



The Open Group
Forum and Work Group Operations
2019

Fundamentals

- » The Open Group is Open
 - Standards Adoption Criteria define what it means to have an “open” specification
- » The Open Group is a Consensus body
 - We operate with the support of the majority of our members
- » The Open Group must at all times operate in accordance with US, EC and international anti-trust laws
 - Certain decisions must utilize the approved standards process

Forum/Work Group Operations

- » There must be a chair – elected by the members
 - An acceptable alternative is to have two or more Co-Chairs to share the role of Chair in rotation or based on availability
- » We use the consensus process (not other procedures such as Roberts Rules of Order)
- » Meetings must be announced in advance
 - Four (4) weeks for face-to-face meetings
 - One (1) week for teleconferences
- » Minutes must be recorded and published
- » Forums/Work Groups must operate within the charter of The Open Group and be lawful and not do anything to undermine the assets of operation of The Open Group

(Note in later slides Forum applies to Work Groups also, unless explicitly stated otherwise)*

Forum/Work Group Operations

- ❑ A Forum/Work Group must operate within the procedures defined by The Open Group Standards Process at all times
- ❑ Workings of the Forum/Work group must be open to all its members

Forum/Work Group Operations

- The objective is to reach stable decisions
 - In general that means supported by a **consensus** of members of the Forum/Work Group
 - It also means not strongly opposed by a sufficient subset of the members to cause decisions to be revisited
 - No reply does not equate to consensus
 - See the following slides on consensus decision-making:

Consensus is a Principle of The Open Group

- » To promote consensus, Chairs must ensure that Forums and Work Groups consider all legitimate views and objections, and endeavor to resolve them, whether these views and objections are expressed by the active participants or by others
- » Decisions may be made during meetings (face-to-face or distributed) as well as through email.
- » Consensus must be established over a time period sufficient to give any interested party an equal chance to participate.

Consensus decision-making

- » Consensus decision-making is a decision-making process that not only seeks the agreement of most participants, but also to resolve or mitigate the objections of the minority in order to achieve the most agreeable decision
- » “Consensus” is usually defined as meaning both general agreement, and the process of getting to such agreement. Consensus decision-making is thus concerned primarily with that process

What is consensus decision-making?

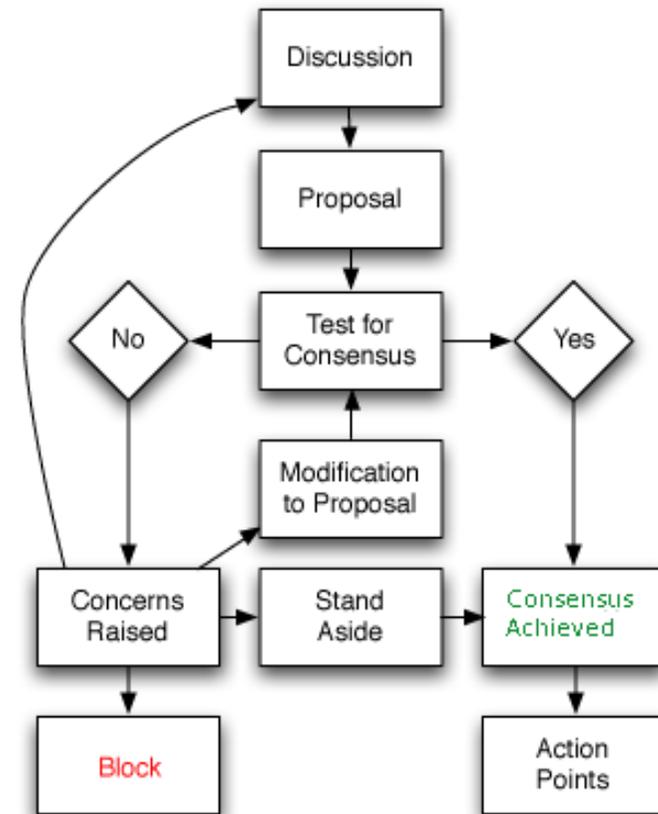
- » **Inclusive**
 - As many stakeholders as possible should be involved in the consensus decision-making process
- » **Participatory**
 - The consensus process should actively solicit the input and participation of all decision-makers
- » **Co-operative**
 - Participants in an effective consensus process should strive to reach the best possible decision for the group and all of its members, rather than opt to pursue a majority opinion, potentially to the detriment of a minority
- » **Egalitarian**
 - All members of a consensus decision-making body should be afforded, as much as possible, equal input into the process
- » **Solution-oriented**
 - An effective consensus decision-making body strives to emphasize common agreement over differences and reach effective decisions using compromise and other techniques to avoid or resolve mutually-exclusive positions within the group

