

# Generic Rules for Interest Groups

Post 2017 AGM





# GENERIC RULES FOR INTEREST GROUPS

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**GENERIC RULES FOR INTEREST GROUPS**  
**OF**  
**THE AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY LIMITED**  
ABN 23 000 543 788

**1. PRELIMINARY**

1.1 These Generic Rules are subject to the Constitution of The Australian Psychological Society Limited (the "Society").

1.2 Unless the context otherwise indicates or requires:

- (a) all words and terms contained in these Generic Rules and defined in the said Constitution will have the same meaning as in the Constitution; and
- (b) these Generic Rules will be interpreted in accordance with the interpretation provisions contained in the Constitution.

1.3 Throughout these Generic Rules, unless the context otherwise indicates or requires, the following words will have the following meanings:

**"AGM"** means the Annual General Meeting of the membership of the Interest Group;

**"Board"** means the Board of Directors of the Society, as constituted from time to time;

**"Casual Vacancy"** means a vacancy arising (for any reason) in a committee position at any time during an incumbent's term of office;

**"Committee Members"** means those members elected to positions on the Interest Group committee in accordance with Rule 8;

**"Convener"** means the convener of the National Committee appointed in accordance with Rule 8;

**"Coordinator"** means the Coordinator of a State Subcommittee appointed by the National Committee in accordance with Rule 10;

**"Generic Rules"** means these Generic Rules for Interest Groups made in accordance with the Constitution and as amended from time to time;

**"Interest Group"** means a Constituent Unit established pursuant to Rules 3, 4 and 5, to support Members of the Society who have a special interest;

**"Interest Group Conveners' Forum"** means the group convened by the Board comprising the Interest Group Conveners or their nominees;

**"Member Groups Committee Manual"** means the manual of the Society setting out procedures for Branches, Colleges and Interest Groups;

**"National Committee"** means the national committee of an Interest Group constituted in accordance with Rule 8;

**"National Office"** means the registered office of the Society or such other office of which the Society may notify an Interest Group from time to time;

**"Office Bearer"** means an Office Bearer of an Interest Group elected in accordance with Rule 8;

**"Secretary"** means the secretary of the National Committee elected in accordance with Rule 8;

**"Standing Orders"** means the Standing Orders of the Board of Directors for the conduct of the business of the Society as may be amended from time to time;

**"State"** means a State or Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia;

**"State Subcommittee"** means a State-based committee of an Interest Group referred to in Rule 10;

**"Treasurer"** means the treasurer of the National Committee appointed in accordance with Rule 8;

**“Written Notice”** means written notification of committee meetings through post, email or text message.

1.4 Alterations and additions to these Generic Rules may only be made by the Society in general meeting.

1.5 A copy of the Generic Rules will be available through the Society’s website at all times.

## **2. ROLE**

2.1 An Interest Group is concerned with a special interest in emerging areas of professional practice, particular content areas, social issues or groups.

## **3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTS**

3.1 As a Constituent Unit of the Society, an Interest Group’s primary purpose must always be to act in the best interests of the Society, including being integral to the pursuit of the Society’s mission and objectives.

3.2 An Interest Group has four (4) further objectives:

- (a) to implement the strategic plan of the Society as it applies to an Interest Group;
- (b) to support coalitions of members in pursuit of special interests within the Society;
- (c) to aid in forming and maintaining liaison among them;
- (d) to provide advice to the Society as needed on issues related to the Interest Group’s area of interest.

## **4. PROCEDURES FOR FORMATION**

4.1 A proposal to establish an Interest Group, containing such information and details as are necessary to demonstrate the manner in which the criteria in Rule 5 will be met, will be presented to the Executive Director of the Society who will consult with the Interest Group Conveners’ Forum. If the proposal is supported, it will be forwarded to the Board. If the proposal is not supported, the proposer may appeal to the Board.

4.2 The Board will consider the proposal in accordance with the criteria in Rule 5 and, if the Board is in favour of such proposal, will forward the proposal to the next annual general meeting of the Society for consideration and approval pursuant to clause 41 of the Society’s Constitution.

4.3 Following the establishment of an Interest Group, the Executive Director of the Society or nominee will arrange for the election of Office Bearers for the Interest Group. Once all Office Bearers have been elected, the Interest Group will be formally established as an Interest Group and will be recognised as such by the Society.

## **5. CRITERIA FOR FORMATION**

5.1 The Board may recommend the formation of an Interest Group, to an annual general meeting of the Society when, in the opinion of the Board, the following conditions have been met:

- (a) **Area**
  - (i) The area of interest is of more than local concern, and not subsumed under any existing Constituent Unit of the Society.
  - (ii) The area of interest and the specific aims and objectives of the proposed Interest Group are deemed by the Board to be appropriate for the Society, with this decision to be made on a case-by-case basis.
  - (iii) The group should either be, or clearly have the potential to become, a nationally based group.

