



## **Guideline on ISoP Special Interest Groups (SIGs)**

### **What is a Special Interest Group?**

A Special Interest Group or 'SIG' is a group of ISoP members acting as volunteers and working on a specific topic relevant to the scope and aims of ISoP. SIGs are not regionally limited and may engage non-ISoP members with special expertise in the topic concerned. A SIG may work together on its specific topic with other groups, associations or societies outside of ISoP, after agreement by the Executive Committee (EC).

SIGs **are considered to be working groups** and do not have their own statutes but shall agree in writing to abide with ISoP bylaws and the constitution.

SIG members designate **by common agreement** a coordinator or lead person who is required to co-operate closely with the ISoP Education & Training Program group (ETP; for details see website) and the ISoP Secretariat.

The SIG can use the name and emblem of ISoP.

### **Advantages of joining a SIG**

Membership of a SIG has numerous advantages, such as advancing research interests, contributing to publications, developing and promoting scientific standards, becoming part of a professional community and expanding one's network in areas of interest. The ISoP SIGs are here to progress the safe use of medicines for the benefit of patients.

ISoP SIGs enable ISoP members to be personally involved in developing documents, opinions, statements which may become official and public ISoP documents. **Such documents must be adopted by the EC prior release or publication.** In some cases, it may be appropriate for ISoP

that SIGs develop specific programmes of support, e.g. supporting conferences, symposia, training courses or workshops. SIGs may have an opportunity to present their activities at Annual Meetings or other ISoP events, with prior approval of the meeting's scientific committee (see below).

SIGs may receive administrative support through the ISoP Secretariat, e.g. organizing tele/video-conferences.

### **Conditions for establishing a SIG and duration of term**

A SIG can be created by at least five ISoP members to discuss and work on a specific and relevant topic which is within the scope and aims of ISoP. SIGs should be approved and established formally by the Executive Committee (EC), their duration of term is not limited.

Within the regular review of SIG activities by the EC, continuation of work of a SIG should be confirmed, or, if justified and legitimate, be terminated by agreement through the EC.

SIG members are encouraged to collaborate in the recruitment of members in sufficient numbers to make SIGs viable. They retain an overall commitment to act as important sources of the information that helps achieve ISoP's mission.

### **How does the ISoP EC approve a SIG?**

For the ISoP EC, in order to approve a SIG, the following points need to be addressed in a submission to the ISoP EC either by affirming commitment or demonstrating evidence:

The proposed SIG must be able demonstrate its determination, diligence and competence to work on their specific topic and the discipline of pharmacovigilance.

**The proposed SIG should have clearly defined objectives and give a summary in their application to the ISoP EC. This submission could be organised and supported by the ISoP SIGs coordinator (see description below).**

At least 5 ISoP members are needed to form a SIG.

The SIG must be organised to be able to fulfil its deliverables. The SIG must be able to extend its activities to such as meetings and training courses.

Each SIG designates **by common agreement** a coordinator leader – continued member of ISoP - who ensures the SIG's activities, and keep its records, for communication with the EC. These SIG Officers are typically appointed within the SIG, and the EC is informed accordingly.

The SIG and its members adhere to and continuously act in accordance with the active ISoP constitution and bylaws. As a first step, an understanding is reached between the ISoP EC and a group of persons (individuals or an existing organization) that a group will work towards forming a SIG of ISoP. The SIG will receive a communication from the President of ISoP recognizing this group as the "SIG xyz" of ISoP. At this stage, the SIG coordinator may use the ISoP name or logo, but may not, unless specifically authorised to do so by the EC, speak on behalf of ISoP. Subsequently, the formation of a specific SIG will be announced in the 'ISoP Star' Newsletter and at the forthcoming Annual General Assembly.

### **The ISoP Global SIG Coordinator**

As per the By-laws Article 9, a global SIGs coordinator is appointed by the EC from the members of ISoP Board once elected during the normal three-year cycle.

Key aspects of this role are as follows:

- Explore areas which may benefit from setting-up a SIG
- Review and evaluate SIG creation proposals received from ISoP members,
- Evaluate the SIG creation proposals and submit them to the Board.
- Whenever creating a new SIG is endorsed by the EC, support setting it up until formally launched and proven to be running smoothly
- Provide support and suggestions to SIGs following the review of periodic roadmap updates
- Provide SIGs support and encouragement in writing articles in the Official journal of the Society *Drug Safety*

The ISoP SIGs Coordinator will also have the following responsibilities:

- Be available to provide support and guidance to SIGs both during start-up and on an ongoing basis.
- Ensure through regular communication with each SIG leadership team that each SIG is supported and is active
- Report back to the EC
- Verbal or written update as necessary at EC meetings
- Written update at mid-year training if not present in person
- In person at the Annual Meeting AB meeting
- Meet with each SIG on a frequency TBD with each SIG.
- Update the website and promote the SIGs

### **Oversight of SIGs and regular review by ISoP EC**

The ISoP EC will intermittently review the activities of SIGs to ensure that the quality and integrity of SIGs is acceptably high. Such procedures are developed to empower meaningful activities while retaining an overall commitment to the joint achievement of ISoP's common mission. The objective is to achieve effective and accountable SIGs.

The EC will assist in any reasonable way with the functioning of SIGs. Where weaknesses are identified, at any time, they should be addressed jointly and constructively, with a primary view to strengthening the position and work of the SIG.

### **Expectations for SIGs**

The activities of SIGs should strengthen ISoP as a whole by being consistent with the stated aims of ISoP.

The EC retains the responsibility of checking that SIGs abide by acceptable standards of conduct as defined in the bylaws. The EC reserves the right to withdraw recognition of SIGs and permission for the SIG to use the ISoP name.

All SIG leaders will manage secretariat and communications in their groups by themselves. If not feasible, leaders can nominate someone else in the group to take care of communication on their behalf.

### **Contributions of external experts to SIGs**

Although it is desirable that all SIG members are also paid-up ISoP members, it is acceptable for certain subject matter experts who are not ISoP members to support the goals and activities of a SIG.

### **Contribution of SIGs to the Annual Meeting**

SIGs contribute to the annual meeting in a number of ways. Discussion on a particular SIG topic at the meeting can generate interest and discussion from new ISoP members and other experts and support the continued growth of the SIG. Contributions may take the form of a pre-conference training course, a stand-alone podium presentation or an entire session.

SIGs are encouraged to submit abstracts for oral/poster presentations for the annual meeting, following the normal abstract submission process.

The ISoP annual meeting is also a great opportunity to launch new SIGs.

Anyone wishing to join one of the SIGs should feel free to contact the respective SIG leader at the ISoP contact email (administration@isoponline.org). Further information is also available on the ISoP website (<http://isoponline.org/specialinterest-groups/>).

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