APA Special Interest Group (SIG) Leadership Handbook

Last Update: October 2025

Contents

MISSION OF APA SIGS

APA Special Interest Groups (SIGs) were instituted to provide a forum for interested members of the APA to network and collaborate in a particular area of pediatrics.

The SIGs provide a valuable venue for our membership to network with other colleagues with similar interests, to provide a forum to discuss issues concerning relevant topics to the SIGs, and work towards goals that will benefit the membership of the APA at large. Some of the outcomes of the SIGs have included annual innovative meetings, invited speakers at the national PAS meeting, development of research awards, topic specific manuals, collaborative research projects and policy statements, and the birth of APA research networks and core professional development programs.

Over the years a very diverse set of SIGs has been established in a variety of disciplines. Their structure varies from a large, yet cohesive group of individuals focused on curriculum development, program enhancement and research initiatives to the smaller group that facilitates more informal networking opportunities at the annual meeting.

Benefits of APA SIGs

- Networking with colleagues with similar interests.
- Create opportunities for junior faculty and trainees to connect with senior members who share their interests.
- Pipelines for APA membership and leadership

Oversight and Support of APA SIGs

SIG Co-chairs:	Directors of Regions and SIGs:	APA Staff:
•SIGs are led by one or more chair(s) selected by SIG members. •The co-chairs serve staggered three-year terms, so that one new co-chair is selected each year. This ensures continuity of leadership and institutional knowledge.	•Serve as the points of contact and oversight for all Region and SIG leaders. •The Directors of Regions and SIGs serve on the Membership, Diversity, and Inclusion Executive Committee and report to the Board on a bi-annual basis on all SIG and Region activity.	•Provide administrative support to individual SIGs and collect information from SIG chairs for PAS planning. •SIG leadership can email the APA office at info@academicp.org to inquire about specific support, issues and/or request.

CATEGORIES OF SIGS

Career Development

- Division Directors
- Faculty Development
- Mid-Career Faculty
- Pediatric Residents
- PHM Leadership

Clinical Pediatrics

- Child Abuse
- Complex Care and Disability
- Continuity
- Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics
- Emergency Medicine
- Health Care Transition and Disease Self-Management
- Health Care Value
- Health Informatics
- Hospital Medicine
- Injury Control
- Integrative Pediatrics
- Newborn
- Patient and Family Centered Care
- Quality Improvement
- Urgent Care

Culture and Ethics

- Ethics
- Global Health
- Health Equity in Youth Affected by the Carceral System
- Latino Child Health Research
- LGBTQ+ Health and Well-Being
- Race in Medicine
- Serving the Underserved
- Well-Being & Vitality
- Women in Medicine

Health Promotion

- Environmental Health, Climate Change and Sustainability
- Group Care
- Health Literacy
- Immunization
- Literacy Development Programs in Primary Care
- Nutrition and Food is Medicine
- Obesity
- Pediatric Tobacco Issues
- Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)

Research

- Evidence Based Pediatrics
- Interdisciplinary Pediatric Researchers
- Pediatric Clinical Research Network
- Qualitative Research

Teaching

- Advocacy Training
- E-Learning in Medical Education
- Medical Student Education
- Simulation-based Medical Education (SBME)
- Teachings in Community Settings

CO-CHAIR RESOURCES

Region and SIG Co-Chair Hub

- The Region and SIG Co-Chair Hub is a resource repository for Region and SIG Co-chairs.
  - The Co-Chair Hub is members only, so chairs must be logged in and active APA members in order to access.
- The main page contains information and resources relevant to all Co-chairs.
- The SIG Co-Chair Hub contains information and resources specific to SIGs.
- We advise that chairs bookmark the main Co-Chair Hub page.

APA Community Boards

- APA's Online Community is a members-only discussion board and networking platform designed for interactive discussions and resource sharing with your academic colleagues.
- Each Region and SIG has their own discussion board in APA's Community.
- Members are automatically added when they select a region/SIG through their APA membership profile
- There is also a discussion board specifically for SIG Co-Chairs: SIG Co-Chair Community Board

APA Website

- The APA Event Calendar advertises a variety of events including Region Meetings and SIG Webinars.
- Co-Chair Nomination Forms and Election Ballots are hosted on the website.
- Every Region and SIG has a page on the APA website
- Every Region and SIG will submit updates 2x/year for their webpages.

