

Strategic Landscape and Challenges of the Academy of Management Critical Management Studies Division

This report documents the strategic landscape of the Academy of Management Critical Management Studies (AoM CMS) Division and the challenges to be managed by the AoM CMS Executive team during the period 2023-2026. The report outlines the strategic plan, derived activities and timeline. The plan's implementation will start during the 2023 AoM Annual Meeting leveraging the on-site presence of our Executive and membership which will facilitate engagement, recruitment, and acquisition of real-time feedback during programmed sessions and PDWs.

The report begins by noting the AoM CMS Division's strengths and strategies to seize opportunities for growth via renewed engagement. A core strength of AoM CMS is the management of communications with its membership. In the latest survey, CMS members report being satisfied with the division, its responsiveness to their needs, and the communication channels established by the executive team (particularly the revamped AoM CMS Newsletter). The ability to communicate and to respond to members' needs has supported post-COVID recovery evident in the increased number of new members joining AoM CMS in the last three years (from 51 to 87).

The 2023 AoM conference provides apt opportunities to further communicate and respond to membership needs. Leveraging the AoM CMS newly created position of representative-at-large "Early Careers and PhD Initiatives" is fundamental for training future critical global scholarship through AoM. This role, recently incorporated in the by-laws change of the AoM CMS division in 2023, is set to present CMS as a value proposition of academic growth and support amongst its membership. The creation of the position and inclusion of early career academics to the board acknowledges the importance of building capacity, early career training, the creation of mentorship pathways and access to resources to ensure the academic success of members (e.g., increase graduation rates, facilitate publishing, aid career and promotion paths, career growth within AoM). Thus, this representative-at-large will have a central role during the AoM CMS Early Careers and PhD Students PDW where participants are paired with mentors and advisors. Another strength in leveraging these efforts is our solid financial basis. This financial strength is set to bridge the financial needs of AoM CMS networking events, including socials which achieve membership growth.

Recognising the strengths and opportunities of AoM CMS, this report acknowledges AoM CMS' threats and weaknesses. The impact of travel restrictions to individuals of colour (especially delegates from Muslim countries and pan-Asian passport holders), COVID (with the associated travel ban), and the global financial crisis has been significant and beyond the control of AoM CMS. Largely international membership and diverse identity profiles have made AoM CMS members particularly vulnerable over the last five years. As AoM participation on site is contingent on securing visas, the US political climate restricted the access to US-travelling visas as embassy appointments have been limited and securing visas was not guaranteed. Further, the travel ban (2017-2021) and the COVID-19 pandemic¹ aggravated this situation as the global quarantine was not the same for everyone as vaccines were not uniformly available. After the COVID crisis was addressed, the subsequent financial crisis magnified the disparities

¹ While the former created difficulties for members from specific countries, the latter had a major effect on travelling, employment and funding conditions at a global level. Therefore, our members either could not physically attend the annual conferences (2018-2019) or could not secure funds to participate in (online) conferences (2020-2022).

for global membership as exchange rates and funding availability affected their ability to afford travelling even if visas were secured. In addition, members are deciding not to fly due to environmental and political factors, changes in university financing have reduced or removed funding for conference travel, and increased competition between conferences greater than ever. As a result, over the last five years (2018-2022), AoM CMS has experienced fluctuations in (1) membership numbers and (2) engagement with the conference. In summary:

- *Membership numbers*: New members per year have decreased (-24%) for the period. This decrease has directly impacted the number of members attending the annual conference and the availability of volunteer reviewers.
- *Conference engagement*: Connected with the number of members, the number of papers submission has also decreased (-16%) and number of accepted papers decreased (-19%).

The AoM CMS Executive has been proactive in addressing these two areas through AoM CMS “Innovations and Best Practices”. Specifically:

MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

The AoM CMS Division focused on two strategic priorities to build capacity:

