Terms of reference

Purpose

1. The techUK Nations and Regions Council (NRC) will provide strategic direction for all techUK and activities related to the Nations and Regions programme.

2. The NRC gives tech industry leaders from both large and small businesses the opportunity to provide leadership on critical policy issues supporting the growth of the digital economy across the UK's Nations and Regions, furthering relationships with devolved government stakeholders in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and elected Mayors.

3. The NRC is a member led sounding board for techUK's Nations and Regions work and activity as well as helping to steer the direction of the programme.
    It will support the programme to:
    −   Promote further engagement between devolved government and the tech industry;
    −   Provide leadership on policy issues related to the digital economy, regional growth and tech sector across the UK;
    −   Develop, grow and support techUK's Local Digital Index and aid techUK's engagement with local tech festivals/weeks across the UK
    −   Work in collaboration with the Local Public Services programme to coordinate on matters that impact public service delivery, digital transformation and policy.

Responsibilities

4. Members of the Council are expected to act in accordance with techUK's Values.

5. Members of the NRC will be expected to engage in debate and discussion. Members should be ready and willing to openly discuss issues with stakeholders and other members in every Council meeting.

6. Key responsibilities include:

    >   Steer the programme and agree priorities for action with a work programme developed on an annual basis;

    >   Define the policy responses required for a given issue – wider programme member views will also be sought;

    >   Represent the interests of techUK members in industry forums, standards bodies, roundtables and other engagement where required;

6.   Additional responsibilities include:

> Encouraging the need for improving and growing the UK's digital skills landscape;

> Aiding and highlighting efforts to deliver greater digital inclusion across the UK;

> Supporting the growth of a more diverse tech sector across the UK including engaging more junior colleagues with an interest and expertise to 'shadow' at NRC meetings;

Membership

7.   techUK Membership Groups aim to reflect the range of companies, both in terms of sectors and size that are interested in each work programme. It will also strive to reflect diversity in all its forms and, in particular, from underrepresented groups across the tech sector. The NRC is seeking to have members representation from across the UK to support its aims in furthering tech ecosystems across the whole country.

8.   One member will be appointed as Chair to help coordinate its output with techUK Secretariat.

9.   The Council will comprise approximately 20 members, plus Secretariat drawn from techUK's membership. Members of the Council must be employed by an organisation that is a member of techUK and should ideally be of manager status or above. If appropriate and agreed by members of the Council, stakeholders can be invited to attend meetings on a regular basis.

10.   At least 10 of the 20 members are designated from an SME. To be considered an SME, a company must fit within the parameters of the EU definition.

11.   Membership, which will include a Chair and two Vice-Chairs, will run for a two-year period on an individual basis. Members will be nominated via an open call to techUK's membership, followed by a member vote if necessary. Only one individual per techUK member company may be on the Council.

12.   At least one of the Vice Chair positions will be reserved for a SME.

13.   The Chair and Vice-Chair(s) is expected to commit to expend whatever time is necessary to fulfil their duties. This includes attending meetings and working with techUK staff to help support the smooth running of the Council, as well as participating in preparatory meetings. They must demonstrate ethical leadership and uphold the highest standards of integrity by setting clear expectations concerning the

NRC's culture, values and behaviours. Provide leadership and manage the business of the NRC through setting its agenda, taking full account of the issues and the concerns of all members. Foster relationships founded on mutual respect and open communication between all members of the group.

14. If an individual Council representative leaves their company to join another techUK member then they may remain on the Council (as long as this doesn't result in a techUK member company having two representatives). If they join a company which is not a techUK member they may remain on the Council for 3 months, after which they will be required to leave unless the company is in the process of applying for techUK membership.

15. Representatives may be re-elected onto the NRC, and there is no cap on how many times they can be re-elected.

16. The Council will operate a 'Strike' attendance policy. If a member is not present (even with apologies sent) at three or more meetings during a calendar year that representative will be removed from the Committee. The Chair and Secretariat will have discretion in making a final decision.

17. The NRC Chair and Secretariat shall have the power to co-opt members to the committee where, between elections, the number of members falls below 20. Nominations will be sought for the remainder of a the term, and where there are more nominations than vacancies the Council shall vote to fill the vacancies.

18. The NRC shall have the power to create sub-groups and working groups to address strategic issues which require a more detailed input. These sub-groups will be led by Council members and comprised – where required – of other invited individuals from the techUK membership. The chair of these sub-groups shall report back to the Council when requested.

19. Given the nature and remit of NRC, the Council will co-ordinate with the Local Public Services Committee, and as required other techUK programme Councils and committees.

Meetings

20. The Council will meet six times a year, with further meetings to be scheduled as required/agreed by the membership.

21. The purpose of the Council is to encourage the growth of the UK's tech sector and digital economy in the UK's Nations and Regions. At least three meeting each year will be held in person, working with members to hold meetings outside London.

22. Meetings will be minuted by the Secretariat unless a private session is requested and agreed to by the Chair.

Decision-making process

23. When techUK member funds are being used to commission work, a high level of consensus is required.

24. When developing a position, the Secretariat will only develop an outline once at least ten members of the Council have indicated a willingness to participate.

25. Policy positions require a lower level of consensus although techUK is at its strongest when it speaks with one voice. There will be times when consensus cannot be reached given the different viewpoints present in the Council. In the first instance, the Secretariat will seek to set out the differences within the Council. It will not, however, seek to quantify these differences. If the Council is particularly divided − or if there is significant opposition to developing a position, the secretariat in conjunction with the Chair will make a decision on whether a public position would play a role in ensuring techUK remains a relevant, influential and credible voice.

Secretariat

26. The techUK Secretariat will manage and resource the work of the Committee.

27. The Secretariat comprises of:

Matt Robinson, Head of Nations & Regions
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Ileana Lupsa, Programme Manager − Local Public Services and Nations & Regions
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