



Special Interest Group Operational Guidelines

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Definitions

“**MSAND**” refers to the Medical Students’ Association of Notre Dame.

“**SplG**” refers to a Special Interest Group.

“**MSAND Executive**” or “**Executive**” refers to the following:

- President
- Vice President Internal (VPI)
- Vice President External (VPE)
- Secretary
- Treasurer.

“**SplG Chairs**” refers to the leaders of the SplGs, whether they be a Chair, Co-Chair, or other.



1. Objectives

- 1.1 To provide clear guidance and expectations for SpIGs.
- 1.2 To facilitate optimal communication and relationships between MSAND and SpIGs.
- 1.3 Allow for a regulation for SpIGs to govern their own societies with support from MSAND policy.
- 1.4 Promoting sustainability and longevity of SpIGs by ensuring smooth transitions from year to year, both at the MSAND Executive and at the SpIG governance levels.

2. Governance and Reporting

- 2.1 Newly elected Chairs must meet with the MSAND Executive before the commencement of the new academic year. The purpose of this meeting is for the MSAND Executive to inform the incoming SpIG Chairs on funding, finances, and running events. SpIG Chairs must submit all proposed event dates to the MSAND Secretary at this meeting to prevent overcrowding of the calendar around key events such as exams.
 - 2.1.1 Once the yearly calendar has been set with the two allocated events for each SpIG, including planned events by MSAND Committee Members and other relevant (Non-SpIG) student organisations (e.g. GPSN), SpIG Chairs are welcome to apply in writing to the MSAND Executive via the Secretary to run additional events. Applications are to include a brief description of the event and estimated total budget.
 - 2.1.2 Newly proposed and/or additional events will be approved at the discretion of the Executive. If the event is not approved, Chairs may appeal via attendance and presentation of the event at an MSAND Committee Meeting where a motion will be passed to obtain approval from the majority of the MSAND Committee.
 - 2.1.3 SpIG Chairs are encouraged to run events in partnership with specific portfolio/s (e.g., Social Justice, Equity, Education portfolios) within MSAND.
- 2.2 SpIGs should be able to demonstrate an established succession plan and infrastructure to ensure longevity.
 - 2.2.1 Each SpIG must fulfil this requirement through established organisational



- structure, and an updated document outlining the objects of the SpIG and its future aspirations. This will be done through the longevity plan template which must be completed once every two years.
- 2.2.2 An annual report template highlighting the progress, successes and challenges as well as strategies for improvement must be submitted yearly.
- 2.2.3 A copy of this document shall also be provided to the newly elected Chairs and the Secretary will assist Chairs if difficulties arise.
- 2.2.4 All paperwork must be submitted to the Vice President Internal before the MSAND Handover Meeting at the end of the academic calendar year.
- 2.3 It is the responsibility of MSAND to maintain the quality and relevance of SpIGs over time. As interests in medicine change with time, the MSAND Executive believes there should be an option to allow for new SpIGs to enter the school in order to foster new educational opportunities. A lack of evidence that a given SpIG is committed to student engagement and appropriately planning for the future is seen as a misalignment with MSANDs objectives and as such it is in the best interest of students for MSAND to consider other SpIGs instead.
- 2.3.1 Every two years MSAND Executives will undergo a review of current and proposed SpIGs.
- 2.3.2 Failure to generate an annual report or longevity plan grants the MSAND Executive the power to dissolve the SpIG via a simple majority vote.
- 2.3.3 As per 2.3.2, if the SpIG has a history of a recurrent lack of student engagement, few to no events, multiple events run at a loss or poor organisational structure, and there are no extenuating circumstances (e.g. COVID19) to account for this, the MSAND Executive reserves the right to also vote on SpIG dissolution.
- 2.3.4 Whereby there is disagreement by Executive members as to whether a SpIG should be removed from the organisation, the President shall invoke executive power to determine the outcome.
- 2.3.5 If a SpIG is dissolved as per 2.3.3 or 2.3.4, the SpIG Chairs have the right to appeal this decision in front of the MSAND Committee where a second vote will be conducted by the Committee.
- 2.4 The SpIGs shall be overseen directly by two Executive members of MSAND.
- 2.4.1 SpIGs will report directly to the Secretary of MSAND. The Secretary will provide SpIGs with a copy of the minutes of MSAND meetings and can be



assessed via the MSAND shared drive (SpIG co-chairs have access). The secretary will endeavour to meet with the SpIG Chairs on a regular basis to discuss outcomes of MSAND meetings that are relevant to SpIGs. The MSAND Secretary/VPI shall also endeavour to maintain constant communication with the SpIGs and ensure the SpIGs are operating within established guidelines.