Consensus as an Alternative to Voting

- » Voting is competitive, rather than co-operative, framing decision-making in a win/lose dichotomy that ignores the possibility of compromise or other potential solutions.
- » A majority decision reduces the commitment of each individual decision-maker to the decision
 - Members of a minority position may have a sense of reduced responsibility for the ultimate decision.

The Process of Consensus Decision-making

- » Since the consensus decision-making process is not as formalized as others, such as Roberts Rules of Order, the practical details of its implementation vary from group to group. However, there is a core set of procedures which is common to most implementations of consensus decision-making
- » Once an agenda for discussion has been set and, optionally, the ground rules for the meeting have been agreed upon, each item of the agenda is addressed in turn. Typically, each decision arising from an agenda item follows through a simple structure



The Process of Consensus Decision-making

- » **Discussion of the item**
 - The item is discussed with the goal of identifying opinions and information on the topic at hand. The general direction of the group and potential proposals for action are often identified during the discussion
- » **Formation of a proposal**
 - Based on the discussion, a formal decision proposal on the issue is presented to the group
- » **Call for consensus**
 - The facilitator of the decision-making body calls for consensus on the proposal. Each member of the group usually must actively state their agreement with the proposal, often by using a hand gesture or raising a colored card, to avoid the group from interpreting silence or inaction as agreement
- » **Identification and addressing of concerns**
 - If consensus is not achieved, each dissenter presents his or her concerns on the proposal, potentially starting another round of discussion to address or clarify the concern
- » **Modification of the proposal**
 - The proposal is amended, re-phrased or a rider is added, in an attempt to address the concerns of the decision-makers. The process then returns to the call for consensus and the cycle is repeated until a satisfactory decision is made

Roles in the Consensus Process

- » **Facilitator (usually the Forum Director)**
 - As the name implies, the role of the facilitator is to help make the process of reaching a consensus decision easier. Facilitators accept responsibility for moving through the agenda on time; ensuring the group adheres to the mutually agreed-upon mechanics of the consensus process; and, if necessary, suggesting alternate or additional discussion or decision-making techniques, such as go-arounds, break-out groups or role-playing
- » **Timekeeper (usually the Chair)**
 - The purpose of the timekeeper is to ensure the decision-making body keeps to the schedule set in the agenda
- » **Empath or 'Vibe Watch'(usually the Chair)**
 - The empath, or 'vibe watch' as the position is sometimes called, is charged with monitoring the 'emotional climate' of the meeting, taking note of the body language and other non-verbal cues of the participants. Defusing potential emotional conflicts, maintaining a climate free of intimidation and being aware of potentially destructive power dynamics, such as sexism or racism within the decision-making body, are the primary responsibilities of the empath
- » **Notes Taker (identified at start of meeting)**
 - The role of the notes taker or secretary is to document the decisions, discussion and action points of the decision-making body. Unlike other forms of decision-making, consensus minutes often make a point of documenting dissenting positions

If consensus is not unanimous, who must agree?

