International Consortium for Court Excellence

Governance Policy

Reviewed June 2026

1. What is the International Consortium for Court Excellence?

1.1 The International Consortium for Court Excellence (the 'Consortium') currently consists of international judicial institutions with expertise in court or tribunal and judicial administration. Representing significant international experience in the application of court quality management models, they have joined to promote court excellence.[1]

1.2 The Consortium has developed an International Framework for Court Excellence (the 'Framework'). The Framework assesses a court's performance against seven areas of excellence, and provides guidance for courts and tribunals to improve their performance. It utilises recognised organisational improvement methodologies while reflecting the special issues that courts face.

1.3 The Framework also incorporates links to case studies, court performance improvement processes and a range of available tools to measure court performance and development.

1.4 The Consortium regularly edits and revises the Framework to reflect new systems and initiatives directed at improving how courts and tribunals deliver services. It also promotes the Framework, provides educational assistance in the form of conferences, workshops/forums and consulting services. The Consortium also undertakes research and develops new resources in relation to the Framework including accreditation and certification processes.

1.5 The Framework represents a process for an all-encompassing approach to achieving court excellence rather than simply addressing limited aspects of court activity. As a result, it applies to all courts and tribunals and is equally effective for large urban courts and tribunals and smaller rural or remote courts and tribunals.

[1] Reference to 'courts' also includes tribunals.

2. Goal of the Consortium

2.1 The goal of the Consortium is the development and maintenance of a framework of values, concepts and tools by which courts and tribunals worldwide can voluntarily assess and improve the quality of justice and court and tribunal administration they deliver.

3. Values of the Consortium

3.1 The Consortium seeks to support all courts and tribunals to uphold the ten core values of courts. These are: equality before the law, fairness, impartiality, independence of decision-making, competence, integrity, transparency, accessibility, timeliness and certainty.

3.2 The Consortium also seeks to follow those values in its own operations. Specifically, the Consortium values are:

- Equality - To encourage and facilitate court excellence in all jurisdictions, developing and developed countries, small and large jurisdictions alike, by providing guidance and assistance to implementing jurisdictions.

- Accessibility – To provide advice, materials and case studies, and to conduct workshops that aid in the training and education of courts and tribunals that are implementing the Framework.

- Competence – To encourage and support innovation and improvement for all courts and tribunals striving to provide the highest quality in the administration of justice.

- Integrity – To provide a transparent, structured approach to achieving courts excellence that is reviewed on a continuous basis and incorporates member feedback.

- Certainty – To ensure the integrity of the Framework as the benchmark methodology for achieving court excellence whilst allowing courts the flexibility to apply or adjust the Framework to meet their circumstances.

4. Governance

4.1 The Consortium comprises of the Executive Committee, supported by the Secretariat and members.

4.2 The Consortium is currently a non-incorporated group of organisations and courts that have an interest in the promotion of excellence in court and judicial administration.

4.3 The copyright in the Framework and supporting material produced by the Consortium is held by the National Center for State Courts USA for the use and production of founding members of the Consortium.

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5. The Executive Committee

5.1 The Executive Committee governs the work of the Consortium.

5.2 The Executive Committee drives promotion of the use of the Framework. The Executive Committee is responsible for refining the Framework and its related resources, and promoting the Consortium's goals. The Executive Committee also actively participates, in person and online, in the Consortium's work and provides support, collaboration, education, research and development of the Framework and court excellence tools.

5.3 Executive Committee members are expected to abide by the values and principles embodied in the Framework. Executive Committee members contribute to the objectives of the Consortium and ensure that programs and future plans of their organisation support the Consortium's court excellence objectives. They also assist in running workshops and training on the Framework for interested judicial institutions.

5.4 The Executive Committee is made up of representatives of the four founding members that are the permanent members of the Consortium:

- The National Center for State Courts (NCSC);
- The Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration Limited (AIJA);
- State Courts of Singapore; and
- Federal Judicial Center (FJC).

