# SIG Guidelines

## About this document

This is a working document. It will be reviewed frequently and updated as processes are refined.

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# 1. Definitions

## 1.1. SIG

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) provide an open public forum to discuss topics of interest to APNIC and the Internet community in the Asia Pacific region. SIG sessions are held at APNIC Open Policy

Meetings. Between meetings, discussions continue via subscription-based SIG mailing lists (archived on the APNIC website). SIGs are open to all interested participants.

## 1.2. SIG charter

A SIG charter is a short description of the SIG's purpose and related activities.

## 1.3. BoF

Birds of a Feather meetings (BoFs) are informal meetings convened for a variety of purposes, such as exchanging information and discussing new ideas or particular issues. They can be proposed and convened at short notice and there is no formal requirement to submit papers or post to mailing lists.

## 1.4. WG

Working Groups (WGs) focus on a particular work item and exist only as long as it takes to complete the task(s). A working group is usually small and consists of volunteers willing to dedicate themselves to one particular task. They are formed as a result of recommendations from the SIGs. A Working Group reports back to the SIG that created it.

## 1.5. Chair

A Chair is responsible for coordinating the activities of a SIG, BoF, or WG. The role of Chair is voluntary.

## 1.6. Co-Chair

Co-Chairs work with the Chair to coordinate the activities of a SIG, BoF, or WG. The role of Co-Chair is voluntary.

## 1.7. Consensus

Consensus is achieved when everyone consents to the decision of the group. The decision may not be everyone's first preference, but is acceptable to all participants.

# 2. Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

## 2.1. Creating a SIG

The recommendation to create a new SIG may come from:

- Mailing list discussions
- An existing SIG
- APNIC Member Meeting (AMM) endorsement
- A Birds Of Feather (BOF)

After a new SIG has been recommended, the following steps must occur:

1. Hold a preliminary BoF
   A new SIG cannot be created unless a BoF has been held. The purpose of the BoF is to:
   o Determine interest in the proposed subject area
   o Find a person to volunteer as acting Chair
   o Draft a charter for the SIG

2. Seek endorsement at the AMM
   The outcomes of the BoF are reported to the AMM. The report should include the draft charter, BoF attendance numbers, the level of participant interest, and the nature of the discussions. The AMM attendees will be asked to indicate by a show of hands whether there is consensus to endorse the formation of the new SIG.
3. Create a mailing list for the SIG
   When the SIG has been endorsed, the APNIC Secretariat will create a subscriber-based mailing list for the SIG. Anyone can subscribe to a SIG mailing list.
4. Formally issue a call for SIG Chair and Co-Chair positions on the mailing list
   The APNIC Secretariat will issue a call for SIG Chair and Co-Chair positions according to the procedure described in Section 2.3.3 of this document.
5. At the first meeting of the new SIG, endorse the draft charter and elect Chair and Co-Chairs
   At the first meeting of the new SIG, the attendees will be asked to endorse the proposed charter and to formally elect the Chair and Co-Chairs for the SIG.

## 2.2. Dissolving a SIG

It is not assumed that a SIG will continue to exist indefinitely. Each SIG should periodically review its charter to assess the SIG's usefulness and relevance.

Signs that a SIG may have outlived its purpose include:

- Lack of discussion on the mailing lists for more than one year
- Lack of response to calls for presentations at SIG sessions
- Low attendance at SIG sessions

A SIG may be dissolved if the members of the SIG decide that this is an appropriate course of action and this recommendation is approved by the AMM. Members of the SIG may make the decision to dissolve the SIG via the SIG mailing list or at SIG sessions. If a SIG is dissolved, all associated mailing lists will be closed for subscription, but the public archives will remain on the APNIC website.

## 2.3. SIG Chair and Co-Chair roles

SIG Chairs and Co-Chairs perform a vital role in managing the SIGs. The effectiveness of a SIG is dependent on the active participation of the Chair and the Co-Chair. All SIG Chairs and Co-Chairs undertake their work on a volunteer basis.

SIG Chairs and Co-Chairs are expected to attend at least one of the two APNIC meetings held each year. When SIG Chairs and Co-Chairs attend an APNIC meeting, and a session is held for the SIG, they are expected to attend that session. SIG Chairs and Co-Chairs must remain subscribed to the SIG's mailing list for the duration of their term.