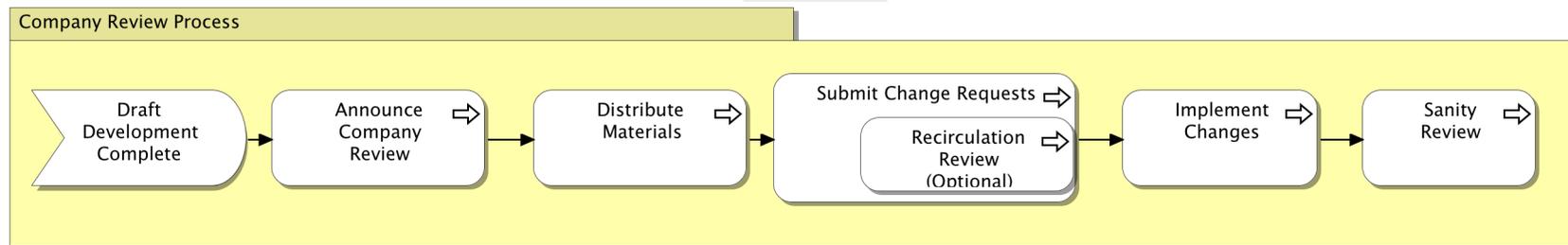
- » A healthy consensus decision-making process usually encourages and outs dissent early, maximizing the chance of accommodating the views of all minorities
- » Since unanimity may be difficult to achieve, especially in large groups, or unanimity may be the result of coercion, fear, undue persuasive power or eloquence, inability to comprehend alternatives, or plain impatience with the process of debate, The Open Group may use an alternative benchmark of consensus
- » **Unanimity minus two (or U-2)**
 - does not permit two individual delegates to block a decision, but tends to curtail debate with a lone dissenter more quickly. Dissenting *pairs* can present alternate views of what is wrong with the decision under consideration. Pairs of delegates can be empowered to find the common ground that will enable them to convince a third, decision-blocking, decision-maker to join them. If the pair are unable to convince a third party to join them within a set time, their arguments are deemed to be unconvincing

When consensus cannot be reached

- » Although the consensus decision-making process should, ideally, identify and address concerns and reservations early, proposals do not always garner full consensus from the decision-making body. When a call for consensus on a motion is made, a dissenting delegate in The Open Group has one of two options:
- » **Declare reservations**
 - Group members who are willing to let a motion pass but desire to register their concerns with the group may choose "declare reservations." If there are significant reservations about a motion, the decision-making body may choose to modify or re-word the proposal
- » **Stand aside**
 - A "stand aside" may be registered by a group member who has a "serious personal disagreement" with a proposal, but is willing to let the motion pass. Although stand asides do not halt a motion, it is often regarded as a strong "nay vote" and the concerns of group members standing aside are usually addressed by modifications to the proposal. Stand asides may also be registered by users who feel they are incapable of adequately understanding or participating in the proposal

Forum/Work Group Operations

- ❑ Guidelines are available for how to start a new project or new work item within The Open Group
- ❑ Decisions relating to approval of specifications MUST use the approved Company Review process
 - This is a useful tool for building consensus around other types of deliverable



Publications Tracks

Standards Track

An agreed way of doing something, e.g. making a product, managing a process, delivering a service etc.

Normative requirements

Formal Status as a standard of The Open Group

Guide Track

How to ...

Supports a standard of The Open Group

Or Provides Informative Guidance only

No formal status

White Paper Track

Discussion or Position Paper

No formal status

Standards Development Lifecycle



Decision Making

- A Forum or Work Group must use the Consensus Decision-Making Process for decision-making, except for the following:
 - Decisions relating to approval of specifications must use the Company Review Process
 - Election of Forum officers *

* A process for Chair elections is available in the sample forum charter

Decision Making

- ❑ By default, the set of members eligible to participate in a decision is the set of Forum or Work Group members (one per company).
- ❑ The Standards Process does not require a quorum for decisions. Instead, the call for consensus is sent to all members eligible to participate.
- ❑ Where unanimity is not possible, a Forum or Work Group is recommended to make consensus decisions where there is significant support and few abstentions.
- ❑ The Standards Process does not require a particular percentage of eligible members to agree to a motion in order for a decision to be made but there must be sufficient evidence to demonstrate the consensus.

