Role-specific SOS guidance

Advice mainly aimed at the three Core Roles of the Self-Organising System, to help carry out their mandates

- How to achieve the purpose of your team (mainly for Internal Coordinators)
- How to work with other teams (mainly for External Coordinators)
- How to build transparency and mitigate power (mainly for Group Admins)

How to achieve the purpose of your team (mainly for Internal Coordinators)

Why the Internal Coordinator role matters

Every role in a team plays a part in achieving the purpose of the team.

The Internal Coordinator (IC) role is there to keep everyone collaborating effectively, and healthily, towards this goal. This page gives you some suggestions for going about this role, and how to prioritise and coordinate the team's activities.

Effective internal coordination helps XR:

- rely on your team to play its part in achieving our demands;
- embody the regenerative culture that we need;
- respond to and deliver its strategy.

It helps your team:

- align the work of its members without 'power over';
- support each other, both within role definitions and as people, friends, collaborators;
- support the movement, by being accountable to others for playing your part in our rebellion.

Overview of the role

The Internal Coordinator role is defined by its mandate and has these features :

Purpose:

Your role exists to ensure that the team is doing what the movement asks of it.

What you do:

You will need to keep in mind an overview of all the team's work, how it fits together, and how it fits into the movement. That means things like

- analysing how team roles and projects align with purpose, priorities, strategy;
- identifying gaps and links between roles and projects, along with creative ways to address them;
- making requests of roles to fill gaps and make links, within their mandates.

IC Skills

To fill the Internal Coordinator role you need to practise your skills in aligning people — each with their rich mix of motivations, skills and emotions — with roles which are more formal.

Practise the art of balancing what you ask of your fellow team members within existing mandates (the team's and their individual roles), which might involve:

- coaching and mentoring them on specific activities within their accountabilities;
- identifying the tensions they experience in the team and helping them to process those tensions;
- signposting them to other forms of support.

Also think about what additional roles and mandates the team needs to fulfil its purpose.

Use existing mandates where you can. Create new ones where you see a need that is likely to be ongoing or recurrent, and where you want to 'offload' responsibility and accountability onto someone else.

It's the IC's role to hold all the parts of the team's work. Usually that's too much for one person. But mandates are a way of simplifying what the IC has to hold, because the details are someone else's responsibility. So think of new roles as a way of lightening the load on you.

Tips for keeping on top of your role

- Write down everything you think needs doing.
- Sort each item into one of three lists:
  - stuff that's in your mandate (do it yourself)
  - stuff that's in other team members' mandates (ask them to do it)

    - stuff that’s not in any mandate (if it’s a one-off, make up a one-off solution; if it’s going to keep coming up, consider creating a new role).
- Keep the list ‘live’ — add things as they arise, delete them when done.

Prioritising your team’s work

How do you decide which parts of the work of the team are higher priority?

- If an activity or project is a particularly effective and efficient way of achieving the team’s purpose, prioritise it.
- If it helps work towards a strategy within the wider movement, prioritise it.

If you expect that team priorities are likely to stay the same for several months, consider writing a team strategy that explains the Whys, Whats and Hows of those priorities.

You — or other team members — can also set priorities for the team by defining a team project, with a particular objective. A project may draw on input from one or more roles (the project itself doesn’t have a mandate, but the project team members bring the authority to make decisions from their existing roles and mandates). By asking for project updates at team meetings, you can keep everyone focused on the objective.

How far your Internal Coordinator authority goes

As IC, you are yourself accountable for stewarding and overseeing the team’s priorities.

You may make requests of role holders or sub-circles to work towards those priorities, and, if the request is within the accountabilities of their mandate, then you can hold them accountable for fulfilling the request.

Then the role or sub-circle with the mandate can decide how, and when, they meet your request. As IC, you do not have ‘power over’ roles and sub-circles to decide these things for them.

Remember that every mandate gives authority to its holder to decide how the purpose is achieved, and how the accountabilities are approached. (This is one way we ensure that we are based in autonomy and decentralisation.)

The only exception to this would be if they are accountable for a certain task to prepare an action, and they say they won’t do it until after the action. Then you could say they are not fulfilling their

mandate.

Working with your Group Admin

You will find it much easier to coordinate your team effectively if you've got solid records about who is definitely in the team, or in its sub-circles, with what roles mandates, and when their appointments run to.

- Firstly it helps you know who you can ask to do what.
- Secondly it helps the rest of the movement know these things, and that helps them to interact with your team without always having to go through you every time. So it reduces your risk of burnout.

The Group Admin role exists to help you with this. You can also work with the Group Admin to align your communication channels in the team, sub-circles and project teams. Sometimes they may be able to help you with storing and sharing team meeting minutes and other records.

Getting support from other teams and roles

It's largely up to you, with the consent of your team, to decide what roles you have in your team and how they help you — as described above. Here are some examples.

