

MSA Focused Interest Groups (FIG) Guidelines

Approved By MSA Council 29 July 2005

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1. Definition

- a. A Focused Interest Group (FIG) is a group of MSA members who have organized, with the approval of MSA Council, to promote a specific discipline relevant to microscopy or microanalysis.

2. Membership

- a. FIG members must be paid-up MSA members.
- b. Ten (10) MSA members are required to initiate or maintain a FIG.
- c. If any individual FIG membership decreases to less than 10 for 2 consecutive years, the FIG will be considered dissolved.
- d. Requests to form or reinstate a FIG must be submitted in writing to the FIG Chair no less than one (1) month prior to a scheduled meeting of MSA Council. Requests will be presented by the FIG Chair to MSA Council for approval. Late requests may be postponed until the subsequent Council meeting.
- e. MSA Council reserves the right to dissolve a FIG for reasons including, but not limited to, fiscal irresponsibility, scientific misconduct or having less than the minimum required number of members as specified above.
- f. FIG members are required to pay FIG dues in the amount of \$10 per annum, in addition to annual MSA dues. These dues shall be billed in the MSA dues notice.
 - Per current MSA practice, dues paid prior to August 1 in any calendar year shall be current through December 31 of that year. Dues paid after August 1 in any calendar year shall be current through December 31 of the following year.
- g. The MSA Business Office and the MSA Treasurer will maintain separate budgets for the General FIG Committee Account and for each of the individual FIGs. Dues and other income, e.g., non-Program-related sponsorships, will be credited to the appropriate FIG.
- h. If an individual FIG is dissolved, and assets remain in its budget, those assets will be moved to the General FIG Committee Account and used or redistributed at the discretion of the FIG Chair.

3. Administration

- a. The first FIG Chair shall be appointed by MSA Council to a 3-year term of office, starting on January 1 of Year 1 and ending on December 31 of Year 3.
- b. His/her successor(s) shall be chosen by a majority of FIG Leaders from amongst their number, during the FIG Business Meeting held at M&M in Year 3 of the current FIG Chair's term. Each FIG should be represented at the meeting, either by its Leader or a designated proxy. If less than two-thirds of the FIGs are represented at the business meeting, the election shall take place by electronic ballot and a simple majority of ballots received shall determine the FIG Chair.
- c. The FIG Chair shall serve on the M&M Program Committee.

- d. The FIG Chair is responsible for communications, budget and report submissions to MSA Council, and fiscal management.
- e. The FIG Chair shall confer with the MSA Council FIG liaison and any other relevant MSA officials on issues that involve non-M&M activities. In addition, the M&M Program Chair shall be consulted on issues that involve the M&M scientific program and related functions.
- f. The FIG Chair shall conduct a business meeting at M&M with all FIG Leaders, or designated proxy, present.
- g. Each individual FIG shall have a duly elected Leader who shall serve a 2-year term. At the end of his/her term, the FIG Leader will be ineligible to hold any FIG office for a period of 2 years. In addition, each FIG will have a duly elected Leader-elect who will serve a 2-year term and then assume the office of FIG Leader. Each FIG will also have a duly elected Secretary/Treasurer who will serve a 2-year term. All terms of office shall be from January 1 of the year following the election (year N) to December 31 of the next year (year N+1). However, if for some reason the FIG Leader-Elect cannot serve as FIG Leader, including but not limited to: lack of active participation in FIG activities during his/her term of office as FIG Leader-Elect; change of job; change of MSA membership status; both the positions of FIG Leader and FIG Leader-Elect may be opened for nominations and election.
- h. All candidates for election to any FIG Office (Leader, Leader-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer) must be current dues-paying members of both MSA and the FIG for which they seek office at the time of the election. Any question that a candidate is a member in good standing will be resolved by the FIG Chair in consultation with the Business Office.
- i. No individual shall succeed him/herself in any office, but may seek the office again after rotating off for a term.
- j. Each FIG must have an annual business meeting attended by a quorum of dues-paying members. A quorum shall be defined as one-third of the membership or a minimum of 7 members, whichever is larger. All FIG members and the FIG Chair must be notified of the time and location of the annual business meeting in writing at least 30 days prior to that meeting.
- k. Elections shall be held at the FIG's business meeting at M&M. A quorum of dues-paying FIG members shall be required to conduct the election. If no quorum is present, an electronic ballot may be cast within 30 days of the close of M&M. A simple majority is required to fill any position.
- l. Election results shall be delivered in writing to the FIG Chair within 10 business days after the election.
- m. No person shall hold elected office in more than one FIG at any time.

4. Funding

- a. FIG dues shall be collected as stated in Section 2 above.
- b. Dues may be used for other than M&M Program-related activities, including but not limited to: food and non-alcoholic beverages for business meetings; website creation and maintenance; telephone, fax and photocopying; support for social events held during M&M; support for specialty meetings/workshops other than at M&M. Use of the dues for a specific purpose must be requested using the FIG Activity Request Form and approved in advance by the FIG Chair.

- c. Dues may not be used for M&M scientific program activities, including but not limited to: symposium or roundtable funding; travel support for FIG members or external speakers. These funds shall only come from the Program Chair's budget.

5. Functions

- a. All requests for functions (M&M symposium, business meeting, special meeting/workshop, social event) shall be made in writing to the FIG Chair using a FIG Activity Request Form.
- b. Organization of a scientific symposium or roundtable at M&M requires prior consent of the FIG Chair, MSA Council liaison and Program Chair. A symposium or roundtable request will not be granted or funded automatically, but at the discretion of the Program Chair. FIG-sponsored symposia and roundtables are considered no different than any other session, and shall operate under the same guidelines as all other symposia (fundraising, scheduling, speaker support, etc.)
- c. Each FIG is encouraged to propose a symposium for the Microscopy & Microanalysis meeting using the FIG Activity Request Form. Approval of the proposal is at the discretion of the Program Chair.
- d. Each FIG, regardless of whether or not it sponsors a scientific session, shall be entitled to space to hold a business meeting at M&M each year. Space shall be provided in the convention center if available, or at an alternate facility within proximity of the convention center.
- e. Pre-M&M workshops or short courses may be requested using the FIG Activity Request Form for consideration by the FIG Chair, MSA Council liaison, Program Chair and Education Committee Chair. Requests will not be granted or funded automatically, but at the discretion of the Program Chair and the Education Committee Chair. Any approved pre-meeting activities shall be coordinated in consultation with the Education Committee Liaison for Pre-meeting Activities.
- f. Non-M&M related special meetings or workshops may be requested using the FIG Activity Request Form. Such meetings or workshops must be approved by the full MSA Council. MSA may provide up to \$1000 support through the FIG budget for these meetings. Examples of these "special" meetings include a symposium of national or international scope, a joint meeting of two or more FIGs, or a workshop built around an emerging topic of microscopy or microanalysis-related scientific studies. Approval for support must come from the FIG Chair and the MSA Council. Additional fundraising must be coordinated through the MSA President and FIG Chair. Participating FIGs which have received this support during the previous two years will not be eligible.
 - Application for funding for a special meeting or workshop must include: a completed FIG Activity Request Form; a meeting program as complete as possible; and a complete budget for the meeting.
- g. Each FIG may sponsor a website or e-newsletter in conjunction with the MSA website to promote dissemination of information relevant to its members and MSA membership in general.
- h. Each FIG will be given space (typically 1-2 paragraphs maximum) in the M&M Expo to promote its activities at M&M. All advertising must be submitted in writing to the FIG Chair.
- i. Each FIG can promote its activities in Microscopy Today as space permits.