

Alumni Community — The Lifetime Network of Practice

The pipeline's cosmology loop says a Won-World re-seeds Discovery. The alumni community is that loop for people: every graduate who returns to teach re-seeds the next cohort — and the discipline compounds through its own people.

Level: alumni · **Companions:** course/forever-learning-program.md, modules/forever-learning/README.md, modules/forever-learning/refresh-and-recertification.md.

This module is the **lifetime side** of the forever-learning tier — the standing community that a graduate joins when they complete any tier of the curriculum and never has to leave. It is built on a simple proposition: the curriculum's most valuable asset is not its documents, it is its **people**. A graduate who stays in the community keeps learning, keeps teaching, and keeps the discipline alive between cohorts.

1. What the alumni community is

The alumni community is a **standing learning organization**, not a mailing list. It has four standing structures, each with a job:

Structure	The job
Study groups	Keep learning current, together, on a cadence.
Practicum mentorship	Alumni coach new students through the pipeline's real work.
Annual symposia	Gather the whole community once a year to set the discipline's agenda.
Cross-cohort case library	Build a reusable, ever-growing archive of analyzed real work.

Membership is **lifetime and unconditional on tier**: a bachelor's graduate, a master's graduate, a doctoral graduate, a post-doctoral fellow, and an executive-education participant all belong to the same community. What differs is the *role* they are ready to play — and the community's ladder of contribution makes that explicit.

2. Study groups

A **study group** is a small, self-organizing cohort of alumni who meet on a cadence — monthly is the norm — to study one topic at altitude. Study groups are how the forever-learning promise stays true *between* the structured programs.

Study groups form around three kinds of topics:

1. **A doctrine deep-dive.** A group re-reads one doctrine chapter and brings the hardest question they have about it — the debrief that contradicted it, the pursuit it failed to predict, the agency where it does not seem to hold. The doctrine is durable, but a room of experienced practitioners will always find the *edge cases* the text does not cover.
2. **A current-event arc.** A group runs its own version of the executive current-event roundtable (executive-education.md): a real, published-and-closed NOFO each month, read as evaluator, strategist, and teacher.
3. **A research read.** A group reads a study from the doctoral research agenda or a paper from a neighboring field (decision science, game theory) and asks what it implies for practice. This is how practice stays *evidence-aware* rather than merely experienced.

Each study group is expected to leave a **trace**: a note in the cross-cohort case library, a proposed debrief-retrofit, or a question for the post-doctoral seminar. The community runs on the discipline’s own rule — the pipeline is always in the room — and a study group that produces nothing for the next cohort is a group that is not yet finished.

A quarterly study group, facilitated

The study group is a small, self-organizing cohort — typically five to nine alumni — meeting monthly, with a rotating facilitator. The facilitation guide below is the standing structure that keeps a study group a *learning* group rather than a discussion group. It follows the module contract’s parts (learning objectives, a session arc, discussion prompts, a deliverable), adapted to a self-organized cohort.

The facilitator’s role. The facilitator is a gate owner, not a lecturer: they hold the session to its arc, keep the discussion specific, and make sure the group leaves a trace. The role rotates quarterly so no one carries the community alone.

A session arc (90 minutes).

Time	Block	What happens
0:00–0:10	Open the question	The facilitator states the session’s topic and the group’s learning objective for the session. The topic is one of the three study-group kinds: a doctrine deep-dive, a current-event arc, or a research read.

Time	Block	What happens
0:10–0:40	The object on the table	The presenter (a rotating member) puts the session’s object on the table: a doctrine chapter with the hardest question the group has about it; a published-and-closed NOFO read as evaluator, strategist, and teacher; or a study from the research agenda read for what it implies for practice.
0:40–1:20	The press	The room presses the object the way the discipline presses a pursuit: specific findings, independent reads, the doctrine’s edge cases — the debrief that contradicted it, the pursuit it failed to predict, the agency where it does not seem to hold. The facilitator keeps findings specific and forward-only.
1:20–1:30	The trace	The group agrees the session’s trace: a note for the cross-cohort case library, a proposed debrief-retrofit, or a question for the post-doctoral seminar. The facilitator records it and names who owns the write-up.

The quarterly rhythm. The monthly sessions are punctuated by a **quarterly study-group check-in** — one session per quarter dedicated to the group’s own learning, not the topic: what have we learned, what have we left as traces, is the group still stretching its members or has it become a social hour. The check-in

is the study group’s own recertification (the discipline’s refresh discipline applied to the group).

Discussion prompts.

- “What is the hardest question you have about this topic, and where did the doctrine’s answer stop satisfying you?”
- “What would a study of this claim need to show before you changed your practice — and is that evidence obtainable?”
- “Who in this room has a debrief or a pursuit that contradicts this — and what does the contradiction teach?”
- “What is the one thing this group should leave for the next cohort, and who will own it?”

