

ICT4D Collective

The ICT4D Collective Charter Version 4, September 2026

This document summarises the main purposes and principles of the ICT4D Collective, as it was reconstituted in 2026 following earlier revisions in 2023. It builds on the [ICT4D Collective: membership and partnership principles](#) revised in 2009, and the ethical guidelines and governance structures formulated by the [Digital Environment System Coalition](#) in 2021, and includes an Annex on practicalities. The original founder of the ICT4D Collective in 2004 was Professor Tim Unwin, who retains a role as its Catalyst.

The Collective's aim

1. Our aim is to undertake the highest possible quality of research and practice together in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (also referred to as “digital technologies”) for Development (ICT4D).

Our approaches

2. We are a Collective of “equals”. We respect each other as having different skills and expertise that all contribute to the Collective’s overall aim and wellbeing, and we do not differentiate between individuals within the Collective based on age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, or any other such criteria.

3. We adopt diverse multi-disciplinary approaches to ICT4D, and do not seek to impose any one curriculum or definition of ICT4D on its meaning.

3. We place particular emphasis on ways through which ICTs and digital technologies can be used to empower poor people and marginalised communities.

4. We aim to work collaboratively together, seeking to engage in partnership with like-minded individuals, organisations and networks (see Partnership Framework).

5. Members volunteer for particular roles and activities that they wish to participate in and on behalf of the Collective, and are not remunerated for such work (see Annex).

Our ethical principles

6. We work collaboratively and openly in support of each other and the communities in which members of the Collective live and work.

7. We seek to treat others as they would like us to treat them and as we would in our turn like to be treated.

8. Members participate voluntarily in the work of the Collective both for what they can contribute to it, but also for what they can benefit from such participation.

9. We treat each other with mutual respect, and do not knowingly engage in activities that might harm the Collective or its individual Members and Partners.

10. We seek to uphold the following generally accepted ethical principles, and individual Members aim to be:

- Honest and behave with integrity;
- Rigorous in all our activities;
- Transparent and retain confidentiality wherever possible;
- Caring and respectful of others, including Members of the Collective and all those encountered in our research and practice;
- Accountable;
- Professional; and
- Fair in our treatment of others.

11. All Members seek to follow the safeguarding principles and practices of the organisations to which they belong and within which they work.

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Annex: ICT4D Collective's membership and leadership practices

These practices are emergent and subject to change, and are intended to provide a simple and flexible framework for our research-practice.

Membership

Membership is by one of two routes: (a) recommendation and invitation from existing members, or (b) on request through submission of CV and <250 word outline of why they wish to become a member and what they could contribute. Applications by route (b) are reviewed by at least two members of the Collective's leadership. Details of all Members of the Collective are listed on the Collective's web-site (<https://ict4d.org.uk/members>).

Leadership and management

Leadership and management of the ICT4D Collective is undertaken on a voluntary basis by its members, guided by the following principles:

- Membership of the Collective Leadership is usually for a three-year term, renewable.
- The Collective Leadership consists of those who take responsibility for a particular existing or new area of the Collective's activities such as research, practice, social media, website management, partnerships, or publications.
- There is a Rotating Chair on an annual basis drawn from within the Collective Leadership – but with renewal permitted.
- Election to the Collective Leadership is on an *ad hoc* basis managed by the Chair and by a vote of all members of the Collective, on a simple majority voting system.
- The Collective leadership meets twice a year (with brief formal minutes being recorded and made available to the full membership).
- Day to day management of the Collective's activities is undertaken by the Leadership, but significant decisions are made by unanimous vote of members, with at least 3 members present.
- New Collective actions (such as convening a Collective conference, applying for Collective grants etc.) can be recommended to the Chair by any member, but must be agreed by the Collective Leadership.
- Should half the membership express written dissatisfaction with the roles or behaviour of any member, including members of the leadership team, they should submit a signed document to the Chair (copied to all members of the leadership team), outlining their case and the actions they would like the leadership team to take.

The Collective's **Secretariat** is currently based at Royal Holloway, University of London, but may in the future change depending on the membership.

Engagement:

- All Members of the Collective are encouraged to share details of their activities through the Collective's blog (<https://ict4d.org.uk/>), publication series (<https://ict4d.org.uk/publications/>), and other means (including social media, such as the Facebook ICT4D group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2553350463>). The Collective retains a Twitter account <https://twitter.com/ICT4DCollective> but this is rarely used, and

DESC also retains an Instagram account although this is likewise little used (<https://www.instagram.com/youthdesc/>).

- The Collective's main means of networking together is currently through Zulip, and all members are encouraged to participate
- Members of the Collective aim to meet together on an annual basis, and invite each other to participate in some or all of their ongoing activities (such as conferences, research projects, interventions and other initiatives).
- Much of the Collective's work is undertaken in partnership with other entities (see Partnership Framework for details).
- Members can have an e-mail address in the format: name.surname@ict4d.org.uk should they so wish.

Finances

- The Collective has no budget or financial activities.
- Activities are undertaken by individual members, funded by themselves or their organisations/institutions.
- There is no subscription for membership.
- The Catalyst has funded all existing digital requirements (domain names and hosting) as well as relevant subscriptions since the founding of the Collective in 2004. New arrangements will probably be necessary beyond 2029.

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