Meetings

- Announce face to face meetings at least 4 weeks in advance
- Announce teleconferences at least 1 week in advance
- All meetings have to publish minutes

Planning and Roadmaps

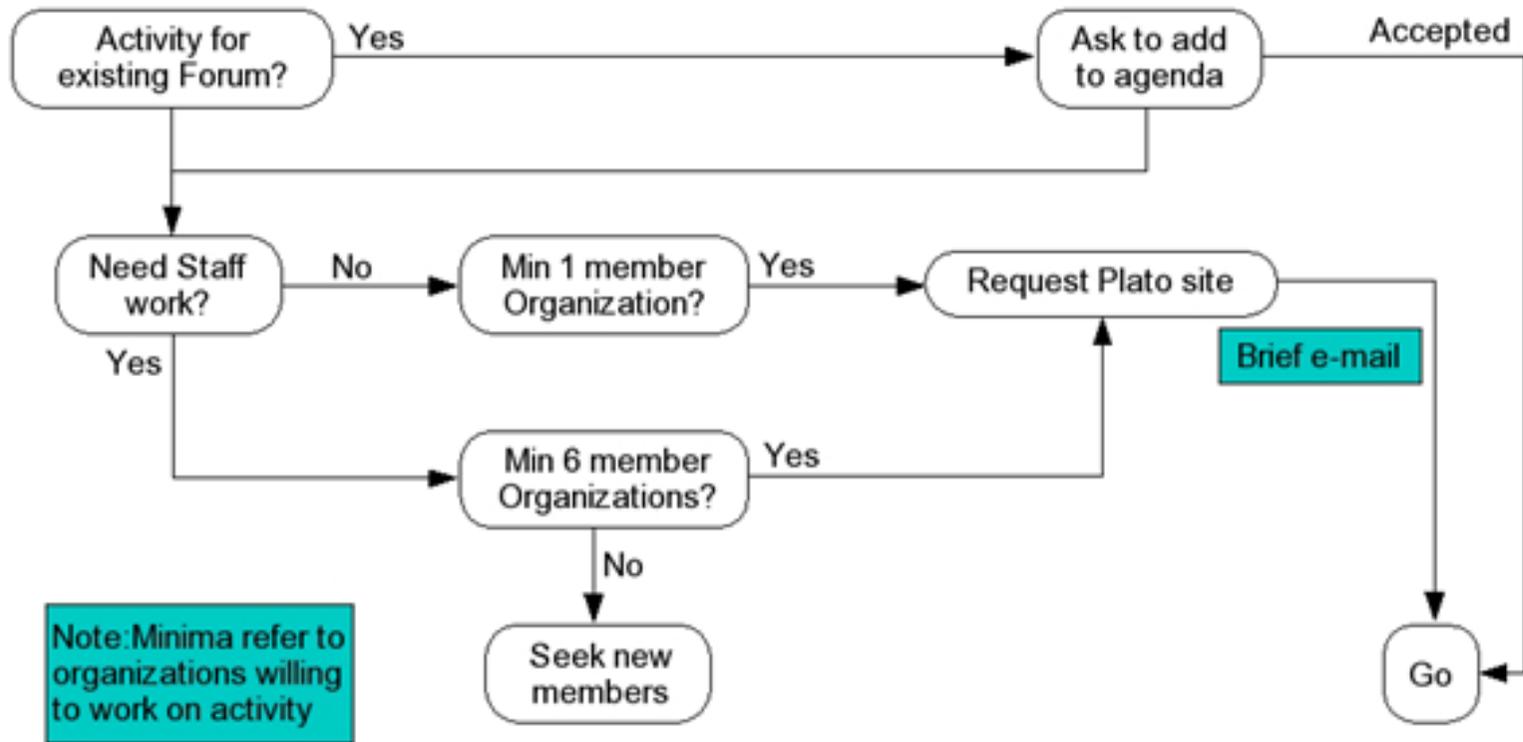
- ❑ Develop a workplan/roadmap for each year (or two year period)
 - Based on member proposals
 - Based on member consensus
- ❑ Work to the roadmap, report regularly on progress, update the roadmap
- ❑ One technique is for the Forum Chair to maintain the Roadmap as part of the Forum Spotlight presentation