## 2.4. Chair responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Chair are listed below:

- Before an APNIC meeting
  - 
    - Monitor mailing list discussions
    - Call for presentation proposals on the SIG mailing list
    - Read submitted proposals
    - Accept or reject proposals for discussion at the forthcoming SIG (and suggest an alternative forum if the topic is not relevant to that particular SIG) [1]
    - After coordinating with APNIC Secretariat, announce policy proposals to mailing list
    - Liaise with speakers as necessary
- At meeting

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  - o Meet with proposal authors before the SIG
    - o
      - Read the author's slides to familiarise yourself with the proposal details (the SIG Chair should already have read the proposal text before the meeting)
      - Check if any details in the original version of the proposal have been changed in the presentation to be shown in the SIG session. If changes have been made, strongly urge the proposal author to submit an updated version of the proposal
  - o Chair the SIG session (at least one out of every two per year)
    - o
      - Create agenda presentation slides for the SIG
      - Present slides with SIG open action items. Ask parties responsible for action items to report on the action item status
      - Encourage active participant involvement
      - Guide the consensus making process (see Appendix 5.1 for consensus decision- making steps)
  - o Meet with EC members before the AMM to discuss proposals approved by consensus
  - o Read SIG session minutes and make corrections as necessary
  - o Meet with other SIG Chairs to discuss SIG matters
  - o Present SIG report to the AMM
- After meeting
  - 
    - o Send report of SIG session to SIG mailing list:
      - Include policy proposal discussion outcomes
      - Include open action items
    - o Monitor discussion during the final call for comments period
    - o Summarise discussion and, following the end of the call for comments, post the decision regarding whether the proposal has reached consensus. The Chair may delegate tasks to Co-Chairs as necessary.

## 2.5. Co-Chair responsibilities

Co-Chair tasks include but are not limited to:

- Attending at least one of the two APNIC meetings held each year. If SIG sessions are held, SIG Co-Chairs are expected to attend the sessions
- Remaining subscribed to the SIG mailing list for the duration of their time as Co-Chair
- Monitoring SIG chat-room discussions during the SIG's session at APNIC meetings
- Undertaking any of the tasks normally performed by the SIG Chair, if requested In the event that a Chair is unavailable to perform some of their duties, the Co-Chair will be expected to be the substitute as required.

## 2.6. Electing a Chair or Co-Chair

Chairs and Co-Chairs are elected for a two-year period. Elections occur yearly. Chair elections and Co-Chair elections occur in alternate years.

The first official Chair of a new SIG will serve for two years. The first official Co-Chair position for a new SIG will be open for election after one year (allowing for the staggered Chair and Co-Chair election timetable). Subsequent Co-Chairs will serve for a full two-year term.

More than one Co-Chair may be appointed, at the discretion of the Chair. The decision to hold an election for more than one Co-Chair is also at the Chair's discretion. A new Chair or Co-Chair is appointed using the following process:

1. The APNIC Secretariat sends a call for nominations to the SIG mailing list and the apnic-talk@apnic.net mailing list so that the widest coverage is received. The call contains:
   o Details of the duties of the position
   o The closing date for nominations (one month after the initial call)
   o Where to submit nominations (usually the email address of the existing Chair and sig@apnic.net)
   o A request that potential nominees should include a short biography and description of their interest
2. Candidates must confirm that they are willing and able to commit to the responsibilities associated with the Chair and Co-Chair positions.
   If a candidate is not contactable via email, or does not respond, then their nomination will not be confirmed. Unconfirmed candidates will not be eligible for election to the position of SIG Chair or Co-Chair.
3. If at least one nomination is received by the closure date, an election must be held.
   o The election must be held at the upcoming SIG session as the first item on the agenda
   o Candidates will be invited to give a short speech
   o Voting will take place by a count of a show of hands
   o Only candidates who are present at the SIG session will be included in the vote. If a current Co-Chair stands for the position of Chair and is elected, the newly vacant Co-Chair position can be filled by one of the remaining candidates for the Chair position or by a call for volunteers at the SIG session.
   o Unless new Policy SIG Chairs and Co-Chairs are required immediately, there will be a handover period. Outgoing Chairs and Co-Chairs are expected to follow proposals reaching consensus at the current OPM, to the completion of the Policy Development Process.