Facilitator note. The study group’s failure mode is the social hour — pleasant, specific, and trace-free. Guard against it with three moves: **open with the learning objective** (the group cannot drift if the objective is stated), **enforce specificity** (a comment that does not name the page, the clause, or the evidence is gently returned), and **protect the trace** (the last ten minutes are sacred — no group leaves without agreeing what it leaves). Rotate the facilitator quarterly and the presenter monthly so contribution is shared, not hoarded.

3. Practicum mentorship: alumni coach new students

The **practicum** is the community’s core teaching structure: an alumni mentor coaches a new student through the pipeline’s real work. It is the curriculum’s answer to the apprentice model the industry always used informally, made deliberate.

The practicum pairs a **mentor** (an alumni professional, typically with several years of practice behind them) with a **protégé** (a student working the undergraduate or graduate tier) across one full pursuit cycle:

Pipeline stage	What the mentor does
Sense → qualify	Reads the student’s market map and qualifies a real, published-and-closed solicitation.
Score → pursue	Challenges the student’s score and bid/no-bid call the way a capture review would.
Design → audit	Runs the color-team cadence over the student’s ORBITAL and proposal volumes.
Submit → learn	Walks the debrief with the student and mines the loss for the next lesson.

The practicum has two rules. First, **real documents, safe exercises** —

the same rule as every tier: published-and-closed teaching objects, nothing live, nothing source-selection-sensitive. Second, **the mentor coaches the discipline, not the answer** — the mentor’s job is to ask the question the student needs, not to do the work. The discipline’s own governance vocabulary applies: the mentor is a gate owner who holds the student to written criteria, not a pair programmer who writes the proposal for them.

Mentorship is also a **learning device for the mentor**. Teaching a score to a student who challenges it exposes the assumptions in your own scoring. The community’s best practitioners report that coaching a cohort makes them see their own next pursuit more clearly — which is the entire point of the loop.

4. Annual symposia

The **annual symposium** is the community’s one standing gathering. It is part conference, part color team, and part gate review — and it is where the community sets the discipline’s agenda for the coming year.

A symposium’s standing agenda:

1. **The year in the record.** The outcome-data record is reviewed: what was predicted, what happened, what the debriefs taught. This is the community reading the market the way a capture team reads a competitor.
2. **The doctrine’s open questions.** The post-doctoral seminar presents the research agenda’s state; the executive tier presents the regulatory-change watch’s delta. The community decides which questions are now urgent.
3. **The case-library review.** New entries to the cross-cohort case library are presented and debated — a winning strategy that surprised everyone, a loss that the doctrine should have predicted.
4. **The retrofits.** Proposed debrief-retrofits are voted into the curriculum’s refresh pipeline (refresh-and-recertification.md). The symposium is a gate: a lesson only enters the curriculum through a written, reviewed retrofit.
5. **The cohort handover.** The year’s graduating students are introduced to their mentors; the year’s mentors are recognized; the community’s contribution ladder is updated.

The symposium is the annual proof that the community is a **learning organization**, not a reunion. It has an agenda, it produces decisions, and it ships lessons into the curriculum.

The annual symposium agenda skeleton

The symposium is the community’s one standing gathering — a full day (eight hours), run on the standing agenda below. It is part conference, part color team, part gate review; its four load-bearing elements are the **keynote**, the **cross-cohort case panel**, the **workshop tracks**, and the **retrofit gate**. Each element has a job, and no element is a speech.

Agenda skeleton (one day).

Time	Element	The job
8:30–9:00	Registration and the year in numbers	The community arrives; the outcome-data record’s year-in-review is up on the screen — what was predicted, what happened, what the debriefs taught.
9:00–9:45	Keynote — the state of the discipline	The keynote sets the year’s strategic question: a senior figure (an executive, a post-doctoral fellow, or an invited scholar from a neighboring field) frames the open question the community will work on all day. Not a motivational speech — a thesis the day will test.
9:45–11:00	Cross-cohort case panel	A panel drawn across cohorts — a bachelor’s graduate, a master’s graduate, a doctoral graduate, an executive — each presenting one entry from the cross-cohort case library: a winning strategy that surprised everyone, a loss the doctrine should have predicted, a partnership that compounded. The panel is pressed by the room the way a color team presses a proposal: specific findings, forward-only.
11:00–11:15	Break	

Time	Element	The job
11:15–12:45	Workshop tracks	Parallel working sessions, one per open question the community voted to work on (see the retrofit gate below for how questions are selected): a doctrine deep-dive, a current-event roundtable on a real, published-and-closed NOFO, a research read from the agenda, a master-class sample. Each track produces a written trace — a proposed retrofit, a case-library entry, a research question.
12:45–13:45	Lunch	Informal; cross-cohort pairing is encouraged (the cohort handover begins here).
13:45–15:15	Workshop tracks, second round	The tracks reconvene or rotate; the goal is that each track’s trace reaches a <i>reviewable</i> state — a draft, not a wish.
15:15–15:45	The year’s retrofits, presented	Proposed debrief-retrofits and track traces are presented to the whole room, each with its written draft, its owner, and its claimed lesson.