- External Coordinator — this is a role that every team should have and you can work with your EC to:
  - find out about strategies and priorities in wider circles, and
  - inform those circles how your team are working towards those priorities;
  - raising tensions that originate outside your team and affect its ability to fulfil its mandate.
- Integrator — some teams have a dedicated role for welcoming and onboarding new members, supporting them as they get to know our systems and Ways of Working.
- Facilitator and/or support from Facilitation circle — to ensure that meetings successfully engage the talents of all team members.
- Regen Advocate or circle — to strengthen the wellbeing of the team and the bonds between its member.

Summary

- **Coordinate activities**: Prioritise and coordinate team activities effectively by aligning team roles and projects with the movement's goals.
- **Develop skills**: Practice skills necessary for aligning people's motivations and formal role requirements to enhance team function.
- **Delegate responsibilities**: Use existing mandates and create new ones as needed to distribute responsibilities and alleviate the coordinator's workload.
- **Organise projects and tasks**: Maintain a dynamic list of tasks categorised by their mandates to manage team workload efficiently.
- **Set priorities**: Determine the priority of team activities based on their impact on achieving team and movement goals.
- **Support team relationships**: Ensure effective team coordination by maintaining clear records of team roles and mandates, and by working closely with the Group Admin to manage team communication and records.

More support

Rebellion Academy has an Internal Coordinator - Quick Start course. The main course is open; register for a free account to do the quiz at the end. A full IC course is coming in the second half of 2026.

How to work with other teams (mainly for External Coordinators)

Why the External Coordinator role matters

The **External Coordinator (EC)** is crucial for integrating the work of your team with the wider movement. By bridging your team and external circles, you ensure that your team aligns with broader strategic goals and shares its insights, resources, and tensions with other circles. This alignment strengthens collective action, improves coordination, and promotes a regenerative culture across the movement.

Effective external coordination helps:

- Synchronise efforts between your team and the wider movement.
- Support distributed decision-making by making sure your team's input is part of the movement's overall strategy.
- Manage conflicts and tensions across teams, contributing to the wellbeing and resilience of the movement.

Overview of the role

The **External Coordinator** operates within the parameters of their team's mandate to keep open lines of communication between their team and the broader movement. Specifically, the role entails:

- Bringing relevant updates, requests, and decisions from broader circles to your team.
- Communicating your team's progress, feedback, and needs back to the wider movement.
- Acting as a liaison to help other teams understand your team's mandate and priorities, which helps prevent conflict and supports mutual accountability.

While the EC does not have “power over” others, they play a pivotal role in helping resolve tensions between teams and aligning the circle’s work with movement-wide priorities.

EC Skills

Success in the EC role relies on several key skills:

- **Clear Communication**: share information succinctly and accurately across circles and project groups to maintain alignment and clarity.
- **Conflict Resolution**: identify and help resolve conflicts arising from overlapping responsibilities or goals. For tensions between teams, you may bring issues to broader circles or work directly with other ECs to find solutions.
- **Understanding Mandates**: grasp the boundaries of your mandate in relation to others’ mandates. Knowing how mandates work can help you guide discussions on responsibilities and authority, and how decisions affect other roles or circles.

Tips for keeping on top of your role

- **Document Key Points**: Keep a live list of all cross-team interactions, requests, and tensions that need follow-up. Organise items by:
  - **Matters within your circle’s mandate** for internal resolution.
  - **Inter-circle matters** requiring consultation with other ECs.
  - **Broader circle issues** that may require raising at the Hive or a larger circle meeting.
- **Set Clear Boundaries**: Align all projects and tasks with existing mandates. For new or evolving tasks, clarify accountabilities and consult with mandate holders when necessary.

Cross-circle projects and project groups

For **inter-circle** and **broader circle** issues, it may sometimes be helpful to set up a Project Group to address the issue. It's important to understand the differences between creating a Project Group — which requires no changes to the distribution of power and authority (through mandates) — and a Working Group (or Circle) — which needs a mandate:

- **Project Groups**: Often cross-team and include members from multiple circles, allowing expertise from each role to contribute. Members bring the authority of their individual

mandates to the project (e.g. Action Design or Media), making their project role an extension of their circle mandate. Project groups are mostly short-term, and focus on specific goals, disbanding when the project completes.
- **Working Groups**: Are formed within a team and carry a specific mandate given by the broader circle. They generally have an indefinite lifespan, operating until the team decides they're no longer needed. Working Groups delegate part of the broader circle's work to a specialist team, and do not cross circle boundaries.

Proposing a Project: Proposing a project may not require a formal process. However, each project group should plan in a way that respects the group members' existing mandates. Considerations for project setup include defining objectives, aligning activities with roles based on mandates, coordination mechanisms and communication, and reviewing the project's expected timeline.

Team boundaries and authority through mandates

Mandates as boundaries

A mandate defines the limits of your authority but also provides you with significant autonomy to take initiative within those limits. This balance supports decentralisation while ensuring that all actions align with the movement's demands and values.

Collaborating across mandates

When your work affects another role's mandate, collaborate rather than assume control over how that work is done. For instance, if you want to send an update to a group but it overlaps with someone else's newsletter accountability, consult them first — ideally using the Advice Process. Their feedback may help tailor the communication to the group's needs, ensuring it lands effectively without overloading members with too many updates.

