Process for Establishing New Communities of Practice (CoP)

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1. Introduction

This policy outlines the criteria and process for the establishment of new Communities of Practice (CoP) within the Canadian Accessibility Network (CAN). It ensures that any new CoP aligns with CAN's strategic priorities and has the necessary resources and leadership to be successful.

2. Criteria for Establishment

Criteria	Description
A. Alignment with Strategic Objectives	The CoP should directly align with CAN's strategic objectives and priorities. It must contribute to advancing the overall mission and vision of CAN.
B. Member Interest and Demand	There should be clear evidence of significant interest and demand from the CAN membership. This could be measured through surveying the CAN network or focus group discussions in AC meetings.
C. Leadership	Co-Lead Requirement: Availability of committed individuals (at least one, preferably more) willing to lead the CoP in accordance with the approved CoP guidelines. The CoP leaders should possess pertinent expertise in the respective field and be willing to invest the necessary time and effort to effectively lead both the CoP and its associated projects.
D. Impact Potential	The potential impact of the CoP should be evident, including how it will contribute to the field, benefit members, and align with CAN's goals.
E. Collaboration and Synergy	Potential for collaboration with existing CoPs, other organizations, or stakeholders. The new CoP should complement and synergize with existing initiatives rather than duplicate efforts.
F. Evaluation and Success Metrics	Clear criteria for evaluating the success and impact of the CoP, including specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) objectives.

Process for Establishing a New Community of Practice

Process	Description
Step 1: Identification of Need or Interest	Members within CAN identify a potential area or topic for a new CoP, based on perceived needs, interests, or gaps in current offerings. - Develop a template, web-based - In the form, do you have a project you are planning to implement in the first year
Step 2: Development of Proposal	The interested parties develop a comprehensive proposal for the new CoP. This document should detail the CoP's objectives, target audience, expected outcomes, alignment with CAN's strategic goals, and a preliminary plan for leadership, membership, and activities.
Step 3: Submission to CAN National Office	The proposal is submitted to the CAN national office. This office serves as the first point of review and assessment for new CoP proposals.
Step 4: Extensive Review by CAN National Office	The CAN national office conducts an extensive review of the proposal. This review assesses the proposal's alignment with the established criteria for new CoPs, including relevance, potential impact, resource requirements, and overall feasibility.
Step 5: Recommendation for Approval	If the proposal meets the minimum requirements and shows potential, the CAN national office recommends the CoP for approval to the Governing Council. This recommendation includes a summary of the proposal's strengths and how it aligns with CAN's strategic objectives.
Approval by Governing Council	The Governing Council reviews the recommendation from the national office and makes the final decision on whether to approve the establishment of the new CoP.
Allocation of Resources and Establishment	Upon approval, the necessary resources are allocated, which may include funding, staff time, and other supports. The CoP is then officially established.
Selection of Leadership and Member Recruitment	CoP leadership is confirmed, and efforts are made to recruit members from within CAN, focusing on those with relevant interests and expertise.
Inaugural Meeting and Goal Setting	An initial meeting is held to set specific goals, establish a roadmap, and foster initial engagement among members.
Ongoing Operations	The CoP commences its regular operations, including meetings, activities, and communication, all aimed at achieving its set objectives.
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting	The progress and impact of the CoP are monitored and evaluated regularly. Successes and challenges are reported back to the national office and the Governing Council.