YorkSpace Collection

Work-Integrated Learning, Accessibility, Accommodations (WILAA)

Materials from SSHRC funded research project
AcTinSite (2020-2023) & Connection Grant (2021-2022)

AcTinSite Research Project Material

AcTinSite Community of Practice: Temporary Board Manual

Shared April 2021

Summary

As part of AcTinsite, we develop a community of practitioners who support work-integrated learning (WIL). We are building an active group of practitioners to make WIL more accessible. To build this community of practice (CoP), AcTinSite is recruiting for a temporary board. This temporary board will direct the creation of needed documents, events, and elections of a body that will take over the management of the CoP. Below is a Board manual to help the temporary board to make decisions.

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AcTinSite Partners

Community of Practice: Temporary Board Manual

Fall 2021

Community of Practice Summary

A community of practice is a group of active practitioners who have a common concern that comes together to support each other in building their knowledge and skills on a topic. The community of practice aims to create a space where practitioners who support accommodation in student work-integrated learning (WIL) can sustain and grow their knowledge or make a policy change within their organization.

The desire for a Community of Practice (CoP) arose from work being done to make the accommodation process easier during nursing practicums. This work takes the form of AcTinSite, a 3-year SSHRC funded research project. AcTinSite aims to create an intervention that can help make this complicated WIL accommodation process easier for everyone involved. AcTinSite comprises five partner institutions, George Brown College, Sunnybrook Health Science Centre, The Hospital for Sick Children, University of Toronto, and York University.

In a desire to reach beyond nursing and healthcare, the AcTinSite partners decided to apply for a one-year SSHRC Connection Grant. This grant provides funds for sharing knowledge related to a research project. With this funding, we are formalizing the learning opportunities from the research project and the lived experience of people connected to the project. We hope that the CoP will thrive after the SSHRC funding finishes so that the AcTinSite intervention can be shared, and people can learn from each there to address the complex situations related to accommodations in WIL.

With these ideas in mind, the CoP creates a space where people can learn and support each other while addressing accessibility and accommodations during WIL. People may want to engage with the CoP to build a supportive network of knowledge to address the complexities of accessibility and accommodations related to WIL. The CoP will support the creation of such a space through

- o Access to a collaborative learning environment where people share their lived experiences and institutional knowledge related to accessible WIL.
- o Access to networking events to help people develop trusting relationships with others working in accessible WIL.
- o Access to educational events for members to learn more about providing accessibility or accommodations during WIL.

Temporary Community of Practice Board

While the CoP gets established with the support of the SSHRC Connection grant, the temporary leadership structure is as follows.

CoP Temporary Board

There will be a temporary board for the duration of the Connection Grant (January to November 2022). This board has nine members.

A minimum of five members must vote for a decision to be made.

The board has the following positions:

- One seat for a representative from AcTinSite.
- (1-5) One seat for representatives from AcTinSite partners if they so choose.
- Two seats for students or person with a disability.
- (1-4) All other seats are open to anyone with interest in WIL accessibility.

Temporary Board Support and Roles

Broad Support

For the duration of the Connection Grant (end October 2022), AcTinSite provides support. These board support positions take direction from the temporary board.

Primary Investigator – Dr Melanie Balkjo: They report to the board. This person will manage the finances of the Connection Grant and the hiring of staff as needed.

Administrator & Knowledge Mobilization Specialist – Dr Hilda Smith: They report to Dr Melanie Balkjo. This person will support the board by

- Setting meetings
- Event planning
- Arranging accessibility
- Writing up the communication and recruitment plan, based on board decisions
- Guiding board on how to implement the communication and recruitment plan
- Supporting the board to create a CoP charter and formal leadership structure.

WIL Student – Corrie Schweertman: They report to Dr Hilda Smith. This person will have 40 hours over four months to support the specific goals the CoP is working on at that time.

Temporary Board Roles

For the duration of the temporary board, the following roles will rotate among members.

Chair:

The Chair guides the CoP meeting. The main objectives are to
- Start the meeting by making sure everyone is aware of the agenda,
- Call on attendees when they have details to share as part of the agenda,
- Aim to keep the meetings on time.
- Keep a speakers list and call on speakers during a discussion.
- Close the meeting and set a date for the next meeting

Members at Large:

Members at large are members of the board who do not hold the chair role. Members will
- Review documents
- Attend meetings
- Guide decision making

Meetings

The temporary board will meet once a month, on the [chose a week and day - to be decided]. Meetings will last one hour. If agenda items are unfinished within the meeting time, they can be voted on between meetings or held over to the next meeting.

Members may do some work outside of meetings. We aim to cap this work at no more than 1 hour a month. If the CoP work would go over these hours, speak with Hilda to address redistribution of workload.

Most meetings will run as follows

- The chair begins the meeting
- Agenda is approved or adjusted
- Go through meeting items
- Set the next meeting

Decision Making

The temporary board will use consensus decisions making. Below is the consensus process used in AcTinSite, which the board may choose to use or change.

Step 1: Identify and clarify topic or issue
•   Share background information.
•   Identify and address priorities within a topic or issue.
Step 2: Discussion
•   Open for discussion and questions related to the topic.
•   Make a note of possible solutions for later.
•   The Reserch Team may consult with expert panels or institutional collaborators for input.
Step 3: Possible Solutions
•   Open discussion to possible solutions, make sure everyone has a chance to speak.
•   Explore the positive and not so positive aspects of each possible solution.
•   The Lead Team may consult with expert panels or institutional collaborators for input.
Step 4: Form Solution
•   Create a solution that considers the needs and concerns of members.
Step 5: Amend the Solution
•   Get feedback to make the solution more robust.
Step 6: Test for Agreement
•   Ask is for opinions of active members. Options are
◦   Agreement
◦   Opposed
◦   Stand Aside (Not voting)
•   Give people a chance to voice their opinions on the solution.
•   If ¼ of people stand aside, or anyone is opposed, go back to step 4 or 5.
Step 7: Implement Decision
•   Decide on a plan and timeline for putting the solution into place.

Online & Meeting Decision Making

Temporary board members are encouraged to attend all meetings. However, we know that schedules might mean that attending a board meeting is not possible. In addition, we are aware that not all decisions can wait until the next meeting. To ensure that we hear from all temporary board members, we will use a combination of online and meeting-based decision making.

Anytime temporary board members cannot attend a board meeting, the following will happen:

- A summary of the discussion on the topic is provided.
- Members will have time to respond to the discussion or share alternative solutions.
- Suggestions of new solutions mean that all members get a chance to respond.
- After the discussion, members have a week to submit their response to the testing for agreement.

Connection Grant Goals

The following goals were outlined on the connection grant and are the core work of the temporary board.

- o Community of Practice Charter: 4-5 page document that details the vision, mission, practices, and goals of the Community of Practice.
- o Policy Documents: Establish policy documents for the CoP to allow the organization to become independent from AcTinSite.
- o Establishing Guiding Body: Create and support a committee to oversee ongoing management of the community of practice.
- o Communication plan: Work with CoP temporary board to use the needs assessment to plan and implement a communication plan.
- o Recruitment Plan: Work with CoP temporary board to use the needs assessment to plan and implement how to recruit new members of the CoP both within and outside of health care.
- o Network Events: Work with CoP temporary board to use the needs assessment to plan and implement events for the CoP membership. Two such events are:
  - o Students Experience Panel
  - o Professional Experience Panel
- o Evaluation: Work with the CoP committee to plan the evaluation of the CoP. Then create, run, and analyze the evaluation with the guidance of the CoP committee.