

Expert Group Profile

Description of the Expert Group

Related Committee	Network Service Committee
Name of the Expert Group	Onboarding&Offboarding
Association Contact	Stephan Bauer

Description / Challenge / Initial Situation:

The onboarding process for Catena-X represents a pivotal initial engagement for any prospective participant. Currently, this process is primarily managed by the Core Service Provider B role, of which there may only be a single one. As the network continues to expand, requirements for the execution of onboarding are evolving, necessitating a transition from a single operator to multiple operators, taking into account regional considerations, market segments, and customer preferences. Consequently, one of the foremost priorities of this expert group is to reassess and refine the existing onboarding processes to ensure scalability and support the exponential growth of Catena-X.

With an increased number of participants, there is also an increasingly urgent need for a well-defined, scalable offboarding process. Companies cease to exist or do not see value anymore in their participation in the Catena-X network. For such companies, there must be a specified way to leave the network.

These processes, the assignment of process steps to Catena-X roles, and the interfaces between the roles are defined in the following standards:

- CX-0006: Registration and Initial Onboarding
- CX-0009: CX Registration API

The **Onboarding and Offboarding Expert Group** will be the owner of these two standards. As such, its task is the maintenance of these standards and their continuous adaptation to the ever-changing requirements. This includes a close cooperation with related groups, i.e., the **SSI Expert Group**, the **BPDM Expert Group**, the **Dataspace Connectivity Expert Group**, and the **Dataspace Operations Committee** as they are responsible for standards and other normative documents that are relevant during onboarding and offboarding of participants.

Relevant related normative documents are (non-exhaustive):

- CX-0001: Participant Agent Registration
- CX-0010: Business Partner Number
- CX-0018: Dataspace Connectivity
- CX-0050: CX-Specific Credentials
- CX-XXXX: Identity Proofing
- The Operating Model

The Network Service Committee decided to reestablish the **Onboarding and Offboarding Expert Group** by issuing a new tender that reflects the upcoming challenges. We encourage existing members, but also new interested parties in the ecosystem to join forces and work towards a scalable, future-proof on- and offboarding process for the Catena-X dataspace.

Expert Group Profile

Known challenges the group will engage with in 2026 are:

- Defining the onboarding of virtual participants, i.e., participants who do not host their own dataspace infrastructure, but instead delegate the representation of their company to another active dataspace participant.
- Defining and standardising an offboarding process for participants.
- Integration of potential regional requirements into the on- and offboarding processes, e.g., integration of the Chinese PoC.
- Reconsider the role assignments and improve the decentralization of the existing onboarding process to meet requirements like scalability of the onboarding, regional concerns, decentralization of Core Service Provider B responsibilities.

All these activities have to be executed under the constraint, that the current level of trust in the dataspace is only ever improved, but never compromised.

The activities include considerations concerning

- Technical Aspects:
 - Functional capabilities and their assignment to roles, e.g. the Onboarding Service Provider, or Core Service Provider B role.
 - Multiplicity of functional capabilities, i.e. decentralize capabilities currently operated by the Core Service Provider B.
 - Gap analysis on current standards and adapting the standard landscape accordingly.
 - Active collaboration with relevant expert groups and committees to consistently align on and adapt other relevant normative documents.
- Contractual/Commercial Aspects:
 - Analysis of existing contractual relationships and assessing their necessity.
 - Proposal of changes to meet the interest of different stakeholders.
- Governance Aspects:
 - Proposals for accreditation requirements to obtain certain roles.
 - Proposals for accreditation of new mechanisms (e.g., regional specifics concerning identity proofing, in close collaboration with the SSI Expert Group).
- Migration Aspects:
 - Introduction planning
 - Ensuring backward compatibility
 - Regional rollouts

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Why should I participate?

- Shape the scaling strategy of Catena-X.
- Ensure decentralization is preserved.
- Influence how ecosystem growth is enabled.
- Protect business relationships while enabling interoperability.
- Build a fair and open enablement market.

What Is Expected of Me?

- Active engagement of at least 20 hours per month
- Governance & ecosystem understanding
- Experience with dataspace onboarding and offboarding flows
- Understanding of governance in digital ecosystems

Organisation and Selection Framework

- ~10 **active** core members
- OEMs, Suppliers, Enablement Providers
- Strong mix of technical and governance expertise

For more information on the responsibilities of an Expert Group, have a look at the [Working Model](#).

Organisation

Timeline

- March 2026 -- Announcement & Application
- April 2026 -- Governance baseline
- June 2026 -- Milestone 1 as part of 26/06 release
- September 2026 -- Milestone 2 as part of 26.09 release
- Q1/2027 -- Potential reevaluation and reelection of the expert group