

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES FORUM OF THE INTER FAITH NETWORK FOR THE UK

Purpose

1. The Faith Communities Forum (FCF) is the category link meeting for national faith community representative bodies in membership of the Inter Faith Network for the UK (IFN).
2. The FCF has been established within the framework of IFN by its Board of Trustees to help enable discussion between member national faith community representative bodies on issues of common concern to them as faith communities and thereby to promote the development of closer working relationships between the UK's faith communities.
3. In common with other IFN category link meetings, the FCF provides opportunities for member bodies to share good practice relating to their inter faith/ interreligious work.
4. The FCF may be consulted by the Board on matters relating particularly to this category or IFN more widely.

Scope

5. The scope of the Forum's engagement is UK-wide, although since the increased devolution of powers to Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and because of the primary focus of inter faith instruments of these nations on devolved matters, a significant part of the Forum's public life agenda may have an England or England and Wales focus.

Chairing

6. The FCF is chaired by one or both of the Co-Moderators of the FCF, one of whom is also the Co-Chair of the Trustee Board.

Frequency of meetings

7. The FCF meets approximately three times a year.

Membership and participation

8. The organisations entitled to be represented at the FCF are national faith community representative bodies currently in membership of IFN.
9. Representatives are also invited to attend, if they wish to do so, from the national inter faith linking bodies of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, which also engage, separately, with matters relating to the policies and work of the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
10. Since the FCF has a potentially wide ranging agenda, member organisations may be represented, where they so wish, by those from within their community with specialist knowledge of the particular issues under discussion.
11. Up to two people from each member NFCRB may attend each meeting.

Resources

12. The FCF may initiate, in its name, programmes of work relating to national faith community bodies and areas directly related to IFN's aims, subject to IFN resources and to the agreement of the Board of Trustees.
13. Along with other IFN meetings, those of the FCF are serviced by the IFN office as part of IFN's activities.

Relationship to other IFN machinery

14. IFN's Board of Trustees keeps under review the operation of the FCF. The Board of Trustees continues, subject to decisions by the AGM, to be responsible for the formulation of IFN policy and to continue to carry overall responsibility for IFN's activities, for its programme of work and for the allocation of financial and staff resources to this.
15. Minutes of meetings of the FCF are provided to it and available to IFN's Trustees for information. They are not circulated more widely.
16. These Terms of Reference originate with the Board of Trustees and are a matter for them. They may only be amended by the Board of Trustees.

Statements

17. The Forum is authorised by the Board of Trustees to issue statements in accordance with any Policy on the Making of Statements set by the Board of Trustees.

Moderators of the FCF

18. The FCF shall have 10 Moderators, of which 2 shall be Co-Moderators and 8 shall be Vice-Moderators.
19. The Board of Trustees shall agree the list of the Moderators annually as part of its oversight of the FCF.

Make-up of the body of Moderators

20. There shall be 10 Moderators: one drawn from each of the 6 largest faith communities in the UK at any given time and 4 from the totality of the smaller faith communities and NFCRBS not accepted (either by themselves or the existing members of the other Groups) as representing one of the six largest faith communities:
 - a) 2 Co-Moderators – one of whom will be the NFCRB linked Co-Chair of the Board of Trustees and the other of whom will be elected by the FCF from among the other Moderators; and
 - b) The remaining 8 shall be Vice-Moderators.
21. A Moderator will normally hold this role for three years.

Role and function of the Moderators

22. The Co-Moderators will chair meetings of the FCF. If the Co-Moderator nominated from the FCF is unavailable, a Vice-Moderator will take his or her place.
23. The Moderators reflect diversity of faith engagement within IFN, which is more broadly reflected within the FCF as a whole.” Advice of the Moderators will normally be sought by the Trustees or Staff on issues relating to the work of IFN in relation to consultation with the community they have been appointed by, where applicable. Where a community does not have a Moderator, the Community’s main FCF contact(s) will be consulted directly.
24. The Moderators will play a role in developing any non-urgent statement which may be developed by the FCF as a whole.
25. The non-NFCRB Co-Chair of IFN may also attend meetings of the FCF as an observer.

Choosing of the Co- and Vice-Moderators

26. The Co-Chair of the Board of Trustees drawn from the NFCRB category is *ex officio* a Co-Moderator of the FCF. The faith community Nominating Group from which this Trustee Co-Moderator is drawn does not, therefore, appoint a Moderator through the process outlined below.
27. For the purposes of identifying Moderators, the same Nominating Groups and processes shall be used as are used for the nomination of Trustees.
28. Once all faith community Nominating Groups have appointed their Moderator (or indicated that they will not be making an appointment or that an appointee cannot be agreed upon), the FCF as a whole shall elect one of these Moderators to be the second Co-Moderator of the FCF, and the remaining Moderators shall be Vice-Moderators.
29. Faith community Nominating Groups shall have the power to recall/ reappoint their Moderator at any time, except where that Moderator is also the Co-Chair of the Board of Trustees.
30. If an FCF-elected Co-Moderator is recalled as Moderator by their faith community Nominating Group, a new Co-Moderator shall be elected by the FCF as a whole. A new Moderator for that faith community Nominating Group will not automatically become the new Co-Moderator.

Review of these Terms of Reference

35. These Terms of Reference shall be kept under review by the Board of Trustees.
36. The system of nomination of Moderators shall be closely monitored by the Board in consultation with the FCF as a whole and subject to review commencing two years after introduction of the system.

Revised November 2016