Managing NISO Standards Development

This document provides guidance on managing the development of a NISO standard in accordance with NISO’s Operating Procedures. They also provide guidance for completing a NISO Working Group work plan. This document is intended primarily for the Working Group Chair.

Stage 1: Initiating Work – Prepare for Information Gathering

This phase typically lasts from one to two months. If possible, it is helpful to hold a face-to-face meeting during this process. During this phase, the NISO Standards Program Manager will review NISO’s policies and processes with your Working Group.

1. Orienting Working Group Chair. The Topic Committee Chair or a designated member of the Committee familiarizes you as the Working Group with the content of the Work Item. Please take the time to review and ask any questions necessary to build a solid understanding of the problem area and the scope of the proposed standard in the work item. Reach out to the Topic Committee Chair or the NISO Standards Program Manager for further guidance if you are uncertain. If NISO is receiving outside funding for this project, review the restrictions or requirements associated with the funding with the NISO Standards Program Manager or Managing Director.

2. Orienting Working Group Members. Review and evaluate this information with the members of the Working Group. You may ask a member of the Topic Committee to participate in this review and evaluation. It is important for the group to question any aspect that appears unrealistic given resource and time constraints. As the chair, you are responsible for cautioning members who might wish to expand the scope of the need for timely completion and the limitations of resources.

3. Updating Work Item. If necessary, draft any proposed changes to the Work Item for Topic Committee review and approval. It is good practice to review the reasons behind the proposed changes with the Topic Committee Chair or the member monitoring your work via a phone call or face-to-face meeting.

4. Completing Work Plan Summary. Once any changes are approved, you may transfer Working Group Title, Background and Problem Statement, Statement of Work, Partners and Participation, Funding sections from the Work Item to your Work Plan.

5. Reviewing related standards. As a Working Group, identify relevant standards that are related to the work underway. Include a list in the Information Gathering section of the Work Plan and identify who is responsible for reviewing those standards and how the research will be reported and shared.

6. Planning data gathering. As a Working Group, identify any questions that must be answered or wide areas of research the committee must conduct, before drafting the standards. Some activities might be included in the Statement of Work. Include this list in the Information Gathering section of the workplan. For each question or area of research, include a description of the approach that will be used to gather information, who is responsible for managing research and the projected date of completion.

7. Planning for Communications. As a Working Group, identify the audiences you need to communicate with during the development of the standard. Besides those in the Voting Pool, this includes those who will implement and use the standard, and other standards bodies. Decide what channels are best for keeping these groups informed. Work with the NISO Standards Program manager to complete the Initiating Work section of the Communications Plan and to notify the community that your group has begun active work.
Stage 2: Information Gathering and Preparing for Drafting
This phase typically lasts from three to nine months.

1. **Monitoring Work.** Hold regularly scheduled conference calls during this phase to review work progress and results. Update schedules if necessary. Notify Topic Committee Chair if the Working Group will need to extend the time anticipated for data gathering by more than a month.

2. **Reviewing Results.** As a working group, evaluate overall results of data gathering. While you may have done this as the work progressed, it is good practice to do this as a group when all the work is complete. This may be a good point to hold a face-to-face meeting.

3. **Preparing Data Gathering Report.** As a Working Group, prepare a formal report on the results of the research. This should highlight key findings, and include any suggestions for changes to the proposed work. Short concise findings are more likely to be read; you may attach more complete reports if this is necessary. If the research reveals serious issues or concerns about the Work Item, please discuss this with the Topic Committee Chair and if necessary propose revisions to the Work Item before circulating the Data Gathering Report.

4. **Circulating Data Gathering Report.** Provide the report to the Topic Committee and ask for comments. Work with NISO staff to see that appropriate publicity is ready for release of the report. Include the information in the Communications Plan. Publish the report to the public for review and comment. Allow thirty to forty-five days for comments.

5. **Reviewing Comments on Report.** As a Working Group, read and review all comments. If substantial objections were raised it may be necessary to post a formal response. If the comments reveal unanticipated issues or problems, it may be necessary to prepare formal recommendations for change to the Statement of Work to the Topic Committee.

6. **Deciding on Trial Use.** As a Working Group decide if you want to have a Trial Use period before releasing the document for ballot. Begin to identify those organizations that might act as trial users so that you can bring them into the process of reviewing the draft document. Include this information in your Trial Use Plan.

7. **Preparing for Initial Draft.** Review requirements for the type of document you are drafting with the NISO Standards Program Manager and/or NISO contracted editor. Define how the Working Group will approach the work of drafting the document. This includes who will be responsible for individual sections and for review of those sections. Establish an editorial calendar that identifies target dates for completing sections and for preparing a committee draft, for securing Topic Committee approval, and for NISO editorial review. Include this information in your Editorial Plan. Work with the NISO Standards Program manager to secure any outside resources you might need to draft the report.

Stage 3 – Drafting the Document – Preparing for Trial Use
This phase may take from three to nine months.

1. **Monitoring Work.** Hold regularly scheduled conference calls during this phase to review work progress and results. Update schedules if necessary. Notify Topic Committee Chair if the Working Group will need to extend the time anticipated for drafting by more than a month.

