

# CTSA Discussion Forums User Guide

**V1.0: October 28, 2025:** Estimated 15-minute read

## Overview

The Discussion Forums advance CTSA Program objectives in high priority areas of clinical and translational science through discussion of specific topics in dept and developing plans for projects that fill identified gaps and/or further the program objectives through a work group proposal. Powered by Google Groups through the NCATS Google Suite, it allows members to collaborate in real-time, share and manage documents, and have discussions—all from a centralized location.

If you have questions, email our support team.

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# Who Can Use This Feature?

This feature is designed for the following roles:

**CCOS Users:** A CCOS User is anyone who has an active account on the CCOS platform. To become a CCOS User, individuals must [register for a CCOS account](#).

## Glossary

Quick definitions for terms used in this guide:

- **CCOS:** Coordination, Communication, and Operations Support Center
- **Support Ticket:** Each new user request creates a support ticket that the CCOS Support Team uses to track and manage the request. It is recommended you use the support ticket number in your communications with the CCOS Support Team so they can help you with any questions or issues identified with the new user request.
- **Discussion Forum (DF):** A secure, shared Google Group environment owned by NCATS, where Group members can share resources, ask questions, and make recommendations in discussion threads and upload collaborative documents to shared drives.
- **NCATS:** The National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences. NCATS manages the backend infrastructure (including Google Shared Drives and Groups) for the Discussion Forum feature.

## Version History

**V1.0: October 28, 2025**

# Guidance

## Before You Begin

Make sure you have the following before starting:

- Access to **the CCOS website via a user account**

**Estimated time to complete:** 15 minutes

**Accessibility Tip:** Use keyboard shortcuts or screen reader navigation if needed.

## Accessing Discussion Forum Page and Signing In

### In This Section

1. [Accessing Discussion Forums page on the CCOS website](#)
2. [Logging into the Discussion Forums](#)
  - A. [New User Logging in with InCommon](#)
  - B. [New User Logging in with Login.gov](#)

## Accessing the Discussion Forums Page

**Goal:** Learn how to access and login to Discussion Forums from the CCOS website

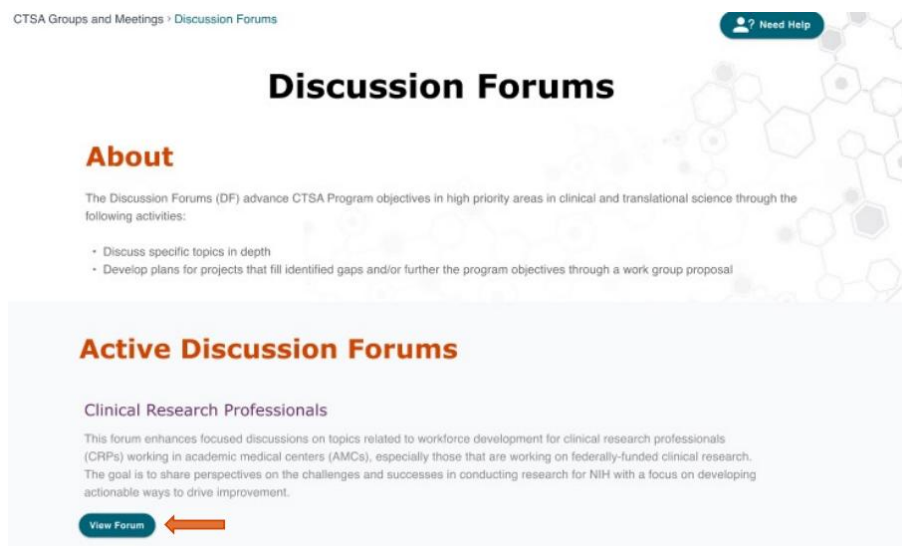
### Step 1: Start at the CCOS Website

1. Log in to the [CCOS website](#).
2. Once you login, the [Discussion Forums](#) page will be available under the CTSA Groups and Meetings tab of the menu bar.