## 2.6.1. Removing a Chair or Co-Chair

If a SIG Chair or Co-Chair does not attend one in every two APNIC meetings and does not attend the SIG session held at the APNIC meetings they attend, the Chair or Co-Chair will be removed from their role. The process of electing a replacement will then begin.

If SIG members do not think that the Chair or Co-Chair is sufficiently performing their duties, they can express their concerns on the mailing list or in the SIG session. If there is consensus that the Chair or Co-Chair is not sufficiently performing their responsibilities, the Chair or Co-Chair will be removed. The process of electing a replacement will then begin.

## 2.6.2. Resignation of a Chair or Co-Chair

If a SIG Chair resigns, one of the Co-Chairs will assume the role of Chair until the next Open Policy Meeting. At least one month prior to the Open Policy Meeting, the APNIC Secretariat will initiate procedures for electing the new Chair as described in Section 2.3.3 of this document.

If there is no Co-Chair, the outgoing Chair or the Secretariat may appoint an acting Chair. If a Co-Chair resigns, the Chair will follow the procedure for electing a Co-Chair described in Section 2.3.3 of this document.

## 2.7. SIG presenters

SIG Chairs will issue a call for proposals for policy and informational presentations at least two months before an APNIC Open Policy Meeting.

## 2.7.1. Guidelines for presenting a policy proposal

After a minimum of four weeks of discussion on the appropriate SIG mailing list, the proposal is presented at the appropriate SIG session at the APNIC Open Policy Meeting. The aim of the presentation is to assist SIG participants understand the proposal text.

If the proposal author wishes to incorporate changes to the proposal (perhaps based on the mailing list discussion[2]), these changes must be incorporated in both the proposal text and the presentation slides. Updated versions of policy proposals can be submitted to the SIG Chair at any time.

**2.7.1.1. Suggested SIG presentation outline**

Presentations for proposals should contain approximately 10 slides, including title and summary slides. The suggested structure of the slides is as follows:

**Slide 1: Title**

The first slide should include:

- The name of the proposal and the tracking number given to the proposal by the APNIC Secretariat
- The author's name
- The date and location of the meeting

**Slide 2: Introduction**

- Summarise the background information necessary to understand this proposal.

**Slides 3-4: Current problems**

- Summarise the current status of APNIC policy in this area.

**Slide 5: Position in other RIR regions**

- If relevant, summarise the status of related policy in other RIRs.

**Slides 6-7: Proposal**

- Briefly state the actual proposal. Explain the reasons for the proposed change.

**Slide 8: Benefits/Disadvantages**

- Summarise the benefits of adopting the new policy, including details of the groups that will benefit from the policy.Summarise any disadvantages.

**Slide 9: Implementation schedule**

- Outline the proposed timeframe for implementation (this is usually three months from acceptance of the proposal).
- Identify any documents, forms, or procedures that need to amended or modified.
- Identify any potential impact on NIRs.

**Slide 10: Summary**

- Summarise previous slides. Try to describe the main gain to be made from changing the policy.

## 2.7.2. Guidelines for informational presentations

The requirements for informational presentations are not as rigid as those for proposal presentations. However, it is suggested that presenters include a title slide and summary slide. Presenters should also consider the general presentation hints outlined below in Section 2.4.3.

### 2.7.3. General presentation hints

#### 2.7.3.1. Speaking

The Asia Pacific region includes many different languages and cultures. English is not the first language for the majority of participants at APNIC Open Policy meetings, and it is important that presentations are clear, easy to follow, and concise:

- Speak slowly, even if English is your first language
- Use simple sentence structure rather than complex phrases
- Try to pause after every slide to give people a chance to absorb the material on the slide
- Remember to maintain eye contact with the audience. Avoid speaking to the screen or the floor
- Time your presentations before the meeting. Speak out loud when you do this

#### 2.7.3.2. Presentation slides

To help meeting participants understand your presentation, and to ensure your slides can be read by remote participants watching the webcast of the session , please:

- Limit each slide to a maximum of four points, or six to eight lines. Slides with too much content are difficult to understand
- Use large fonts if you include tables or diagrams
- Use font and background colours with good contrast as the APNIC uses VGA projectors

# 3. Working Groups (WGs)

Working Groups (WGs) are formed as a result of recommendations from the SIGs and reports back to the SIG that created it. When a Working Group has completed its task(s), it is closed.