- 2.4.2 The Vice President Internal (VPI)/any appointed assistant to the secretary of MSAND may advise on the educational aspect of the SpIGs events and ensure the events run by SpIGs are of good quality and high standard. They also may seek the input of the MSAND Education Chair for further educational input.
- 2.4.3 All the administrative duties related to the SpIGs shall remain under the office of the MSAND Secretary. The VPI, including the Education Chair with invitation from the VPI, may liaise with SpIG Chairs regarding the structure and content of events.
- 2.4.4 The MSAND Secretary and the VPI shall work as a team in ensuring effective communication between MSAND and the SpIGs.
- 2.4.5 An annual meeting between all SpIG Chairs, the MSAND Executive, and other relevant portfolio holders of the MSAND, must be convened by the MSAND Secretary within the first thirty days of the MEDI6100 academic calendar.
- 2.4.6 Meetings with SpIG Chairs (besides the initial meeting) should occur at the very least, once per semester and include the MSAND Secretary, President, VPI, VPE and or Treasurer. Any other MSAND Committee Members may also attend SpIG meetings as observers where relevant. The Education Chair may act as a proxy for VPI.
- 2.4.7 The MSAND Secretary is to report on the activities of the SpIGs at MSAND Committee Meetings. This report will include the outcomes of SpIG activities in the preceding month and planned SpIG events for the upcoming calendar month.
- 2.4.8 SpIGs can alternatively request, within 48 hours of a MSAND Committee meeting, to the Secretary of MSAND to attend the meeting where they can raise an agenda item as per MSAND constitution.

3. Leadership of SpIGs

- 3.1 Individual SpIGs shall maintain the right to determine the organisational structure of



their own SpIG.

3.1.1 The recommended organisational structure is that of two Co-Chairs who act as the joint leaders of the SpIG. It is also recommended for each SpIG to have a subcommittee, where each member of the subcommittee may have a specific role with specifically detailed duties and responsibilities.

3.2 SpIGs must comply with the following guidelines regarding nominations of leadership positions. SpIGs that choose to alter these guidelines for their respective group may submit a written proposal to the MSAND Secretary and attend an MSAND Committee meeting where a motion will be passed to obtain approval from the majority of the MSAND Committee.

3.2.1 It is the responsibility of each SpIG to notify the Secretary if their leadership or subcommittee structure has changed. The Secretary shall advertise Chair/Co-Chair positions at the beginning of the academic year (typically in early-mid January).

3.2.2 Interested candidates shall submit written nominations addressing selection criteria as dictated by the MSAND SpIG application guidelines. If a SpIG would like additional selection criteria they can contact the MSAND secretary and discuss its relevance.

3.2.3 All applications must be submitted to the Secretary of MSAND by the advertised closing deadline.

3.2.4 Applications will be forwarded by the MSAND Secretary to the outgoing Chairs and the MSAND Executive. Applicants will be de-identified by the secretary.

3.2.5 The outgoing SpIG Chairs will be given two weeks to make individual recommendations to the MSAND Secretary of the two most suitable candidates based on the written nominations.

3.2.6 MSAND Executive will be required to endorse the recommended candidates.

3.2.7 Where the MSAND Executive disagrees with the recommendations or there is no clear winner from the voting of the outgoing SpIG Chairs, resolution will be obtained by way of voting. The voting parties will be the two Chairs and the five members of the MSAND Executive team.

3.2.8 Where a resolution is not obtained through the voting process, the MSAND President shall invoke executive power to determine the best process to determine the Chairs.

3.2.9 All candidates shall be notified of the outcome of their nominations by the MSAND Secretary/President within thirty days of applications closing



deadline.

