

# Guidelines for Internet Society special interest groups and standing groups

# Guidelines for

## Internet Society

### Special Interest Groups and Standing Groups

#### 1. Definitions

Special interest groups (SIGs) and standing groups (SGs) are groups of Internet Society members who collaborate on topics and themes for which they share a common interest and/or expertise in view of advancing the Internet Society's vision and mission.

The SGs' focus areas are more permanent in nature and will therefore remain active as long as they provide value to the members.

SIGs and SGs will be working groups of interested Internet Society members but not a separate legal entity.

#### 2. SIG/SG topics

The topics of the five (5) SIGs are identified every two (2) years and are based on a process during which Internet Society members are invited to submit and then vote on SIG topics.

The 5 topics that get the highest number of votes from the Internet Society community of members will become SIG topics for 2 years, after which a new round of topic proposal and voting will be organized to



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ensure the SIG topics remain timely and of interest to a majority of Internet Society members. After the 2 year cycle, an existing topic can continue for additional cycles if they are among the top 5 votes received.

For at least the first two years under the new model, there will be three SGs on Accessibility, Youth and Gender. Any change to that list will have to be made based on a set of criteria that will be developed in collaboration with a volunteer working group over the next two years.

### 3. Membership

All Internet Society members are free to join and participate in one or several of the SIGs and SGs. This can be in addition to their chapter membership, if any.

Members can join SIGs and SGs via the Internet Society Member Portal.

As part of the SIG/SG join process, all members are asked to read and adhere to:

- These SIG and SG guidelines
- The Internet Society's code of conduct

A breach of any of the above can lead to a member seeing his/her membership with the SIG/SG or even the Internet Society being terminated.

### 4. Leadership

Each SIG/SG has a leadership group comprised of the following positions to lead the group's work: a lead facilitator, vice facilitator, and secretary. Groups can also select up to three additional board members.

- **Lead Facilitator:** The facilitator (or Chair for the Accessibility Standing Group) leads the work of the SIG/SG and is the primary liaison between the SIG/SG, Internet Society staff and SIG members. The lead facilitator typically organizes and leads SIG/SG meetings and ensures the SIG's/SG's work and functioning is in line with these guidelines and according to the scope and goals of the SIG/SG.



- **Vice Facilitator:** The vice facilitator (or Vice-Chairs for Accessibility Standing Group) assists the lead facilitator in their duties and will assume these duties in the absence of the lead facilitator. Regional diversity between the lead facilitator and the vice facilitator is highly encouraged.
- **Secretary:** The secretary acts as custodian for SIG/SG documents, is responsible for the scheduling and operation of SIG/SG meetings in coordination with the facilitator /vice facilitator (Chair/ Vice-Chairs for Accessibility Standing Group). The secretary is also in charge of keeping minutes for meetings.
- Additional **Board Member(s):** Groups can have up to three additional board members serving as more generalists in the leadership

Elections for these positions will be held among each group's membership at the beginning of each SIG's/SG's 2-year term. All SIG/SG members are eligible to be candidates for one of these positions, but should not be holding other Internet Society leadership positions, including Board of Trustees, SIGs, SGs or Internet Society chapters at the same time.

The election of the SIG/SG leadership group shall be carried out by the Internet Society staff liaison using appropriate electronic voting software. The Internet Society staff liaison will be responsible for establishing, supervising, and overseeing the entire election process, posting a call for volunteers, set up the electronic voting and monitoring the transparency of the process.

SIG/SG leadership terms are usually for two years. However, a SIG/SG can request for additional elections in between if a position became vacant.

Each SIG/SG can decide, as appropriate, to put in place a number of committees to work on specific aspects of their action plan.

## 5. SIG/SG activities

Each SIG and SG will be requested to submit an annual action plan with concrete deliverables as well as a corresponding budget at the beginning of each calendar year and according to the template and timeline communicated by Internet Society staff.

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All SIG/SG activities need to be aligned with the scope and goals as defined during the SIG topic submission period.

A committee composed of volunteer community representatives will review and evaluate the submitted action plans and budgets. Internet Society will approve final action plans and budgets as well as conduct due diligence related to vendors.

## **6. SIG/SG budget**

SIGs/SGs submit their action plans together with a budget that will help them carry out their activities that will be reviewed and approved according to the process described under point “5. SIG/SG activities” above.