- **Increase global engagement via CMS InTouch**. The division has collaborated with the journal *Organization* to launch a global platform to extend reach and presence in academic and practitioner spaces. CMS InTouch is an online platform launched in May 2020 during the pandemic. The platform relies on real time conversations (webinars), video archival (YouTube), and social media distribution (Twitter & LinkedIn) reaching all the AoM CMS critical community around the world. Since its launch, 33 webinars and PDWs have been organised. This platform facilitates sharing research dissemination between CMS members and enables the AoM CMS Executive to promote the division across countries and continents. This initiative has been extremely successful with over 4,000 event registrations and over 6,000 YouTube recording views. It enabled scholars facing temporary struggles to remain connected, facilitating online participation and academic engagement throughout the AOM CMS community. The aim is to encourage online participants to return to AOM in the near future. CMS InTouch has also enabled the fostering of relationships between the division and highly respected journals through the highly successful PDW series on Publishing Critical Work. There have been, so far, 14 events in this series, each bringing a particular journal (including *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *Human Relations*, *Organization*, and *Organization Studies*) into conversation with the division community. The platform has also strengthened relationships with journals and enabled research outputs through the more recent series of PDWs featuring special issues calls, as well as through standalone events. One example is the development of the recent special issue on immigration in the *Journal of Business Ethics*. During the pandemic, a global conversation converged into a forum at CMS InTouch. This forum was followed by a special issue call and later an AoM PDW where conversations on ethics and immigration took place and became manuscripts for the special issue - further promoted through another CMS InTouch event. In 2023, book launches were added to the CMS InTouch programme as part of the new “Hot off the Press” series, encouraging wider community involvement.
- **Representative-at-large on “Early Careers and PhD Initiatives”**. The CMS division leadership understands that membership into a division is a long-term relationship that needs to carry a value proposition for the division members. Early career scholars are the future as well as the

present of the division, but they also often face challenges specific to early stages of career development. These can threaten their engagement with the division and endanger their career success. Therefore, the executive team has created institutional channels of mentorship and support to nurture early career scholars and provide the mentorship support needed for a successful long-term career. The creation of this position is an intentional step intended to have year-round support for AoM CMS early career members. This contrasts with traditional approaches that are limited to once-a-year PDWs at the annual conference.

CONFERENCE ENGAGEMENT

The AoM CMS Division focused on two initiatives to increase conference engagement and add value for AoM membership:

- **“How to be a reviewer” sessions.** In response to the decreasing number of reviewers, the AoM CMS Executive took immediate action to encourage members to become AoM reviewers. These sessions have run from 2022 to promote AoM CMS to PhD students and Early Career academics. These online workshops sustain the division’s reviewer database for the 2023 conference, as well as providing added value to AOM CMS incoming members. In turn, these reviewers will be encouraged to become more involved in AoM activities including conference attendance.
- **Collaborations with scholarly journals.** To reach wider scholarly communities, the division collaborates with leading Management and Organization journals whose aims and scope are of direct relevance to AoM CMS members. In the last two years, the executive team built new collaborations with the journals *‘Organization Studies’*, *‘Leadership’* and *‘ephemera’*. These collaborations join *‘Organization’*, *‘Gender, Work and Organization’*, *‘Critical Perspectives on International Business’*, *‘Management Learning’* and *‘Journal of Business Ethics’*. Through a series of best paper awards, reviewer awards, and best thesis/dissertation award, the AoM CMS division became more visible externally. The sustained support of high impact journals publishing critical research evidences the increasing relevance of the AoM CMS division to the scholarly field of management and organization.

The AoM CMS Executive remains alert to the challenges around membership and engagement and, building on our strengths, a strategic plan is developed to address the strategic goals developed. Thus, three priority areas are identified beyond the current ongoing actions described above. These areas have been developed in line with the shared vision of inspiring and enabling a better world through critical scholarship and teaching about management and organizations.

Strategic Goal 1	Increase and maintain membership	Priority: HIGH
Strategic Goal 1.1	Strengthen global relevance	Priority: MEDIUM
Strategic Goal 2	Enrich collaborations	Priority: MEDIUM

Strategic Goal 2.1	Build CMS brand	Priority: MEDIUM
Strategic Goal 3	Renew diversity and inclusion	Priority: MEDIUM
Strategic Goal 3.1	Create more opportunities for membership representation	Priority: LOW

Underpinning the AoM CMS Division is a key mission: to build a vibrant and supportive community of scholars by markedly expanding opportunities to connect and explore ideas. The three strategic priority areas are informed by the analysis of division data and trends and further shaped by the overall AoM Statement of Strategic Direction. Furthermore, the strategic goals and activities are structured considering the collaborative work within the executive team so that there is a mechanism and accountability for passing this strategic direction on from one leadership team to the next.

