

CBDC Technology Forum Terms of Reference

Purpose and scope

1. The Technology Forum (TF) will provide a forum to engage stakeholders and gather input on all technology aspects of CBDC from a diverse cross-section of expertise and perspectives. The Bank has not yet made a decision on whether to introduce CBDC, and so the TF will inform the Bank's further exploration of the challenges and opportunities of potentially implementing CBDC.
2. The Bank will use the TF to inform its approach to CBDC including functional design and technology issues pertaining to CBDC. More generally, the TF will have an important role in helping the Bank to understand the technological challenges of designing, implementing and operating a CBDC. The TF will not have any decision making responsibilities, no formal advisory capacity nor will the authorities be under any obligation to formally consult the TF. The TF will not replace the generally applicable mechanisms for consultation and engagement that the Bank operates in fulfilment of its statutory objectives.
3. By way of example, the TF will consider issues such as – but not limited to – ledger design, point of sale hardware choices, interoperability, the user journey, data security, API standards, resilience & availability, and the implementation of specific functionality such as offline payments etc.
4. The TF will not routinely discuss CBDC policy issues, which will instead be considered by the CBDC Engagement Forum (whose Terms of Reference can be found on the Bank of England website).
5. The TF will not be a forum for potential technology suppliers to promote their specific solutions to the Bank or other members of the TF.

Chair and secretariat

6. The TF will be chaired by the Director for CBDC at the Bank of England (the Bank). The Bank will provide the Secretariat.

Membership

7. Participation in the TF is at the invitation of the Bank. Members will be drawn from the full range of CBDC stakeholders focusing on technology and functional design: including financial institutions, academia, fintechs, infrastructure providers and technology firms. At this stage we do not expect to include professional services and advisory firms (e.g. legal and consulting businesses). The selection process is set out in Annex 1 to this document.
8. The TF will comprise a diverse set of knowledgeable participants with relevant background and experience in designing, implementing or operating retail payments. Members will be experts who are close to the technology work of their own organisations and have a strong understanding of the interests of their constituency. Membership is on an individual basis (rather than an organisational basis) and is dependent on individuals having relevant expertise to be able to contribute to the discussions and commit their own time to the TF. A member who

steps down cannot therefore automatically pass on their seat to a replacement within their organisation.

9. Given the importance attached to the input of named members, the Chair would not expect members to send an alternate in the event that they are unable to attend a meeting. In this situation members would have the opportunity to provide written feedback on the papers being discussed ahead of the meeting.
10. Non-TF observers may also be invited to attend TF meetings/ workshops if and when it is considered helpful/necessary by the Chair.
11. Membership will be periodically reviewed to ensure diversity of perspective and balance of expertise.

Responsibilities and activities

12. The Bank will engage the TF on material issues related to technology and functional design issues relevant to its CBDC work programme. In this respect TF members are expected to offer frank and robust inputs and challenge. To facilitate this, meetings will be conducted under the Chatham House rule: participants will be free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s) may be revealed.
13. The TF is not a decision-making or governance body for the CBDC exploratory work programme, but its views will inform and play a role in the Bank's work on CBDC. The activities, discussions, and outputs of the TF should not be taken as an indication of future policy by the Bank or considered binding for future policy work undertaken.
14. Members of the TF are expected to:
 - attend physical/virtual meetings as required, including workshops, unless otherwise agreed with the Chair;
 - provide technical, analytical, and business perspectives and inputs to the discussions; and
 - act in a personal capacity and to contribute to the TF with a view to sharing perspectives that reflect their constituency as whole, rather than representing the views or interests of their individual organisations. This includes refraining from advocating for the technology solution provided by their own/any affiliated organisation.
15. The Chair is responsible for:
 - setting the strategy for the TF and shaping its forward agenda;
 - guiding and moderating the discussions in meetings;
 - inviting Observers to attend meetings and/ or workshops, where appropriate; and
 - obtaining members' agreement on any proposed outputs.
16. The Secretariat will be responsible for:
 - the organisation and coordination of the TF's activities, including timely circulation of minutes after meetings and publication of summary minutes on the Bank website;
 - preparation of the agenda and materials for the meetings, which may incorporate input from members; and
 - co-ordinating any outreach to other market participants and stakeholders, if required.
17. The TF will meet quarterly for the duration of the CBDC exploratory work programme. The Chair may need to vary the meeting frequency where circumstances demand it.
18. Members can request and/or suggest specific topics to be included in meeting or workshop agendas. Any such request should be communicated to the Secretariat before the relevant

meeting or workshop to which the agenda relates. The final content of any agenda will be decided jointly by the Chair.

19. The Secretariat will share with Members drafts of summaries and minutes of the discussions held during the meetings after each meeting. Members may communicate any comments or edits on the content to the Secretariat within one week of receiving the summary. The final content of any meeting summary will be decided by the Chair.

Reporting and accountability

20. The Bank is committed to being transparent about its work and the work of the TF. Agendas and minutes of discussions will be published after each meeting.
21. The Chair may elect, from time to time, to hold open sessions of the TF where a wider set of participants can observe the meeting, including over digital platforms. Any plans to do this will be discussed with the TF in advance.
22. Interested parties who are not Members of the TF are welcome to send their views on topics discussed by the TF to cbdc@bankofengland.co.uk
23. Any non-public or potentially sensitive information disclosed during meetings will only be included in the minutes with the prior approval of both the speaker who made the comment and the Chair.

