



the path of facilitator of Council within the European Council Network (2022)

In this document, the use of the word 'Council' is short for 'practice of Council' and refers exclusively to 'Way of Council' according to the tradition of the Ojai Foundation, unless otherwise stated.

*This is a living document, (as of February 2022) it is valid until we find more clarity and better ways to express.
Several people have contributed to this document over many years.
May it serve! Thank you all.*

About Council and the ECN

Council history is a rich weave of many threads and lineages.

That history is still being woven...

We strongly invite you to read about the roots and history of Council as a modern practice on the global Website of the Council community:

<https://waysofcouncil.net/council-histories/>

It is worth sharing this story and lineage, and be aware of how Council is different from other circle-methods in which one can be trained with certificates on some weekends. The ongoing practice of Council offers us a path we choose to walk.....

The ECN is a network that received and still receives the practice of Council as a gift, something we have in our bones, something we can remember. It has no copyright.

There is no owner, and no inventor. It is about honouring the lineage, how it evolved in its modern form and how it spread in Europe. We wish that the practice of Council may be passed on in the lineage and tradition of the Ojai Foundation honouring those who have walked before.

About the path:

This document presents an overview of the way the ECN community teaches Council and supports facilitators on the path until the confirmation ceremony.

In order to learn more about Council and facilitation, to be part of and connected to the ECN, to carry Council in our heart and wear it on our sleeve, there is no need to step onto this Path in particular. We are very much welcomed to offer the practice of Council as a **carrier of Council** as a gift wherever and whenever we feel it serves.

And: after some time with Council there can be a wish, a call, to commit more deeply to the practice, to add awareness and deepen connection to the process, and to show ourselves more with our commitment to Council. This is where we recommend stepping on the **path of facilitator**.

We know every situation we find ourselves in is a different one. Some of us, those perhaps reading this document for the first time may be very much on our own, suddenly falling in love with Council, others may already be part of a lively experienced regional hub, with other facilitators and trainers of Council, with a regional path that has already been walked upon. Some may step on this path with a lot of life- and work-experience in circle practice, others may come from somewhere else.

On the one hand we want to offer a path that is clear, and on the other we want to acknowledge the different situations people are in. We offer bullet-points as a path – they are not a curriculum that is to be done as fast as possible and then one is recognized. It is more a rough guideline to ensure that we walk in the lineage of the Ojai Foundation and Way of Council as is practised in the ECN, as we feel it serves most.

Participation in Council-trainings combined with learning-by-doing-experience, offers us to learn by mistakes, and learn from and with each other as peers, at the heart of this path. Start your own circle, and practice Council with yourself and nature. Furthermore we can learn with and from the wisdom of other Council carriers; elders, trainers, facilitators and peers, through attending free online Councils offered, and regional hub meetings and of course, the ECN-Gathering.

Other types of self-development and group work are highly recommended to support the process of becoming a recognised Way of Council-facilitator. The more authentic

and at peace we are with ourselves, the better will we master the art of facilitation and passing on Council.

Yes, there are some requirements that are felt as essential parts of the path (see the clarified guidelines below) and then there is a lot more between the lines, personal process, learning experiences, thresholds to be crossed, that are individual and also an important part of the process.

The process of becoming a recognised Council facilitator usually takes several years – sometimes more, rarely less! The practice of Council teaches us not to rush, not to push, to practice 'what serves self, circle and higher good', an experience one has to go through again and again to incorporate and learn.

After this process we assume that one is deeply grounded in the many aspects of Council and are ready to continue offering skills as a Council-facilitator in the tradition of the Ojai-Foundation and the European Council Network in the world.

This is how it starts:

- **Get to know Council** and attend a Council circle:
meaning; experiencing Council - one or two days sitting in a Council circle, attending other Council-circles, getting in touch with people practising Council
- **Read the book:** Way of Council; by Jack Zimmerman & Virginia Coyle - taking on what it means to be a carrier of Council and deepening it as a life practice.
- **Feel the 'call'** to learn more about Council:
At a certain point there is an 'inner knowing' that you want to commit to the practice of Council deeper and with more awareness, that also means learning the roots of Council in the lineage of the Ojai Foundation as well as acknowledging your own.
- **Connect with ECN** and if available, a regional hub, sharing your intention to deepen the practice.
There are several ways to get in touch and connect, according to where you are located. You can choose which way serves you best:
 - get in touch with facilitators or trainers of Council, if some are near your location
 - connect with the facilitators on the path-circle; they offer an online Council to share about the practice: facilitators.circle@council-network.eu and/or
 - write an email to faciliatorspath@council-network.eu stating your journey with Council until now and your possible wish to step on the facilitators path to

become a recognized facilitator.

