

# The First Canadian Military Assistance Dog Summit

## September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013



Summit Supporters \*CFAS/Innovation Works/ Project War Horse/TPL Foundation/Canadian War Museum\*

### Preamble

Thousands of men and women risk their lives daily to serve Canadians and the United Nations. To honor these individuals and every-day heroes [The Canadian Foundation for Animal Assisted Support Services](#) established [The Major-General Lew MacKenzie Fund](#) which supports Canadian Forces members, veterans, and their families through partnerships with companion and service animals. The number of requests for programs, services, and assistance dogs has been progressively rising, so more than ever it is critical to establish a national infrastructure in order to develop a seamless range of exceptional *Animal Assisted Support Services* to address and overcome the effects of operational injuries. To this end we, like so many others, are willing to roll up our sleeves to be part of the solution. It is my sincere hope that this report will not only identify and address our collective concerns, but reflect our shared hope shedding a ray of light at the end of the tunnel. Thanks to the attendees, the summit was a great success; so much so that the group asked that a subsequent summit be held as soon as possible to build on the first. Consequently, the next summit will be held on November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup> at the legion in Manotick, Ontario; stay tuned for more details.

*With Heartfelt Intentions, Joanne Moss,  
National Director, CFAS*

### Standards! What do we want standards for?

Three key principles came out to this group's discussion; first and foremost, standards for assistance dog handlers and public access should be realistic; attainable; and accessible.

An eligibility criteria needs to be established that would include a doctor's note, written military endorsement, be part of a medical treatment plan and/or psychological action plan, and a training strategy streamlined to meet the needs of the handlers.



### [Summit Video! Click to View](#)

#### *Animal Assisted Support Services*

*Animal Assisted Support Services are partnerships between people and animals that improve physical, emotional, and social well-being.*

### Summit Highlights & Priorities

The summit confirmed that forming a standards working group would be beneficial. The general consensus was that a subsequent summit was essential to build momentum in order to maximize the impact of military assistance dog teams in Canada.

#### Arising Topics of Interest – Connecting the Dots

- ✚ Create a Public Education Campaign & Speakers Bureau
- ✚ Develop Best Practices and National Standards
- ✚ Establish a Credibility Chain for Service Providers
- ✚ Explore Third-Party Certification of Assistance/Service Dog Teams
- ✚ Identify the Necessary Resources to Develop a Plan to Ensure Sustainability

#### Road to Mental Readiness (R2MR) and Health Promotion

The human-animal bond is a natural resource that helps sustain positive mental health in Canadian Forces members and their families throughout the deployment cycle which is key to operational readiness and success. Accordingly, Animal Assisted Support Services can be utilized in:

- a. drug and alcohol prevention programs;
- b. anti-smoking programs;
- c. stress reduction programs;
- d. promotion of healthy lifestyles; and
- e. weight control and reduction.

Patient-oriented Human-Animal Interventions (HAI) put the stigma associated with mental health down, not the people dealing with related issues, paving the road to mental readiness and quality of life.

## CFAS Complementary Topics of Interest

### Create a Public Education Campaign & Speakers Bureau

Building a working group to develop educational and promotional material that is consistent would be instrumental throughout the process. A national speaker's bureau could also be established to spread the word and gain support from those hearing the message, while covering the out of pocket expenses of the speakers.

### Industry Research

An independent consulting firm is on standby to conduct an environmental scan, stakeholders and gap analysis to gather basic information to better understand the landscape of Animal Assisted Support Services in Canada. Based on the outcomes recommendations for next steps would be noted at the end of the report.

### Establish a Credibility Chain for Service Providers

There are two camps concerning the qualifications of assistance dog trainers. One is that the status quo remain intact whereby anyone can hang a shingle on their door claiming to be an assistance dog trainer.

The other option is that trainers agree to work together to establish best practices and possibly even a sector council to establish a credibility chain focusing on building a skilled workforce that would be recognized in the *National Occupation Classification (NOC) with the Government of Canada*.

**Animal Assisted Support Services**

One of Canada's Most Precious Natural Resources!

