

## IAKS Expert Circles: Guideline for way of working

### Introduction

IAKS members are professionals who represent all aspects of active living. Many members are associated with a specific area of expertise or interest in the broad range of sports and leisure facilities. These include ownership (public and private sector), operations, planning and design, construction, equipment, and specialized sports finishes. The focus of IAKS members ranges from community-scaled facilities and programs to professional multipurpose venues for international events and competitions. The IAKS has established the Expert Circles as an international forum for the discussion of specific issues, trends and expectations relative to the area of interest for the Expert Circle.

The IAKS recognizes that while there is a shared vision of the purpose and expectations of sports and leisure facilities, this is often regional or national in its reach and often is not part of an international conversation. Members of Expert Circles will come from the membership as well as allied groups or organizations with a vested interest or area of expertise. The ultimate intent of the Expert Circles group is to provide a transfer of knowledge at planning, technical, and operating requirements for the specific area of interest.

This concept of international Expert Circles is a guideline and may also be adapted to national or regional IAKS organizations.

### Potential areas of focus

Expert Circles can be developed for every area of focus within the IAKS membership and can include facilities such as aquatic centres, fitness centres, indoor and outdoor facilities, public areas, stadiums, multipurpose arenas, and ice rinks; specific topics such as sustainability or innovation; or specific user groups such children, senior users, grass root or elite athletes.

The IAKS has already established Expert Circles for swimming pools, sports halls, ice rinks, stadia and arenas, and outdoor sport surfaces, and will extend the programme to other areas of interest.

### Potential activities of expert circles

Each Expert Circle can define its own set of activities. Potential activities could include:

- **Expert Circle meetings:**  
regular physical and online meetings / workshops (at least one physical meeting per year) to recognize / present successful international projects, identify trends, and discuss problems and common interests;
- **IAKS Congress:**  
identify and possibly present interesting trends and topics for the biannual IAKS congress in Cologne;

- 1 -

- **sb magazine:**  
identify interesting facilities to be presented, write technical or management articles;
- **IOC IPC IAKS Architecture Prizes:**  
identify interesting projects for the competitions;
- **International events:**  
set up international events for the focus area of the Expert Circle, e.g. international pool seminar;
- **National events:**  
support national IAKS seminars with international experience / speakers;
- **Expertise support for IAKS office:**  
support the IAKS office in answering questions from members with specialized knowledge, in offering contacts for organizing study tours, etc.;
- **Subgroups:**  
Expert Circles may create subgroups or working groups to discuss and investigate specific topics or questions within the range of their topics, and involve further experts to participate in this work.
- **Further activities:**  
Each expert circle can develop further activities on its own, e.g. developing whitepapers, guidelines, or library / body of reference material.

### **Expert Circle members**

Expert Circle members should have personal capacities in their respective field and be able to spend some time on the circle activities:

- Members of an Expert Circle should be recognized specialists in the facility type and who can significantly contribute to their group and the objective of transferring knowledge.
- Membership in an Expert Circle should generally be for IAKS members with consideration for invited non-members whose body-of-knowledge is noteworthy.
- Expert Circle members should be prepared to participate electronically in communication with other members between face-to-face meetings and take on responsibilities and tasks identified by the group.
- They should be able to communicate in English.

### **Expert circle leaders**

Each Expert Circle requires a leader or a team of leaders. The tasks for the leader(s) include:

- organizing group meetings;
- agenda setting;
- coordinate group activities;
- maintaining ongoing communication within the group;
- inviting specialists from other organizations like IFs or operators' associations to join;
- ensuring a balanced and diverse composition of the group.

### **Support offered by the IAKS**

- While the IAKS does not charge Expert Circle members for participating, members have to cover all costs for participating in Expert Circle activities herself/himself.
- The IAKS Office may support the Expert Circle leaders.
- The IAKS Executive Board sends one board member to every Expert Circle, in order to ensure the best possible outcome from the Expert Circle's activities within the IAKS network.

### **Possible steps for setting up a new Expert Circle**

Topics and activities during the initial phase of an Expert Circle may include:

- **Meeting 1:**
  - Explanation of the concept of Expert Circles;
  - Getting to know each other;
  - Expectations from the members of the group;
  - Drafting operating mode (way of working) for the Expert Circle.
- **Meeting 2:**
  - Each member explains the business environment / the market in her/his home country;
  - Identify potential tasks and topics for the Expert Circle;
  - Planning an international seminar to foster the transfer of knowledge to others.
- **Meeting 3:**
  - International seminar combined with Expert Circle meeting;
  - Draft content for a whitepaper (e.g. future trends, international market overview, case studies for the respective facility type).
  - Building up an online library with documents from different countries
- **Meeting 4:**
  - Visit interesting sports and leisure facilities;
  - Finalize the whitepaper.

Approved by the IAKS Executive Board at its meeting on 1 June 2021.