Directors of Regions & SIGs

- The Directors serve on the Membership, Diversity, and Inclusion Executive Committee
- Report to the Board on a bi-annual basis on all SIG and Region activity
- Main Points of Contact and oversight for all Region and SIG Co-Chairs
- The Directors of Regions & SIGs oversee
  - Co-Chair terms and transitions
  - Guidelines for Regions & SIGs
  - Region & SIG budgets
  - Bi-annual reports from Co-Chairs

GUIDELINES

Leadership Structure

1. Each SIG shall have at least 1 Chair.
2. Chairs must be active APA members for the duration of their term.
3. SIG co-chair terms will be limited to two consecutive 3-year terms (6 years total).
4. SIG leadership should be diverse.
5. The members of the SIG will select new co-chairs via yearly elections organized through the APA national office.

Elections

- [Election Guidelines and Process](#)
- [Templates for Region/SIG Election Results](#)

Important Reminders:

- APA Membership is a requirement of being a co-chair
- Chairs need to be recruited through this process
- Chairs recruited outside of this process without the APA's knowledge will not be recognized
- If a group only has one nominee, the chairs may choose between having an election or approving the nominee. The nominee will need to be approved by all the current chairs.

Recruitment Schedule Timeline:

Exact dates will vary each year depending on the dates of Region meetings and PAS.

- November-December- APA soliciting Regions and SIGs for who needs a new chair
- Early January - Open Nominations
- Mid-February - APA Team notifies chairs of the current amount of nominations for the open seat
- Mid-March - Nominations Close (End of Day ET)
- Mid-March - APA Team creates ballots
- Late March - Elections Open
- Mid-April - Close Ballots (End of Day ET)
- Mid-April - Ballot Results Calculated
- Mid/Late-April - Results announced internally & Nominees Notified
- PAS - Results announced Publicly & Groups introduce New Chairs
- May/June - Update APA Website, community boards and chair rosters

Chair Responsibilities

1. Developing the SIG agenda for the annual PAS meeting
   a. SIGs must submit a PAS program 2 out of every 3 years
   b. Each SIG must combine with another SIG 1 out of every 3 years
2. Attending the quarterly SIG Chair calls.
3. Coordinating correspondence among its members using various communications tools: (Community Boards, Emails and Social Media).
4. Educating residents about APA benefits and opportunities available to them.
5. Leading at least one opportunity for SIG connection and communication during the year (in addition to the meeting at PAS)
   a. This could be an educational webinar, an active community board, a virtual meeting, or other activity that brings SIG members together
6. Identifying opportunities to advance APA's equity, diversity and inclusion work within their region embodying APA's core values.
7. Submitting updates twice a year (January and July). The updates should be about the past activities or SIG content area and should be around 500 words in length.

Chair Requirements

- Active APA members for the duration of their term. If Chairs If a chair's membership lapses, they will be removed from their position.
- If a chair's contact information changes, they are responsible for updating their APA profile and notifying the APA staff.

SIG Criteria

If the SIG does not meet the following minimal criteria, they will be asked to merge with another SIG or disband.

- Does not combine with another SIG 1 out of every 3 years at PAS (this requirement only applies to SIGs who historically have less than 30 attendees at PAS)
- Does not submit a PAS program 2 out of every 3 years
- If the SIG has low PAS attendance and are not networking throughout the year
- SIG does not provide the annual report or PAS programming submission in a timely manner

Biannual Updates

The SIG updates are required and should be submitted to the SIG Update Form every Spring and Fall, for review by the Co-Directors of Regions and SIGs.

The Spring Report should contain:
- Updates on what the SIG is working on
- Upcoming SIG programming

The Fall Report should contain:
- Annual Summery
- Recap of PAS

- Research or projects that the SIG is currently working on and/or collaborating with other SIGs
- Updates on what the SIG is working on
- Upcoming SIG programming

Stipend

[Click here for the APA SIG Stipend Guide](#)

- The APA will provide an annual stipend not to exceed $500 to each individual SIG to support reasonable SIG activities.
  - o can be used for educational materials, meeting supplies and snacks, speaker honorarium, etc.
  - o Unused funds **do not carry** over from one year to the next.
  - o SIGs hosting combined PAS sessions may combine funds
- All SIG-generated bills must be submitted to the APA Office for payment.
- The Association will provide the customary audio-visual support for SIG meetings at the annual PAS meeting. This does not include internet service.
- All check requests relating to funds used for PAS will be processed AFTER the meeting.
- The APA team will send an email to all SIG chairs after the meeting with the APA Check Request PDF.
- SIGs with a combined session can merge their stipends to have a total of $1,000. This combined fund can only be used for expenses pertinent to the PAS Session.
- The stipend should not be used to coordinate F&B with the PAS hotels or convention centers as contracts must be arranged by the APA staff and the current average cost exceeds the stipend amount. (As of March 2024, averaging around $40 per plate plus service fees)

SIG Awards

APA SIGs may give awards related to their SIG content area or activities if the following criteria are met:

- Review process for awards is fair and transparent
- At least 3 SIG chairs/members should be on the selection panel.
- The selection process should be documented and aim to eliminate bias.
- The review process should be communicated to the Co-Chairs of Regions and SIGs and APA staff prior to the announcement of the award and selection process.
- Notify the Co-Chairs of Regions and SIGs of the award winners prior to notifying winners.
- Award should be identified as being awarded by the APA SIG involved.