Recording Issues and Consensus

- » Maintain an Issues List
 - A list of issues where no consensus has been reached.
 - A way to “park” an issue
 - For example,
 - Issue *identifier*: How to best organize the specification, should it be a singular document or split into modules?

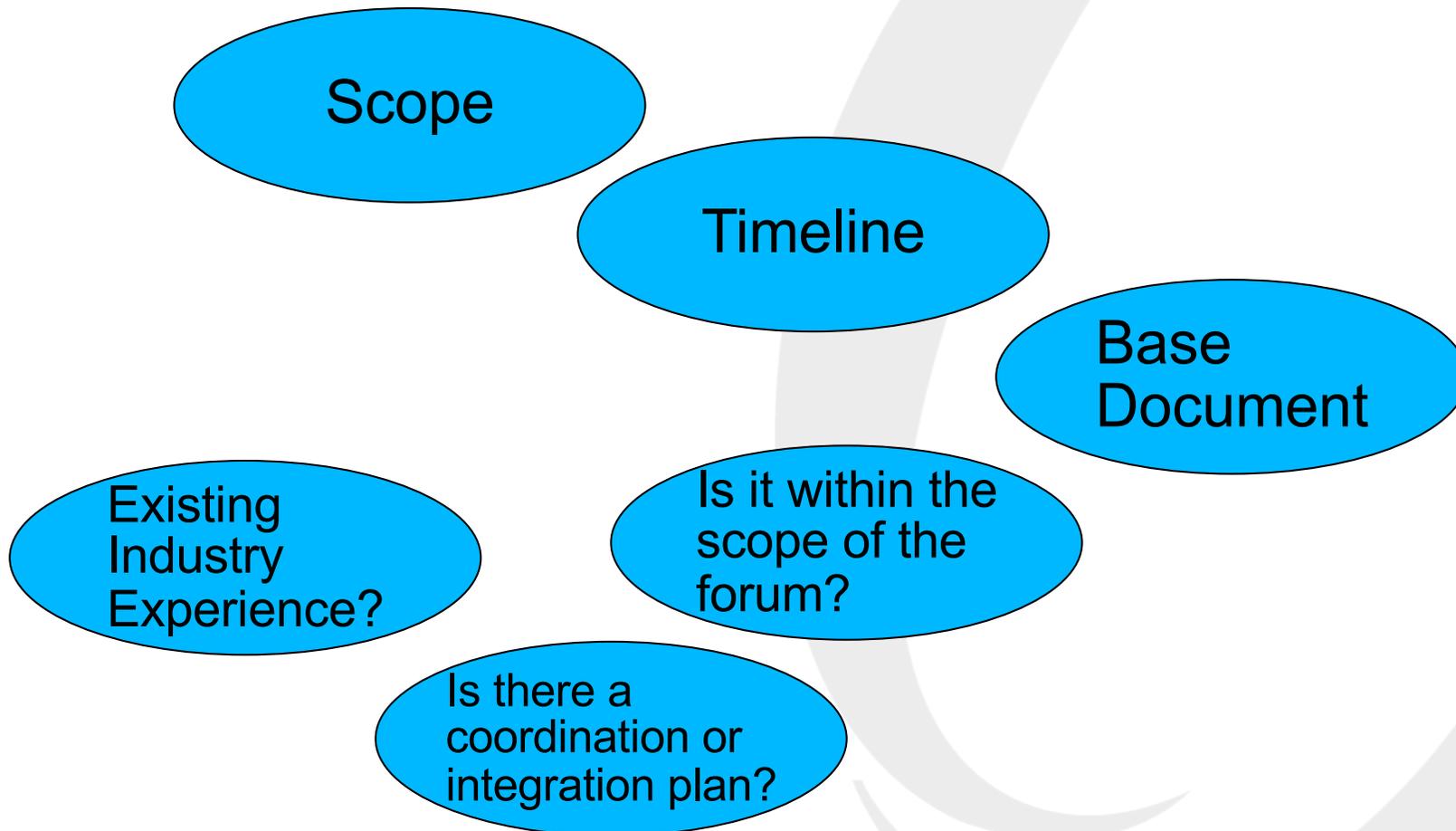
- » Maintain a Consent list
 - A list of key decisions
 - For example
 - *Identifier*: AGREED. New feature xyz would be incorporated into the specification

