



**CONSCIOUS
FOOD SYSTEMS
ALLIANCE**

The CoFSA Inner Council Terms of Reference

Convened by:



**UN
DP**

The Conscious Food Systems Alliance

Inner Council Terms of Reference

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I. Introduction to CoFSA

The **Conscious Food Systems Alliance (CoFSA)**, convened by UNDP, is a movement of food, agriculture and consciousness practitioners united around a common goal: to support people from across food and agriculture systems to cultivate the inner capacities that activate systemic change and regeneration.

The vision of the Alliance is anchored in the realisation that we have the science, technical capacity and technological tools needed to transform food systems. However, we are lacking the collaborative capacities and the transformative qualities and skills required to leverage necessary change. To transform food systems we must work not only on policy, research and project implementation, but also on the **inner drivers of individual, collective and institutional behaviours**. We must **reconnect with ourselves, each other and nature to activate the transformative qualities and skills** needed to support the transition to regenerative food systems.

The Alliance aims to establish the cultivation of inner capacities as a **key evidence-based approach** to envision and create regenerative food systems, and to build **legitimacy** for this agenda by:

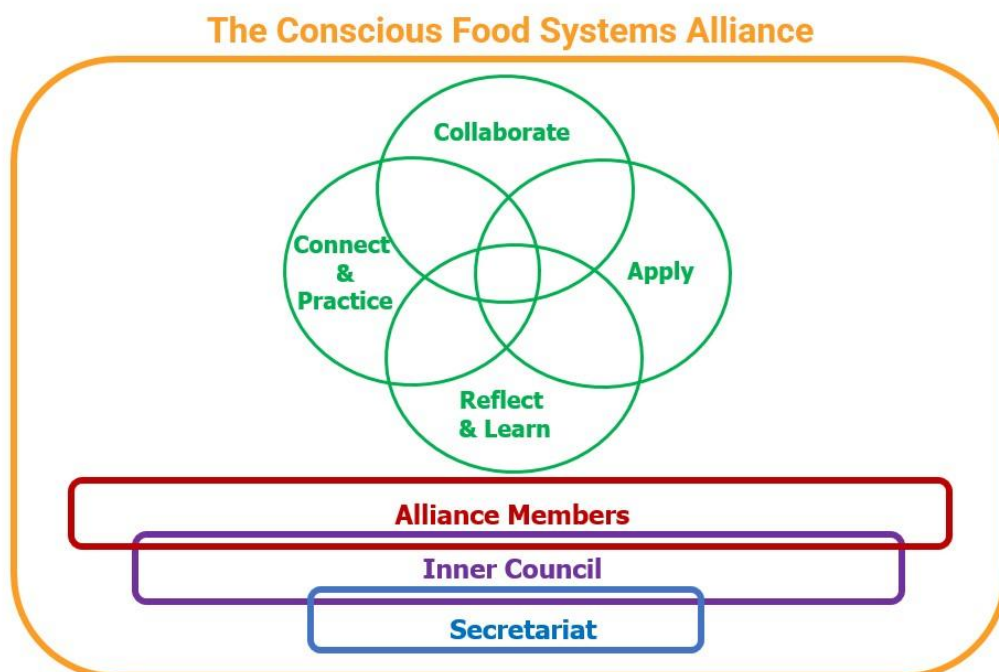
- Establishing a **Community of Practice and Learning**, within which individuals and organisations to connect, learn and exchange knowledge, support and inspire each other, and collaborate to build conscious food systems;
- **Pioneering the application of consciousness approaches and practices** across food systems, through a global portfolio of interventions, including the delivery of trainings, coaching and facilitation services, supported by research and learning frameworks.

CoFSA approaches food systems transformation by working with all relevant stakeholder groups across food systems, including consumers, companies, governments, development agencies, academia, global and local NGOs, local communities, and farmers and food producers.