A Working Group is usually small in size and consists of volunteers willing to dedicate themselves to one particular task.

Working Groups usually conduct their discussions on the Working Group's mailing list, but may also request that time be given for face-to-face discussions at APNIC meetings. The Chair and Co- Chair of a Working Group help maintain the group's focus on the tasks delegated to it by the SIG.

# 4. Birds of a Feather (BoFs)

Birds of a Feather meetings (BoFs) are informal meetings convened for a variety of purposes, such as exchanging information and discussing new ideas or particular issues. They can be proposed and convened at short notice and there is no formal requirement for submission of papers or posting to mailing lists.

The APNIC Secretariat issues a call for BoF proposals shortly before each Open Policy Meeting. There is no formal requirement for submission of papers or posting to mailing lists. However, the BoF Chair reports on the results of the BoF at the Member Meeting session.

BoFs are an important part of the process of forming a new Special Interest Group (SIG). When a new SIG has been recommended, a preliminary BoF should be held to determine interest in the proposed

subject area, the readiness of individuals to volunteer as Chair, and to develop a charter. A new SIG cannot be created unless a BoF has been held.

# 5. Appendices/templates

## 5.1. Basic steps in the consensus decision making process

1. A proposal is made.
2. The SIG Chair invites participants to comment on the proposal. The Chair encourages discussion about both the pros and cons of the proposal. This should happen both on the mailing list and at the SIG session of the APNIC Open Policy Meeting.
    1. If there is little or no comment for or against the proposal, the Chair needs to assess the level of interest in the proposal. Perhaps the community does not believe a problem exists, or, alternatively, the participants are hesitant to begin discussion. The Chair may ask for a show of hands indicating:
    2. Those for the proposal
    3. Those against the proposal (or individual elements of the proposal)
    4. Those who have no opinion on the proposal

The show of hands is not a vote. It is a way of broadly gauging opinion.

If the majority of the participants indicate that they have no opinion, the Chair and the proponent should work to stimulate discussion about the proposal. The Chair may ask the proponent to restate the problem the proposal attempts to solve. If the participants do not believe that the problem is real, or significant, the Chair should ask the proponent to reconsider the need for the proposal.

1. If comments are all in favour of the proposal and there are no objections, the Chair can assume consensus.
2. If there are objections, the Chair can ask the dissenters to decide if their objections are:

### i. Minor objections

If the proposal goes forward, the dissenters believe that some problems may occur for some members in the group.

The participants should work together to see if the proposal can be modified to overcome these minor objections. However, it is not always possible to overcome these objections. If this is the case, the Chair should ask the dissenters if they are prepared to acknowledge that the overall advantages of the proposal outweigh their objections and if the dissenters are willing to stand aside.

### ii. Major objections

If the proposal goes forward, the dissenters believe that major problems will occur for parts of the community and that the proposal cannot be adopted in its current format.

The Chair should devote sufficient time for participants to discuss ways to overcome major objections. As in the case of minor objections, participants, including the proponent, should work together to develop solutions that overcome the objections.

The process of working together to create a proposal acceptable to all participants may take more than one meeting phase. It is possible that the community may consider an issue to be important, but not be able to reach consensus on the proposed solution during one meeting. When this happens, the Chair should encourage the proponent and the community to continue discussion and develop a more widely accepted proposal to be presented at the following meeting.

[1] The Chair may decide that a proposal is not suitable for discussion at the forthcoming SIG session if:

- The proposal is out of scope for the SIG
- The proposal is insufficiently developed to be the basis for a useful discussion
- The agenda has already been filled by topics of greater priority

[2] In the weeks before the meeting, proposal authors should subscribe to the appropriate SIG mailing list to follow the discussion about the proposal. This allows authors the chance to incorporate feedback in a new version of the proposal to be presented at the APNIC meeting.

**Note:** Remember that the discussion at the meeting is not the end of the proposal process. Proposals that reach consensus at the meeting are sent to the appropriate SIG mailing list for a final eight-week discussion period. During this final discussion period, the community may continue to raise objections. If, the proponent is not subscribed to and actively following the appropriate SIG mailing list, the proponent will not be able to respond to community objections. In cases where the proponent does not respond to objections in the eight-week comment period, the Chair may have no choice but declare that consensus has not been reached.