Time	Element	The job
15:45–16:45	Retrofit gate	The community votes the retrofits into the refresh pipeline. The gate follows the discipline’s governance: criteria written in advance (is the lesson new? is it consistent with the doctrine? is the source documented?), a named owner per retrofit, a forward-only cadence. A lesson only enters the curriculum through this gate.
16:45–17:30	Cohort handover and close	The year’s graduating students are introduced to their mentors; the year’s mentors are recognized; the community’s contribution ladder is updated; the next year’s symposium chair is named.

What the four load-bearing elements protect. The **keynote** sets a thesis so the day is an argument, not a series of talks. The **cross-cohort case panel** forces the case library to be *presented and pressed* rather than filed. The **workshop tracks** make the day productive — every attendee leaves having worked on a live question, not having watched. The **retrofit gate** is the symposium’s reason for being: it is the standing gate through which the community’s lessons enter the curriculum, so the community literally learns from the market every year.

Facilitator note. The symposium’s failure mode is the reunion — a full day of warm, trace-free company. Three guards: **the day must produce decisions** (the retrofit gate is not optional; it is the day’s deliverable), **the case panel must be pressed** (a panel that is not questioned is a set of speeches), and **the tracks must leave traces** (a workshop that ends without a written draft has not finished). The agenda above is the skeleton; the community’s standing order is that the skeleton never collapses into a conference.

5. The lifetime-access model

Alumni hold **lifetime access** to the curriculum — every tier, every module, every future refresh — and lifetime standing in the community. The access model has three deliberate properties:

1. **Access is to the doctrine, not to the tools.** Lifetime access means the learner can always re-read the doctrine, re-take a master class, join a study group, or attend the symposium. It does not mean access to any product — the curriculum is stack-agnostic, and so is its library.
2. **Access compounds with contribution.** The community’s ladder of contribution is explicit: a learner who returns to mentor, to peer-review, to curate the corpus, or to author a retrofit earns *standing* — faculty roles, editorial voice, symposium platform. The discipline values its stewards by the same criteria it teaches: contribution, not tenure.
3. **Access stays honest.** The refresh cadence re-verifies that every alumni-touching doc still matches reality (the rulebook delta, the DNA version, the canon edition). Lifetime access to a stale curriculum would be a disservice; the community’s refresh discipline is what makes the lifetime promise real.

6. The cross-cohort case library

The **cross-cohort case library** is the community’s shared memory: a growing, indexed archive of analyzed real work. Each entry is a published-and-closed solicitation, analyzed at altitude, with the analysis preserved for every future cohort to learn from.

An entry follows a fixed spine, mirroring the pipeline:

- **The document.** The real solicitation (or its key pages), linked or referenced, with its publication facts.
- **The read.** How the group read it — evaluation structure, compliance spine, the discriminators the structure favored.
- **The strategy.** The win strategy the cohort would have run — themes, discriminators, teaming, pricing posture — with the reasoning.
- **The outcome.** What actually happened (award, debrief, protest), where available.
- **The lesson.** What this entry teaches that the doctrine does not yet say — the seed of a debrief-retrofit.

The library is the discipline’s **case method**, built by the community rather than by a textbook author. It grows every year, every cohort, every study group — and it is the clearest evidence of the “forever-learning” promise: a learner who joins the community and stays for twenty years reads a library that is twenty years richer than the one they started with.

7. The community's governance

The community runs on the discipline's own governance ideas (doctrine/04): gates with written criteria, named owners, forward-only cadence.

- **Integrity is the floor.** The case library, the study-group notes, and the practicum all operate under the curriculum's non-fabrication standard: documented fact separated from clearly-labeled illustrative material, nothing attributed to a real organization that did not do it.
- **The safe-exercise rule holds in the community too.** Alumni work in the industry; the community's standing rule is that no live competition and no source-selection-sensitive information enters any community forum. The case library contains only published-and-closed teaching objects.
- **Contribution is recognized, not rationed.** There is no quota on mentorship or study groups. The community's ladder rewards contribution with standing, but the door stays open to any member at any level.

Self-check

1. How is the alumni community the “cosmology loop for people” — and what does a study group leave for the next cohort?
2. What are the two rules of the practicum, and why does coaching a student sharpen the mentor's own judgment?
3. Why must an entry to the cross-cohort case library end with “the lesson,” and how does that lesson reach the curriculum?