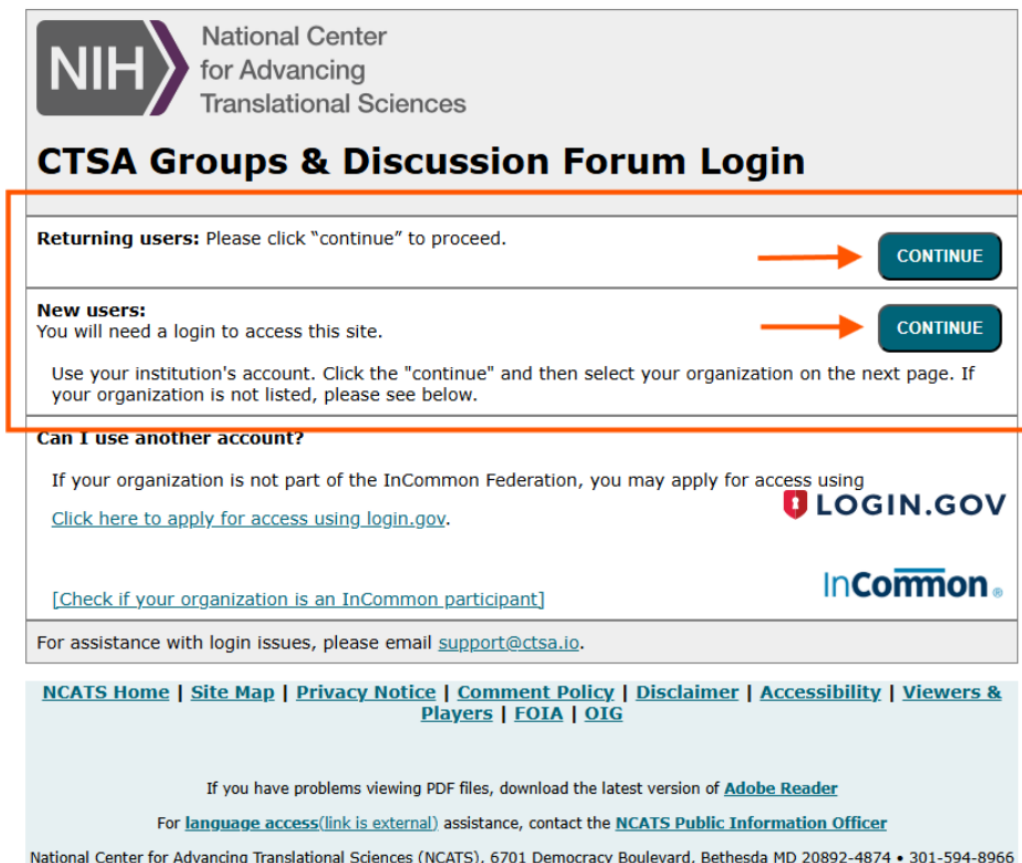
**Note:** While access starts on the CCOS site, the Discussion Forums are hosted on the NCATS Google Suite platform and managed by NCATS.

3. The Discussion Forums page lists the names and descriptions of all active Discussion Forums. Click the **View Forum** button next to the discussion forum you would like to visit.



## Step 2: Logging into the Discussion Forum

1. The **View Forum** button will take you to a separate CTSA Discussion Forums login page



**NIH** National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences

### CTSA Groups & Discussion Forum Login

**Returning users:** Please click "continue" to proceed. [CONTINUE](#)

**New users:**  
You will need a login to access this site. [CONTINUE](#)

Use your institution's account. Click the "continue" and then select your organization on the next page. If your organization is not listed, please see below.

**Can I use another account?**

If your organization is not part of the InCommon Federation, you may apply for access using [Click here to apply for access using login.gov.](#) **LOGIN.GOV**

[\[Check if your organization is an InCommon participant\]](#) **InCommon®**

For assistance with login issues, please email [support@ctsa.io](mailto:support@ctsa.io).