- (b) **Name**
  - (i) The name of a proposed Interest Group will be "The APS Interest Group on <INSERT SPECIFIC AREA>". The name should not imply exclusion of any members, and should include the word "Psychology" in its title.
- (c) **Members**
  - (i) The proposal is accompanied by the signatures of not less than twenty (20) Elected Members holding the membership grades of Honorary Fellows, Fellows, or Members of the Society, from more than one State, indicating intended membership of the Interest Group.
- (d) **Membership**
  - (i) Membership of the proposed Interest Group is open to all Members of the Society;
  - (ii) Interest Groups can opt to have subscribers who are not Members of the Society whose costs are covered by an annual subscription and who have no voting or office bearing rights.
  - (iii) Membership records for Society members and non-Society subscribers of Interest Groups are maintained by the National Office.

## 6. RESIGNATION

- 6.1 Any Interest Group member may resign from an Interest Group by lodging at the National Office a signed statement to that effect. The resignation will be recorded and forwarded to the Interest Group Convener.

## 7. ORGANISATION

- 7.1 An Interest Group will establish:
  - (a) a National Committee which will conduct the business of an Interest Group;
  - (b) such State sub-committees and working groups as are considered necessary or desirable for fulfilling the purposes of an Interest Group.

## 8. COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS

- 8.1 The National Committee will comprise:
  - (a) Office Bearers
    - (i) Convener,
    - (ii) Secretary,
    - (iii) Treasurer and
  - (b) Committee Members
    - Up to six (6) Committee Members elected by the membership of the Interest Group.
- 8.2 The roles and responsibilities of Office Bearers and Committee Members are as defined in the Member Groups Committee Manual.
- 8.3 Up to three (3) additional members of the Interest Group may be appointed to the National Committee whom members of the National Committee may see fit to appoint.
- 8.4 The Office Bearers and Committee Members will be elected for a two (2) year term, by ballot, by Interest Group members.
- 8.5 Only elected members of the Society, namely those holding the grade of Honorary Fellow, Fellow, Member or Associate Member may hold Office Bearer positions on a Committee and exercise voting rights.

- 8.6 The maximum period permitted to serve as an Office Bearer or Committee Member, or a combination of both, on a National Committee is four (4) sequential years.
- 8.7 (a) The National Committee will have the power to co-opt members to fill any unfilled or Casual Vacancy until next AGM.
- (b) Notwithstanding Rule 8.6, in circumstances where a Casual Vacancy occurs and there is, at that time, no other Interest Group member available to serve except for a National member having, in the same year, already completed the maximum of four (4) sequential years, the National Committee may, but only then, co-opt that member to fill the Casual Vacancy.
- (c) A person co-opted to fill a Casual Vacancy under (c) above and who serves one (1) year or less in that position, may disregard that period of service for the purpose of calculating their maximum sequential years of service on a National Committee. For the avoidance of doubt, the period served as a co-opted Committee Member will re-set the commencement of sequential years of service on the Committee to zero.
- 8.8 Subject to Rule 8.5, appointed members of an Interest Group committee will have the same rights and responsibilities as Office Bearers and Committee Members.
- 8.9 Nomination and election of the National Committee will be as provided in Rule 9.
- 8.10 In addition to the circumstances specified in the Constitution, the office of a member of the National Committee will become vacant if such a member of the National Committee:
- (a) resigns his or her office by notice in writing to the Secretary;
- (b) is absent for more than six (6) months from meetings of the National Committee held during that period without permission of the National Committee; or
- (c) ceases to be a Member Entitled to Hold Office;
- 8.11 A paid employee of the Society, whilst eligible to be appointed or co-opted to an Interest Group Committee, is not eligible to be elected, appointed or co-opted as an Office Bearer and is not entitled to exercise voting rights.
- 8.12 All members of the National Committee and State Subcommittee must adhere to the Member Group Committee Code of Conduct as set out in the Standing Orders.
- 9. NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCEDURES**
- 9.1 The call for nominations and the conduct of elections for Office Bearers and Committee Members will be in accordance with the procedures set out in the Member Groups Committee Manual.
- 10. STATE SUBCOMMITTEES**
- 10.1 A State Subcommittee may be formed as part of the National Committee to support continuing professional development and other activities in the State.
- 10.2 The National Committee will appoint a Coordinator to oversee a State Subcommittee.
- 10.3 The State Coordinator will be appointed as a member of the National Committee.
- 10.4 A State Subcommittee of the National Committee will be subject to any and all directions given by the National Committee from time to time.
- 11. MEETINGS OF AN INTEREST GROUP**
- 11.1 An Interest Group may hold meetings, public meetings, seminars, courses and conferences.
- 11.2 Meetings of the National Committee of an Interest Group will be called by the Convener or, in the absence of the Convener, by the Secretary, as and when necessary, but not less than three (3) times throughout the financial year of the Society. One of these meetings will be face-to-face.

- 11.3 The AGM should be held approximately twelve (12) months, but not more than eighteen (18) months, following the previous AGM, and will whenever possible be held during the period between October and December each calendar year.
- 11.4 The quorum for the AGM is five (5) members eligible to vote.
- 11.5 All members wishing to vote in relation to nominations for contested National Committee positions at the Interest Group AGM must do so in person.
- 11.6 Each committee will cause minutes of meetings to be kept.
- 11.7 A National Committee will cause minutes to be kept of its meetings and of the meetings of its subcommittees and its working parties.
- 11.8 The admission of non-members of the Interest Group to activities will be at the discretion of the National Committee.