Relationship to the wider CBDC work programme and other engagement groups

24. Views from the TF will be input to the Bank's wider work programme on CBDC. The Chair will be responsible for representing the TF's views inside the Bank, including sharing them with relevant decision making bodies.
25. The issues raised by the TF may inform the topics considered by other engagement groups (for example, the CBDC Engagement Forum), and vice versa. The minutes of other engagement groups will be made available to TF members via the Bank's website.

Conflicts of interest, competition law and information-sharing

26. Members are responsible for identifying and declaring any conflicts of interest that may arise from participating in the TF.
27. It is the responsibility of each Member to ensure they understand and comply with their obligations under all applicable competition law. To the extent that any participant is unclear about these, they should seek legal advice and if appropriate arrange to undertake competition law compliance training/seek further guidance at their respective organisations.
28. It is the responsibility of any Member to ensure that they are confident in the level of protection for any information shared. If they are not satisfied then it is the Member's responsibility to not share any such information.

Data protection

29. See Annex 2 for data protection information.

Disclaimer

30. Neither the Bank nor or any of its staff, officials, or representatives, including but not limited to the TF Chair and Secretariat, are responsible for any views or statements expressed by other Participants.
31. Views expressed by the TF in its outputs may not reflect the views of the Bank.
32. The activities, discussions, and outputs of the TF should not be taken as an indication of future policy by the Bank. Bank policy positions will continue to be developed and communicated in accordance with the usual governance and public consultation procedures of the organisation.

Annex 1: Membership selection process and criteria

Selection process

1. The Bank will place a call for interest on 19 April 2021 with a closing date of 14 May 2021.
2. Applicants will be asked to provide a brief summary (no more than 1 page of A4) of their role and experience, as well as their suitability to join the TF and their interest in CBDC. Applicants will also be asked to provide a specific example (no more than ½ page of A4) of a trade-off related to the technology choices around CBDC, as well as one suggested topic for discussion at the TF. Applications should be submitted by email to cbdc@bankofengland.co.uk
3. The Bank will review all applications and, using the criteria in Annex 1, select c.20 Members to form the TF.
4. As a guide, the Bank will consider the selection criteria set out below in evaluating applications. In addition to these criteria the Bank will consider the overall balance of the forum in terms of representation of sectors, areas of expertise and individual characteristics.
 - **Knowledge and experience.** The member should be a knowledgeable and experienced professional from a financial services firm, a technology firm, a university, or non-government organisation. They should have first-hand professional experience working with technology in retail payments.
 - **Understanding of policy perspective.** It is preferable if the member can demonstrate understanding of policy issues related to the implementation of CBDC in the UK economy.
 - **Resources.** It is important that the member is able to commit sufficient time and resources to the TF. The required commitment will include attendance at meetings four times per year, as well as additional workshops (as required), and preparatory work. Members will also need to provide input into meeting and workshop agendas and papers (potentially at working level from within their organisations).
 - **Diversity.** They should contribute to the overall diversity of members and the institutions they come from. The TF will reflect diversity in all its forms both in terms of individuals and also the organisations that they work for, so that the TF may draw on a rich variety of knowledge and experiences amongst its members. On an individual level, the TF will be representative of the gender and ethnic diversity of the UK population, and seek to incorporate members of different backgrounds to support diversity of thought. On an organisational level, a variety of organisations based on size, geography (reaching all regions of the UK), nature of business, etc. may be selected.

Composition and participation

5. The TF will consist of a group of Members from the public and private sector. Membership will be as representative as possible of the UK retail payments sector.
6. Members are expected to represent institutions from a range of sectors, including (but not limited to):
 - Academia
 - Banking and financial services
 - Fintechs
 - Non-Governmental Organisations / Think Tanks
 - Payment companies

- Technology companies
- Trade bodies

Annex 2: Data protection information

1. The Bank is likely to be a 'controller' (within the meaning of data protection law) in respect of the personal data it processes for the selection of members and the running of meetings for the TF.
2. The Bank will collect the name, work email address, job title, name of organisation, and summary of role and experience, from individuals who submit an application for membership of the TF. The Bank will also collect views, opinions and further personal data where this is shared either verbally or in writing (e.g. by using a 'chat' function) by individuals participating in online meetings for the TF.
3. The information will be used by the Bank for the purpose of reviewing and assessing applications to become a member of the TF, to communicate with members of the TF and to advance the purposes of the TF as set out more fully in these Terms of Reference.
4. The Bank will process personal data where necessary for the performance of our tasks carried out in the public interest being the establishment of a forum to facilitate dialogue around the potential adoption of CBDC in the UK. We may share your personal data with other members and with observers of the TF where necessary for this purpose.
5. To ensure that the Bank external engagement on CBDC is transparent, the names and company affiliations of TF members will be published on the Bank website.
6. Safeguarding individuals' personal data is important to the Bank. Members' personal data will be stored on secure Bank systems with controlled access. The Bank are committed to information security and we each use a range of layered information security measures to protect the data we hold. We will keep Members' personal data for so long as is necessary to facilitate the TF or otherwise in accordance with the Bank's applicable document retention policies, which are available [here](#) and [here](#).
7. Individuals can request that we no longer use your personal data by writing to the Bank.
8. Further information about how the Bank processes personal data is set out in the Bank's Privacy Notice at: <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/legal/privacy>.
9. Where the Bank uses an online meeting service provider to host meetings, then the privacy statement of that service provider will apply.
10. Individuals have a number of rights under data protection laws. To contact an organisation about those rights, including making a request for the personal data the organisations hold about you, please see the relevant website above. You can also report concerns to the Information Commissioner's Office, the regulatory authority for data protection in the UK. Contact details can be found on their website.
11. The Bank's Data Protection Officer can be contacted via the details above.