**

1. Making a plan

When you applied to co-lead a SIG, we asked about your general plans for the group. We suggest that before you get started you spend some time articulating your engagement plan for the first 3 - 6 months.

You might wish to spend 30 - 60 mins co-working together on the project planning document we've provided as part of your onboarding materials. We've included an example of how to fill it in to help you get started.

Once you've drafted your plan, please reach out to your CSCCE staff contact and let them know you are ready to discuss your plans. We'll then schedule a 30-minute call to talk through any remaining questions you may have, and then you're ready to start running your proposed programming.

2. Prepping your group

ON SLACK

- **Update the info about your channel.** Navigate to your channel, then find the channel name at the top of the feed. Click the down arrow next to your channel's name, then click the "Edit" button next to the "Topic" and "Description" sections to adjust the text). To get you started, we will post the text you submitted in your application, but please feel free to edit it.
- **Update the channel topic periodically.** This can be a good place to highlight current work happening in your group or a particular focus for the month. You can edit this by clicking the text at the top of your channel in the main pane.
- **We suggest you start your group with a welcome thread** asking what interests and experience members have in the topic you'll be covering.

- **You can pin items that you wish to be highlighted in the header of the group** by clicking the ellipsis (three dots) to the right of any post and then selecting “Pin to channel”. This can be useful for highlighting polls, meeting times, or new outputs. You can unpin things later when they’re no longer timely.
- Slack additionally has a feature to **create a bookmark in the group header**. You might want to use this for content that you use frequently, such as links to your Google Drive folder of meeting notes.

IN THE GOOGLE FOLDER

- We’ve provided you with a Google Drive folder for your group. The folder is configured so that you can share a link to it with anyone you choose. You’re also free to add subfolders and organize your materials in a way that works for you.
- In the folder **you will find a sub-folder of resources we’ve curated for you**, including:
 - A copy of this guide
 - A copy of the CSCCE Slack quick start guide
 - A template Google doc that you may want to clone for note-taking during your calls
 - A slide with the CSCCE core values and link to the Community Participation Guidelines (for you to use on group calls)
 - A handout you can share with colleagues interested in joining the CSCCE CoP
- Take some time to discuss how you might want to set up document sharing, e.g., creating a subfolder for meeting minutes and a private subfolder for co-leads to plan calls.
- If you are planning to host calls for your group, please let us know so that we can help to coordinate timing, tools and other logistics to avoid clashes with other programming. We generally prefer to host all CSCCE events on the CSCCE Zoom account.

3. Inviting members to your group

- **Existing CSCCE CoP members** – you can invite anyone already in the CSCCE CoP Slack group to join your channel.
 - **To manually invite individuals**, click the info icon from your channel in the main pane and then select “Add”. Please only invite people who’ve expressed an interest in the topic of your group – do not spam everyone. It may be helpful to send an accompanying DM explaining what your group is for and why you’ve invited them.
 - **To highlight your new channel to everyone** – if your channel is public, you may want to post an update in the main #community channel – mentioning your channel by name as follows: #your_channel_name. This will not work for private groups.
- **People who are not currently in the CSCCE Slack** – if you would like to invite friends and colleagues who are not currently in the CSCCE Slack, they’ll need to request to join the group

[here](#). If you like, you can send us a heads-up by emailing info@cscce.org so that we know to look for their request. We've added a handout to the Google Drive folder of resources that you may wish to use to tell them about the CSCCE CoP.

4. Setting Up an Information Pipeline

SIG co-chairs are responsible for finding information about the topics their SIGs were convened around, disseminating that information to CSCCE's community of practice, and stimulating discussions around that information. To do this, you will need ways to stay on top of what's happening in the field you're covering. If you're not already tuned into current events, consider using the following tricks to ensure you have a steady stream of information to share.

- Subscribe to newsletters on the subject. [Searching Substack](#) is one way to find relevant newsletters.
- Search social media (e.g., [Twitter](#), [Mastodon](#), and [LinkedIn](#)) for relevant keywords and then follow the people who are talking about them.
- Set up [Google alerts](#) and [Google Scholar alerts](#) using relevant keywords.
- If there are academic journals or magazines devoted to the issue, set yourself reminders to check new issues when they come out.

5. Planning Synchronous Activities

We ask that SIGs organize and run two to four synchronous activities per year to share information with the broader community of practice and/or stimulate discussion. You and your group will choose the forms that these activities take. The following is a list of possible formats, but we also encourage you to get creative and come up with new experiences.

- A Zoom presentation from one or more leader(s) in the field, followed by time for discussion or silent doc'ing.
- A panel discussion in which a moderator asks questions of experts.
- A presentation in the form of a fireside chat, in which a moderator converses casually with an expert.
- A coworking session in which members of the community spend around an hour working independently on projects related to the topic of the group, then discuss their progress and any roadblocks they're hitting.
- A speed networking format in which participants are randomly paired and then given a few minutes to discuss a prompt related to the topic of the group.

When it comes time to plan the event, it can help to keep a shared document that describes all the actions that need to take place for the event to occur. This can ensure that nothing gets missed, and

it can also serve as a way of dividing tasks between members of a SIG. If you chose to make an event checklist, consider adding the following items:

- Choose a platform for the event and make sure you have access to an account that can support the number of participants you're expecting for an appropriate length of time. We would prefer that you use CSCCE's Zoom account. If you would like to use a different venue, please contact Katie to talk about arrangements.
- Identify and invite speakers, moderators, and anyone else who's necessary for the event.
- Advertise your event to your target audience using email, Slack, etc.
- Create any needed documents such as a shared notes doc and make sure the permissions are set so that it's accessible to call participants.
- Create any slides you might want to use to open the event, introduce speakers, etc.
- If necessary, hold a practice session to make sure all technical aspects of the event are working.
- After the event, be sure to archive any documents that were created so that you can find them in the future!

6. Engaging your members

- **Be inclusive!** - One of our core values is that "we continuously strive to be inclusive" and we ask that in running your group you remember to make sure you're including everyone who would like to participate - including helping new members discover how they might contribute to your group's activities.
- **Welcoming new members** - We've configured Slack so that you can see when new members join a channel. You may want to welcome them by adding emojis to those notifications and even adding periodic "welcome to the group" comments in the channel where you @mention new members. You could assign someone to do this each week or month in order to share tasks.
- **Scheduling calls** - We recommend that you schedule a call with your group within a month of starting the group. When planning to host calls:
 - Remember, CSCCE members are spread across many time zones, so try to find times that work for most.
 - You can set up polls by creating a list of options with a different emoji for each one and asking folks to vote using corresponding emojis. Alternatively, you can use the polling app in Slack by clicking on the lightning icon in the text input box and selecting "Create poll".
 - By giving your members two weeks' notice for a call they may be more able to attend, either by blocking out the time early or moving some other things around.
 - While moving call times around might help to serve members in different time zones, setting up a regular time can help to create a routine.

7. Sharing the workload

- It's up to you how you decide to share the workload of running your group. You may rotate responsibilities as co-leads or seek to engage your group members in certain tasks.
- Some suggested tasks to think about:
 - Welcoming new members
 - Leading monthly calls
 - Setting up collaborative notes and taking minutes
 - Starting conversations in Slack
 - Sharing out to CSCCE staff when you want to see something in our weekly or monthly newsletters
 - Scheduling invited speakers or webinars
 - Monitoring sources of information and identifying content that's relevant to the topic of the group

That's it! Enjoy your group - we look forward to seeing what you create together.

Questions? Email info@cscce.org

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