

How to work with other teams

When two (or more) teams need each other

No team in XR UK works in complete isolation. Your mandates are interconnected, and your work often touches — or depends on — the work of another circle.

When you notice that kind of dependency, it's worth exploring. It might call for a quick conversation, a standing agreement, or something more structural. The aim here is to help you find the *lightest* form of engagement that genuinely resolves your tension. We don't want to make heavy-handed or complicated changes — so we reach for more structural options only when they're truly needed.

Four levels of cross-circle engagement

1. The Advice Process

Before making a decision that might affect another circle — or where another circle has relevant expertise — seek their advice. It's informal, requires no governance change, and over time builds real trust between teams.

For more details, please see [The Advice Process](#)

2. A formalised consultation agreement

If the same kind of coordination keeps coming up, it may be worth making it an expectation rather than a favour. One or both circles can create a simple written agreement — for example: "Where

our mandates depend on each other in [area X], we will consult before proceeding."

Depending on what's at stake, this could be a lightweight written note agreed informally, or a formal policy created through Integrative Decision Making. Let the context and the pressure you're working under guide which fits.

3. A Liaison or Support Role

Where coordination is ongoing but doesn't require embedded representation or governance involvement, you can create a Liaison or Support Role within your circle. The role holder engages directly with the other circle — typically working with specific roles there rather than attending their general meetings, though that may happen occasionally where it's useful.

This is created through your own circle's governance process and carries no decision-making authority in the other circle.

4. A Link Role

A Link Role is the most structural option, and the one that requires the most justification. It's for situations where there's ongoing interdependence that needs to be structural and to involve governance — not just information-sharing or operational coordination.

Before proposing one, your circle should be able to explain convincingly:

- the recurring structural dependency between the two circles;
- why embedded representation is needed, rather than information-sharing being enough;
- why advice, a consultation agreement, or a Liaison Role won't resolve the tension.

This isn't a rigid gate — it's a prompt for clear thinking, to avoid Link Roles being created by default when something lighter would do.

If you create a Link Role

Be explicit from the outset about how the two mandates relate, which recurring processes or decisions require representation, and whether the Link Role is Standard or Decision-making — and why. Clarity at the start prevents drift and makes it easier to review the role later.

At each six-month re-election, ask: does the structural dependency that justified this role still exist? If not, the role should lapse or convert to a Liaison Role. Structure should serve the organism — not the other way around.