The Alliance offers a **bold vision** on the role of consciousness for food systems transformation, around which a diverse set of stakeholders, committed to adapting it to their particular contexts, can unite.

Further information about the Alliance can be found on the CoFSA [website](#).

II. CoFSA Governance Structure replace diagram



The CoFSA governance is structured as follows: **The Alliance Members, the Inner Council, and the Secretariat.**

The **Alliance Members** convene in the bi-annual Alliance Gatherings (1.5 hrs), to share updates on CoFSA activities, present newcomers to the Alliance, connect, and share inspiring work and initiatives. They have access to tools, resources and partnerships through the digital platform, as well as the opportunity to participate in community activities such as dialogues, webinars, action groups or practice sessions. The Alliance Members have a consultative role (for example through polls to assess their views that will be considered) and validate the Terms of Reference for the Inner Council (from 2023 onwards).

The **Inner Council** defines and steers the implementation of the CoFSA strategy by the Secretariat. It is responsible for decision-making on key aspects of the Alliance including: the annual workplan, community activities, service offer and products, interventions, fundraising strategy, resource allocation, communications, membership, and Inner Council TOR. An interim Inner Council will be appointed by the Secretariat for a period of one year November 2022 – December 2023. The interim Inner Council will co-create the Terms of Reference for future Inner Council that will be endorsed by the Alliance Members.

The **Secretariat**, hosted by UNDP, manages the day-to-day operations of the Alliance. This includes coordinating and supporting the Inner Council and the Alliance Members, including the management of the digital platform and membership activities. The Secretariat reports to the Inner Council and the Alliance Members.

III. The Inner Council

I. Objectives

The objective of the Inner Council is to define and steer the implementation of the CoFSA strategy within the boundaries of the CoFSA Vision and Approach. It is intended to be a democratic body and decision-making mechanism. To begin, an **interim Inner Council will be established for a period of one year** to co-create the Terms of Reference for future Inner Council that will be endorsed by the Alliance Members. The interim Inner Council will be appointed by the Secretariat upon submission of interest and according to specific criteria (see sections VII. Membership criteria and VIII. Selection Process & Timeframe below).

II. Function

The Inner Council will define and steer the implementation of CoFSA strategy, including: the workplan, activities, service offer and products, interventions, fundraising strategy, resource allocation, communications, membership, and Inner Council TOR.

For each topic, the Secretariat is responsible for developing and presenting a proposal to the Inner Council, and the role of the Inner Council is to review, discuss, provide comments and approve.

a. CoFSA Strategic Priorities for 2022-2023

- **Establish a thriving CoFSA community of learning and practice**, including a dialogues series, working groups, and practice sessions,
- **Evolve governance to a model of shared decision-making** of activities and strategic decisions with a core group of partners,
- **Ensure diverse, inclusive and representative membership** in the Alliance,
- **Develop concrete CoFSA service offer and products** e.g. CoFSA curricula,
- **Raise CoFSA visibility and legitimacy**, through a network of champions and events, and establish the Alliance a strategic initiative with key stakeholders,
- **Secure funds to support Alliance activities and implementation of CoFSA interventions**,
- **Generate and validate Terms of Reference for the Inner Council** (2023 onwards).

b. Focus Areas

- **Workplan:** the Secretariat presents the workplan to Inner Council every quarter,
- **Community activities:** topics for dialogues and webinars, working groups, Annual Summit,
- **Service Offer and Products** e.g. implementation of the CoFSA curricula,
- **Interventions:** criteria, guidelines, and proposals by members,
- **Fundraising:** outreach and engagement strategy to key stakeholders, donors or networks;
- **Resource allocation:** see 'Decision-making',
- **Membership:** strategic partners and networks to join the Alliance, and influential stakeholders to be CoFSA 'Champions',
- **Communications strategy:** promotional campaigns, strategic events or conference to present CoFSA,
- **Inner Council Terms of Reference:** TOR for next Inner Council, inc. membership criteria, selection process, responsibilities & benefits etc.,
- **Other:** Inner Council members can propose other areas or topics.

