

DMTF Standards Incubation Process
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Notice

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1 Standards Incubator

The DMTF may establish efforts known as Standards Incubator which allows a set of members to develop specifications which allow cross-vendor interoperability in an exploratory fashion. This type of effort has similarities to some vendor led “Workshop Processes”, or other Standards Body Incubation processes. Standards Incubators are useful, but not limited to, in cases where one or more exploratory solutions which can be implemented in products is deemed beneficial. The resulting deliverable from the Standards Incubator, known as a Informational specification, is sufficiently documented such that vendors can implement it in their products in a manner suitable for delivery to customers. This provides a valuable learning experience for use in subsequently generating a long term Standard. One or more Informational specifications may be input contributions into a normal Working Group to be unified into a single standard. If there is only one viable Informational specification, it may be promoted to Standard.

Standards Incubators are often formed in conjunction with an initial baseline contribution by the founding members with the expectation that the group will serve to evolve and finalize that contribution.

Standards Incubator groups have two levels of membership, Leadership and Reviewing. Leadership members are expected to produce the technical contributions, lead the work and provide adequate resources to produce the deliverables, as well as act as a fair review body for feedback given by reviewing members.

The purpose of this is to allow vendors aligned with a certain proposal to move forward and produce an interoperability specification without being blocked by those who would prefer a different proposal. Supporters of an alternative proposal are also permitted to start their own Standards Incubator to explore their alternative.

The formation, lifecycle and operation of a Standards Incubator is intended to be based on the standard Committee and Working Group rules with the following exceptions indicated below.

In a case where Standards Incubator efforts overlap with Working Groups, the degree of overlap should be carefully evaluated and chosen with a goal of minimizing it.

2 Membership Levels

2.1 Leadership Member

Leadership members must commit to meeting the requirements, which typically include resource commitments to producing implementations for use in interoperability testing, strong attendance, organization and hosting of feedback workshops, meetings, etc. The group itself is permitted to define additional requirements for the membership levels. Leadership members must fairly review and consider technical feedback from Reviewing Participants. The group of Leadership members comprises

a technical review board which evaluates all feedback and makes decision by the voting process. Incubator Leadership members must also be at least Leadership level members of the DMTF.

2.2 Reviewing Member

Reviewing Members are encouraged to participate in meetings, technical discussions, document reviews and events. Reviewing members are expected to provide technical feedback. Reviewing members are not part of the technical review board. Reviewing members must be at least Participation level members of the DMTF.

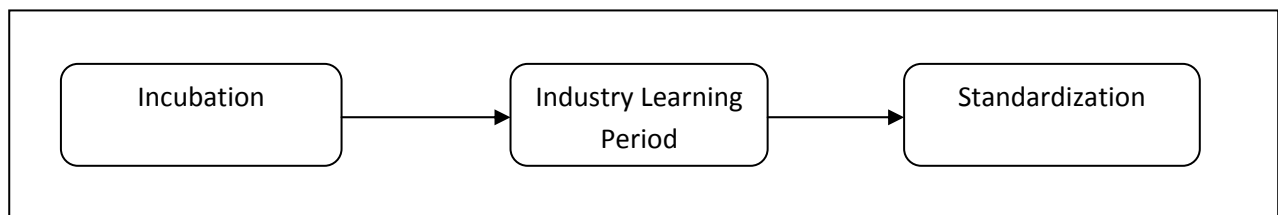
3 Definitions

3.1 Review Board

The review board is comprised of the Leadership members. This board uses the voting process to resolve issues when there is no consensus.

3.2 Informational Specification

Once a given deliverable has been completed and approved by the group, and subsequently approved by the Board, it is considered a Informational specification. Informational specifications are public specifications suitable for implementation by interested developers. Informational specifications are intended to evolve into Standards over time, although this is not a guarantee. Vendors who implement an Informational specification in their products are encouraged to participate in the subsequent standardization process as well as implement the resulting Standard, which may deviate from the Informational Specification.



