

## AHRD Special Interest Group Policies

### I. Definition & Purpose

- A. A SIG is a Special Interest Group. SIGs differ from AHRD committees in that they:
  - 1. May be organized around an area to which AHRD members are making or are likely to make scholarly contributions
  - 2. Provide disciplinary õhome basesö for AHRD members with specific scholarly and/or professional interests
  - 3. Encourage scholarship, dissemination of information, and fellowship among persons of similar academic and/or professional interests
  - 4. Can offer a range of service activities, including educational sessions and social events, newsletters, web pages, professional development opportunities, and recognition programs

### II. SIG Proposals

- A. Starting a SIG begins with an individual or group drafting a proposal and submitting it via email to both the AHRD Board of Directors SIG Liaison ([SIGLiaison@ahrd.org](mailto:SIGLiaison@ahrd.org)) and the AHRD Office ([office@ahrd.org](mailto:office@ahrd.org)).
- B. The proposal must be approved by (1) the current AHRD Board SIG Liaison, (2) the past SIG Liaison, and (c) the Past AHRD President. When reviewing formal SIG proposals they will be looking for four things. The proposal should:
  - 1. Clearly articulate a statement of purpose and objectives for the SIG.
  - 2. Identify a SIG Steering Committee comprised of a minimum of five active AHRD members, including the proposal writer, who will serve as the point of contact for the AHRD Board until a chair is elected by the SIG.
  - 3. Identify at least 20 active AHRD members who endorse their support for the SIG and choose their affiliation with the SIG as part of their AHRD membership.
  - 4. Demonstrate that the full proposal has been circulated widely and reflects the collective thinking of a cross-section of members who will provide intellectual leadership and ongoing support.
- C. An individual can choose to affiliate with as many SIGs as they wish.
- D. The Steering Committee and SIG Chair are also members of the SIG and are included in the proposed SIG's membership.
- E. The proposed SIG Steering Committee can access AHRD membership information by logging into the AHRD website ([www.ahrd.org](http://www.ahrd.org)). Every AHRD member has access to the Membership Directory, which provides up-to-date information on a member's status by looking at the member's expiration date in the directory.
- F. To create a SIG, a Steering Committee must submit a proposal to both the AHRD Office ([office@ahrd.org](mailto:office@ahrd.org)) and the SIG Liaison ([SIGLiaison@ahrd.org](mailto:SIGLiaison@ahrd.org)). The SIG Liaison will notify the Steering Committee of the proposal approval.

### III. SIG Formation

- A. Upon Board approval of the SIG proposal, the SIG Steering Committee should:
1. Develop a SIG Charter using the template provided on the AHRD website ([www.ahrd.org](http://www.ahrd.org)), on the SIG page under People & Communities. SIG charters must include an agreed process for electing the SIG Steering Committee, the roles and responsibilities required of Steering Committee members, the length of time any Steering Committee member can serve, and procedures for SIG membership to challenge and remove any Steering Committee member who is not performing.
  2. Set up a SIG website within the AHRD website. This can be accomplished by working with the AHRD office ([office@ahrd.org](mailto:office@ahrd.org)). The website should include a hotlink to the SIG's Charter.
  3. Set up a SIG email listserv. This can be accomplished by working with the AHRD office ([office@ahrd.org](mailto:office@ahrd.org)). The listserv must be easily accessed through a hotlink in the SIG's AHRD website.
- B. The SIG Charter must be submitted to both the AHRD Office ([office@ahrd.org](mailto:office@ahrd.org)) and the AHRD Board SIG Liaison ([SIGLiaison@ahrd.org](mailto:SIGLiaison@ahrd.org)). It will be reviewed by (1) the current AHRD Board SIG Liaison, (2) the past SIG Liaison, and (c) the Past AHRD President. The SIG Board Liaison will notify the Steering Committee of the SIG Charter ratification.
- C. The AHRD Board of Directors may authorize a SIG to exist for up to three years, at which time the AHRD Board or a subcommittee will review the SIG's activities and membership numbers. In instances where documentation shows the SIG is accomplishing its charter, the charter will be ratified for another three years. In instances where documentation shows the SIG is not accomplishing its charter, the charter may be conditionally ratified or revoked by the AHRD Board.
- D. The AHRD Board may revoke a SIG's Charter at any time.

#### IV. Day-to-Day SIG Operations

- A. SIG membership can determine the SIG Steering Committee's role in planning and conducting SIG activities. The AHRD Board requires that the Steering Committee:
1. Verify at least 20 SIG members' active AHRD membership by logging into the AHRD website ([www.ahrd.org](http://www.ahrd.org)). Every AHRD member has access to the Membership Directory, which provides up-to-date information on a member's status by looking at the member's expiration date in the directory.
  2. Ensure maintenance of the SIG listserv and website that fosters networking, discussion, and learning for the SIG members.
  3. Facilitate SIG sponsorship of at least one activity at the annual AHRD International Research Conference in the Americas.
  4. Foster scholarship, dissemination of information, and fellowship among SIG members.
- B. Each SIG is expected to be autonomous, responsible for its own self-governance (e.g., election of the SIG Chair and Steering Committee, planning and conducting SIG activities). Once the SIG Charter is ratified by the AHRD Board, the AHRD Board will support SIG initiatives with minimal requirements. The AHRD Board may occasionally stipulate that some SIG rules, procedures, and processes be common across all SIGs to ensure consistency.