- 3.3 SpIGs must comply with the following guidelines regarding nominations of subcommittees:
- 3.3.1 The immediate outgoing Chairs shall automatically become part of the new subcommittee. This is to ensure sustainability of SpIGs and smooth transition.
 - 3.3.2 In the case of an outgoing Chair being unwilling or unable to remain on the new committee (e.g. students wanting to refocus their efforts into other groups/interests), the new Chairs can seek advice from the MSAND Executive or the immediate past Chairs of the SpIG as appropriate.
 - 3.3.3 The new Chairs with the advice from the immediate past Chairs will decide on the size of the subcommittee.
 - 3.3.4 Once decided, the new Chairs shall submit to the MSAND Secretary an advertisement for these positions with selection criteria, and if applicable, detailed role descriptions. The Secretary shall then facilitate the advertisement of the subcommittee positions via the MSAND website and social media accounts. Alternatively the secretary can and should liaise with the Media representative to organise a visually appealing announcement for the SpIGs to decrease burden on social media pages.
 - 3.3.5 If a SpIG is having difficulty filling its subcommittee, posting on the year group social media pages will be at the discretion of both the current year reps and the Secretary, as per the Social Media Policy.
 - 3.3.6 Interested candidates must submit written nominations addressing the selection criteria.
 - 3.3.7 All nominations for the subcommittees shall be submitted directly to SpIG Chairs.
 - 3.3.8 SpIG Chairs will make decisions on and notify both successful and unsuccessful subcommittee candidates.
 - 3.3.9 All unsuccessful subcommittee nominations shall be returned to the MSAND Secretary and, where applicable, be considered for second and subsequent round offers, until all subcommittee positions have been filled.
 - 3.3.10 Any unfilled positions after final round offers may be re-advertised as per clause 3.3.5 or the Chairs may elect to fill these positions as they see fit without the need to re-advertise.



4. Naming of SpIGs

- 4.1 To change the name of the SpIG, the following guidelines must be followed:
 - 4.1.1 The Chairs of the SpIG must submit a proposal to change the name of the SpIG to the MSAND Executive via the MSAND Secretary.
 - 4.1.2 The proposal must provide detailed reasons for the change of name, including the new proposed name. In the interests of continuity, the name of a SpIG may not be changed in two consecutive years.
 - 4.1.3 The MSAND Executive shall discuss the proposal and approve or reject the notion based on the majority vote at an MSAND Executive meeting. SpIG Chairs are welcome to address the Executive directly prior to such a vote.
 - 4.1.4 If approved, the MSAND Executive shall ensure the new name fulfils the government and business legislations.
 - 4.1.5 Where applicable, the MSAND Treasurer shall register the new name with the WA Chamber of Commerce.
 - 4.1.6 Upon completion of this process, the SpIG Chairs shall be notified of the outcome by the MSAND Secretary.

5. Establishing a new SpIG

- 5.1 For a new SpIG to be considered by MSAND they must prepare and submit the relevant SpIG Application Form and fulfil all of the following criteria:
 - 5.1.1 The SpIG is being formed to address the needs and interests of medical students.
 - 5.1.2 Demonstrates the beneficial nature of their activities for Notre Dame medical students.
 - 5.1.3 Will provide an initial, followed by a two-yearly longevity plan for the proposed SpIG. For example, what events will be run, how will the SpIG be financed, how will the SpIG be sustainable long term etc.
- 5.2 New SpIGs must apply via email to the MSAND Secretary (secretary@msand.org.au) with the following:
 - 5.2.1 Completed SpIG **Application Form** and **Longevity Plan**.
 - 5.2.2 A signed letter from the relevant Discipline Leader or Associate Dean Clinical supporting the creation of the proposed SpIG.
 - 5.2.3 Name, student number, year, contact email, phone number, and position of proposed coordinators, organisers, or executive members.
 - 5.2.4 Proposed events and activities, including any detailed request for financial



support for the period up to the next MSAND AGM.

5.2.5 Physical signatures of 80 students with student names, student number and current year of study (scanned).

5.2.6 Applicants should submit all required documents to the MSAND Secretary. Applicants will be invited to present their application at an MSAND meeting where it will be voted on by the MSAND committee. If the vote is successful, the application will then require final approval by the MSAND Executive.

5.3 It is in the interest of MSAND to assist in maintaining the quality and longevity of the SpIGs. When too many groups are actively running, the numerous events can become overwhelming for students and can lead to decreased sub-committee and event engagement. As such, MSAND has placed a cap on the number of SpIGs, which MSAND believes should run in proportion to current student numbers. For every 50 students enrolled in the School of Medicine Fremantle (SoMF) there can be one SpIG group, i.e., 400 students enrolled in the SoMF allows for a total of 8 SpIGs. All applicants should contact the MSAND Secretary prior to application to determine if there is relevant space for a new SpIG.

6. Finances

6.1 SpIGs will be transparent and answerable to MSAND by providing financial documentation to the MSAND Treasurer (treasurer@msand.org.au).

6.2 SpIGs will ideally operate on a balanced budget. SpIGs can apply to the MSAND treasurer for funding of events and the MSAND treasurer will consider each request on its merits. The MSAND Treasurer will seek final approval from the MSAND Executive or MSAND Committee prior to disbursing any funds.