**Fund Overview**

- Animal Assisted Activities
- Assistance Dog Teams
- Equine Assisted Wellness and Learning Programs
- Therapeutic Riding, Trail Riding, & Hippotherapy

### Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB)

The [Canadian General Standards Board](#) (CGSB) is a federal government organization that offers client-centred, comprehensive standards development and conformity assessment services in support of the economic, regulatory, procurement, health, safety and environmental interests of our stakeholders — government, industry and consumers.

### Service Dog Teams

Getting skilled service dogs into the hands of military personnel and veterans who would greatly benefit is critical. Ask anyone who has already teamed up with a service dog and they will tell you about the profound life saving impact that the human-animal bond has made in their lives and in the lives of those around them.

### Setting Stakeholders Up for Success

An inclusive consensus-based approach is critical if those we serve are to succeed. Shifting the focus from needs and deficiencies to strengths and opportunities will undoubtedly develop winning strategies that focus on the desirable future.



### Commendation! Tim Fleming of Innovation Works

Thank you for facilitating the summit on short notice. In spite of having a window of about a month to prepare for the summit, Tim's adaptability, resilience, and leadership helped make the summit a success. For more information please visit [www.innovationworks.ca](http://www.innovationworks.ca).

With Sincerest Appreciation Joanne Moss, National Director, CFAS

**From A Maze to Amazing**

*Bridging the gap between humanities, the natural and social sciences and veterinary medicine is no small feat, nevertheless, it's critical if this burgeoning Animal Assisted Support Services Industry is to be recognized within Canada's military, healthcare, social services, and justice sectors.*

**Building a Corporate Citizenship Network & Strategy**

*Multiplying the Social Return on Investment (SROI) that corporations offer through their community engagement, partnerships, employee supported volunteerism and philanthropic endeavours is not only possible but would make the best possible use of resources with less effort.*

**Imagine!**

**One Point of Entry! One Community! One Vision!  
One Ask!**

## MSAR's Draft Industry Seed Document



To access the draft standards please visit: <http://asist.ca/standards.html>. The updated version will be released around mid November and will be available for review prior to the next summit. More information will be forthcoming.

## Certification of Military Assistance Dog Teams

A discussion emerged regarding the cost of the certification of assistance teams. Highlights included comments such as: there should be no commercial value to the certifying body. The cost of certification was guessed to be around \$5000 per team. A subsidy program would need to be developed to offset this fee.

## Types of Conformity Assessment

Three types of Conformity Assessment were identified: Supplier's declaration, Second Party Acceptance, and Third Party Certification. Supplier's Declaration is commonly used in Europe as the basis for the CE marking required for all products sold in Europe; Europe requires the marking to be supported by a Technical Report with an Individual's Signature (who could be jailed if the report is not legitimate). Other examples of Supplier's Declaration are the certification of animals by Guide/Service Dog Schools, as well as computer software by the company selling it (sometimes known as "vapourware").

Second Party Acceptance is commonly used by large industry to accept materials from their suppliers. It can also be used by Regulators that assess, accept, and certify/licence persons or products. This is done by some Australian states for service dogs.

Third Party Certification is provided by a credible, arms length, independent body to assess products, services, or persons, often is support of regulation. A common Canadian example is UL or CSA Certification for electrical products. A world-wide accreditation system exists for Certification Bodies that facilitates Certifications issued in one country to be accepted in other countries. In the best case scenario a certifying body is separate from the regulatory body, and other organizations that set common requirements (standards).

## Record Keeping - Registries Verses Certification Databases

A discussion around the pros and cons concerning registries verses databases took place whereby the presenting group felt that databases would be more thorough, because there needs to be a credibility chain to proving that an organization is "certified." As a result, the onus would be on the registry to follow up by investigating to verify the validity of the credentials provided as supporting evidence. Conversely a Certification Body's public database provides up-to-date verified qualifications.

## Service Dog Trainers Community of Practice (CofP)

### Food for Thought!

A community of practice (CoP) is, according to cognitive anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, a group of people who share a craft and/or a profession. The group can evolve naturally because of the members' common interest in a particular domain or area, or it can be created specifically with the goal of gaining knowledge related to their field. It is through the process of sharing information and experiences with the group that the members learn from each other, and have an opportunity to develop themselves personally and professionally (Lave & Wenger 1991). Establishing a CofP may prove worthwhile, for trainers.

