



SIGs Charter

Last updated: January, 2018

Constituted within the Museum Computer Network (MCN), MCN Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are organized and run by MCN members who have shared interests related to MCN's overall mission. Each SIG provides a forum for MCN members to pursue specific interests and niche topics.

Contributing to the many technology areas of specialization within the cultural sector, SIGs provide opportunities for learning, skill growth, and leadership. This Charter describes SIGs' governing principles, functions, and responsibilities.

1. MCN Board Oversight

- The MCN Board of Directors appoints a Director to act as the Board's SIG Liaison.
- The Board's SIG Liaison, with MCN's Executive Director, ensures ongoing communication between the SIG Chairs and the Board.

2. SIG Creation Process

- At least two current members of MCN are required to sponsor the creation of a new SIG: a proposed Chair and Vice Chair.
- Together they prepare a SIG Proposal indicating their names, the SIG's proposed name, and a statement of purpose (proposed SIG mission).
- To offer durable value, a SIG should address a broad and long-lasting topic (e.g., Digital Media rather than a narrower topic such as JPEG 2000).
- If there is perceived overlap with existing SIGs, the new SIG sponsors should reach out to the existing SIG chairs with which topics/areas are shared (after first clearing with the Executive Director that the proposal is ready to be shared) to discuss the proposed scope and clarify areas of potential overlap. If the SIG Chairs from the existing SIGs are interested, they can request to review and comment on the new SIG proposal.
- After the discussion and review by current SIG chairs those sponsoring the new SIG should ensure that the Proposal 1) clearly outlines how the subject matter of the proposed SIG is distinct from currently existing SIGs, and 2) how they will work with existing SIGs to foster cross-SIG dialog and discussion.
- SIG sponsors submit their SIG Proposal to the Executive Director and Board SIG Liaison.
- MCN's Board reviews the SIG Proposal and votes to decide to accept or reject the Proposal. The Board may ask the sponsors to refine the SIG Proposal and to resubmit it.
- Once the proposal is approved, the Executive Director and/or the Board's SIG Liaison notify the SIG's sponsors and update MCN's website and other digital platforms.

3. SIG Membership Requirement

- Membership in MCN is required to join one or more SIG(s).
- Membership in any number of SIGs is free for MCN members.



- SIG members (except for the Chair and Vice Chair) may leave a SIG at any time without notice.

4. SIG Leadership Nomination Process

Leading a SIG enables an MCN member to have a more active role in the MCN community by contributing to, and demonstrating leadership in, the field of digital technologies in the cultural sector. It also affords opportunities for career growth and networking. Becoming a SIG Chair can be a track toward later consideration as a candidate to serve as a Director on the MCN Board.

- Each SIG is led by a Chair and Vice Chair, who must be current MCN members.
- Both roles are volunteer positions and do not entail any compensation.
- Upon a SIG's inception, its Chair and Vice Chair serve for an initial one-year term.
- Every year thereafter, between December 1 and 15, each SIG shall hold virtual elections to elect their Chair and Vice Chair.
- SIG members shall nominate, from among their peers, candidates for the roles of Chair and Vice Chair. Those who receive the most votes shall be elected to these positions for a one-year term.
- A SIG's Chair and Vice Chair may be re-elected an unlimited number of times.
- SIG Chairs and Vice Chairs retain their positions for as long as they wish and continue to fulfill their duties until the next SIG election as above, and after each such election if they are re-elected. They may resign from their roles at any time.
- When a Chair resigns before the end of her term, the Vice Chair takes her place as Chair until the next election. When a Vice Chair resigns before the end of her term, the Chair shall nominate a member of the SIG to serve as Vice Chair until the next election.

5. SIG Chairs' Roles and Responsibilities

- The primary role of SIG Chairs is to promote ongoing discussions relevant to the group's topic(s). Chairs are also expected to foster active involvement and collaboration among SIG members.
- SIG Chairs may also be asked to serve on Board Committees on a permanent or *ad hoc* basis; when requested, such service is optional.
- SIG Chairs and Vice Chairs are expected to actively lead the activities of the SIG as defined under SIG Operational Guidelines.