The Internet Society staff liaison will work closely with the SIG/SG leaders to oversee budgets. Internet Society staff will conduct due diligence of suggested third-party vendors, approve vendors, contract with vendors and ensure timely execution of payments of third-party vendors according to the action plans. Payments will be made by Internet Society staff. The approved budget will not be transferred to the SIG/SG directly since they are no formal entities and do not have a bank account in the name of the SIG/SG.

Internet Society staff will validate the third-party vendors proposed by the SIGs/SGs through the same process used for Internet Society activities and expenses. Any vendors need to contract directly with the Internet Society and provide information through a vendor setup form along with bank account information & applicable tax form (such as W-9), and need to meet necessary legal requirements.

## **7. Communications and meetings**

The Internet Society will set up an online community for each SIG and SG that will support the communication, collaboration and engagement with and between the group’s members. Given the global nature of the SIGs and SGs, these communities are a key platform to enable asynchronous work across different time zones.



Meetings of the SIGs and SGs will be held online and the times of the calls will have to be set in respect with the member's preference and availability.

The main working language of the SIGs/SGs is English. Interpretation and translation can be organized by the SIGs/SGs as needed and budget to enable this should be included in the budget request as outlined under point "6. SIG/SG budget".

## **8. Decisions**

SIGs and SGs leadership are encouraged to make decisions, such as approving plans and budgets, by consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached, then a vote by members can be organized. In case of a vote, the quorum shall be fifteen per cent (15%) of the total number of members of a SIG/SG.

Given the global scope of the SIGs/SGs, any decisions taken (either based on a consensus or a vote) should involve members from at least three out of the six Internet Society regions.

## **9. Reporting**

Each SIG/SG is required to submit an annual report at the end of each year documenting the activities and actions of the group.

## **10. Removal of SIG/SG members and or leaders**

As stated in point "3. Membership", members and/or leaders of a SIG/SG can be removed from a SIG/SG by Internet Society staff if they violate:

- These SIG and SG guidelines
- The Internet Society's code of conduct

## **11. Resignations and replacements**

SIG/SG leaders may resign from their position, but remain a member of the SIG/SG in question.

When a SIG/SG leader resigns (or is deemed to have resigned), then the lead facilitator will invite the Internet Society staff liaison to organize the call for nominations and election process of a replacement

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member. The procedure for nomination and election process will be the same as the one described in point “4. Leadership”, except that the number of people to be elected will be smaller.

The replacement member will serve the remainder of the term.

## 12. Non-exclusive trademark use of Logo for SIGs and SGs

The Internet Society (ISOC) is the owner of all trademark rights in the ISOC formative logo, which is registered with trademark offices around the world (“the ISOC Logo”). ISOC allows its working group members, SIGs and SGs, to use the ISOC Logo solely as part of their work on behalf of ISOC.

This approved use of the ISOC Logo is a non-exclusive, worldwide, non-transferable right (without any right to sublicense) to use the ISOC Logo, and the SIG/SG logo incorporating the ISOC Logo as shown [here](#) (“the SIG/SG ISOC Logo”), on work projects approved by ISOC. The ISOC Logo and the SIG/SG ISOC Logo must be displayed in a manner that is approved by ISOC and must include all legends, markings and notices requested by ISOC to give appropriate notice of ISOC’s intellectual property rights.

Although SIG/SG members have the right to use the ISOC Logo and the SIG/SG ISOC Logo for ISOC-approved activities, ISOC is the sole and exclusive owner of the ISOC Logo and the SIG/SG ISOC Logo. Use of the ISOC Logo and the SIG ISOC Logo by working members will not create any additional right, title or interest in the ISOC Logo and the SIG/SG ISOC Logo. No SIG/SG members are allowed to use the ISOC Logo and the SIG/SG ISOC Logo after the members are finished with their work for ISOC or if the right to use the Logo was revoked by ISOC.

The approved SIG/SG Logos are available here: <https://assets.internetsociety.org/>

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## 13. Amendments to these guidelines

Internet Society staff reserves the right to review and update these guidelines periodically and based on community feedback that can be submitted via [sig-support@isoc.org](mailto:sig-support@isoc.org).