4 Standards Incubator Lifecycle

4.1 Proposal Generation

Proposals for new Incubators can be brought to the Chair of the Committee. They can be suggested by any two Board or Leadership Member companies of the DMTF. An Incubator proposal must be submitted and an interim Chair or Co-Chairs identified (hereafter referred to as “interim Chair”). The interim chair must be from a Board or Leadership Member company. The Chair of the Committee then hosts a discussion with the Committee, the interim Incubator Chair and any additional proposal representatives. The goals of the discussion are to determine if the work aligns with the DMTF's strategy and focus, what existing work is available in the industry, whether cooperative relationships with standards outside the DMTF might be necessary, etc.

In situations where there is more than one proposal to create an Incubator for the same scope, it is acceptable to have more than one Incubator created to explore alternative solutions.

When at least two Board or Leadership Member companies have expressed interest in forming the new Incubator, representatives from these companies meet to discuss goals, initial charter, deliverables, and proposed timeline. An interim Incubator may be created on the DMTF Web site at this point to help facilitate discussion and coordination of meetings. The Chair of the sponsoring Committee is responsible for providing insight and observations from the DMTF, any requested help in anticipating Committee/Board questions and responses, and answers to procedural questions.

At this time the Chair of the Committee shall send an email to the DMTF Membership announcing the intent to form this Standards Incubator.

4.2 Board Approval

At the conclusion of the meetings, the interim chair submits an initial charter, list of goals and deliverables, and timeline to the Chair of the Committee. In addition, the interim chair must identify at least three member companies, which are committed to the ongoing work. The Chair then verifies the submitted information and if valid, forwards the information to the "other" Chairs of the other committees to determine if any issues exist. If yes, then the charter, timeline and lists are returned to the interim chair for resolution. If no, then the charter, timeline and lists are sent to the Board for approval.

Issues with the Incubator goals, charter, deliverables, committed companies and timeline should be raised in initial ballot and then worked to closure.

4.3 Commencement

After Board approval of the initial Incubator charter, a second announcement is sent by the Committee Chair to all the DMTF members indicating the formation of the new Incubator and the timing of its first meeting. At the Incubator formation meeting, the charter, goals, deliverables, list of committed companies and timeline are reviewed (and possibly amended), the official chair, and other Incubator officer nomination process is started, and work on the deliverables commences. Meeting times for the new Incubator should also be discussed, and balloted if agreement during the meeting is not reached.

At the Incubator formation meeting, the presiding Committee Chair accepts nominations for officers of the new Incubator. Nominations can be accepted at the meeting or by email to the Committee Chair alias. Board or Leadership membership is required for eligibility for the position of Chairperson. At the next meeting, the Committee Chair announces the list of nominees. Each nominee describes his or her background and interest in the officer role. If multiple candidates for Incubator Officers exist, email ballot to the Committee Chair alias is used to select the Incubator Officers. If only one Incubator Officer Candidate exists for a position, members may voice objections to the candidate to the Committee Chair alias within 7 days of the candidate's announcement.

5 Incubator Specification Delivery

5.1 Informational specification

When a specification has been approved by the Incubator group, it is brought to the Board for approval. Upon Board approval, the specification is published as a Informational specification.

5.2 Industry Learning Period

After the publication of the Informational specification, the board may elect to take no action for a set period of time in order to gain implementation feedback and assess the results. At the conclusion of this period, they Board may choose to extend this period or move forward with Disposition

5.3 Disposition

Since Informational specifications are expected to evolve into permanent Standards, at the conclusion of the Learning Period, the Board shall determine if the Informational specification is suitable for permanent standardization and how that should be accomplished.

The Board shall select one of the Disposition Strategies below and direct the organization to charter a Working Group to move the Informational specification to a permanent Standard in a manner consistent with the selected Disposition Strategy.