6. SIG Operational Guidelines

- SIG Chairs, the Executive Director, and the Board's SIG Liaison shall meet at least once each quarter to discuss current affairs.
- Each SIG shall hold at least one annual meeting (can be held virtually via videoconference) before the MCN annual conference. The general meeting is a forum for welcoming new members, providing updates about the SIG's topic, and developing ideas for SIG-sponsored workshops or sessions for the upcoming MCN annual conference. The Chair and Vice Chair shall develop an agenda for each meeting and share it with the SIG's members prior to the meeting.
- Each SIG shall organize and propose at least one session or workshop for the MCN annual conference.



- SIG Chairs shall maintain their own SIG page on the MCN website. Each SIG's web page includes at least the SIG's name, its mission, the topics it covers, and related resources.
- To attract new members, a SIG may hold "open/welcome meetings" open to people who are not yet members of the SIG.

7. SIG Activities

SIGs are expected to take on a wide range of projects such as, but not limited to:

- Hosting "best of" or "best practices" awards in the SIG's area.
- Proposing and hosting sessions at other professional conferences.
- Participating in projects relevant to the SIG's area, potentially by serving as a sounding board of information professionals in the museum community, conducting surveys of this community, etc.
- Creating an annual calendar of SIG events.
- Developing a SIG Chairs' orientation and a Chair leadership track and mentoring program.
- Creating such documentary resources as vendor listings, bibliographies, etc.
- Developing training materials or programs in the SIG's area. These could be presented online or in workshops at the MCN conference and related venues.
- Hosting MCN Pro sessions throughout the year. These sessions are an opportunity for SIGs to invite experts to discuss a particular issue and/or showcase projects relevant to the SIG's topic.

8. SIG Resources

MCN supports the SIGs' unique role in engaging members with MCN's mission, and it provides them with resources to run their affairs. These resources may include, but are not limited to:

- A dedicated SIGs sections on the MCN website.
- Video-conference services for SIG meetings.
- Use of the MCN name and logo in connection with all approved activities.
- Access to contact information from the MCN member database.
- A SIG table in the Exhibits Hall at MCN's annual conference to promote the SIGs to conference attendees.
- Access to MCN's Executive Director and the Board's SIG Liaison for any SIG-related questions or issues.

9. Dissolving a SIG

- Whenever a SIG's membership falls below five members (three members plus the Chair and Vice Chair), an election among the SIG's members shall be called to decide whether to dissolve the SIG.
- Should the SIG's members decide to continue the SIG, they must recruit new members within 60 days of that election. Failure to recruit new members within this time shall result in the automatic dissolution of the SIG.

10. Conflict Resolution

- Disputes or conflicts pertaining to SIG elections or affecting the normal conduct of business of a SIG may be escalated to the Board's Executive Committee for resolution.



- Any SIG member, or a group thereof, may bring a dispute or conflict to the attention of the Board’s Executive Committee by notifying the Executive Director or the Board’s SIG Liaison in writing with a description of the issue at hand.
- The Board’s Executive Committee shall arbitrate each case at its own discretion within 10 business days of being notified.

11. Charter Transition

- This version of the SIG Charter will go into effect on January 25, 2018.

This version of the SIG Charter was revised in 2018, with revisions drafted in January 2018 by Elizabeth Bollwerk, board member. It was adopted by a vote of the MCN Board of Directors on January 24, 2018. Prior history: Charter drafted 9/23/1997 by Richard Rinehart, MCN President-Elect, adopted by vote of MCN Board 10/19/1997 with changes; revised 6/27/2004 by Rob Lancefield, MCN Board Member / SIG Liaison, adopted by vote of MCN Board 7/8/2004; revised during the first half of 2014, with revisions drafted in September 2014 by Eric Longo, MCN’s Executive Director and adopted by a vote of the MCN Board of Directors on September 24, 2014.