

## **Making and Using Groups on [capacity4dev.eu](http://capacity4dev.eu)**

### **What are groups for?**

The objective of the group function on [capacity4dev.eu](http://capacity4dev.eu) is to allow for existing groups of people to expand their community and extend their collaboration and exchanges through a dedicated online space. The creation of new groups also allows for new networks to be formed, helping people to group around common interests or issues and to start exchanging practice and collaborate online. It is clear that building a new community / group is more demanding than migrating existing groups that have been in contact through e-mail or face-to-face meetings.

### **Why create a group? Advantages and value added:**

There are lots of advantages to working online, as you are able to:

- Create a single point of reference for accessing and exchanging knowledge and information around a set of issues.
- Create professional network of people that share the same interests and help them to keep in touch over time.
- Ease the exchange of information: instead of emailing everything to everyone, groups enable you to post your information online once and all group members are notified.
- In the context of an increasing turn-around of people, it is important to capitalise and retain information and knowledge around specific issues on a shared platform. People may move, but the information and knowledge stays within the group.

### **What tools are on offer?**

- Facility to draft texts online and share in a group.
- Functions for sharing of information you have or you have found online (documents, media files, etc.) with group members.
- Discussion Forums to help a structured exchange of views within your group on a topic or issue over a certain period of time (ideally not more than 3 weeks). The discussions are more effective if they are linked with concrete outcomes in terms of policy or action, as they give a real motive for participants to contribute.
- Event publisher to help members share events they know are of interest to the group.
- Members' list to keep a "who's who" at hand and to learn about new group members (who they are what they are interested in, etc.) through their online profile.

### **Is that it?**

No! More tools and functions will become available in the coming months, including:

- A calendar, or planner, function to keep track of group tasks and deadlines.
- Chat and group-chat facilities, to enable exchange of information in real time among two or more members of the group.
- Surveys and Polls, giving the possibility to group moderators to launch a survey or poll to group members.

- "Peer support" is a Questions and Answers tool that enables any member of the group to solicit specific information from fellow group members. All those that can, provide their answers. If the person asking is satisfied with the answers he closes the question and it is archived for others to consult. If not, it remains open until it is answered.

**Remember, this is your website. If you think you have an idea for a group function or modification, please write your suggestion it in the capacity4dev.eu wish-list: <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-forum/capacity4dev-wish-list>**

### **How do I create a group?**

Creating a group is simple. Go on the "All Groups" page and request a 'New Group'. Fill in the brief form and an approval note will soon arrive in your email box from one of the managers of capacity4dev.eu<sup>1</sup>. And that's it! You can begin using your group.

Just to explain, group creation is not automatic as the site moderators aim to make sure groups aren't duplicated, thus fragmenting valuable discussions.

### **What is needed to create a group?**

- A clear vision of what is the purpose and rationale for the group. Make this clear in the naming and description of your group, then potential members and other site users can see what your group is about.
- A group Moderator: is the person in charge of approving members and is responsible for the quality group contents, exchanges and activity.
- Some Members! Invite others who you think might be interested in your group. The capacity4dev.eu website can be a great place to find others, with similar interests, who you perhaps have never met.

### **What kind of group do I need?**

[x] Public: The description of the group, name of the moderator, contents and activities of the group are publicly accessible. Users become members of this group on request and upon group moderators' approval.

[x] Restricted: Only the description of the group the moderator and number of members are visible to all. Activities and contents of the group are only visible to its members. Users become effective members of this group on request and upon group moderators' approval.

[x] Private: The group description, moderator, number of members are invisible. Contents, activities and members of the Group are only visible to members. Users need to be invited by the group moderator to become effective members. No

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<sup>1</sup> Managers of capacity4dev.eu : Wojciech Lubowiecki (HoU EuropeAid E/5), Virginia Manzitti (HoSector EuropeAid E/5) Christoforos Korakas (Project Manager capacity4dev.eu), Nils Boesen (chief editor capacity4dev.eu)

membership request is possible.

**NOTE:** This type of group is to be used only in very special situations as it does not effectively contribute to knowledge sharing and exchange with the broader community of capacity4dev.eu.

If you feel you need your group to be private there will be the possibility to address a request to the managers of capacity4dev.eu clearly stating the purpose of the group and the reason why its existence should be kept private / invisible on the platform.

**NOTE:** The administrators of capacity4dev.eu have the right to access all the groups to ensure that the "Terms and Conditions" of the site are respected.

For any further assistance or help with Groups on capacity4dev.eu don't hesitate to contact the project manager of capacity4dev.eu

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