5.3.1 Bootstrap / Expedited Delivery

If the Informational specification has implementation and customer momentum and is sufficient to be standardized in its current form, the Board may direct the organization to charter a Working Group which will perform a technical review of the specification, make any necessary fixes of correctional nature and complete the process for approval as a Preliminary Standard. The spirit of this strategy is to make necessary adjustments to prepare the Standard for release as quickly as possible and deferring significant work until the next subsequent version. The resulting Working Group should also include a next version deliverable.

5.3.2 Finalization

If the Informational specification has implementation and customer momentum, but lacks some features or extensions in order to achieve consensus, the Board may direct the organization to form a Working Group which is scoped to add these additions with the minimum amount of changes and bring it forward as a Preliminary Standard. The spirit of this strategy is to bring the specification to a level of feature completeness which meets the needs of the consensus. Remaining features should be added within the existing design and then appropriate testing and bug-fixing and ratification as a Standard would follow.

5.3.3 Rationalization

If multiple Incubators have delivered multiple Informational specifications, the Board may direct the organization to charter a Working Group to rationalize the Informational specifications. Since adoption and momentum may outweigh technical issue regarding success, the Board may stipulate a direction in

order to avoid drawn out delays. The Board may direct this new Working Group to use one of the Informational specifications as the basis and then add the missing features of the other Informational specification, allow the Working Group to make the decision on which Provision Standard is the basis but stipulate a time period for the group to make its decision.

5.3.4 Termination

If the Informational Specification has little adoption or industry interest, the Board may direct the organization to conclude the Incubator and take no further action. The Informational Specification shall remain available.

5.4 Future Versions

Should there be a need to evolve the specification as time moves forward to create subsequent versions of the standard; Working Groups or Incubators may be formed according to the appropriate processes.

6 Voting Process

Decisions made by the Incubator should be made by consensus when possible. When this is not possible, decisions shall be made by the Review Board. The Review Board shall vote on the issue and a majority vote will carry. At the time of proposal generation, the definition of “majority and quorum rules” shall be set in the proposal and charter.

7 Participation Requirements

Each Incubator will determine its participation requirements for Leadership and Reviewing members. These requirements shall be indicated in the proposal and initial charter. For Leadership members, these requirements **MUST** include:

- 1) Commitment to attendance
- 2) Commitment to technical contributions and discussions
- 3) Commitment to host meetings or events
- 4) Commitment to produce an implementation suitable for interoperability testing

In addition to these requirements a Standards Incubator **SHOULD** also require

- 1) That new Leadership members are approved by vote by the Review Board. If this is the case, it must specify the voting rules for approval, such as Unanimous, Majority or Super Majority.
- 2) Commitment to maintaining alignment with the input submission

Any IPR participation requirements must be consistent with section 9.2

8 Oversight

Since the Incubator allows a greater amount of autonomy than a typical Working Group, it is necessary to ensure that the Review Board is making a good faith effort to take Reviewers feedback seriously. In the event that a dispute arises, the Parent Committee or Board may choose to review the issue and make a recommendation to the Incubator.

While the recommendation may not be binding, failing to follow the recommendation may affect the results of the Disposition phase or termination of the incubator.

9 Other Characteristics of Standards Incubators

9.1 Parent Committee

Standards Incubator groups shall be administered and supervised by the Process and Incubation Committee.

9.2 IPR Issues

As an effort within the DMTF, Incubator efforts are subject to the DMTF Patent and Technology Policy. Any members participating in an Incubator or submitting contributions to an Incubator must do so in compliance with the DMTF Patent and Technology Policy.

9.3 Public information sharing and Feedback

Incubator efforts may publish specifications externally and receive external feedback in accordance with the Work In Progress process (DSP4004) and the DMTF Feedback Portal respectively.

9.4 Interoperability Workshops

Incubator efforts may conduct Interoperability workshops to validate their designs.

9.5 Addition of New Members

New members who agree to the membership requirements in this document as well as any requirements adopted by the Incubator (such as in it's charter). Leadership members must be approved by the Review Board in compliance with the participation requirements set forth in the charter as defined in section 7.