



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

AMERICAN ALLIANCE FOR THEATRE & EDUCATION SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS POLICY MANUAL VERSION 1.0 – June 12, 2014

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AATE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP POLICY MANUAL

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AATE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs) OVERVIEW

Special Interest Groups are designed to provide forums for members from various networks with shared interests in particular topics to gather to share ideas, discuss contemporary issues, and identify strategies for collaboration to move the field forward. SIGs address topics that generally cut across Networks and would be of interest to members from a variety of different Networks.

Unlike AATE Networks, SIGs may be formed on a temporary basis to explore particular areas of interest that arise from time to time, or may exist in perpetuity. SIGs are established when the membership sees a need for collective exploration of a particular topic, and are dissolved when interest in that topic fades.

SIG MEMBERSHIP

All AATE members may participate in as many SIGs as they desire, or may choose not to join any SIG.

Unlike Network membership, SIG membership is informal; while SIGs may opt to keep rosters of their membership, they do not formally join SIGs as part of AATE registration process.

SIG COMMUNICATION

CONFERENCE MEETINGS

Each SIG will have a meeting time scheduled during concurrent sessions at each annual conference. The agenda for these meetings shall be determined by the members of the SIG who attend, or may be determined in advance by the SIG Coordinator. SIGs may opt to use these meeting times to work on projects that have been developed outside of conference or to continue discussions from outside of conference in real-time.

YEAR-ROUND MEETINGS

Each SIG has the option to meet throughout the year, outside the timeframe of the annual conference, as it sees fit. SIGs may choose, for example, to meet three times, around the beginning of October, February, and April, if they desire to meet on a regular basis. These meetings may take the form of conference calls, online meetings, or in-person gatherings. The structure and agenda of these meetings will be determined by the Network Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Network Membership at large, as they see fit to best serve the needs of their Network's membership.

One effective model SIGs may employ is to host a series of conference calls throughout the year, each focused on a particular topic of interest to the membership. The SIG may take advantage of AATE's conference call service (free of charge) to host these meetings. Once the meeting time, date, and topic have been determined, the SIG Coordinator may invite any and all interested network members to call in to discuss their thoughts / questions / experiences related to the topic and / or any other SIG-related concerns. Minutes from these meetings may then be distributed to the entire membership so that individuals unable to attend can still benefit from any insights shared at the meetings.

SIG LIST-SERVES

Each SIG has the option to set up a list-serve that allows members of the network to e-mail all other members of the network simultaneously. SIGs wishing to set up a list-serve should contact the AATE Central Office for assistance.

WEBSITE FORUMS

Each SIG has the option to request a page on the AATE website that features a discussion board / forum. SIG members are encouraged to use these resources to ask questions, dialogue, and communicate in between the annual conference and other SIG meetings.

NOTE: The AATE Board of Directors has determined that forming individual SIG groups on social media (e.g. Facebook)

does not effectively serve the mission of AATE, given the high number of individual groups that could be created. However, SIGs may use the official AATE Facebook back as a tool for communicating, advertising events, etc., and members are encouraged to join the official AATE Facebook page.

NOTE: The AATE Communications Director is responsible for monitoring all public communication from SIGs. Coordinators should consult with the Communications Director prior to releasing any official communication.

SIG PROJECTS

PURPOSE & SCOPE

In order to advance the shared goals of each network, SIG members have the option of working with their SIG coordinator to devise and implement SIG projects. The framework for these projects is flexible, and SIGs may pursue any set of goals that is relevant to the SIG membership, provided that:

- The project advances the mission of the individual SIG and the mission and goals of AATE at large.

AATE MISSION STATEMENT:

The American Alliance for Theatre & Education connects and inspires a growing collective of theatre artists, educators, and scholars committed to transforming young people and communities through the theatre arts.

- Participation in the project is open to all interested SIG Members.
- The project follows all AATE guidelines for symposia and other events, when applicable.