[NCATS Home](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [Comment Policy](#) | [Disclaimer](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Viewers & Players](#) | [FOIA](#) | [OIG](#)

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For [language access](#)([link is external](#)) assistance, contact the [NCATS Public Information Officer](#)

National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), 6701 Democracy Boulevard, Bethesda MD 20892-4874 • 301-594-8966

2. To access the Discussion Forum, you'll need to log in using an identity provider such as **NIH**, **InCommon**, or **Login.gov**. Choose **New User** if this is your first time logging in, or **Returning User** if you've previously set up access to the Discussion Forums before via the CLIC website.

### Option A: New User Logging in with InCommon

1. Click **Continue** under **New User** and select **InCommon** as your login method.

2. You'll be redirected to the **CTSA Groups & Discussion Forum Login** screen.
3. Find and select your **institution's name** to log in with your institutional credentials.

CTSA Groups & Discussion Forum Login

Research Institutions [InCommon federation i]

Uni

Arizona State **University**

Brown **University**

California Polytechnic State **University**-San Luis Obispo

California State Polytechnic **University**, Pomona

California State **University**

California State **University**, Chico

California State **University**, Dominguez Hills

California State **University**, Fresno

California State **University**, Fullerton

California State **University**, Monterey Bay

California State **University**, Office of the Chancellor

California State **University**, Sacramento

California State **University**, San Bernardino

Case Western Reserve **University**

Clemson **University**

4. Enter your institutional **username and password**. Do not use your alias.
5. **Confirm** your Google account on the verification screen.
6. Select your preferred **authentication method** and click **Continue**.
7. You'll be redirected to the **Google Welcome page**.
8. Review the terms of use for your new @ctsa.io account and click **I Understand**.
9. You'll receive a **confirmation email** and instructions for forwarding this new account's emails to your institutional email.

10. After successful login, you'll be automatically redirected to your **Discussion Forum page**. Some Discussion Forums may require you to select **Apply to Join the DF** and your request will need to be approved before you can access content.

NIH National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences RUN Discussion Forum

The **Research Unit Network (RUN)** was created with the purpose to enable direct communication, sharing, and collaboration among CRUs. The short and intermediate goal of RUN is to identify best practices that units are establishing, implementing, and following with the goal of sharing these experiences and try to adopt them in the different CRUs. The network's long-term goal is to establish standard benchmarks that can be used for evaluating the performance of an individual CRU as well as comparing the performance of units around the nation. This network consist of 50 sites (79 members, 42 CTSA and 6 IDeA states).

**Discussion Group Posts**

To post a new topic or to read the current discussions, open the Google Groups in a new window. please click [here](#). Note that you must first join the Discussion Forum to access this feature.

Recent Posts

**Apply to Join the DF**

**CTSA Links**

- [About Discussion Forums/Getting Started](#)
- [List of Discussion Forums](#)
- [Google Meet Web Conferencing](#)
- [Contact Support](#)

**RUN DF Links**

The links below are only accessible to members of this Discussion Forum.

[RUN Discussion Forum Home Page\\*](#)

## Option B: New User Logging in with Login.gov

1. Click **Continue** under **New User** and select **Login.gov** as your login method.

2. You'll be redirected to the **Login.gov** website.
3. Use your **institutional email address** to sign up and select **Sign In**.
3. Authenticate using your **authenticator app**:
  - Enter the six-digit code displayed under Login.gov.
  - If you don't have an authenticator app, choose another authentication method.
4. After successful login, you will be redirected to the **Google Welcome page**.
5. Review the terms of use for your new @ctsa.io account and click "**I Understand.**"
6. You'll receive a **confirmation email** and instructions for forwarding this new account's emails to your institutional email.
7. After successful login, you'll be automatically redirected to your **Discussion Forum page**. Some Discussion Forums may require you to select **Apply to Join the DF** and your request will need to be approved before you can access content.





## RUN Discussion Forum

The **Research Unit Network (RUN)** was created with the purpose to enable direct communication, sharing, and collaboration among CRUs. The short and intermediate goal of RUN is to identify best practices that units are establishing, implementing, and following with the goal of sharing these experiences and try to adopt them in the different CRUs. The network's long-term goal is to establish standard benchmarks that can be used for evaluating the performance of an individual CRU as well as comparing the performance of units around the nation. This network consist of 50 sites (79 members, 42 CTSA and 6 IDeA states).