How to Start a New Work Item



New Project: Description

(Describe the project and its scope, its proposed timeline and whether there is a base document, describe existing industry experience, if any)



New Project: Business Relevance

(Identify the market place relevance of this proposal in terms of what problem is being solved and or need being addressed)

What problem does this solve?

What need does this address?

Does this bring sufficient value to the industry?

Does it sufficiently further the interests of the industry?

New Project: Market Requirement

(Identify the nature of the Market Requirement, assessing the extent to which it is essential, desirable or merely supportive of some other project. Indicate if this is Essential, Desirable, or Supportive.)

What is the market requirement?

Is it Essential, Desirable or Supportive?

New Project: Commitment

(List participants who would commit to this proposal. These participants must include a Chair and Technical Editor, as well as a sufficient number of technical experts representing a reasonable balance of viewpoints, and the participants must be willing to support the secretarial function)

Who is the Chair?

Who is the Technical editor?

Who is the secretary?

Who has committed to participate?

Is there a balance of viewpoints?

Do the participants have the necessary expertise?

Is the resource impact reasonable?

Collaboration Tools

- Maintain a document register
 - A repository of forum documents
- Maintain an email archive
- Collaborative development
- Use other technology to allow access to as many members as possible
 - Webex
 - Skype

Confidentiality and IPR

- » Member agrees to the following obligations of confidentiality with respect to information received through participation in the Forum(s):

“Any specifications, drawings, sketches, models, samples, data, computer programs or documentation or other technical or business information in written, graphic or other tangible or electronic form furnished or disclosed to The Open Group or any other party in the course of the Forums’ activities and/or as a result of Member’s use of any materials (“the Information”) should be deemed the property of The Open Group, and shall be returned to The Open Group upon request. Member agrees to maintain all Information in confidence, using the same degree of care Member uses to protect its own proprietary information of like importance, but in no event less than a reasonable degree of care.”

The Open Group Membership Agreement

Copyright Notices

- » Materials developed as part of participation in a forum's activities must carry The Open Group copyright
Copyright © Year The Open Group, All rights reserved*
- » And its recommended that drafts carry the additional header or footer
Unapproved Draft, Subject to Change
- * *First and each year in which the materials were created/amended/updated – e.g. “Copyright 1994-2019, The Open Group. All rights reserved”*

Liaisons

» Establishing Liaisons

- Approval required from The Open Group Executive Management
- Liaison Manager assigned by The Open Group Executive Management
- Liaison representatives can be designated from the membership by an open nomination and election process
- Governing Board notified and given opportunity to raise objections

Liaisons

» Approving Liaison Statements

- Liaison statements must reflect consensus of a Forum or Work Group
- Must be approved by Liaison Manager
- Must be copied to the Director, Standards

Invited Guests and Invited Experts

- » Criteria defined for qualification of guests and experts with a Forum or Work Group
- » Process defined for obtaining approval for a guest or expert to participate
 - The Chair designates a Guest or Expert
 - The Open Group VP Membership & Events approves the designation
 - The individual provides a signed NDA to The Open Group Legal Counsel