6.3 No member may profit monetarily from any SpIG.

6.4 No SpIG organisers/executive positions will benefit financially from their positions.

6.5 SpIGs will have their finances managed within MSAND accounts. All money both incoming and outgoing must pass through the MSAND accounts. Processes for this should be discussed with the MSAND Treasurer (treasurer@msand.org.au).

6.6 Any surplus resulting from operation of a SpIG must be returned to the MSAND



Treasurer. This will be held for the future operation of the SpIG from which it came or, in the case where a SpIG no longer exists, may be consolidated into general revenue or trust revenue as determined by the MSAND Executive.

7. Sponsorship

- 7.1 All sponsorships for both MSAND and SpIGs must seek guidance from the MSAND VPE.
- 7.2 SpIGs may not directly approach a sponsor. If SpIG Chairs wish to seek their own sponsors for some or all their events, the SpIG Chairs must contact the MSAND VPE in writing who will further liaise with the sponsors in order to maintain professionalism and to keep an accurate ledger of agreements with sponsors.
- 7.3 Where such sponsors are current or potential future sponsors of the MSAND, the MSAND VPE shall contact the sponsors on behalf of the SpIGs Chairs.
- 7.4 Sponsors who are not current or potential MSAND sponsors, as determined by and with written authorisation from the MSAND VPE, may be contacted directly by the SpIG Chairs if they wish to, or elect for the MSAND VPE to contact the sponsors of behalf of the SpIGs (with the latter being the preferred option).

8. Event Organisation

- 8.1 As per the yearly calendar, the Secretary will liaise with the University of Notre Dame Fremantle and the School of Medicine to seek permission to run the SpIG event and book rooms. This also includes any additional supplies the SpIG may need from campus services, such as additional tables.
- 8.2 SpIG Chairs are to liaise with the Treasurer and VPE as per sections 6 and 7 in regards to budgeting and funding their events.
- 8.3 SpIG Chairs are encouraged to liaise with the MSAND Media Officer at least 3 weeks prior to an event should they require event posters to be produced by the Media Officer on their behalf.
- 8.4 SpIG Chairs are to ensure all promotional posters carry the logos of MSAND and their



sponsors.

- 8.5 With respect to event promotion, SpIGs are bound by the MSAND Social Media Policy.
- 8.6 SpIG Chairs are to liaise with the MSAND Year Representatives to promote their event via available MSAND online platforms such as the MSAND Website and social media pages. SpIGs may also create their own online platforms and whilst the MSAND Social Media Policy still applies to these platforms there are no MSAND limits on the number of posts.
- 8.7 After an event, SpIG Chairs are to complete the following:
- 8.7.1 Ensure the venue is clean and reordered to its previous layout.
 - 8.7.2 Ensure all MSAND equipment is returned to the MSAND room in a neat and orderly fashion.
 - 8.7.3 Report the outcome of the event, including attendance by students and guest speakers and any successes/challenges, uploaded onto the shared drive. This will be monitored by the VPI.
- 8.8 The Media Officer of MSAND may liaise with SpIG Chairs before or after an event to request a brief article (e.g. 150 words) with one or more accompanying photos for publication in the Notre Damus.

9. Code of Conduct

- 9.1 For continuing affiliation with MSAND, each SpIG must adhere to the following:
- 9.1.1 Maintain appropriate level of respect for the University of Notre Dame name and logo and to NOT use either in any form without the explicit permission of Notre Dame University Fremantle Administration.
 - 9.1.2 Approach academics with proper manner and respect and ensure that they are not misinformed (i.e. that their participation is not required as part of their contract with the University of Notre Dame Faculty of Medicine).
 - 9.1.3 Do not approach sponsors directly. Sponsorship may ONLY be sought with the permission and assistance of the MSAND VPE as per section 7 (vicepresident.external@msand.org.au) and must be done in such a manner to ensure they are not intentionally or unintentionally misinformed.
 - 9.1.4 Advertise all events to all students studying Medicine at The University of



Notre Dame, Fremantle. This advertising must comply with the MSAND Social Media Policy.

- 9.1.5 Not to discriminate between students, unless it is based on stage/year of study (subject to the MSAND Committee's approval).
- 9.1.6 Provide receipts and other documentation to the current MSAND Treasurer (treasurer@msand.org.au) in a timely manner.
- 9.1.7 Verbal acknowledgement of MSAND's affiliation at every event where appropriate as well as use of MSAND's logo on par with and next to the SplG's logo in every publication and presentation.
- 9.1.8 Students and attendees must abide by the MSAND Code of Conduct at all SplG events



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