

Cochrane Membership

Update for the Cochrane Steering Group, October 2016.

Document prepared by:	Chris Champion.
Submitted to Steering Group:	October 2016
Purpose of paper:	To provide the CSG with an update on the implementation of Cochrane Membership, including a planned timeline.
Access:	Open
Summary of Recommendations:	There is no recommendation for the CSG. This is an update for information only.
Resource implications:	There are no resource implications presented in this paper.
Contact person for any queries:	Chris Champion, cchampion@cochrane.org or Julie Wood, jwood@cochrane.org

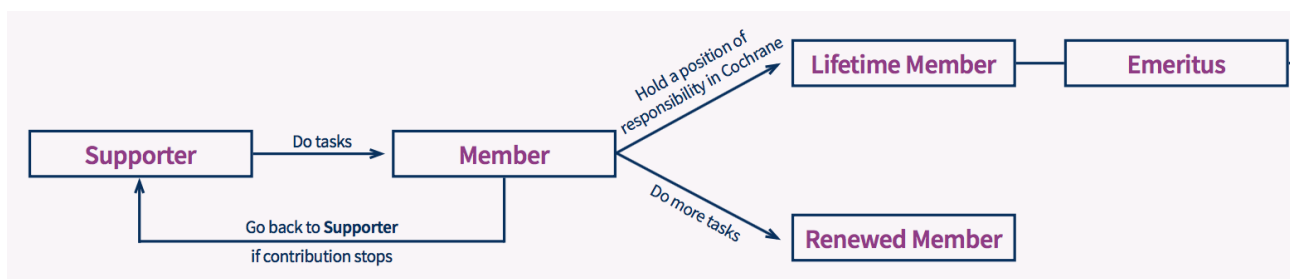
What is Cochrane Membership

Cochrane Membership is an initiative that seeks to reward those who contribute to Cochrane and also open up Cochrane to newcomers. We are trying to make it easier to get involved with Cochrane in a way that helps the organization, creates new pathways for involvement and better captures all the ways that people contribute to our work. Whilst the status of Members is only attributed to those who have made a substantive contribution, we will be opening up Cochrane to anyone who wishes to become part of the organisation through a ‘Supporter’ status.

Newcomers will initially be supporters, but as they contribute to Cochrane they will reach the threshold for membership and will be given a certain period of membership commensurate with their contribution. (Please note that all these thresholds for different contributions will be discussed with each Cochrane Executive and will need CSG approval before implementation.)

Certain people will qualify for additional types of membership, such as lifetime membership or emeritus membership. These types of membership will be more discretionary and will reflect a long term commitment to Cochrane’s work and, in many cases, will be linked to service in a position of responsibility within Cochrane.

Our current active contributors, about 6,000 in 2015, will automatically receive membership status for an initial period.



Why is membership important

Cochrane is not taking advantage of the people all over the world who want to contribute to our organization. We need to make it easier for them to contribute to activities that best meet the skills and time that they are offering. This is what the membership scheme will provide. This is critical to Cochrane's future as we need to constantly attract new talent, and if we are not providing a good experience to newcomers we will not have a strong human foundation for the future.

Gaining a better understanding of Cochrane Supporters and Members will offer significant benefits, for example a comprehensive profile of potential authors will help assess whether they have the skills required to take on a review; or Groups wishing to target certain audiences with special communications will benefit from the detailed records we will be able to store regarding people's interests and experience. Groups will also receive better reporting on who is doing what in their area on a regular basis.

From the member's perspective, he/she will be able to track his/her contribution and there will be public recognition for what he/she has contributed as part of a members' page on our website.

Project update

The first phase of the project focuses on understanding, documenting and tracking people's contributions. This is essential to allow us to set thresholds for membership based on contributions made.

We have done a lot of the foundational work now, which involved assessing different types of contribution and what sort of information needs to be captured to allow for meaningful data to be collected for use in establishing membership.

We have also identified the IT system and partner that will provide the system we need to run the membership scheme. This system is a critical part of membership, as it will pull together all the disparate sources of information on people's contributions to provide a single view on each person who contributes to Cochrane. Most importantly, it will collate data on what tasks and training each person has undertaken.

One of our guiding principles has been to minimize change for the community in terms of ways of working whilst providing better, more robust data on who is doing what. The main change that will affect the community is that all data on people must go into the central database to comply with data protection; and we will provide support in this transition. In return, the community will be able to take advantage of having better information about the people in Cochrane and we will manage all data compliance issues centrally.

We are currently in the process of establishing a firm project plan for the implementation of the system. We estimate that, contingent on technical resources being available, we will be launching the live system in April 2017.

Further information

For more information on membership see the community page where there is a project overview and links to the CSG papers we prepared as we developed the membership concept.¹

You may also contact Chris Champion (cchampion@cochrane.org) or Julie Wood (jwood@cochrane.org) who are co-leading this project.

¹ <http://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/resources/membership/>