## The Human-Animal Bond Sector Council



The CFAS is seeking corporate partners to conduct research regarding the feasibility of establishing a human-animal bond sector council.

Animal Assisted Support Services is a burgeoning industry, as such giving some serious consideration whether to establish a sector council is well worth exploring. There are approximately 35 sector councils in Canada all of which have greatly enhanced career opportunities, credibility, and accountability in their respective fields.

### What is a Sector Council?

Sector councils are industry-led partnership organizations that address skills development issues and implement solutions in key sectors of the economy.

Today's global marketplace is changing at an unprecedented rate; dramatic shifts in the economy, large scale layoffs, recession, changing demographics and the pace of technological advancements combine to add pressure to an already competitive labour market. It is essential that Canadians are prepared to meet these challenges with the skills, knowledge and confidence that are required to succeed in this new landscape.

Sector councils work as a uniting element to engage employers, workers, educators, professional associations and government in a strategic alliance that is focused on implementing solutions to the specific skills and human resource needs that will enable their sector to thrive.

**\*Source:** *The Alliance of Sector Councils*



## Consensus -Based Collaboration – Building a Circle of Support

### Who do we need to invite to the table?

#### Capacity Building Organizations

The Canadian Foundation for Animal Assisted Support Services  
The Royal Canadian Legion  
Wounded Warriors

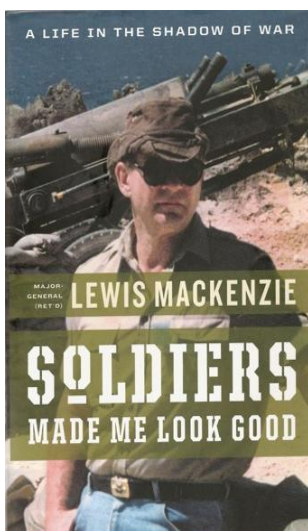
#### First Responders and Members of the Canadian Forces and Veterans

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police  
Canadian Centre for Public Safety and First Responders  
Canadian Institute for Military & Veterans Health Research (CIMHVR)  
CMP - Chief Military Personnel  
Correctional Services Canada  
Department of National Defence  
DOJ - Department of Justice  
First Responders Government of BC  
IPSC - Integrated Personnel Support Centres  
JPSU - Joint Personnel Support Unit  
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)  
Veterans Affairs Canada  
Veterans Ombudsman  
Veterans, Soldiers and Family Members

#### Housing and Health

Canadian Landlord and Tenant Board's  
Canadian Mental Health Association  
Health Canada  
Mental Health Commission of Canada  
The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA)  
Public Health Agency  
Surgeon General Cont'd...

#### The Major-General Lew MacKenzie Fund



[Download FAQ Flyer](#)

#### Service Providers

Canadian Canine  
Canadian Service Dog Foundation  
CARES Program  
Citadel Canine  
MSAR

#### National Public Safety and Accessibility

Canadian Centre for Public Safety and First Responders  
Canadian Federation of Municipalities  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)  
Foreign Affairs Canada  
Public Safety Agency  
Public Safety Association

#### Others

Government Communications and Public Engagement  
Guide Animal Certification BC Office  
Hotel Association of Canada  
Intergovernmental Affairs  
Other Veterans Organizations  
The Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association (CRFA)

#### Provincial Accessibility Directorates

Ministry of Community and Social Services – Ontario  
Provincial Disability Support Programs

#### Standards and Quality Management

Canadian General Standards Board  
Standards Council of Canada

#### Transportation Sector

Canadian Transportation Agency  
Canadian Urban Transit Association  
Greyhound Motor Coach  
Transport Canada

#### Emerging Strategic Discussion Points

- ✓ Differences between Industry Standards and National Standards
- ✓ Eligibility Criteria of Service Dog Teams
- ✓ Liability Insurance
- ✓ National Consensus-Based Standards
- ✓ Public & Residential Accessibility of Service Dog Teams
- ✓ Support Services {Education, Public Relations, Establishing a Speakers Bureau, Peer Support, Service Dog Healthcare Insurance, Dog Food, Training Support & Certification}
- ✓ Third-Part Certification & Identification Cards
- ✓ Trainer Credentials & The Prospect of a Sector Council



