# Link Roles

# Standard and Decision-Making Link Roles

[Note: this guidance is referred to by Section C.7 of the XR UK Constitution.]

## 1. What Is a Link Role?

A Link Role is a role created by one circle to represent its mandate within another circle, and to pass information between the two circles. It is only available when both teams involved are mandated circles under the Constitution.

## 2. Key Definitions

**Source Circle**
The circle that elects the Link Role. The role holder represents this circle in the Destination Circle.

**Destination Circle**
The circle in which the Link Role sits and represents the Source Circle.

**Governance**
Decisions that distribute or restrict authority (e.g. creating or changing mandates, policies or domains; creating, moving or dissolving roles or circles).

### An Example

Operations has a link role to Systems & Cultures.

- Operations elects the link role → Operations is the **Source Circle**.
- The link sits in Systems & Cultures → Systems & Cultures is the **Destination Circle**.
- The link represents Operations' mandate inside Systems & Cultures.

The link does **not** make Systems & Cultures accountable to Operations.
And Systems & Cultures cannot set priorities inside Operations.

This reflects a core constitutional principle: authority must match accountability.

# 3. Why Decision-Making Authority Is Limited

To understand why Link Roles have limited decision-making power, it helps to understand how accountability works between circles.

A Destination Circle can hold its own roles and sub-circles accountable — but it does not have the same authority over a Source Circle. The Destination Circle's Internal Coordinator, for example, cannot set the Source Circle's priorities or direct its work.

Because a Destination Circle cannot fully oversee a Source Circle, it would be problematic to give Link Roles — which represent that Source Circle — broad decision-making authority within the Destination Circle. Keeping that authority limited helps maintain clear lines of responsibility.

# 4. The Standard Link Role (Default)

This is the normal and recommended form.

In the example above, the Operations link to Systems & Cultures would usually be a Standard Link Role.

## Rules

**1. A Link Role must be created in the Source Circle and approved in the Destination Circle using Integrative Decision Making (IDM).**

**2. The role holder must be elected by the Source Circle.**

**3. The maximum term is 6 months, after which a new election must be held. The same person may be re-elected.**

**4. The role represents the mandate of the Source Circle, not individual views.**

**5. A Standard Link Role does not take part in decision making in the Destination Circle.** This precludes voting, raising objection or other participation in governance or operational decisions.

**6. The role holder retains full authority in the Source Circle (including governance), within their mandate.**

## Standard Link Role Mandate

**Purpose**
Information that helps the work of both circles is shared.

**Accountabilities**

- Representing the mandate of the Source Circle in the Destination Circle.
- Helping information flow between the circles.
- Communicating regularly with the External Coordinator of the Source Circle.

# 5. The Decision-Making Link Role (Exceptional Case)

On rare occasions, there may be a compelling reason for the Destination Circle to include the Source Circle in certain operational decisions.

In that case, a Decision-Making Link Role may be used.

Using the example:

If Systems & Cultures genuinely needed Operations to participate in certain operational decisions (but not governance), they could agree to use this model.

## Rules

**1. The Destination Circle must explicitly agree the link role is Decision-Making.**

**2. A Decision-Making Link Role must be created and approved in each circle using IDM.**

**3. The role holder must be elected by the Source Circle.**

**4. The maximum term is 6 months, after which a new election must be held. The same person may be re-elected.**

**5. The role represents the mandate of the Source Circle, not individual views.**

**6. A Decision-Making Link Role may take part in non-governance decisions in the Destination Circle.**

**7. A Decision-Making Link Role may not take part in governance decisions in the Destination Circle.**

**8. The role holder retains full authority in the Source Circle (including governance) within their mandate.**

## Decision-Making Link Role Mandate

**Purpose**
The Source Circle’s mandate is well represented in the Destination Circle by sharing relevant information and contributing to non-governance decisions.

**Accountabilities**

- Representing the mandate of the Source Circle in the Destination Circle.
- Taking part in non-governance decisions in the Destination Circle.
- Helping information flow between the circles.
- Communicating regularly with the External Coordinator of the Source Circle.

# 6. Choosing the Type of Link

Use the Standard Link Role unless there is a clear and compelling reason not to.

Ask:

- Is information flow sufficient?
- Is shared operational decision-making genuinely required?
- Would granting decision power undermine the principle that authority must match accountability?

If unsure, choose Standard.

---