

Guide Notes for Network Convenors

What is the purpose of the Quarterly Network Meetings?

There are two types of networks:

1. Networks primarily for solicitors and which focus on specific areas of legal practice. These are designed to share and talk about casework, legal precedents, legislative changes and advocacy alliances.
2. Networks for non-legal staff, which focus on general business areas. These are designed for staff who may be siloed in admin, program delivery or service support roles, to share and talk about their projects, challenges, discoveries and professional development questions.

While the networks have intended audiences, every non-closed meeting is open to all CLC staff members who wish to attend.

The purpose of all the networks is to encourage and facilitate learning, information and knowledge sharing, peer support and collaboration across the sector.

What is the role of a 'Convenor'?

The Convenor role should not be onerous. It involves putting together the agenda for the quarterly meeting and running that meeting.

Ideally there will be two co-convenors who can take turns with chairing the meeting or alternatively taking the minutes. If there is only one convenor, CLCNSW may be able to support you with minute-taking.

Co-convenors should meet online about 3 to 4 weeks before the meeting to review the previous minutes, plan the upcoming meetings, and create the agenda to be sent out by CLCNSW with the meeting invitations. CLCNSW will send out an email to convenors two week prior to the Network Meetings requesting that agendas be provided.

You will need to liaise with CLCNSW to send the agenda, minutes and any other communications out to the network. (CLCNSW does not have the permission of the network members to share their contact information with convenors. As such we support convenors by sending out communications on their behalf.)

There will always be at least one CLCNSW staff member in each network meeting to assist the convenors with any technical issues. The convenor needs to log in to the meeting 10 minutes before it starts to check with CLCNSW that agendas and support docs are ready.

The convenors can also arrange special presentations, external participants, and training opportunities for the network. If the assistance of CLCNSW is required, either with advertising the opportunity to the network or with logistical support, the convenor should request assistance more than two weeks prior to the meeting.

Support for the Network

Most networks have a Microsoft Teams channel set up within the CLCNSW Microsoft account which can be accessed for sharing info and contacting members in between the quarterly meetings. There is a [guide to accessing and using those Microsoft Teams groups here](#).

Tips for running a Network Meeting

- Start with an Acknowledgement of Country and invite participants to put their name, their org and their Country in the chat. This helps with minutes.

An Acknowledgement of Country is a way that the wider community can demonstrate respect for Aboriginal culture and heritage and the ongoing relationship that the Traditional custodians have with their land.

An example of an Acknowledgement of Country:

I would like to acknowledge the Wiradjuri people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land I am on today. I would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present of the Wiradjuri Nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are present. Sovereignty was never ceded. Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land.

- We strongly encourage convenors to spend the first 10 to 20 minutes of the meeting inviting each participant to introduce themselves, which centre they are from and to share a quick summary of any projects, publications, unusual cases, practice management issues or legal sector networks or alliances they are involved in which are relevant to the network.

By opening with this, everyone will learn from each other's work and share knowledge of the sector as a whole. It gives people an opportunity to get to know each other.

This also builds confidence for individuals to join in with later discussions that come up in the rest of the meeting.

- It is a good idea to check in with everyone at the end of the meeting for training, ideas and topics that they might be interested in covering in the next meeting.

Contacts for more information

Please reach out to clcsw@clcsw.org.au or paloma.jackson-vaughan@clcsw.org.au if you have any questions.