#### What did I value most about participating in the summit?

#### What the participants said:

I enjoyed learning about the issues of different players

The vast knowledge of others, experiences, and support

Hearing all the different perspectives on topics

Meeting many different players

Sharing my service dog experiences with like minded individuals and potential stakeholders

Liaising with many people with different backgrounds and points of view

Interactions and meeting some great people who have the same passion for veterans as I do

Team building and networking opportunities

Everything

Meeting many stakeholders

Gathering information, sharing experiences, and a commitment to get service dogs for veterans

Building awareness, acceptance, and support for accessibility of service dog teams

Surpassed challenges making it a great day

## Uniting and Engaging People to Create Our Collective Desired Future!

The Human-Animal Bond Industry is an emerging interdisciplinary and burgeoning field that overlaps with a number of disciplines, including anthropology, ethnology, medicine, psychology, veterinary medicine, and zoology.



### **Minister Fantino Announces Partnership to Explore the Use of Psychiatric Service Dogs to Help Veterans with PTSD September 20, 2013 [Read more...](#)**

## **Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB)**

CGSB is a Standards Development Organization (SDO) certified by the Standards Council of Canada (SCC), and the only Federal Government SDO. Only SDOs certified by SCC may develop National Standards of Canada (NSC).

An important distinction requiring clarification arose on the floor regarding "consensus based standards" and "industry standards". Consensus based standards are developed using the core World Trade Organization (WTO) principles of transparency, openness, impartiality, and consensus.

Consensus requires balanced representation of all interests on committees such that no one interest has dominance, and development of the standard is based upon general consensus amongst the committee members.

For example, committee categories may include Service Providers, Regulators, General Public Interest, and Consumers (end users).

Industry standards are standards developed by private organizations for their own purposes, which do not follow the above principles. The draft standard put forth by ASSIST/Assister, which was discussed on the floor, is one such industry standard. An industry standard cannot be put forth as National Standard of Canada (NSC), however it may be considered in the development of a NSC.

Established in 1934, CGSB provides standards development and conformity assessment services. CGSB has a wealth of expertise and experience in the development of NSCs, and will work closely with CFAS and related stakeholders to meet their standardization requirements. [Read more](#)

## **Research**

Currently part of the challenges faced where industry research is concerned is that qualitative studies are considered subjective, with no direct measurable quantification or verification. The Department of National Defence and Veterans Affairs Canada are Federal Government Agencies; as a result qualitative studies have not been accepted as supportive documents for program requests.

To get beyond this stumbling block it would take years of research to gather enough data to validate the studies to have them recognized. Time is not a luxury we can afford. National Standards of Canada on the other hand are valid and sufficient for adoption by federal government departments and may take less than a year to develop. In this instance more than one standard may need to be developed depending on the subject matter nevertheless, building consensus-based National Standards of Canada would not only address current challenges but overcome them. Equally noteworthy is that a complementary credibility chain could be established to ensure public access of military assistance dog teams, while increasing public confidence.

National Standards of Canada can also bridge the gap internationally, while setting precedence, for the civilian population who also experience similar challenges faced by Canadian Forces members and veterans.

### **Melanie Woolley, Canadian Service Dog Foundation**

As more and more soldier's fall victim to Operational Stress Injuries (OSI) or invisible threats such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) we become increasingly aware of the need for manageable solutions. Beyond the peer groups, medications, and psychotherapy comes an assistive partnership like no other. Use of specially trained service animals to improve functional independence and quality of life for injured soldiers and veterans is not a new concept. This summit is intended to help us join forces, tell our stories, and develop strategies to make such indispensable partnerships accessible to those who need the assistance most.

### **A Big Thank You to All the Attendees**

18 Veterans  
 6 Service Dog Handlers  
 4 Soldiers  
 13 Trainers  
 4 Family Members  
 4 Policy Makers  
 1 Supporter  
 5 Members of the Royal Canadian Legion  
 3 Standards Representatives  
 10 Service Dogs



### **Third-Party Certification of Service Dog Teams**

As group discussions continued into the afternoon third-party certification of service dog teams was considered to be a viable option worth exploring. The benefit of having a variety of stakeholders paid off, as feedback from the Canadian General Standards Board and others working in this area were able to provide some concrete reasons for, and compelling comments about, this subject. It was pointed out that this approach eliminates emotional and personal biases, as such avoiding conflict of interest.