TIMEFRAME

While some part of the project may take place at the annual AATE conference, SIG Projects primarily take place outside of the conference time frame. This enables SIGs to pursue more ambitious projects that cannot be accomplished in the space of a few days and require greater time, reflection, and resources. This also allows SIG Members to remain actively engaged in AATE activities throughout the entire year, as opposed to primarily engaging with the organization only during the annual conference. Projects could be completed with a year, over the course of multiple years, or in a shorter time frame as is appropriate for the given project. SIGs may engage in multiple projects simultaneously, and should generally have at least one active project at all times.

PROPOSALS & FUNDING

Each year, SIG Coordinators may submit a proposal for SIG Project(s) they wish to pursue to the Director of Networks & SIGs, who will review the proposals in conjunction with other selected members of the AATE Board who may be stakeholders in the project. In general, projects will be approved provided they meet the criteria outlined above *and* funding is available.

While many SIG projects can be achieved without substantial financial support, SIGs may apply for funding to support their projects by contacting the Director of Networks & SIGs, who will advance the request to the President of AATE. SIGs should recognize that, at this time, limited funding is available for such projects. Proposals that seek modest support to fund essential needs of the projects are most likely to be funded. SIGs may also pursue other avenues of funding (e.g. registration fees if hosting symposia or events, external funding, etc.). AATE is committed to pursuing additional avenues of financial support SIG Projects in the future.

SIG GOVERNANCE

SIG COORDINATORS

The membership of each SIG elects one or more Coordinators who, in consultation with SIG members, envision goals for and carry out the mission of each SIG. Coordinators are elected annually at the AATE conference for terms of one year.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Coordinator(s) of each SIG shall:

- Serve the members of their SIG by overseeing all SIG initiatives, projects, communications, and finances with enthusiasm, integrity, and transparency.
- Serve as liaisons between SIG membership and the AATE Board of Directors in partnership with the Director of Networks & SIGs / Network Council Chair.
- Facilitate at least one SIG meetings in-person at the AATE Conference and, at the discretion of the SIG, additional meetings throughout the year.
- Optionally, in consultation with their members, plan and oversee the execution of AATE Projects as described earlier in this manual.
- Manage the SIG page on the AATE website & moderate the SIG list-serve, if these tools are established.

ELECTIONS & REMOVAL

Any member of a SIG is eligible to run for the position of Coordinator. Each Coordinator will serve a term of one year that commences at the Membership Meeting at the annual conference in the year in which they are elected; SIG Coordinators may be re-elected annually. Should a SIG Coordinator fail to perform the responsibilities above, she or he may be removed from office by AATE's Board of Directors; in such situations, a Board Member must submit in writing a formal motion detailing how the Chair has failed to fulfill her/his responsibilities, and the motion must pass with a 2/3 majority of all Board Members. In the event that a Coordinator resigns or is otherwise removed from office before the end of her/his term, the Director of Networks and SIGs may appoint a replacement coordinator to complete the rest of her/his term. If no SIG member is willing to serve as coordinator, the SIG may be dissolved.

SIG DESCRIPTIONS

INTERNATIONAL SPECIAL SIG

The International Special Interest Group fosters international relationships among like-minded members and organizations abroad; provide the members of AATE international resources; and encourage the sharing of high quality artistry and education in our increasingly global society.

THEATRE & CREATIVE DRAMA FOR THE VERY YOUNG SIG

The Theatre for the Very Young Special Interest Group is comprised of artists, educators, and administrators who produce formal theatre productions or create educational drama experiences for the very young, including infants and children from birth through approximately age five. TVY productions and drama experiences are often but not always immersive, participatory events that include parents and caregivers along as well as their children.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDER SIG

The Professional Development Special Interest Group is comprised of members who provide professional development programming, sharing current research and emerging practice. SIG members meaningfully respond to the articulated needs, wants, and voices of teachers (pre-service and practicing) across the curriculum, arts educators (specialists, teaching artists, consultants), administrators, and professional development providers and communities.

POTENTIAL FUTURE SIGS

Members have expressed interest in a number of topics which could results in the creation of new SIGs in the future that consider topics such as:

- Faith & Spirituality in Theatre Education
- Teaching Artistry
- Other topics TBD

2014-15 SIG COORDINATORS

International SIG

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