

Digital advisory group Terms of Reference

General

The British Council was founded to create a friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and the wider world.

There are separate sector advisory groups to reflect each of the main areas of the British Council's work. The Chief Executive's authority is required to form or disband a sector advisory group. The groups report to the relevant member of the British Council's Executive Board. The groups' functions are solely advisory. They do not have decision making or executive powers.

Purpose

The Digital advisory group advises the Digital leadership team and influences how the British Council's vision and strategy are developed.

Objectives

- Support the British Council in its mission to create a friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and wider world
- Act as an advocate for the British Council's work
- Advise on the development of the British Council's strategy
- Ensure that the Digital leadership team is kept informed of major developments in the digital
- Use 'provocation' as a tool to push boundaries and strengthen propositions
- Serve as a channel of professional advice within the areas of expertise represented on the group
- Offer insights and identify new opportunities and trends
- Create links between the British Council and the communities within the relevant digital sectors for whom our work has particular relevance

Membership

- The Digital advisory group will consist of a maximum of fifteen members, including the Chair
- The Chair and the members will serve a term of three years, which may be renewed in exceptional cases¹
- The Secretary is the Director Digital but is not a member of the group
- The Secretary may nominate another member of staff to assist them in carrying out his/her functions, with the exception of signing letters of appointment
- The British Council seeks to secure a complementary range of experience and knowledge across each sector advisory group
- The members are generally invited to join in a personal capacity rather than as a representative of their employer
- The group will not include government representatives. The British Council has other mechanisms to gather the views of the UK government and devolved administrations, for example on the development of its corporate plans
- The members and Chair are recruited through an open and transparent process and are not remunerated

¹ See Membership guidance page for more details

Meetings

- The Digital advisory group will normally meet three times per year. The number of meetings called is at the Secretary's discretion in consultation with the Chair
- The group will be provided with a meeting schedule and a forward plan of agenda items
- The Secretary should ensure that the group is consulted during the corporate strategic planning process
- The papers should be circulated at least one week before each meeting
- After each meeting, minutes will be prepared by the Secretary and reviewed by the Chair before they are circulated to the members, no later than one month after the meeting
- Once approved by the members at the next meeting, the minutes will be reviewed by the Secretary for any material that could be considered exempt under the Freedom of Information Act and then published, with any redactions, on the British Council corporate website

Communication channels

- The Secretary is the principal recipient of the group's advice and is responsible for providing feedback to the group on how its input has influenced thinking on the strategy of the relevant Strategic Business Unit. The feedback will be captured in the minutes
- The Digital advisory group has access to the Executive Board and senior managers through the Secretary who is also Director Digital
- The Secretary should liaise with the member of the group sitting on the Board of Trustees to identify opportunities to engage the Trustees with the work of the group, for example by inviting them to join the group's meetings
- The Secretary should maintain links as appropriate with the British Council's country advisory committees and other sector advisory groups

Review

The Terms of Reference of the Digital advisory group will be reviewed at least annually by the Secretary to the British Council in consultation with the Secretary.