- **Participate in an 'Introduction to Council training'** led by a European Council trainer
- **Practice Council for at least 6 months**
 - Start facilitating your own Councils with friends and/or family, becoming familiar with holding/leading/facilitating Council
 - Participate in a 'Deepening Council Training', led by a European Council trainer
 - Continue practising Council for at least another 6 months.
 - Get in touch with other carriers / facilitators / trainers of Council
 - Engage in your regional hub if you have one or and join the facilitators on the path - Council meetings
- **Find a mentor. Up 8** Generally, a recognized facilitator or trainer, or a facilitators circle inside a regional hub - important is the connection to the tradition of Ojai and here in Europe a connection to the European Council Network.
- **Write a letter of intention** - when you are in contact with the ECN in any of the above ways, at some point you will be asked to write and share a letter of intention, speaking and sharing from your heart about yourself and your call to step on the path of a Way of Council-facilitator. You will get more information about this letter of intention and to whom to send it from the people you are in contact with.
- **Organise and offer your own ongoing Councils, where it is possible for you.**

It could be a monthly women's circle, or a community-circle in your neighbourhood, a circle for parents, introducing Council at your workplace as a regular practice...

Offering and facilitating Council regularly, practising to be participant and facilitator at the same time; sit and share in Council and hold the container is our most substantial way to learn and grow with and through Council.
- **What will help you along the way:**
 - Find peers to walk the path with you. Council is ideally offered with a partner. Preparing and debriefing together as peers is the hands-on part of learning and growing into facilitating Council. In our experience this is where most of the mentoring happens, being informed by and through the practice itself.
 - Find another circle as a support circle, where you participate, e.g. the circle of the facilitators on the path

→ Practice “asking for what you need and offer what you can” wherever it may serve in terms of mentoring / guidance / support / advice. Usually while practising Council questions arise and it is helpful to share those and hear other stories from others about your questions.

- Next to the regular Council-Trainings we recommend **participating in other trainings and practises** such as ones focused on nature connection, social/racial justice, meditation/mindfulness, non-violent communication along with experience of song/music, art, dance, theatre and improvisation. We recommend **Council-trainings**, e.g. 'Council in Nature', Nature of Council, 'Advanced Council', 'Flesh and Spirit', led by a Council trainer. These again are not requirements but rather strong suggestions that will add to your experience.
- Walking the path of facilitator is also a path of self enquiry and personal development, it's an inner journey as well, so we recommend **developing skills and practice in complementary areas** as above.
- **Connect with your regional hub**, join the next meeting, if there is none yet, maybe you start one with your peers. Connect to the European Council Network, attend ECN-Gatherings, if you feel called. Those community-meetings are a great way of living Council, of stepping up and being seen and getting feedback, of supporting each other with the practice...
- **Serve in one of the working groups of the ECN**, if you feel the call. It's a great way to connect, build relationships and experience Council in action.

Letter of Completion

When you, your mentors, peers or guides feel your path as a facilitator of Council is completed, you are asked to write a letter of completion, shared with those you have walked with. To formally mark the occasion there will be a confirmation ceremony with your community / peers / family / circle / regional hub and mentor(s) / trainer. This ceremony is held at the annual ECN Gathering or, if applicable, at a regional hub Gathering. It can also be with your community, peers, family and council people who have seen you facilitate, as a regional hub may not yet exist in your locality.

... and this is only the beginning of a lifelong journey with the practice of Council

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*This document is based on documents from Trainers meetings in Innsbrück, Geneva and Ammersee and on meetings from the subgroup (Linda, Gesa, Rob and Han) facilitators on the path. This document is composed and edited by Han Delissen. With contributions from Eva Dittingerova, Jaroslava Vatay, Rob Dreaming, Linda Elias,*

*Tina Kansy and Gigi Coyle .... There are certainly more people who contributed to this document, I am not aware of that, please let me know if you have contributed.*

*Acknowledging and honouring that some of this is from - The living document first drafted in August, 2008 by Bonnie Mennell, Gigi Coyle & Jack Zimmerman and revised in February, 2010 by the CCT Advisory Council ('The Nine'). It will continue to evolve over time.*

*And; the many meetings and Councils we have in the European Council Network to bring Way of Council developed through - The Centre for Council Training (CCT) and The Ojai Foundation (TOF) to European roots, culture and tradition.*

*This version is current as of February 6th, 2022  
May it serve us all in the work we do.*