Consequently, the impact of this model would increase the public's confidence and reassure the handlers, while making it easier to identify service dog teams with a uniform identification card and an accessible central registry and database with an international scope.

### **Development of a Certification Scheme**

Like any good idea or concept it takes people power and resources to make things happen. In order to move things forward summit attendees agreed that it is imperative to form a critical mass and working group to compose and answer a number of related questions like what would a certification body do to certify the teams, where would the assessments be carried out, how much would it cost, and how often would assessments be required; this also raised questions about aging service dogs, what happens when they can no longer work, making sure that adequate insurance is in place for veterinary care and so forth.

As the summit came closer to an end the participants were not only charged but eager to return to pick up where we left off for this reason a subsequent summit is in order.



***What actions or steps am I willing to make to contribute to this emerging vision?***

***Tell my Story – [Medric Cousineau and Thai](#)***

***Provide information about Veterans Affairs Canada***

***Network, conduct research, and create a public awareness campaign***

***I would like to participate in helping train service dogs***

***Work with veterans to encourage and support them***

***Share my knowledge about standards***

***Share my story***

***Have Royal Canadian Legion staff available to participate to see this program completed***

***Gain and analyze data in order to determine how the legion can best assist veterans moving forward***

***What I am already doing.***

***Help coordinate to avoid duplicating efforts and participate in future summits***

***Participate in a working group***

***Spread the word about the nature of PTSD***

***Foster puppies for people with PTSD***

***Participate in future summits***

***Any way I can help***

***Maximize the use of time, energy, and resources***

***Photo Credit! Ralph Pulfer, President of the Kemptville Royal Canadian Legion, Many thanks!***





### Developing a Military Assistance Dog Team Emergency Preparedness Action Plan

Natural disasters, combat and the like have a way of bringing people together when the going gets tough. The repercussions of operational injuries have done just that; yet responding rather than reacting is key in order to bring something good out of something so tragic.

Recognition of Animal Assisted Support Services as being part of the solution is apparent given the militaries growing interest in this emerging field.

Historically animals have played a significant role in military combat. Lloyd Swick a veteran of the Second World War whose military and public service career spans more than 48 years has much to say about this aspect of military service ([Read More...](#)). Lloyd is joining the ranks of this growing community to not only acknowledge the animals who have died in the line of duty, but to echo the worth of preparing an emergency response action plan that will empower his comrades who are struggling with operational injuries. Whether on the front lines or serving at home animals continue to play a major role in serving the military.



If we are to reach Canadian Forces members, veterans, and their families before conditions and situations escalate early intervention and deployment of assistance dogs, therapy dogs, and equine facilitated programs must become an integral part of the military health-care regime.

*Let's stop asking what's wrong and start asking what's possible.*

### On the Radar!

- Standards for Military Assistance Dog Teams
- Credentialing of Military Assistance Dog Trainers
- Third-Party Certification of Teams
- Military Assistance Dog Teams Public Access Guide
- Public Education Strategy & Peer Support
- Identification of Teams
- National Registry

#### ***What might have made the summit experience even better for me personally?***

*More time*

*More stakeholders*

*More opportunities to speak with veterans who have a service dog*

*More detailed agenda beforehand*

*More thought into how this movement will impact civilians with psychiatric service dogs*

*More summits*

*More time to plan and get feedback on the agenda*

*More time to connect with and listen to each other's stories*

*Great Job!*



#### ***Next Steps!***

*Prepare & Distribute the Summit Report*

*Confirm Dates for Next Summit*

*Distribution of the Industry Standard*

*Create an Email Distribution List*

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**What key things did I learn or what 'aha' moments did I have; if any?**

Most players agree there is a need for standards and a regulatory body.

The groundswell has started.

We are still in the infancy stage so we can invite other stakeholders to get involved.

The ignorance and lack of knowledge about what the differences are between psychiatric service dogs, service dogs, therapy dogs, and guide dogs.

