

## Operating guide for Transport Knowledge Hub - Topic hubs

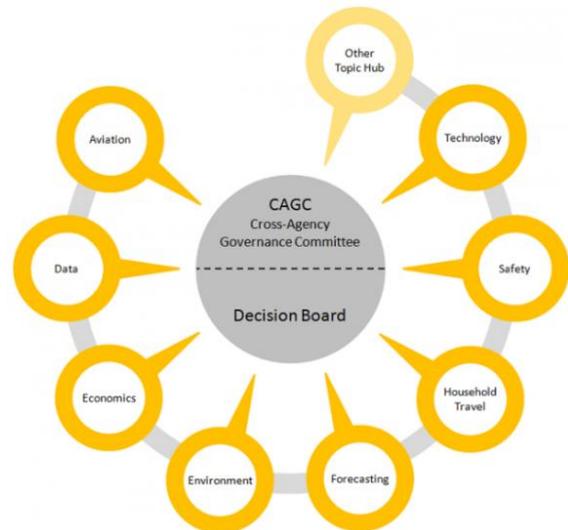
This document helps if you are a leader or member of a topic hub or thinking of becoming one.

Topic hubs are largely self-managing and can choose what works for them and their members. Guidance and support is available through the Transport Domain Plan, Transport Research Strategy, and you can email [knowledgehub@transport.govt.nz](mailto:knowledgehub@transport.govt.nz)

### What is a topic hub?

Topic hubs are groups of people with particular interests in transport data, information, and research. Members are from public and private organisations and across inter-related disciplines, including decision-makers, academics and consultants. Topic hubs link members into the Transport Knowledge Hub.

The Transport Knowledge Hub structure provides for communication between the people and agencies that generate, supply, and demand transport data, information, and research.



**To learn more about the Transport Knowledge Hub, read page 30 of the Transport Domain Plan**

The Transport Knowledge Hub strives to encourage collaboration and raise awareness of related work and future opportunities or needs. Topic hubs provide an open environment where members can share transport data, evidence, knowledge, research, information, capabilities, and ideas!

### Can I become a member of a topic hub?

Anyone can join a topic hub and there are no membership fees. The existing topic hubs are:

- Aviation
- Data
- Economics
- Environment
- Forecasting
- Household travel
- Safety
- Technology

**Email [knowledgehub@transport.govt.nz](mailto:knowledgehub@transport.govt.nz) saying which hub or hubs you would like to join**

## How does a topic hub work?

### Governance principles

Different topic hubs find different ways of working. There are governance principles but topic hubs decide for themselves how they will use those principles.

**To learn more about the governance principles, read page 32 of the Transport Domain Plan**

### Elements of hub operation

Topic hubs should think about:

- What **objectives** or benefits does the topic hub want to achieve?
- What **activities** does the topic hub want?

Some topic hubs have regular meetings for networking and catching up with their topic's knowledge community. Other topic hubs meet only occasionally for special seminars. Others stay linked using a mailing list and rarely meet up.

- What **membership** should the topic hub target?

Membership is open to anyone. Some topic hubs target a balance of members from public and private organisations as well as academia and across inter-related disciplines.

- What **leadership** will help the topic hub?

Each topic hub must have one or two named leaders. Most topic hubs also have a key working committee of four to ten people.

Topic hubs may have to make decisions, such as selecting ideas to promote or deciding on options for how the topic hub should work. Topic hubs can use a decision-making process that works for them. The decision-making process should align with the Transport Knowledge Hub principles of collaboration and communication.

- What **behaviours** support knowledge building and sharing?

Topic hubs are committed to fostering an environment for open Intellectual Property and sharing. Formally or informally, topic hubs have behaviours or responsibilities expected of members.

There are administration options that may support the topic hub. Some topic hubs share a database of members' contact details to assist with networking and collaboration, other topic hubs might more selectively manage communications only through the working committee. Some topic hubs use members or the working committee to make records of meetings for wider sharing to members not attending. Some topic hubs use a website for sharing of uploaded documents, reports, and articles.

**A summary of how each topic hub works is available through from the Ministry's website:**

**<http://www.transport.govt.nz/research/transport-knowledge-hub/>**

## What else should I know?

### What do I need to do as a member of a topic hub?

Supporting the principles of the Transport Knowledge Hub is the most important part of being a member of a topic hub. As for topic hubs as a whole, members should commit to fostering open Intellectual Property and sharing of transport data, information, and research.

Leaders and working parties should be able to answer questions about behaviours and responsibilities expected of their topic hub members. **Email extra questions to [knowledgehub@transport.govt.nz](mailto:knowledgehub@transport.govt.nz).**

Topic hubs appreciate many members are busy so specific time demands are generally low or optional. Members may volunteer extra involvement in a topic hub, such as making presentations or helping with administration or hosting events.

### Can I start a new topic hub?

Over time, new topic hubs may emerge or existing topic hubs may decide to change their topic or to start a new sub-hub. **To suggest a new topic hub, email [knowledgehub@transport.govt.nz](mailto:knowledgehub@transport.govt.nz)**

For a new topic hub or sub-hub, think about:

- What is the name for the new topic hub?
- How does the new topic hub link to the Domain Plan and Research Strategy?
- What knowledge gap does the new topic hub address and how would it benefit the sector?
- Who would champion the new topic hub?

There should be one or two champions to lead starting of the new topic hub. There should be support shown from two or three public sector agencies and wider interest from prospective members.

### What if I have an idea for a data, information or research project?

The Transport Knowledge Hub is not itself a funding body. It does not commission projects or offer grants.

Topic hubs can discuss and develop project ideas for transport data, information, and research. The Triple-4 Knowledge Development and Prioritisation Framework can help with assessing project ideas and their alignment with the Transport Domain Plan and Transport Research Strategy.

Topic hubs can promote project ideas to the Decision Board. The Decision Board is a group representing key funders of transport data, information and research projects. The Decision Board can consider directly funding (or co-funding) project ideas or forwarding project ideas to a programme of funding.

Note that any funding of project ideas is not awarded automatically but may be subject to competitive tendering.

**To learn more about the Triple-4, read page 13 of the Transport Research Strategy**