- C. Twice a year (February 1, September 1) each SIG Chair must submit a SIG Activities Report summarizing substantive activities related to the SIG's programs, membership, contributions to the community-of-practice, and unique elements of the SIG's focus. This report should demonstrate successful progress and/or achievement of the SIG's goals, growth in membership, and support for the AHRD strategic plan. It should also identify any items requiring AHRD Board action or issues/questions the SIG would like addressed by the AHRD Board. A template for this report can be found on the AHRD website ([www.ahrd.org](http://www.ahrd.org)), on the SIG page under People & Communities. In instances where a SIG does not provide the report in a timely manner, the AHRD Board may revoke the SIG's Charter.

## V. SIG Budget

- A. AHRD will allocate funds in its annual budget to support the on-going activities of the SIGs. Each SIG with a membership of at least 20 active AHRD members upon the SIG's anniversary date will be supported by this budget. SIGs can also submit a request to the Board to support an innovative SIG initiative that advances the SIG and the AHRD mission. Requests for such funding should include a budget and a justification that shows how the initiative will advance AHRD mission and projected revenue when appropriate. All SIG expenditures are subject to the AHRD board review as part of the annual budget review process
- B. Once the SIG Charter is ratified, the SIG can request funds through the AHRD Board SIG Liaison ([SIGLiaison@ahrd.org](mailto:SIGLiaison@ahrd.org)). To access funds from AHRD, the expense request must be submitted in advance for approval by (1) the current AHRD Board SIG Liaison, (2) the past SIG Liaison, and (3) the Past AHRD President.
- C. At any time, a SIG can submit to the AHRD Board a proposal for an additional amount beyond the annual fiscal year allocation.
- D. Each SIG's budget will be held by the AHRD Office.
- E. Each SIG can generate revenue through its own events and/or initiatives. That revenue can be carried in the SIG's budget indefinitely.

## VI. SIG Affiliation

- A. A current AHRD member may affiliate with any SIG through her or his profile in the Membership Directory on the AHRD website.
- B. The AHRD Membership policy identifies options for SIG affiliation.

## VII. SIG Leadership

- A. The AHRD Board SIG Liaison ([SIGLiaison@ahrd.org](mailto:SIGLiaison@ahrd.org)) is appointed by the AHRD President.
- B. All full, regular AHRD members are encouraged to actively participate in SIG leadership. SIG leadership must be affiliated with the SIG through her or his member profile on the AHRD web site.
- C. Each SIG determines the composition of its Steering Committee (e.g., number, roles). Steering Committee members are elected by AHRD members affiliated with the SIG. Other officers may be elected and other SIG-specific committees appointed by the SIG Steering Committee as deemed appropriate and necessary to accomplish SIG goals. SIG policies should ensure the

maximal number of AHRD members have the opportunity to participate in SIG leadership. The SIG Steering Committee will divide roles and responsibilities among themselves by consensus.

- D. SIG Chair(s) are members of the SIG Steering committee. The AHRD members affiliated with the SIG elect the Chair(s) to lead SIG activities and serve as point of contact to the AHRD Board.
- E. Election of SIG leadership will occur annually with at least three Steering Committee slots up for election every year and the SIG Chair(s) position up for election every other year. Steering Committee members, including SIG Chair(s), are elected for a term of two years. Terms begin in April.
- F. Steering Committee members, including the SIG Chair(s), are limited to serving two consecutive terms, but may be re-nominated and re-elected after sitting out one election cycle.

#### VIII. Disbanding a SIG

- A. At any time, AHRD members affiliating with a SIG can vote to disband the SIG. This can be accomplished through the AHRD Office, so that all those AHRD members affiliating with the SIG can vote. Once a majority of SIG members vote to disband, the SIG Chair will send the AHRD Board a motion to disband the SIG. The AHRD Board will communicate the motion to the general AHRD membership via notice in the monthly the AHRD Digest to solicit any relevant feedback. In the first AHRD Board meeting 30 days after the notice in the AHRD Digest, the Board will vote on the motion of whether to disband the SIG.
- B. The AHRD Board or a subcommittee annually reviews each SIG's activities and membership numbers. In instances where documentation shows the SIG is not accomplishing its charter (e.g., sponsoring a conference session, maintaining its website, coordinating activities) or maintaining affiliation of at least 20 AHRD members, the Board may move to revoke the SIG's charter, thereby disbanding the SIG. The Board may put in place a performance improvement plan, whereby the SIG may improve its standing over a six-month timespan. The Board may also move to not renew a SIG's charter, thereby disbanding the SIG.
- C. If the Board moves to revoke or not renew a SIG's Charter, the Board will communicate the motion to the general AHRD membership via notice in the monthly the AHRD Digest to solicit any relevant feedback. In the first AHRD Board meeting 30 days after the notice in the AHRD Digest, the Board will vote on the motion to disband the SIG.
- D. If the AHRD Board approves the motion to disband, the SIG is disbanded. The AHRD Board will notify all AHRD members affiliating with the SIG that the SIG is disbanded, with encouragement for those members to join another SIG.
- E. Any funds remaining in the disbanded SIG's budget will return to the general AHRD fund. The SIG's annual budget allocation will stop.
- F. A disbanded SIG cannot be re-established for at least one year.

G. This policy supersedes any language in an individual SIG's Charter.

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