III. Composition

The Inner Council will be composed of 8-12 committee members, including one chair-person.

The chair of the Inner Council will be Andrew Bovarnick, UNDP Global Head, Food and Agricultural Commodity Systems.

The responsibility of the chair-person is to:

- Facilitate meetings and guide the committee through the agenda items,
- Ensure that an accurate record of the discussions and decisions of each meeting is prepared and forwarded to all members,
- Monitor the implementation of agreements and action points from previous meetings and ensure adequate follow-up.

IV. Decision-making

Decision-making

The Inner Council will aim to reach consensus.

If this is not possible, decisions will be taken by majority vote, in which:

- Each member of the Inner Council shall have one vote,
- Decisions shall be made by an affirmative vote of more than 50 per cent of members,
- If the vote is split, the Chair has the decisive vote.

Agenda items will be shared in advance and voting will occur in Inner Council meetings. For absences, votes can be submitted in writing in advance of the meeting.

Resource allocation

Decision-making on resource allocation will depend on where funds are from, noting that some funding comes with its own framework and certain boundaries. As such:

- Whilst funds are from UNDP only, UNDP decides how it is allocated (as it is accountable to its donors), in consultation with the Inner Council.
- If funds are raised collectively for the Alliance, then resources will be managed by the Inner Council through joint decision-making.
- If funds are raised by a particular partner, resources are managed by this partner, in consultation with the Inner Council.

Conflict of Interest

If a Inner Council member, or its affiliate or employee is receiving Alliance funds (channelled through UNDP or another member) or is engaged in the development of a proposal to receive Alliance funds, the Inner Council member or its affiliate or employee shall disclose such involvement to the Secretariat through an email or other written means. The Secretariat will accordingly inform other Inner Council members and observers, and the Inner Council member in reference will not participate in or be present for discussions or decisions relating to the activity for which the funds (actual or potential) pertain. If the Inner Council member or its affiliate or employee fails to disclose the relevant involvement, the Inner Council will determine what appropriate action to take.

V. Meetings

- **Timeframe:** November 2022 - December 2023
- **Frequency:** The Inner Council will meet **every 2 months** for **1.5 hours**.
- **Agenda:** The Secretariat will propose the agenda for committee meetings. Inner Council members can propose additional agenda items or modifications, by emailing the CoFSA Secretariat at least one week in advance of the next meeting.
- **Platform:** The meetings will be held online via zoom.
- **Language:** The meetings will be held in English.

VI. Commitments

Inner Council members are expected to commit to the following:

- Attend Inner Council meetings (1.5 hours, every 2 months),
- Be an ambassador and champion of CoFSA in your networks and organisations e.g. present CoFSA at conferences or events.

VII. Membership criteria

Inner Council members must meet all criteria for general Alliance membership (see [here](#)). In addition, Inner Council members will be selected based on the following criteria:

- (i) level of engagement in CoFSA (in particular, through involvement in concrete initiatives and workstreams),
- (ii) alignment and relevance for CoFSA, including the ability or potential to contribute to the growth of the Alliance,
- (iii) diversity of stakeholders (including Indigenous People, grassroots organizations, companies and governments).

VIII. Selection Process & Timeframe

Application to the Inner Council is by expression of interest; **applicants should submit their interest by emailing the CoFSA Secretariat by 28th October** (see contact details below).

Members of the *interim* Inner Council will be selected by the CoFSA Secretariat, based on the criteria listed. As noted, the selection will pay close attention to ensuring the diversity of stakeholders - if you are not selected, it may be on this basis and does not indicate your value as a member of the Alliance.

Inner Council members will be appointed for one year. Selection of the next Inner Council members will commence in December 2023. Members can be elected for multiple years.

Contacts

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Find out more at: <https://www.consciousfoodsistemas.org/>