5.5 The Executive Committee may by consensus appoint up to three additional members to become term members of the Executive Committee in the first instance for up to two years. Term members may be reappointed by the Executive Committee for additional terms, each extending not more than one year. To be appointed as a term member of the Executive Committee, the individual must be the nominated representative of a member organisation of the Consortium and must also have been nominated by a permanent member of the Executive Committee. The term member must commit to supporting the work of the Executive Committee.

5.6 The four permanent members of the Consortium will endeavour to ensure the composition of the Executive Committee reflects a broad range of geographical regions including Asia-Pacific, Europe, Middle East/Africa and North/South/Central America.

5.7 The Chair of the Executive Committee will be nominated and appointed from the permanent members for a term of three years. The appointment of the Chair will be by rotation in the order listed in clause 5.4. If that member is unable to take up the position the Chair may be appointed out of the prescribed order by consensus of the Founding members. The role of the Chair of the Executive Committee is to chair Executive Committee Meetings and act as the head representative of the Consortium.

5.8 The Executive Committee will meet via video conference (or equivalent) not less than twice per calendar year but conducts its business primarily by email.

6. The Members

Membership of the Consortium is governed by a Membership Policy*. In summary, the members of the Consortium comprise two categories:

Supporting Members

Open to individuals, courts, court systems, tribunals, tribunal systems, and judicial institutions. Judicial institutions are institutions that provide active support, education, and assistance to judges, courts, or court systems but do not have direct responsibility for implementing the *Framework* in courts or court systems.

Supporting members:

i. have an active interest in the *Framework;*
ii. assist the Consortium in fulfilling its objectives;
iii. share information, experiences and ideas with the Consortium; and
iv. promote use of the *Framework*

Courts, court systems, tribunals, and tribunal systems may join as Supporting Members when they are considering whether and how to implement the *Framework*, and move to Implementing Member status once they have demonstrated evidence of significant use of the *Framework* (see below).

Implementing Members

This category of membership is open to courts, court systems, tribunals and tribunal systems.

Implementing members:

i. have an active interest in the *Framework* and implemented the *Framework* ;
ii. assist the Consortium in fulfilling its objectives including providing advice where able;
iii. share information, experiences and ideas with the Consortium;
iv. promote use of the *Framework;*
v. have demonstrated significant use of the *Framework*. Examples of significant use include:
    - Completion of the self-assessment questionnaire or checklist and development of an improvement plan
    - Well-defined planning for further rounds of self-assessment
    - Demonstrated use of the *Framework* in the administrative operations of the court including strategic planning and leadership development
    - Creation of an organizational structure to support the implementation of the *Framework*
    - Other areas as identified in collaboration with the IFCE Executive Committee.

Initial application for implementing member status requires documentation demonstrating significant use of the *Framework*. Thereafter, the head of the court, court system, tribunal, or tribunal system must annually certify continued implementation of the *Framework*. Implementing Members that do not complete the annual certification will have their membership status revert to Supporting Member.

7. Consortium Support

7.1 The Executive Committee is supported by a Secretariat located at the AIJA in Australia.

7.2 The Chief Executive of the AIJA is ex officio Secretary for the Consortium.

7.3 The role of the Secretary is to manage the activities and administration of the Secretariat in its support of the Consortium.

7.4 The Secretariat is responsible for:

- Maintaining a register of members to the Consortium.
- Maintaining data on the implementation of the Framework and key developments across the world.
- Developing up-to-date material for the Consortium website.
- Drafting up to four newsletters per year on developments and implementation of the Framework internationally.
- Establishing effective networks with key stakeholders so that members are actively engaged in the development of the Framework.
- Assisting members with accessing relevant information and facilitating the exchange of case studies.
- Undertaking research for the Executive Committee as required.
- Providing Secretariat support to the Executive Committee including taking minutes and following up on action items.

7.5 Any proposal for sponsorship of the ICCE or of its programs, conferences, projects or products must be submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration and decision.

7.6 Members of the Executive Committee should notify the Secretary of any requests or proposals for promotion, training or the holding of conferences for any matters related directly to the Framework or its related products. The Secretary may refer the matter to the Executive Committee for consideration where appropriate.

7.7 These arrangements may be varied by agreement of the Executive Committee from time to time.