Qualifying Invited Guests and Experts

Invited Guest <i>Term limit – a single meeting</i>	Invited Expert <i>Term limit – until the specific activity concludes</i>
<p>Should possess recognized expertise that a Forum or Work Group needs for a specific activity</p> <p>Can be a prospect for membership</p> <p>Can be from a different category of membership</p>	<p>Must possess recognized expertise that a Forum or Work Group needs for a specific activity</p> <p>Must not be a prospect for membership</p> <p>Must not be one category of member but enjoying the benefits of membership by invitation</p>

Resources

- » We've developed specifications and standards before!
- » <http://www.opengroup.org/standardsprocess>
- » Its often better to build on the work of others than re-invent the wheel
- » Additional resources:
 - <https://collaboration.opengroup.org/projects/spectools/>



The Open Group: M

The Open Group works with customers and suppliers, services, and with consortia and other standards organizations to integrate current and emerging requirements, establish best practices. Our standards ensure openness, interoperability, and consensus.

[Learn More](#)

Member Newsletters

Member Spotlights

Become A Member

Benefits & Entitlements

Membership | Commercial License

Membership FAQs

Forums

Work Groups

Consortia

Academic Program

Membership List

Standards Process

Company Reviews (Member Login Required)

Members Collaboration Portals [Login]

Member Code of Conduct





The Open Group Standards Process

This is where we begin to visualize your requirements and make them into Standards.



1. Introduction

This section provides an introduction to The Open Group Standards Process describing its purpose and the principles upon which it is founded.

[LEARN MORE](#)



2. Definitions and Glossary

This section provides the definitions and glossary for terminology used in The Open Group Standards Process. It is organized in terms of the human actors (participants), processes, documents, and tools used within the Standards Process.

[LEARN MORE](#)



3. The Standards Development Process

This section describes the procedures to be followed for the development of Open Group Standards. It includes the Core Processes, together with Supporting Processes.

[LEARN MORE](#)



4. The Certification Development Process

The Open Group provides Certification Programs for people, products, and services that meet Open Group Standards.

[LEARN MORE](#)



5. Confidentiality

This section describes the procedures to be followed when handling confidential material within The Open Group and within member companies when working with The Open Group.

[LEARN MORE](#)



6. Standards Adoption Criteria

This procedure describes the criteria of openness which must be considered before any specification may be adopted by The Open Group as the basis for the development and possible publication of an Open Group Standard or inclusion in the Standards Information Base.

Resources

The screenshot shows the 'Specification Tools and Process Support Site' interface. At the top, it features the Open Group logo and the site title 'Specification Tools and Process Support Site' with the subtitle 'Tools, templates and processes for specification development'. A breadcrumb trail indicates the user is on the 'Specification Tools and Process Site'. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Information' (4 Documents, latest change 12-May-10), 'Procedures' (15 Documents, latest change 25-Mar-19), 'Sample Documents' (3 Documents, latest change 07-Jan-15), 'Style Guides' (2 Documents, latest change 24-Feb-11), 'Templates' (22 Documents, latest change 20-Mar-19), and 'Tutorials' (5 Documents, latest change 17-Jul-15). A 'Recent Review Documents' section lists a document titled 'A Handbook for Publications Development' from 10-Dec-14, with 13 comments and a 'more' link. The left sidebar contains user controls like 'Admin Access', 'Logout', and 'My Open Group', along with search and admin options. The bottom of the page has a small note about broken links.

Handbooks



- » Guidance Hand Books available:
 - I121 A Handbook for the Consensus Decision-Making Process
 - I122 A Handbook for Elected Officers of The Open Group Forums and Work Groups
 - I123 A Handbook for Individuals Acting as The Open Group Liaison to Another Organization
 - I153 A Handbook for Publications Development

Publications Handbook



- A Handbook for Publications Development:
 - The Standards Development Lifecycle
 - Developing Text for The Open Group Standards
 - The Snapshot Process
 - The Guide Process
 - The White Paper Process
 - Guidance for Reviews
 - Executable Standards



Thankyou!



Questions