2. **Completing sections.** It is good practice to divide the work of drafting the document among the members of the Working Group. The role of the Working Group Chair is to assign and monitor work. It also good practice to formally assign at least one person to review and prepare a written response for each section.
3. **Planning for Trial Use** (optional). As a Working Group, decide on details of Trial Use: what type of trial use is needed, what kinds of trial users are needed, what length of time is necessary for adequate tests, what support will be provided for those who trial, what response will be made to any problems or defects. Include this information in Trial Use Plan. Work with NISO staff to help recruit trial users and prepare appropriate publicity for trial use period. Work with NISO staff to find resources necessary for supporting trial use.

4. **Conducting content review**. Once all sections are complete, have one or more members of the Working Group read the entire document, to insure that the document is complete and consistent. The reviewers should focus on content rather than format or grammar.

5. **Identifying Trial Users** (optional). Secure agreement of two or more trial users. Include organization name and principal contacts in Trial Use plan.

6. **Completing copy edit**. Have NISO editor complete the copy edit. The NISO editor will confirm that the appropriate standard terminology was used. Work with NISO staff to identify publicity necessary for anticipated release. Include this information in communications plan.

7. **Preparing for Trial Use**. When you are close to starting trial use (6 -8 weeks make sure that all documents and other resources needed by Trial Users will be complete in time for the beginning of the Trial.

8. **Completing Internal Review**. Once the copy edit has been completed, ask the Working Group members to review the entire document and take a formal vote approving the release of the draft to the Topic Committee. Work with the Topic Committee Chair to ensure that the Topic Committee reviews and approves the release of the document for trial use or for ballot. Work with NISO staff to see that appropriate publicity is prepared for release. Make any changes required. If changes are significant, you may need to re-do approvals.

9. **Conducting external review**. You may want to have the document reviewed by external editors before a general public release. If you are going to conduct a Trial Use, it may be helpful to ask organizations who have agreed to participate in the Trial Use review the document. Make any changes required. Make any changes required. If changes are significant, you may need to re-do approvals.

10. **Releasing document for Ballot or Trial Use**. Work with the NISO staff to manage public release.

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**Stage 4 – Managing Trial Use – Preparing for Ballot**

The Trial Use period ranges from six to eighteen months. Preparation for ballot typically requires one or two months.

1. **Monitoring Work**. Hold regularly scheduled conference calls during this phase to review work progress and results. Update schedules if necessary. Notify Topic Committee Chair if the Working Group will need to extend the time anticipated for trial use by more than a month.

2. **Obtaining comments from trial users**. Near the end of Trial Use period, ask trial users to begin to prepare comments and suggestions for revisions to proposed standard and to submit within a week after trial use closes.

3. **Reviewing Trial Use**. After Trial Use is complete, review results and comments from Trial Use. Identify any changes necessary, who is responsible for making them, and the target
completion date. Include this information in the editorial plan. Update Topic Committee if the revisions will delay anticipated release for ballot.

4. **Completing Internal Review.** Once the copy edit has been completed, ask the Working Group members to review the entire document and take a formal vote approving the release of the draft to the Topic Committee. Work with the Topic Committee Chair to ensure that the Topic Committee reviews and approves the release of the document for trial use or for ballot. Work with NISO staff to see that appropriate publicity is prepared for release.

5. **Preparing for Ballot.** Work with NISO staff to prepare materials that will support the Voting Pool Representatives. This might include preparing a short FAQ that summarizes issues and responses. A short webinar to overview proposed standard and answer key objections may also be helpful. These materials may also be used for interested parties.

6. **Conducting external review.** You may want to have the document reviewed by external editors before a general public release. It would be particularly valuable to ask Trial Use Participants to review changes.

7. **Releasing for Ballot.** Alert NISO staff that the document is ready for ballot.

**Stage 5 – Balloting – Responding to Ballot – Planning for Maintenance**

This phase typically takes two to four months. The ballot results determine the range of activities necessary during this phase. The NISO staff will explain specific requirements and you may consult the Operating Procedures for detailed instructions.

1. **Supporting Voting Pool Representatives.** Work with NISO staff to make sure that Working Group members are available to answer questions raised by Voting Pool representatives.

2. **Planning for Implementation.** Review what types of support that implementers will require. Include this information in the Maintenance Plan. Work with NISO to identify resources necessary. This might include implementers’ guides, online resources like registries, or educational programs. Include this information in the Transition to Maintenance Plan.

3. **Reviewing votes and comments.** Review all comments, it is important to note that the committee must attempt to resolve any negative votes. The NISO Standards Program Manager can provide guidance on procedures for this response. If possible, like comments together. Assign comments or groups of comments to individual working group members. Include that information in the Ballot Response Plan.

4. **Preparing Responses.** As you make changes in response to the ballot, you must evaluate if any of the changes would be considered significant. If you make a significant change, NISO must prepare a second ballot.

5. **Completing Internal Review.** Once the responses have been completed, ask the Working Group members to review the responses and take a formal vote approving the release of the responses to the public. Work with the NISO to publish comments.

**Stage 6 – ANSI Approval -- Transitioning to Maintenance**

This phase takes two to four months.

1. **Securing ANSI approval.** NISO staff will manage this process. The staff may call on the working group if ANSI has content question.
2. **Transitioning to Maintenance.** The Working Group will work with NISO staff to implement maintenance approach outlined in the standard. Work with the NISO staff to identify any activities necessary to put a maintenance agency or standing committee in place. If plans call for Maintenance Agency, the Working Group will work with the Topic Committee NISO staff to prepare an RFP or provide other support for recruiting a Maintenance Agency. If plans call for a Standing Committee, the Working Group will work with the Topic Committee and NISO staff to identify expertise and skills needed among members of the Standing Committee.