Service dogs make a huge difference in the lives of veterans and their families.

There are many stakeholders across Canada wanting to do the same things, but we need each other to succeed.

There has been great progress made to date in spite of fragmentation. Imagine what we could accomplish by working together.

There are many differences of opinions; therefore, sharing experiences, stories, and knowledge must be our focus if we are going to succeed as a community.

National consensus-based standards must be developed to overcome the battle of wits and brand competition. These are but a couple of issues that are sabotaging progress.

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**Upon leaving today, what positive impact do I see this summit having?**

It got the wheels in motion toward developing standards. Hope for creating a blueprint for success is finally possible. I am looking forward to reading the industry standard coming out in November. We have broke new ground; sometime in the near future we will hopefully have clarification for service dog training. Good connections were made. Thanks Joanne for spearheading this effort. I pray that we will see some of our common goals met in this lifetime. I am looking forward to the next meeting. Together Everyone Achieves More {TEAM}. Improving the life of veterans and their families is my ultimate goal. Forming a community with a common goal is an initiative I can get behind. I made a lot of friends. Bringing people together with the same vision is exciting and promising. New relationships formed, Next steps were outlined. Commitments signaled.

Good starting point to build on. We agreed to meet again and work on various issues to make things happen. I will connect with others in our organization to inform them of the discussions and decisions made today. The fact that many people from different interests came together to try and come up with a set of standards for service animals in Canada is inspiring.

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**Animal Assisted Support Services transform lives one heart at a time.**



## About The Canadian Foundation for Animal Assisted Support Services {CFAS}

### Why a Public Foundation

A public foundation is a legal categorization for a nonprofit organization that typically either donates funds to other charities and/or provides the source of funding for its own charitable purposes.

### Vision Statement

Our vision is being the philanthropic leader that sustains the innovation, coordination, and integration of Animal-Assisted Support Services within Canada's healthcare, social service, and justice sectors to improve the quality of life of people with physical, emotional, and social challenges.

### Value Creation Statement

Our mission is to improve the health and quality of life of people with physical, emotional, and social challenges through partnerships with companion and service animals.

### Goals:

1. Unite the stakeholders to identify core values and common priorities to stimulate collaborative action in the spirit of cooperation and inclusiveness.
2. Inspire a consistent level of quality, safety, and satisfaction of those served.
3. Ensure the sustainability, credibility, and availability of exceptional Animal Assisted Support Services.
4. Support related charities and those they serve.
5. Carry out the Foundation's charitable programs and activities.
6. Conduct and support research.
7. Promote the human-animal bond.

## The Major-General Lew MacKenzie Fund The Gateway to Animal Assisted Support Services

[Download FAQ Flyer](#)



### Fund Highlights!

#### Animal Assisted Activities & Charitable Programs

Assistance Dogs  
Equine Assisted Wellness and Learning Programs  
Therapeutic and Trail Riding  
Research/Peer Support/Speakers Bureau/Public Education/Summits/Publications

#### Benefits of Animal Assisted Support Services

- Increase motivation
- Reduce depression and anxiety
- Facilitate open communication
- Shed light into behaviors
- Patients/clients look forward to sessions
- Promote active living
- Sooth and comfort
- Promote bonding
- Stimulate motor skills
- Encourage playfulness
- Enrich being living in the moment/present
- Reduce the stigma associated with treatment
- Focus on the bond rather than the problem

### Closing Remarks: by Joanne Moss, National Director, CFAS

Maximizing the impact of military assistance dog teams in Canada is not just about building partnerships that create and sustain an exceptional range of seamless services, but sharing our collective stories, experiences, and our journeys. It's about being heard, belonging, and beginning to restore shattered dreams and mending broken hearts.

Solutions cannot be found by one person or organization alone, but only by working together will we realize true success.

Defining the roles and responsibilities of the participants along with developing a strategic road map will come in future initiatives as we continue to connect the dots, but while we are forming this dynamic learning community, expect that growing pains are inevitable, but will not be without their rewards.

For more information about this initiative and the foundation please visit: [www.cf4aass.org](http://www.cf4aass.org) call 1-888-473-7027 or email us at [community@cf4aass.org](mailto:community@cf4aass.org).