### Discussion Group Posts

To post a new topic or to read the current discussions, open the Google Groups in a new window. please click [here](#). Note that you must first join the Discussion Forum to access this feature.



[Recent Posts](#)

Apply to Join the DF



### CTSA Links

[About Discussion Forums/Getting Started](#)

[List of Discussion Forums](#)

[Google Meet Web Conferencing](#)

[Contact Support](#)

### RUN DF Links

The links below are only accessible to members of this Discussion Forum.

[RUN Discussion Forum Home Page\\*](#)

# Discussion Forums Features via Google Groups

## In This Section

1. [Google Groups Features](#)
  - A. [Discussion Forum Landing Pages](#)
  - B. [Discussion Posts](#)
  - C. [Starting a New Conversation](#)
  - D. [Discussion Group Shared Documents](#)
  - E. [Google Group Membership Settings](#)
  - F. [Google Group About Page](#)

## Google Groups Features

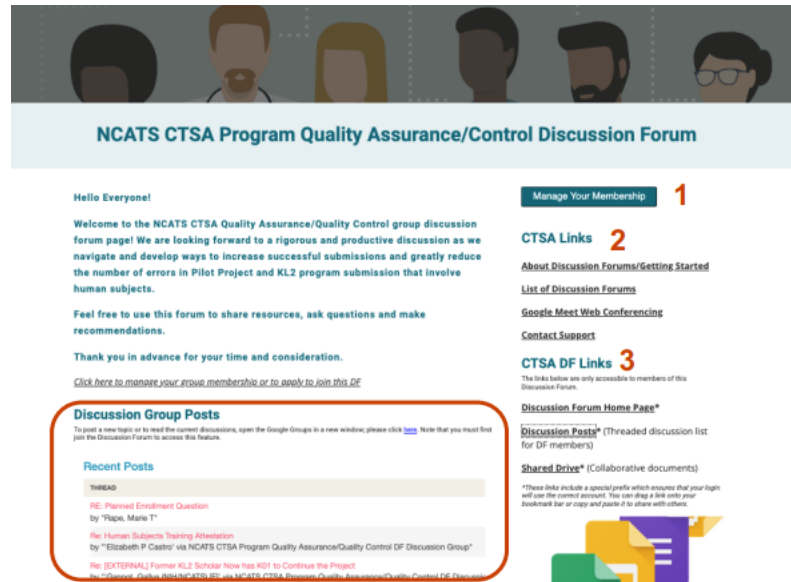
**Goal:** Learn how to navigate Google Groups which allows users to communicate and collaborate with colleagues by:

- Sharing a common email address
- Setting up chat rooms/discussion groups
- Sending messages & inviting all users to events
- Sharing documents for collaboration in a Group Google Drive
- Providing settings & permissions features to manager activity and content in each group

## Step 1: Discussion Forum Landing Pages

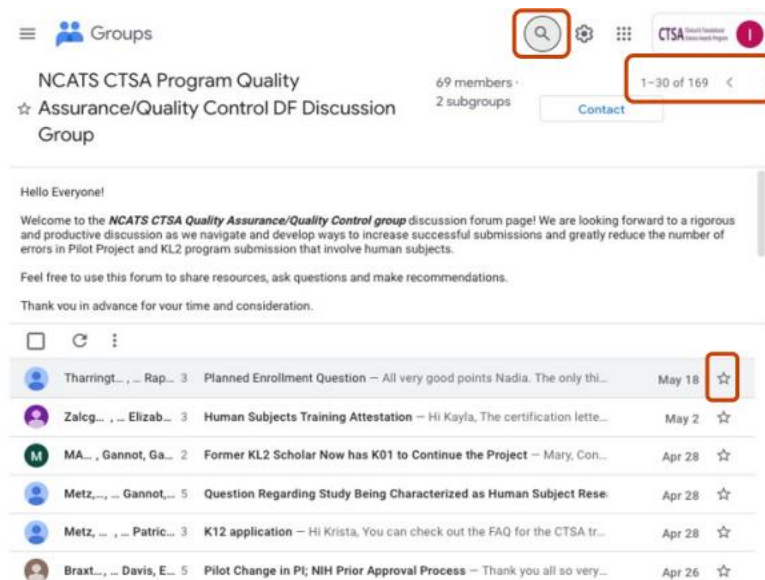
Once signed in, the landing page provides quick access to:

1. Google Group Membership settings
2. CTSA links
3. CTSA Discussion Forum Links
4. Discussion Group Posts



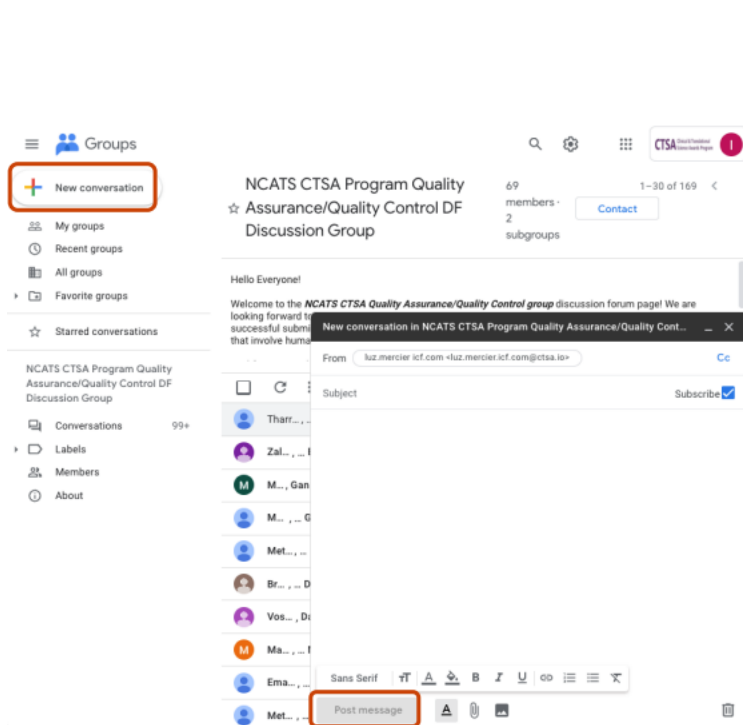
## Step 2: Discussion Group Posts

1. After clicking the Discussion Posts link from the Discussion Forum landing page you'll arrive at the conversations page in the Google Workspace platform where you can:
  - Start a new conversation
  - Search by keyword & navigate pages of discussions
  - View & mark/star favorite discussions
  - Within conversations you can reply all, forward, and subscribe to/follow specific conversations



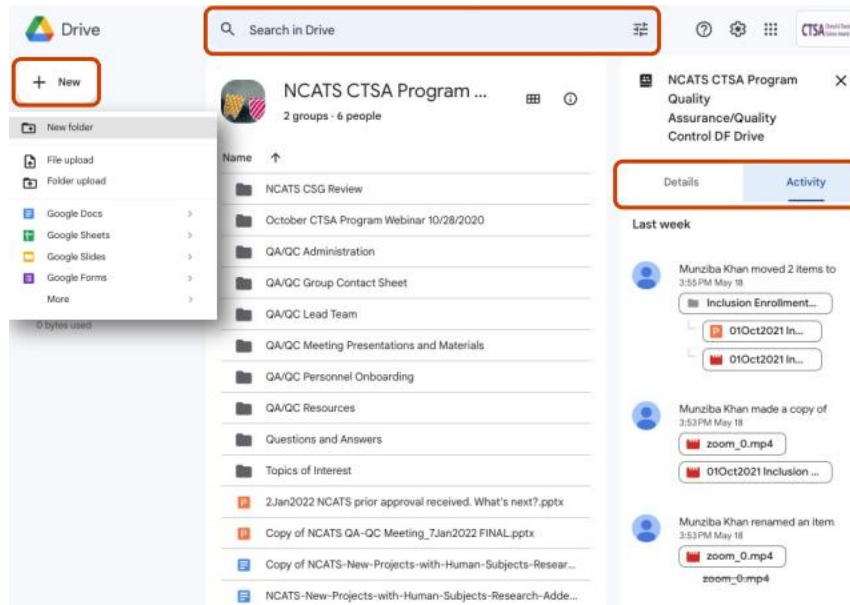
### Step 3: Starting a New Conversation

1. Depending on the permissions of the Discussion Forum, you can start a new conversation by clicking the New Conversation button or you can simply start an email message to the Group email
2. To start a conversation simply enter a subject, add your content and click the Post Message button
3. By default, the option to subscribe to this conversation thread will be checked so you can view any responses



