

# Interoperability Coordination Working Group Terms of Reference for 2024-27

The aim of the Interoperability Coordination Working Group (IWG) is to enhance collaboration and coordination among CESSDA Service Providers and organisational goals. Specifically, the group focuses on achieving common objectives, advising Service Providers and the Main Office, developing relevant policies, and fostering communication and consensus among CESSDA Members.

This Terms of Reference document is effective from January 2024 and continues until December 2027.

## Document info

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## Version history

Version	Date	Comment	Revised by
0.1	30/10/2023	First draft, establishing outline	John Shepherdson
0.2	31/10/2023	Updates following review by CESSDA Director	John Shepherdson
1.0	15/11/2023	Finalised, following discussion at MO Management Team Meeting	John Shepherdson

## Contents

<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Purpose of the Working Group</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Duration</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Duties of the Working Group</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Duties of the Interoperability Board</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Duties of MO</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Removal of unproductive members</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>8</b>

## Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Expansion
MO	(CESSDA) Main Office

## Glossary

Term	Definition
Accountable (person)	Has ultimate control over the working group
Consulted (person)	Gives advice to those Responsible within the working group
Informed (person)	Needs to be kept in the loop about all aspects of the working group
Responsible (person)	In charge of completing assigned tasks
Service	A way to provide value to users through bringing about results that they want to achieve
Service Owner	Person(s) or Organisation(s) that manages and delivers a service to users
Supportive (person)	Provides assistance to those Responsible within the working group
Technical Maintainer	Person(s) or Organisation(s) that maintains and enhances the technical components of the service

## Executive Summary

A terms of reference document (ToR) defines the purpose and structures of a project, meeting, negotiation, or any similar collection of people who have agreed to work together to accomplish a shared goal. Terms of reference show how the object in question will be defined, developed, and verified.

This document details the terms of reference for the organisation and delivery of the Interoperability Coordination Working Group (IWG).

The aim of the IWG is to enhance collaboration and coordination among CESSDA Service Providers and CESSDA's organisational goals. Specifically, the group focuses on achieving common objectives, advising Service Providers, Technical Maintainers and the Main Office, developing relevant policies, and fostering communication and consensus among CESSDA Members.

## Purpose of the Working Group

The IWG federates the Service Owners and Technical Maintainers in one group to oversee the development, maintenance, harmonisation and promotion of the CESSDA services collectively (i.e. the CESSDA tools [1], the expert guides [2, 3] and the Metadata Office [4]).

The IWG deals with topics that cross service boundaries, such as maintenance models, common metadata standards, harmonised technology stacks, research and development topics.

Each tool or expert guide typically has a number of logical components:

- Software application
- Technology platform
- Metadata model
- Content

The IWG oversees the work of the Metadata Office for metadata uplift for all digital objects.

## Duration

The IWG will continue its operations until the conclusion of the CESSDA Strategic plan 2023-2027. A year before the end of the strategic cycle (in 2026) the IWG's performance (with respect to the delivery of goals, the needs of both Service Providers and MO) will be reviewed against its planned activities and targeted goals. The review will inform the next five year strategic cycle and determine if the IWG will be continued, adjusted or disbanded.

## Duties of the Working Group

- Responsible for developing and periodically reviewing and revising its work plan.
- Consulted by the Service Provider Forum with regards to the content of the CESSDA work plan.
- Supports MO with regards to the production of the CESSDA work plan.

- Consulted by the Directors meeting with regard to its strategic direction.
- Informs the General Assembly with regard to key decisions.
- Supported by external experts on technical matters as and when required.
- Supported by the CESSDA Head of IT (or his/her representative), at every meeting.
- Responsible for broadening the engagement of Service Providers - products of the WG (reports, policies etc.) will be organised for review.

## Duties of the Interoperability Board

The Interoperability Board oversees the work of the IWG. It is made up of the IWG Chair, the CESSDA Head of IT and a representative of each of a maximum of three Service Providers who are not responsible for the technical maintenance of any service.

- Accountable for the activities of the IWG.
- Responsible for reporting progress to the Service Provider Forum, or where appropriate (in particular on strategic matters) to the Directors meeting and/or the General Assembly.
- Responsible for representing the IWG at internal and external meetings, conferences and other events.
- Responsible for creating a feedback mechanism among the Service Owners to provide recommendations for the Main Office and the Directors meeting and the delegates of the General Assembly for the following year.

## Duties of MO

- Responsible for arranging the review of the IWG's performance.
- Responsible for arranging the removal of unproductive members from the IWG.
- Responsible for publishing the name of the Chair and the WG members on its webpage.

## Removal of unproductive members

In the event of unproductive IWG members, MO reserves the right to request their removal in consultation with the Chair. In the event that the Chair is unproductive, MO will consult with the other IWG members to request his/her removal.

## References

[1] CESSDA ERIC. 2023. CESSDA Data Archiving Guide. [online] Available at: <https://www.cessda.eu/Tools>

[2] CESSDA ERIC. 2023. CESSDA Data Archiving Guide. [online] Available at: <https://www.cessda.eu/Training/DMEG>

[3] CESSDA ERIC. 2023. CESSDA Data Archiving Guide. [online] Available at: <https://www.cessda.eu/Training/DAG>

[4] CESSDA ERIC. 2023. CESSDA Metadata Office. [online] Available at: <https://www.cessda.eu/Metadata-Office>