## **12. INTEREST GROUP PUBLICATIONS**

- 12.1 An Interest Group may publish a newsletter, after approval by the Board of the initial publication of that newsletter.
- 12.2 The Convener of an Interest Group in consultation with the other Office Bearers will oversee the publications of the Interest Group.
- 12.3 The National Committee will manage the Interest Group's website, bulk email and social media channels as outlined in the Member Groups Committee Manual.

## **13. ACTIVITIES**

- 13.1 Each Interest Group should acknowledge its status as a unit of the Society in all materials, with inclusion of the Society's logo, name and ABN number.
- 13.2 All media releases made by Interest Groups must be approved by the Executive Director of the Society and such other person appointed by the Board prior to release.
- 13.3 All submissions made by an Interest Group must be ratified by the Board, or if time does not allow, by the Executive Director of the Society and such other Director or person appointed by the Board.
- 13.4 An Interest Group is to hold a minimum of three (3) continuing professional development events or other types of activities or communications for the members of the Interest Group in each calendar year.

## **14. POWERS, DUTIES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTEREST GROUP COMMITTEES**

- 14.1 The Interest Group will be subject to any directions from the Board. The property and affairs of the Interest Group will be managed by the National Committee and, in so far as practicable, will do so in the same manner as the Board is required to do in relation to the Society as a whole.
- 14.2 No Interest Group or member of an Interest Group shall enter into a contract on behalf of the Society which purports to legally bind the Society and all contracts must be forwarded to the National Office for consideration and review.
- 14.3 The Secretary, at the request of the Convener or any three (3) members of the National Committee may at any time convene a meeting of the National Committee by giving at least seven (7) days written notice to all members of the Committee.

- 14.4 An extraordinary or emergency meeting of the National Committee may be convened on less than seven (7) days written notice with the approval of the Convener providing that all reasonable efforts have been made to so notify all members of the National Committee of the meeting, including the nature of the business to be discussed, and at least two-thirds (2/3) of the National Committee members have acknowledged receipt of the notice to the Secretary.
- 14.5 The Interest Group Convener or an appointed proxy from the National Committee is expected to attend the Interest Group Conveners' Forum on a date as determined by the Board.

## **15. FINANCE**

- 15.1 An Interest Group may receive an annual allocation of funds which will reflect the number of members within the Interest Group as well as the expected functions for the Interest Group.
- 15.2 Allocation 'rules' are as set out in the Standing Orders of the Board of Directors.
- 15.3 The administration of Interest Group finances will be conducted through the National Office.
- 15.4 An Interest Group committee will ensure that funds are used for activities that benefit the Interest Group and its members and income and expenditure are such that the Interest Group maintains an operationally viable level of funds.
- 15.5 The National Treasurer will be the person authorised to monitor Interest Group finances, approve all Interest Group and State Subcommittee expenditure as directed by the National Committee and must abide by procedures and policies as outlined in the Member Groups Committee Manual.

## **16. REPORTS**

- 16.1 Each committee will review expenditure of the Interest Group's funds at each committee meeting, and approve the financial report to be presented by the Treasurer at the Interest Group AGM.
- 16.2 Each committee will present an Annual Report at their AGM.
- 16.3 An Interest Group Convener must submit by the end of February an Annual Report of the Interest Group's activities for the previous twelve (12) month period to the Member Group team at the National Office to enable it to report to the Board.
- 16.4 An Interest Group from time to time may be required to present further reports as requested by the Board.
- 16.5 The Interest Group Convener or an appointed proxy from the National Committee is expected to attend the annual Interest Group Conveners' Forum on a date as determined by the Board.

## **17. DISSOLUTION**

- 17.1 If at any time it is desired to abolish an Interest Group, to sub-divide an Interest Group or to amalgamate an Interest Group with one (1) or more Interest Groups, meetings of the Interest Group or Interest Groups concerned will be called for the purpose of considering a resolution to (as applicable) abolish, sub-divide or amalgamate an Interest Group or Interest Groups.
- 17.2 Resolutions to abolish, subdivide or amalgamate an Interest Group passed at such meetings will be reported by the Secretary of the Interest Group concerned to the next meeting of the Interest Group Conveners' Forum and, if approved by that body, will be referred to the next meeting of the Board for ratification. The resolutions thus ratified will take effect immediately. Should the Board notify the Interest Group of their disapproval of all or any of the resolutions, they will be considered by a general meeting of the Society and the decision of such meeting will be final.
- 17.3 (a) Any Interest Group which does not maintain an adequate level of functioning and a minimum activity level over a twelve (12) month period, in accordance within the various provisions of the Generic Rules, will be suspended by the Board.

- (b) A suspended Interest Group will be required to liaise with the Executive Director of the Society in order to determine whether:
  - (i) it is likely that it will subsequently become viable and if so, to formulate a developmental plan to achieve this objective; or
  - (ii) it is unlikely to become viable in which case the Board may resolve to disband the Interest Group.