

Building a networked commercial community

Improving communications with government departments

Knowledge Hub provides us with an interactive tool to enable people to communicate with teams spread all over the UK, share ideas, receive information and network. It's a significant game changer in the way we communicate with central government departments as well as the wider public sector. Commercial staff can connect, ask questions to other members, share best practice, run multi-location networks and create regional events.

We have a number of ways of reaching the GCF community, including a monthly GCF Update newsletter, cascading information within departments, and quarterly all staff conference calls. But the GCF Knowledge Hub Network has regularly proved itself to be the most effective in reaching our commercial community.

With over 50 groups now, we have seen a rapid growth in project groups and communities of interest that have grown organically rather than directed, in fact the success thus far has come from an information pull rather than push. A range of valuable information is now held on the Knowledge Hub. A repository of best practice has been built so members can access standards, toolkits and contract management guidance.

Reducing emails and providing one central service

We have seen many benefits as a result of the GCF Community and have many great examples of how we have used it, for example, signposting forthcoming events and webinars, delivering project materials and circulating information to our 2,000+ members for Commercial Awareness Week. It has helped us to reduce the number of emails being sent and has created a skills model where people are learning through experiences, communities of practice and networking more than before.

Another success has been to swiftly host an interactive version of our cross-government contract management best practice guide and share it to 140+ public sector organisations. The guide is very well used with a high volume of downloads, and is a powerful tool that provides one central service that everyone can reference and has saved us having to reinvent the wheel. The success of this contract management guide as a collaborative tool has helped contribute to us winning the GO Procurement Team of the Year Award and being shortlisted for the IACCM Awards.

The **Government Commercial Function (GCF)** is on a programme to create the best commercial function in the UK. The purpose of the GCF Community on Knowledge Hub is to be the key communications channel to help build a networked commercial community.



Government
Commercial
Function

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The success of the cross-government contract management best practice guide

“The GCF cross-government contract management best practice guide is a 200+ page document and can be quite daunting to use. Through close collaboration with the Knowledge Hub team, we developed the interactive version of the guide using Knowledge Hub’s ‘knowledge base’ tool. This is hosted in the GCF Community on Knowledge Hub and provides a comprehensive piece of content that is much easier to access and use, including hyperlinks to terms and templates cross-referenced throughout the guide.

For members, the guide now has an excellent online structure that helps them to find relevant sections within 2-3 clicks. We liked the concept and structure of using the ‘knowledge base’ tool, as it was quick and easy to build, while also allowing me to have admin rights to be able to update it myself. We had great collaboration with the KHub team who were receptive to all our needs – it was painless.”

**Vicky Ladzhinskaya, Associate Commercial Specialist,
Commercial & Contract Management Directorate | Ministry of Justice**

Reaching a far greater portion of the commercial profession

The main opportunities for GCF members include:

- Hosting and managing your own community as a facilitator and being part of a networked commercial profession
- Proven invaluable networking opportunities
- People posing questions about what they are working on to the collective community
- Seeking information, advice and guidance from peers

In my personal view, the GCF Community has enabled me to reach a far greater portion of the profession and have direct communications with them. It has been useful for providing a mechanism for cascading information and building communities. As a pillar of our core strategy, it is generating a step-change in participation and enabling others to network within the profession.

I visit Knowledge Hub daily to add documents, oversee engagement, communicate with members and project groups, share our monthly newsletter, access latest guidance, manage events and highlight webinars, and gain qualitative and quantitative information on participation in the profession.

What I have found most helpful is being able to post documents, share best practice and create groups with networks. Being able to create additional private groups has also enabled a degree of closed working. Some government departments are using different systems and Knowledge Hub provides a way of cutting across traditional ICT barriers to cross-government working.

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Find out more about the GCF Community on Knowledge Hub:
<https://khub.net/gcf>