



MCN SIGs Charter

Last updated: December 2025

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(s) to chair the Membership and SIGs committee in order to act as the Board's SIG Liaison(s) to the Co-chairs.
- The Board's SIG Liaison(s) ensure 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: two Co-Chairs.
- Together, they prepare a SIG Proposal indicating their names, the SIG's proposed name, and the SIG's proposed statement of purpose.
- To offer durable value, a SIG should address a broad and long-lasting topic (e.g., Information Technology rather than a narrower topic such as Windows 11).
- 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 Board 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 Board SIG Liaison(s) to be reviewed by the Membership and SIGs Committee and the Board.
- 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 Board's SIG Liaison(s) 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 Co-Chairs) 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 or two Co-Chairs, who must be current MCN members.
- Both roles are volunteer positions and do not entail any compensation.
- Upon a SIG's inception, its Chair(s) serve for an initial one-year term.
- Every year thereafter, in December, the Chair(s) may invite their SIG members to self-nominate or nominate, from among their peers, candidates for the roles of Chair(s). If there are more than two nominees, the SIG(s) shall hold a virtual election and those who receive the most votes shall be elected to these positions for a one-year term. If there are only one or two members who express interest in leading a SIG, they will be appointed by the outgoing Chair(s) to lead the SIG.
- A SIG's Chair(s) may serve an unlimited number of terms.
- SIG Chairs retain their positions for as long as they wish and continue to fulfill their duties until the next SIG nomination process, 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 their term, the Co-Chair leads the SIG alone until the next election or until the remaining Chair appoints a replacement Co-Chair. When both Co-Chairs resign before the end of their term (or when there is only one Chair), the Chair shall nominate a member (or two members) of the SIG to serve as Chair(s) until the next nomination process.
- If no Chairs are nominated, the SIG will enter an inactive period. Inactive SIGs can be reactivated by a self-nominated new Chair, who must be confirmed via a virtual election.

5. SIG Chairs' Roles and Responsibilities

- The primary role of SIG Chairs is to facilitate community connection and moderate productive ongoing discussions relevant to the group's topic(s). Chairs are encouraged to foster active involvement and collaboration among SIG members leveraging the in-person conference, meetings throughout the year, and online conversation platforms.
- 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 are expected to actively lead the activities of the SIG as defined under SIG Operational Guidelines.

6. SIG Operational Guidelines

- SIG Chairs and the Board's SIG Liaison(s) shall meet at least once each quarter to discuss current MCN affairs.
- Each SIG shall hold at least two annual meetings (can be held virtually via videoconference) before and after the MCN conference. These meetings are a



forum for welcoming new members, providing updates about the SIG's topic, and developing ideas for sessions for the upcoming MCN 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 statement of purpose, 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 encouraged and empowered to find a cadence and approach that best serves their members. Some ideas may include:

- 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.

Additional ideas and activities are captured in the ongoing SIG Playbook, a toolkit of proven patterns and suggestions for cultivating communities of practice.

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 section on the MCN website.
- Videoconference services for SIG meetings via Zoom meetings for each SIG.
- Use of the MCN name and logo in connection with all approved activities.
- Access to contact information from the MCN member database.
- A shared SIG table at MCN's conference to promote the SIGs to conference attendees.
- Access to MCN's Board SIG liaison(s) on the Membership and SIGs committee 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(s)), 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 Board's SIG Liaison(s) in writing with a description of the issue at hand.
- The Board's Executive Committee shall arbitrate each case at its own discretion within ten business days of being notified.

11. Charter Transition

- This version of the SIG Charter will go into effect on December 10, 2025.

The version of the SIG Charter was revised in December 2025, with revisions drafted in fall 2025 by SIG Chairs and Sara Snyder, board member. It was adopted by a vote of the MCN Board of Directors on December 10, 2025. 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; 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. The version of the SIG Charter was revised in 2022, with revisions drafted in November 2022 by Jessica Warchall, board member. It was adopted by a vote of the MCN Board of Directors on December 14, 2022.