Strategic Goals	Activities & Lead Responsibilities	Measurement, Impact, & Review	Priority, Alignment, & Timeline
1: Increase and maintain membership	Activity 1 - Drive to secure new members a. Target scholars for CMS membership (including recent PhDs) (LEAD: Rep at Large Newsletter, Rep at Large Dark Side). b. Maximise executive members' networks to showcase CMS - including refreshed biographies, written pieces in business school newsletters (LEAD: all executive team). c. Share templates for CMS award winners to adapt for their Business School newsletters and individualised emails to encourage membership (LEAD: Rep at Large Communications). d. Appoint non-exec ambassadors to raise the profile of AoM in different regions (LEAD: Past Chairs).	Measurement: Regular review of membership numbers and membership mix (LEAD: Treasurer). Impact: Increase membership numbers and retain over #800 until 2026 (average 2018-2022: 767). Increase new members inflow over #100 until 2026 (average 2018-2022: 77). Review: Report on Strategic Goal 1 at Exec meetings (standing item) focused on tailoring efforts in line with data (LEAD: Exec Chairs).	HIGH PRIORITY Interventions designed to: Solidify OPERATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY and Raise and Reimagine MEMBERSHIP TIMELINE Activities beginning August 2023 and refreshed annually as part of ongoing internal review process.
	Activity 2 - Enhance member engagement a. Launch an annual online workshop preparing for paper submission (LEAD: Program Chairs / Chairs Elect). b. Enhance communications around AoM Annual Meeting (LEAD: Rep at Large Communications) and scholarships/bursary program (LEAD: Treasurer) to secure registrations. c. Incentivise reviewing with pre-review period workshop and resources (LEAD: Program Chairs).	Measurement: Track (a) total submission numbers, (b) attendance and engagement, and (c) reviewer numbers (LEAD: PDW Chairs, Program Chairs). Impact: Secure (a) over 150 submissions annually (average 2018-2022: 137), (b) 400 registrations annually (average 2018-2022: 372), and (c) over 160 reviewers annually (average 2018-2022: 151). Review: Report on Strategic Goal 1 at Exec meetings (standing item) focused on tailoring efforts in line with data (LEAD: Exec Chairs).	
1.1: Strengthen global relevance	Activity 3 - Launch "global relevance" initiative a. Leverage new Rep-at-large position to host annual, online Town Hall style events – in conjunction with CMS InTouch and <i>Organization</i> – where leading scholars debate the global relevance of critical approaches to management (LEAD: Rep at Large ECR/PhD, Rep at Large Ethics & Inclusion).	Measurement: Regular review of membership numbers and membership mix (LEAD: Treasurer). Impact: Strengthen general awareness of global relevance of CMS with anticipated benefits in terms of: i. Increased membership and engagement.	MEDIUM PRIORITY Interventions designed to: Define and Strengthen the VALUE PROPOSITION and Reinvent MEETINGS for HYBRID, IP & VIRTUAL

		<p>ii. Stronger brand building. iii. Internal and external collaborations.</p> <p>Review: Included in report on Strategic Goal 1 at Exec meetings (LEAD: Reps at Large).</p>	<p>TIMELINE Activities beginning January 2024 and spanning 18 months – review to follow.</p>
2: Enrich collaborations	<p>Activity 4 - Strengthen existing internal relationships</p> <p>a. Reinvigorate relationships with Exec members of other DIGs² (LEAD: Chairs Elect, Chairs).</p> <p>b. Strengthen relationships with other DIGs through an online mid-year meet up and discussion of possible joint events for Copenhagen 2025 (LEAD: Program Chairs, Chairs Elect).</p> <p>c. Explore mid-year collaborations with academic journals demonstrating connection between CMS membership and professional success (LEAD: Chairs Elect, Chairs).</p>	<p>Measurement: Track increasing number of collaborations and joint events with target joint events in Copenhagen 2025 (LEAD: Exec Chairs).</p> <p>Impact:</p> <p>a. Cross-DIG initiatives (sharing best practice, and in/formal support).</p> <p>b. Cross-DIG engagement with mid-year online meet up.</p> <p>c. Professional success/career progression through surveys.</p> <p>Review: Report on Strategic Goal 2 at Exec meetings (standing item) focused on tailoring efforts in line with data (LEAD: Exec Chairs).</p>	<p>MEDIUM PRIORITY Interventions designed to: Fuel DIVISION INNOVATION and SUPPORT and Raise and Reimagine MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>TIMELINE Activities beginning January 2024 and spanning 18 months – review to follow.³</p>
	<p>Activity 5 - Develop new external academic collaborations</p> <p>a. Launch new paper awards (sponsored by <i>Leadership</i> and <i>ephemera</i> journals and another in memory of late DIG member) (LEAD: Chairs Elect).</p> <p>b. Target relationship building with two important AoM journals in 2024 beginning with ‘meet the editors’ events:</p> <p>i) <i>Academy of Management Learning and Education</i>. ii) <i>Academy of Management Perspectives</i> (LEAD: PDW Chairs, Chairs).</p>	<p>Measurement: (a) Track # of division membership of award winners and map where they share news of their success, (b) # engagements with workshops and, (c) number of relevant submissions for awards (LEAD: Chairs Elect).</p> <p>Impact: Enhanced reputation of division and reaching out to wider scholarly communities.</p> <p>Review: Report on Strategic Goal 2 at Exec meetings (standing item) focused on tailoring efforts in line with data (LEAD: Exec Chairs).</p>	

