

CoderDojo Recommended Practice

June 4th, 2014 by PeterOShea

Open Consultation Period

As you may know, the CoderDojo Foundation is inviting the entire global CoderDojo Community for an Open Consultation Period (11th of June 2014 to the 13th of July 2014 at 12 midnight) during which they can give their feedback on Recommended Practice. We are happy to announce that this period has officially started and is open until the 13th of July 2014. During this time any Dojo can submit feedback, or arrange a call with the CoderDojo Foundation team to discuss their thoughts. The Foundation is committed to the CoderDojo community and value their input greatly on this matter which is why we are having this Open Consultation Period.

CoderDojo Recommended Practice (RP)

For all Ninjas there is as always only one rule: Above all, be Cool! (bullying, lying, wasting peoples time and so on is uncool!) To enable this it is up to CoderDojo Champions to take certain necessary steps and allow the Ninjas this unique creative freedom.

This document details a set of guiding principles that the CoderDojo Foundation recommends all individual Dojos meet. The principles set out in this document may be amended at any stage through a consultation process with the Community or Advisory Committee.

What is the Recommended Practice?

The recommended practice for all Dojos is a set of 5 guiding principles that Dojos can choose to meet. Due to the global nature of CoderDojo these principles have been designed to be user friendly and applicable to Dojos regardless of their geographical location.

1. Creating a safe space
2. Safeguarding Children
3. Encompassing the ethos
4. Communication & Review
5. Privacy and Data Protection

It is important to note that for ninjas there is only The one rule of CoderDojo; Be Cool. However us adults need to take further steps to ensure that we create safe spaces for ninjas to enjoy themselves. The Recommended Practice has been developed to act as a guide for Dojos in regards to standards to meet.

How does this affect the CoderDojo Charter?

The CoderDojo Charter was brought in in December 2013. Since then all Dojos who want to listed on the website must agree to the basic ethos encompassed in the Charter, this does not change. Recommended Practice is a set further, and is for Dojos who want to meet industry best practice standards.

What is the Recommended Practice trying to achieve?

1. **Quality Control:** To introduce a level of quality control across Dojos regardless of geographical region.
2. **Safeguarding Children:** All Dojos should be safe spaces for children, the RP ensures that Dojos meet child protection standards and guidelines.
3. **Brand Protection:** To protect the CoderDojo brand by ensuring that individual Dojos do not damage it for the wider community through negligence or naivety.
4. **Representation:** To enable the Foundation to legitimately represent a group of Dojos on an international level enabling partnerships with international companies to be negotiated.
5. **Process & Guidance:** To give Dojos looking to start up a structured process to follow. Dojos choosing to align will receive more active guidance and support from the Foundation.

6. **Sense of Community & involvement:** To create a greater sense of community between the Foundation & Dojos through enabling those meeting RP to become a member of the Foundation and have a say in the running of the organisation.

The Principles

Principle 1: Safeguarding Children: *We have taken necessary steps to ensure all attendees are safeguarded.*

- We have taken all necessary steps to ensure we meet child protection standards in our country.
- We have a child protection policy in place which all our volunteers are aware of and trained in its necessary procedures.
- If background checks are required in our jurisdiction then we have completed these prior to starting our Dojo.

Principle 2: Creating a Safe Space: *We have created a safe space for everyone involved in our Dojo.*

- All volunteers have been provided with a role description so they are aware of what is expected of them.
- All parents have been provided with adequate information about our Dojo to ensure they know what is expected of them.
- The space we use meets relevant national health and safety guidelines.

Principle 3: Embodying the ethos: *All Dojos are different but abide by a common set of CoderDojo values which we embody.*

- We encourage attendees to work with one another through peer mentoring and self led learning.
- We respect diversity among our attendees and don't discriminate against race, gender or religion
- We do not charge attendees to participate in our Dojo
- We actively encourage youth participation and support the young people in having an active role in the operations, running and direction of our Dojo.

Principle 4: Communication & Review: *We understand the importance of communication with the Foundation.*

- We will provide information to the Foundation which may be required for partnerships and measuring impact.
- We recognize that this will assist with guiding the Foundation on issues and successes had.
- We take our members opinions on board and welcome feedback.
- We commit to taking feedback, including complaints, about our Dojo seriously and to make necessary changes.
- We encourage members to contribute to the greater CoderDojo movement through adding to the Kata Knowledge Base and the GitHub page
- We encourage members to engage with the greater CoderDojo community through the community groups, forums and Community calls.

Principle 5: Privacy and Data Protection: *We commit to take seriously the privacy of our members and to safeguard their data.*

- We are aware of and understand the importance of complying with relevant regional legislation relating to all personal information held by our Dojo.
- We have taken necessary steps to ensure that our members privacy is safeguarded
- We will only use information and contact details for the purpose they were collected.

Benefits for Dojos in meeting RP

A Dojo who chooses to meet the RP is making a public declaration that they are committed to best practices and child protection. The Foundation is currently in the process of altering its structure to allow Dojos meeting RP the ability to join as a member, automatically giving them certain rights in the running of the Foundation. There is no cost to become a member of the foundation.

There are a number of additional benefits for Dojos such as:

- Recognition as a Dojo that meets the highest quality standards through aligning with Recommended Practice.
- Dojos will have a voice in the operations of the Foundation and the ability to actively shape the direction and future of the global CoderDojo movement through this.

- Access to partnerships negotiated by the Foundation; such as Google & Raspberry Pi partnership negotiated for all UK Dojos and Coderstarter pilot partnership offering laptops for US Dojos to reach out to underserved attendees.
- Access to sponsorship and partnership opportunities such negotiated by the Foundation such as Coolest Projects Travel for European Dojos
- Option to attend regular Foundation organised events such as Coolest Projects and DojoCon as well as option of attending once off high profile events that may be organised in your area eg. Recent Dojo at Westminster Abbey, upcoming Dojo at Buckingham Palace.
- Official affiliation with a globally recognised brand and community network opening opportunities in local areas for support and sponsorship.
- Access to upcoming Foundation facilitated remote projects between international Dojos working in collaboration.

Compliance with RP

The process in which the Foundation will monitor compliance with RP has yet to be fully designed. However based on initial research the Foundation will not actively enforce meeting the principles, instead a Dojo will be trusted that they are meeting RP if claiming to do so. Dojos may be asked to:

- Sign a one page copy of the principles document to confirm their understanding of the principles
- Dojos may need to provide certain proof via email to the Foundation, i.e proof of vetting, insurance cert etc
- Before officially being recognised as meeting RP Dojos will be required to have a call with member of team or join Community Call

Annually the Foundation will complete a survey of global Dojos. The purpose of this will be to ensure Dojos originally met RP are continuing to do so and to clean out inactive Dojos to ensure that Foundation maintains an active Dojo count.