

## Working Groups : Project Group Framework

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# Project Group Framework (Approved 7/2/07)

## What is a Project Group?

Project Groups consist of 6-8 AARNet members, staff (and in some cases partner organisations) who are brought together to work on short term projects or activities which will provide direct benefits to the Academic and Research Network Community and AARNet.

Projects and activities are varied but each project group will be expected to address a common problem by completing a set of specific deliverables that may cover network infrastructure, network systems, management, policy, or service support aspects.

## Lifespan

1 year (unless extended by the AAC). The project group may apply to the AAC for an extension at the end of its term.

## 1. Formation

1. An AARNet Member must complete and submit the Project Group Proposal form to the Director of Applications and Services (there will be two "windows each year where the community will have an opportunity to submit proposals).
2. The proposer holds a meeting with interested parties to determine Co-Chair positions and draft the Charter and Work Plan.
3. The proposal and a list of prospective participants is forwarded to the AARNet Advisory Committee (AAC) for endorsement.
4. The new Project Group is launched and work commences.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Each group will consist of two co-chairs, a support officer, and state based representation. Non member partners may also participate in these groups.

**AAC:** The AARNet Advisory Committee is the governing body for project groups. It oversees formation, progress and termination of project groups. It provides business/technical advice and guidance. The AAC approves, monitors and reviews the work of Project Groups ensuring they align closely to AARNet's strategic plans and offer demonstrable benefits to the R&E Community. The AAC may also choose to appoint an AAC representative to a Project Group.

**Chairs/Co Chairs:** Chairs have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that a Project Group achieves forward

progress and meets its milestones. They will be responsible for publishing the agenda a minimum of one week before each meeting, coordinating the work of the group and presenting progress reports at AAC meetings.

**Members:** Membership participation will be by AAC approval which may be initiated by a call for volunteers via the website and mailing lists. Acceptance will be based on prior experience, knowledge (and, if applicable, access to equipment). Members are expected to devote a percentage of their time to (a) attend all meetings and (b) to work to complete the project deliverables. Members must be granted authorisation by their line managers to participate in the group. State representatives will also act as a communication channel to their respective regional network organisation and equivalent technical groups. Members are typically members of AARNet customer organisations, they can also be commercial vendors who will support and partner the group in achieving the aims as set out in the group charter. Members will work on deliverables via AARNet's wiki environment.

**AARNet staff:** AARNet staff members will participate and assist with specific deliverables, with the permission of the Director, Applications & Services.

**Support Officer:** The Project Support Officer will organize meeting logistics, record the minutes, administer email lists, and update the project group web pages.

## 2. Operations

### Charter

The Charter must include:

- Scope and Objectives
- Nominated names for co-chairs, project group support officer, vendor representatives.
- An outline of benefits to members.
- An overview of the approach, milestones, tasks and a timeframe of the group's activities.
- High level details of the expected outcomes (list of deliverables).
- Costs to support the group (including breakdown).

### Work Plan

A work plan outlining the systematic approach to achieving the desired aims/objectives of the Project Group in detail must be submitted to the AAC. Regular progress reports must also be submitted to the AAC ahead of these meetings.

### Meetings

A project group will meet up to four times per year in person. Video conference meetings will be held each month except for where physical meetings are scheduled.

### Documentation

Reports and other results of the project group will be placed in the public domain, with the exception of information that is subject to a Commercial Non-Disclosure Agreement.

## **Reporting**

Regular written/verbal reports must be submitted to the AAC. The Co-Chair may be asked to attend AAC meetings.

## **Communication**

Each Project Group will have access to a dedicated web page to disseminate completed work.

An "active members" only wiki area will also be made available to help coordinate and respond to work in progress.

Each Project Group will have access to a dedicated e-mail list which will be used for communication between the active members. The list and its archive will be publicly available.

Project Groups will present on their work at AAC meetings, Ozeconfs and the annual Questnet Conference.

## **Funding**

A budget, if required, must be submitted with the Work Plan for approval by the Director, Applications and Services, which in turn will be forwarded onto the AAC for endorsement.

A typical budget for a Project Group (meetings, admin and travel) should be around \$20,000 pa. The Budget must be justified with details covering such items as meeting costs including travel, accommodation and conference registration fees for project group members, and/or equipment that may facilitate group outcomes. Major expenditure on pilot projects or developments related to a project may also be considered if submitted as a business case and incorporated in the work plan.

## **Intellectual Property**

Unless otherwise agreed in writing, intellectual property generated by the activity of a Project Group remains the property of AARNet Pty Ltd. Such intellectual property is available for use by AARNet members and shareholders free of charge for educational and research purposes only.

## **Project Group Disputes/Resolutions**

In the event that a Project Group is split on an issue, AARNet will elevate this issue to the AAC for resolution.

## **3. Dissolution**

A Project Group will dissolve in the following circumstances:

- The project group completes its mandate in advance of or in line with its timescales and does not submit a revised charter and workplan to extend its life.
- The project group is considered by the AAC to have made insufficient progress or that its activities are no longer useful or relevant.
- The project group co-chairs resign and no replacement can be found.
- The project group is unable to complete its mandate within the Project term
- The project group application for an extension/renewal is not approved by the Director, Applications and Services or the AAC.

## Outcomes

Where a project group recommends an application and/or service should be offered to AARNet customers, the Project Group may seek to work in partnership with AARNet or oversee its implementation via AARNet. AARNet reserves the right to decide whether it chooses to adopt the recommendations on a technical or commercial basis. Those recommendations that are adopted would follow AARNet's Project Management Framework to manage new Service Development and any major infrastructure changes. <https://wiki.aarnet.edu.au/display/INT/Project+Management>