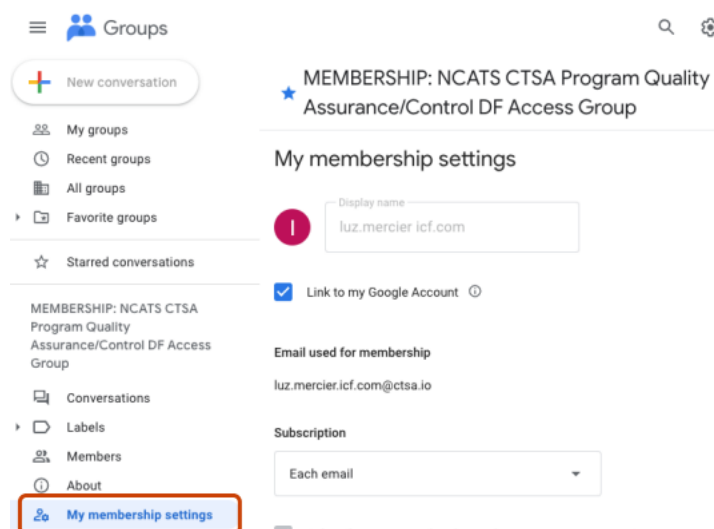
## Step 4: Discussion Group Shared Documents

1. After clicking the Shared Drive link from the Discussion Forum's landing page you'll arrive at the Discussion Forum's shared Google Drive where you can:
  - Search for documents & navigate through files
  - View details & recent activity
  - View & mark/star favorite files
  - Create new files/documents to share with the group



## Step 5: Google Group Membership Settings

1. After clicking the Manage Membership button you'll arrive on the Google Workspace platform on your settings page
2. From the Membership Settings page you can view your levels of access, update your subscription preferences for receiving Discussion Forum emails, and access other menu items such as Members of the group and the About section of the group



## Step 6: Google Group About Page

1. The About page displays the Discussion Forum group email, a description, owners, language, and the privacy and permission levels for the group

The screenshot shows the Google Groups interface. On the left is a sidebar with navigation options: 'New conversation', 'My groups', 'Recent groups', 'All groups', 'Favorite groups', 'Starred conversations', 'Conversations', 'Labels', 'Members' (highlighted with a red box), and 'My membership settings'. The main content area displays the group's name, its email address 'ctsa-qaqc-access@ctsa.io' (highlighted with a red box), and the date it was joined. Below this is the 'Description', 'Owners' (with a link to 'Contact owners and managers'), 'Language' (English), and a 'Privacy' section. The 'Privacy' section is highlighted with a red box and contains a table of permissions.

Privacy	
Entire organization	can see group
Entire organization	can view members
Entire organization	can view conversations
Group owners and managers	can post
Entire organization	can ask to join group

## Need help?

[Email support](#) with the following information so we can help you faster:

- **Your name:** [First and last name]
- **Your role or team:** [e.g., Program Analyst, HR Specialist]
- **Feature or task you were using:** [e.g., Uploading a document in File Manager]
- **What you expected to happen:** [e.g., I expected the file to upload and show a confirmation message]
- **What actually happened:** [e.g., I received an error message that said “Upload failed”]
- **Steps you took before the issue occurred:**
  - [Step 1]
  - [Step 2]
  - [Step 3]
- **Screenshot (if possible):** [Attach image]

## We’d Love Your Feedback

Have thoughts on this guide? [Send us an email](#) and let us know what you think. Your feedback helps us understand what’s working well and where we can improve.