FHIR Connectathon Track Process

This page describes the process used to select and approve the implementation tracks at the FHIR connectathons held in conjunction with HL7 working group meetings. (These rules do not apply to connectathons organized by other organizations and may not always apply to non-WGM connectathons organized by HL7 international.)

The guidelines provided here are DRAFT and are not yet in force.

If you have questions or need help submitting a track proposal contact Connectathon Administrator Sandy Vance.

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Objectives

FHIR is becoming more popular. Testing as part of a connectathon is a pre-requisite for resources and implementation guides progressing up the FHIR Maturity Model. As well, connectathons are an excellent way to increase the visibility of resources, profiles and implementation guides. These factors are resulting in increasing pressure on the number of tracks to be held. At the same time, room size and resources to support coordination as well as limits on what key participants (server providers, EHR vendors, etc.) can reasonably accomplish means that there is an upper limit to how many tracks can reasonably be hosted within a single connectathon event.

The process described below is intended to ensure the following:

- The process for selecting tracks hosted at connectathons is open and transparent
- Connectathon tracks are sufficiently well-defined to support a quality connectathon experience for implementers
- Connectathon tracks meet the needs of the implementer community and the development of the FHIR specification by prioritizing higher-priority topics

Process

The connectathon track selection process has 3 phases - solicitation of interest, preliminary approval and prioritization and final selection.

Solicitation of Interest

This process should be initiated within the 2 weeks following an HL7 Working Group Meeting

The FMG will send out a solicitation of interest for connectathon tracks to the FHIR list server, co-chairs list server and FHIR Implementer's Skype Chat.

The solicitation may also be distributed through other mechanisms (blogs, FHIR.org, etc.)

The solicitation will provide a deadline for initial submissions with a period not less than 2 weeks. The solicitation will include a reference to the requirements on this wiki page and provide a mechanism to submit proposed connectathon tracks.

Connectathon proposals will include:

- What resources and/or implementation guide components will be exercised by the track
- Name, email and (ideally) Skype id of the individual who will commit to attending the connectathon to help manage the track.
- Each track needs to have a Track Lead
- A list of the roles (conformance statements) a connectathon participant can take on, including a description of the capabilities each role must have
- An initial list of implementers who intend to participate in the track and which role(s) they intend to be able to exercise
- A detailed description of the test scenarios indicating what each role participant would be expected to do, including distinguishing optional and mandatory steps
- Any information around implementer and/or work group requirements/timelines that might impact the prioritization of the track
- The proposal must include a description of the test scripts that will exist, along with a commitment to have TestScripts in place prior to the final track approval deadline, or it must indicate why TestScripts are inappropriate for this track

Connectathon proposals can be submitted here

Preliminary Approval and Prioritization

Upon the completion of the submission period, the FMG will review candidate track proposals and prioritize them based on the following criteria:

- Proposals will only be considered if an individual is committed to attend the connectathon to help manage the track as the track coordinator
- Proposals for tracks that are needed to evaluate content scheduled for ballot will receive higher weighting
- Proposals with evidence of significant implementer interest will be weighted higher than those with less or no such evidence
- Proposals that exercise capabilities not tested in prior connectathons will receive greater weighting than those that have already been tested
Exception: Some tracks will be designated by the FMG as "ongoing" tracks, meaning they will be exercised as part of all connectathons. This will include the entry-level "Patient" track as well as other tracks that are considered to provide essential infrastructure to other tracks. (These tracks must still meet the requirements of having a designated track coordinator and complete TestScripts.)

Upon completion of their review, the FMG will produce a preliminary list of connectathon tracks, ranked by priority. This list will be provisional as not all tracks will be included on the final list. Approval will be dependent on the evaluation in the final approval step (below).

This preliminary list of tracks will be distributed to the FHIR list server and implementer Skype chat along with a request for implementers to sign up to tracks on the Connectathon Google spreadsheet (with an email alternative for those where Google access may be problematic).

Final Approval

The final approval process will consider tracks that were given preliminary acceptance. The FMG "may" choose to consider 'late' submissions, but will not do so as a general course of business.

Approximately 6 weeks prior to the connectathon, a "frozen" version of the FHIR specification will created or designated for Connectathon use. At this point the FMG will review the state of all preliminary tracks including the degree of implementer commitment and the state of the formal Test Scripts. The FMG will evaluate:

- Whether at least one implementer has signed up for each role necessary to exercise the track
- Whether the TestScripts are sufficiently complete as to support automated testing of the server portions of the track and to guide execution of the client side of the track. (In some cases, TestScripts may not be applicable, depending on what the track is testing.)
- Whether the coordinator for the track has registered to attend the connectathon

Tracks that meet these requirements will generally be approved as an official part of the connectathon. The FMG reserves the right to remove tracks where participants or coordinators appear to be over-extended or where room capacity or other limitations raise concerns about the ability of all tracks to proceed successfully.

Other tracks can potentially proceed as part of the "experimental" track but will not be officially announced as part of connectathon communications.