
CSCCE guide to setting up your special interest group within the CSCCE community of practice

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.

What's the difference between a SIG and a working group at CSCCE?

SIGs are member-led groups that are instigated by members of the CSCCE CoP. They do not have a fixed format, however every SIG in the group has a public channel in the Slack workspace as a primary place to convene (see sections below for more on programming). By contrast, working groups are convened by CSCCE staff and generally meet to progress a project towards an end goal. Participation expectations for working group members are somewhat higher than for SIG members. For example, working group members may be expected to attend regular Zoom meetings, co-author documents, or give presentations.

This document offers guidance for anyone leading a SIG, whether they are doing so on a volunteer basis or as a member of staff.

Prepping your group

ON SLACK

- **Update the info about your channel.** (Click the info icon next to your channel's name in the main pane, then select "About" and edit the description of your channel.) 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 highlight** 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. Don’t forget to periodically review your pinned items to remove pins from updates that are no longer relevant.

IN THE GOOGLE FOLDER

- If you are leading a SIG, 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.

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.

Engaging your members

- **Inclusion** - 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 members 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.

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.

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

Questions? Email info@cscce.org

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