² including, but not limited to, DEI, MED, MH, MSR, OMT, ONE, SIM

³ Activity 5a begins in Boston 2023 to leverage in person opportunities

	c. Organise PDWs around publishing in AMLE, AMP (LEAD: PDW Chairs) and strategic development of two high-profile awards in 2024/2025 (LEAD: Chairs).		
2.1: Build CMS brand	<p>Activity 6 - Review of communications strategies</p> <p>a. Review communications strategies to deliver on priorities (LEAD: Rep at Large Communications, Rep at Large Newsletter).</p> <p>b. Work with AoM to refresh website presence using social media to drive engagement (LEAD: Rep at Large Communications, Chairs).</p>	<p>Measurement: Track # of users on social media, website and other communication means, target increase the # of users both within and beyond the CMS division (LEAD: Reps at Large).</p> <p>Impact: Strengthen CMS brand with anticipated benefits in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. DIG reputation. ii. Membership and engagement. iii. Collaborations internal and external to AoM. <p>Review: Include in report on Strategic Goal 2 at Exec meetings (LEAD: Exec Chairs).</p>	<p>MEDIUM PRIORITY Interventions designed to: Define and Strengthen the VALUE PROPOSITION and Propel TECHNOLOGY for the 21st Century</p> <p>TIMELINE Activities beginning September 2023 and spanning 6 months – review to follow.</p>
3: Renew diversity and inclusion	<p>Activity 7 - Renew commitment to pluralism (theory, method, practice) and inclusion</p> <p>a. Through diversities of Exec members model commitment, inclusive scholarship, and praxis (LEAD: Rep at Large Ethics & Inclusion).</p> <p>b. Internal review of CMS events and activities at the AoM Conferences to ensure openness to all critical approaches inspiring and enabling a better world (LEAD: Rep at Large Ethics & Inclusion).</p> <p>c. Recruit carefully to Executive roles to ensure broad representation of the membership (LEAD: Past Chairs, Rep at Large Ethics & Inclusion).</p>	<p>Measurement: Regular review of the membership mix, paper submissions and participation through surveys, targeting increased # of engagements with diverse theories, methods, and practices (LEAD: PDW Chairs, Program Chairs).</p> <p>Impact: Retaining and strengthening the diversity and inclusion of the CMS division.</p> <p>Review: Report on Strategic Goal 3 at Exec meetings (standing item) focused on tailoring efforts in line with data (LEAD: Exec Chairs).</p>	<p>MEDIUM PRIORITY Interventions designed to: Define and Strengthen the VALUE PROPOSITION and Raise and Reimagine MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>TIMELINE Activities beginning September 2023 and spanning 18 months – review to follow.</p>
3.1: Create more opportunities for	<p>Activity 8 - Expand Rep at Large roles to encourage network building across interested members</p> <p>a. Build opportunities for younger members to gain Exec experience through assisting with key roles (e.g., Newsletter,</p>	<p>Measurement: Regular review of the membership mix, paper submissions and participation through surveys, targeting increased # of engagements with diverse theories, methods, and practices (LEAD: PDW Chairs, Program Chairs).</p>	<p>LOW PRIORITY Interventions designed to: Define and Strengthen the VALUE PROPOSITION and</p>

membership representation	Communications, Ethics and inclusion) (LEAD: Reps at Large in liaison with Exec Chairs).	<p>Impact: Retaining and strengthening the diversity and inclusion of the CMS division.</p> <p>Review: Include in report on Strategic Goal 3 at Exec meetings (LEAD: Exec Chairs).</p>	<p>Raise and Reimagine MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>TIMELINE Activities beginning January 2024 and refreshed annually as part of ongoing internal review process.</p>
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Timeline

Please see the attached spreadsheet for the timeline of the activities. As we propose specific dates and durations, they can be adjusted based on the progress of the activities and the needs of the executive team. Given that this addendum and strategic goals will be living documents, the flexibility will be reflected through ‘Actual Start’ and ‘Actual Duration’ on the document.