

Process Framework and Flow of HERO Study Groups

HERO Study Committees

An Organizing Framework for Learning, Discovery and Evidence-based Contributions to the Field

HERO committees have served as a vital modality for generating, coordinating and, often times, producing the research that HERO conducts in service to our members and to the health promotion professional community. While, per the input of HERO members, committees have been deemed to be interesting and worthwhile, it is also the case that there is considerable variability among the committees concerning the volume, format, and rigor of output, i.e. generating reports, producing industry briefs, and/or creating white papers with recommendations members can apply immediately. For example, one committee may take a direct route to organizing and conducting a research study, while another committee may spend considerable effort educating and informing members about the study questions of interest before proposing a focused study or project. The following framework and committee process are intended to reduce variation within and between HERO study committees and to increase the likelihood committees learn together as well as produce study results that can be shared with HERO members and other HERO stakeholders.

Study Committee Purpose: HERO study committees aim to understand and educate members about an important study topic, keep them current on emerging evidence, produce case studies, and conduct original and/or secondary research related to a research question with the intent of disseminating findings to HERO members and the broader professional health promotion community.

In order to provide value to members and support consistent progress towards its charter, **study committees are expected to meet regularly**, usually about once per month. Committee meetings serve as an ongoing opportunity to achieve stated study objectives and to learn from and interact with committee members. Educational activities include, but are not limited to, webinars by subject matter experts, presentations by study committee members profiling their work on the study topic, “book club” discussions focused on critical review and discussion of a published work, and roundtable discussions to vet drafts of workgroup deliverables.

HERO looks to its study committee co-chairs to provide strong leadership, as well as monitor and support progress towards the study charter. Co-chairs work with HERO staff to proactively set the meeting agenda and facilitate meetings. HERO staff will support meeting coordination, scheduling, and other support tasks.

Study Committee Process: An effective process starts with an end in mind. At HERO, the goal is for study committees to produce evidence-based study findings to which all committee members are able to participate and contribute as their time and interests allow. Publications can range from a case study-based white paper shared on HERO’s web site to a qualitative or quantitative study published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. HERO staff anticipate and will support considerable variation in the research backgrounds and experiences of study groups, and can also leverage the research expertise of the HERO Research Study Subcommittee as needed. Direction setting and staff support also can vary considerably between committees depending upon the expertise and resources represented among committee members.

The following process is intended to guide committee leaders and volunteers through orderly steps to increase the likelihood that committees will be able to produce study committee findings within a two-year timeframe. An overview of key phases and a proposed timeline follows.

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1. **Initiating and Launching a Study Committee:** Study committees are formed to address specific topics that align with the HERO research agenda or significant emerging member needs and interest areas. HERO staff will launch a new study committee when there is significant member interest in a topic and some indication that members will commit to producing new knowledge or information about the topic to the benefit of the broader HERO membership. A study committee requires strong leadership and subject matter expertise and support so prerequisites for the formal launch of a study committee include (1) strong co-chairs are identified and committed to providing visible, active leadership; (2) at least ten HERO members commit to joining the study committee; and (3) HERO staff are available to support study committee needs.
2. **Develop a Committee Charter & Identify a Study Project:** Within 3 months of the first formal study committee meeting
 - a. Committee leader(s) will collaborate with HERO staff for initial strategic development of the Committee Charter before going to the larger study committee for feedback
 - b. Committee leader(s) and volunteers will brainstorm to define a manageable study project with defined deliverables, relating to the committee charter.
 - c. A manageable study committee project may take any of the following forms:
 - i. Environmental scan of the existing knowledge about a topic with a white paper report for HERO members
 - ii. Systematic literature review based on published research studies with a manuscript submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for publication
 - iii. Industry survey and subsequent report on findings
 - iv. Key informant interviews, focus groups, World Café, or other qualitative data collection and subsequent report on findings
 - v. Written or video case studies that are disseminated to HERO members
 - vi. Formal qualitative or quantitative research study (with oversight provided by Research Committee and HERO Vice President of Research) with preliminary findings shared with HERO members and submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Published peer-reviewed articles should be complemented by follow up articles in industry trade journals.
3. **Develop a Project Plan:** Within 3 months after the charter is finalized
Elements of the Project Plan include:
 - a. Clearly stated project deliverable or goal
 - b. Study approach and methods (qualitative, quantitative, surveys, literature reviews, case reviews, etc.) with guidance from HERO research staff and members of the Research Committee as needed
 - c. High level timeline to execute the project with study committee members identified to support the activities listed in the timeline
 - d. Proposed dissemination plan: for example, a white paper to be posted on HERO's web site, a PowerPoint Presentation delivered at a HERO event or conference, a science journal article submission, a trade journal submission or some combination of these. Ideally, each scientific journal publication would be complemented by follow-up articles in industry trade journals. All projects, within each Study Committee, should result in at least one written summary of the findings for HERO members.
 - e. Identification of resources needed from HERO staff or external collaborators to support the Project Plan

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4. **Execute the Project Plan:** Within 9 to 18 months of the Project Plan's approval
Execution of the Project Plan includes any of the following activities (with support from HERO staff to ensure appropriate steps are identified):
 - a. Development of data collection tools or documented process
 - b. Development of communication materials related to data collection/information gathering
 - c. Data analysis or information synthesis
 - d. Development of documented preliminary findings to be vetted in the form of draft reports or presentations
 - e. Written executive summary of key findings to be shared with HERO members

5. **Broadly Disseminate Findings:** Within 3 to 6 months of the executive summary being shared with HERO members
 - a. All study findings must be shared with HERO members in a formal presentation via a webinar or another HERO educational event, e.g. Think Tank meeting.
 - b. Written study findings may be shared in the form of a white paper, a series of case studies, an article in an industry trade journal, or a manuscript that is submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.
 - c. Ideally, all HERO study committee efforts culminate in both a presentation to HERO members as well as a written summary of study findings.

6. **Refreshing Committees:** Within 1 to 3 months of study committee completing its Project Plan
 - a. "Refreshing committees" means taking on a new and specific study question(s) upon the completion of the project plan. This step will allow for enlisting new committee leaders and members, defining a new study question(s) or project(s) relevant to the broader study committee charter.
 - b. Ideally, the Think Tank membership will be included at this point to provide feedback on the additional research questions that remain for a particular topic and/or to help inform the identification of a new study committee deliverable.

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Study Committee Phases and Timeline