Summary

- **Align activities with wider goals**: Keep your team's work aligned with movement-wide priorities through consistent cross-circle communication.
- **Clarify boundaries through mandates**: Use mandates as a guide for authority and collaboration, supporting autonomy without creating duplication.
- **Organise projects effectively**: Recognise the differences between project and working groups and use each where appropriate to mobilise resources and expertise across teams.

- **Resolve cross-team tensions constructively**: Use your position to manage tensions that may arise between teams, respecting each mandate’s authority.
- **Support effective information flow**: Work with other coordinators, facilitators, and the Group Admin to maintain clear, shared records and facilitate smooth team operations.

By following these guidelines, an External Coordinator can support their team’s contribution to the movement, align their work with collective goals, and ensure productive cross-team collaborations.

How to build transparency and mitigate power (mainly for Group Admins)

Why the Group Admin role matters

The **Group Admin (GA)** is vital to supporting the movement's commitment to decentralisation, transparency, and equitable distribution of power. By documenting and maintaining up-to-date records of team roles, mandates, and members, you help ensure clarity across the movement about who does what, with what authority, and how to engage with them.

Effective group administration:

- **Supports autonomy**: By making information accessible, it reduces dependence on any one person for decision-making or communication, ensuring roles remain clear and unambiguous.
- **Maximises transparency**: Clear records empower individuals to contact relevant role holders directly, fostering collaboration across teams.
- **Strengthens accountability**: Transparent mandates make it easier to see how roles fulfil their responsibilities, enhancing trust and efficiency within and beyond the team.

This work ensures the movement can function without traditional managerial roles that tend to concentrate information and power.

Overview of the role

The **Group Admin** plays a key administrative and facilitative role within the team, defined by the mandate they hold. The GA's core responsibilities include:

- Maintaining records of **team membership, roles, mandates**, and term limits for role holders.
- Ensuring that this information is accessible to other teams and (where appropriate) the wider movement, enabling effective collaboration and accountability.

- Supporting **coordinators** (Internal Coordinator, External Coordinator) in aligning team communication channels and keeping administrative tools updated.
- Helping the team to organise meetings by storing and sharing minutes, project updates, and decisions.

The GA role is indispensable for ensuring smooth operations and empowering the movement to embody its regenerative and decentralised culture.

GA Skills

Success in the Group Admin role requires a mix of organisational, technical, and interpersonal skills:

- **Organisation**: Managing records efficiently and ensuring that information is accurate and up-to-date.
- **Attention to detail**: Ensuring mandates, roles, and records are precise and align with the movement's goals and structures.
- **Collaboration**: Working seamlessly with coordinators, role holders, and other GAs to facilitate communication and alignment.
- **Technical ability**: Familiarity with record-keeping tools, communication platforms, and data-sharing systems used across the movement.

These skills ensure that the GA contributes meaningfully to the decentralised and transparent functioning of the team.

Tips for keeping on top of your role

- **Maintain live records**: Keep an up-to-date record of who holds what role, their mandates, and when terms end. Ensure this is visible to all relevant members of the movement.
- **Categorise and organise**:
  - Records of **mandates** (purpose, accountabilities, domains).
  - Membership details, including **roles and sub-circles**.
  - Communication channels, meeting minutes, and key decisions.
- **Regular reviews**: Periodically check for changes in roles or mandates and ensure that information is promptly updated.
- **Accessible storage**: Use agreed-upon tools (e.g. Mattermost, shared drives) to store records securely yet accessibly.

Maximising transparency within the movement

The movement’s commitment to decentralisation relies on clear, accessible information:

- **Role visibility**: Ensure that all role titles and mandates are accessible and up to date.
- **Direct engagement**: By maintaining updated contact details and records, you enable others to contact relevant role holders directly without needing to go through intermediaries.
- **Accountability and alignment**: Transparency helps the movement understand what each team is accountable for and ensures efficient collaboration without unnecessary conflict or duplication.

Working with coordinator roles in your team and other teams’ admins

As Group Admin, collaboration with other roles and admins is essential:

- **Internal Coordinator (IC)**: Work closely with the IC to ensure that all team members’ mandates align with the team’s strategy and that team priorities are clear and recorded.
- **External Coordinator (EC)**: Support the EC by ensuring clear communication between your team and the broader circles, helping track requests and responses from other teams.
- **Other GAs**: Engage with GAs in other teams to share best practices, troubleshoot challenges, and align record-keeping standards across the movement.

Through these collaborations, the GA role becomes a cornerstone for transparency and efficiency in both your team and the wider movement.

Summary

- **Enable decentralisation**: By documenting and maintaining transparent records, you empower individuals to take initiative without relying on gatekeepers.

- **Support accountability**: Ensure roles and mandates are clear, enabling the movement to trust that work is being done effectively.
- **Foster collaboration**: Work with coordinators and other GAs to align communication channels and maintain accurate, accessible information.
- **Embody transparency**: Make information about roles and mandates easily available, ensuring everyone knows who to contact and how to engage.

By focusing on these areas, the Group Admin ensures their team and the movement as a whole can work together effectively, embodying regenerative culture and decentralised decision-making.