SIG SESSIONS AT PAS

- SIGs must submit a PAS program 2 out of every 3 years
- Each SIG must combine with another SIG 1 out of every 3 years

- SIGs may be disbanded is they have low PAS attendance and are not networking throughout the year.
- This information can be found on the PAS SIG Session Tracker located on the SIG Co-Chair Hub

Planning for your SIGs PAS meeting

- A major responsibility for each SIG chair is to plan their annual SIG meeting held each year.
- It is important to note that APA staff work hard with SIG Chairs and PAS staff each year to make SIG meetings as successful as possible.
- PAS is a collaborative meeting of numerous national organizations. This means that certain decisions (such as deadlines and logistical changes) are made by the PAS office.
  - SIG chairs should understand that the APA Office works hard to limit these changes, but that flexibility and understanding in these situations is important.

PAS Timeline

Summer	Review Feedback from previous PAS and brainstorm ideas for the next PAS
June - Late July	SIG Chairs will receive an email from the APA office, asking if they would like to have a combined meeting with another SIG.
July 31st	APA sends a list of SIGs to PAS. This list will note the SIGs having combined sessions.
August – Mid September	PAS Call for SIGs *If a SIG fails to submit by the deadline they will not be eligible to present a session at the next PAS*
Mid-September - Late October	PAS will review and select SIG sessions. Notifications will be sent to the chair who submitted the session in late October.
Mid-January - March	Oral Abstract selection (If opted into and abstracts are eligible)
April/May	Annual PAS Meeting

NEW SIGS AND SIG CHANGES

Guidelines for initiation of a new SIG

- The APA regularly receives requests from groups who desire to establish a new SIG. It is important to have criteria in place for the establishment and maintenance of each SIG. This will help ensure the long-lasting viability of the SIG, minimize redundancy between SIGs and prioritize resources related to our SIG structure.
- A proposal to initiate a new SIG must be submitted for approval (contact info@academicpeds.org for the submission form). This proposal must include the below information:
  1. Name of the SIG

2. List explicit goals of the SIG
3. An explanation of why the SIG is important and in what ways it will benefit the membership of the APA
4. A list of names and signatures of a minimum of 20 APA members who would join
5. The name(s) of the SIG Chair (and/or Co-Chair)
6. Schedule of activities

- The Co-Chairs of Regions and SIGs and the APA President Elect will discuss the application for a new SIG, and vote on the application.

Procedure for SIG Name Change

- Because SIGs represent the interests of a group of APA members, chairs should seek member input before requesting to change their SIG's name.
- If a SIG wishes to change its name, the chairs of that SIG should present the name change to its SIG members (e.g. via community board and/or email list) to request member input. This request for input can be through either a vote or through a request for comments. Based on the collective input of members, SIG chairs can present their name change request to the Co-Chairs of Regions and SIGs.
- This request should include the following:
    1. Old name
    2. New name
    3. Reason for change
    4. Short description of process for obtaining input from SIG members.
- The Co-Chairs of Regions and SIGs will review the proposal. If approved, the SIG chairs should include a brief description of the reason for the name change in the next update.

APA SIG CHAIR EXPECTATIONS

The goal of APA Special Interest Groups (SIGs) is to provide a forum for APA members to discuss and collaborate within their area of interest. A SIG Chair's primary duty is to facilitate this communication through various venues during the year.

The SIG Chair Role

- Chairs must be members of the SIG to apply for the role
- Chairs are elected every year in the spring for a 3-year term
    - New Chairs are announced at the PAS conference
- SIGs should aim to have 2 or 3 Co-Chairs so there is always someone experienced on the leadership team

Duties as Chair

- Coordinate and facilitate a SIG meeting at the annual PAS conference
    - Goal is for each SIG to meet at least 2 out of every 3 years
    - Once every 3 years, each SIG should partner with another SIG to put on a shared meeting at PAS; this grows connections between members
- Provide additional opportunities for meaningful communication among SIG members. This may consist of:
    - An **active** (multiple posts a month) community board or listserv [OR]
    - Meetings, webinars, or workshops throughout the year
- Prepare and submit an annual report on SIG activities for APA leadership

Resources

- Quarterly meetings with APA staff, SIG leadership and all SIG Chairs
- APA staff are available to help set up Webinars (form on website)
- Each SIG receives an annual stipend of up to $500. This may be used for:
    - Speaker fees/honoraria
    - SIG awards
    - Educational materials
    - Supplies for SIG meetings