

# Education Studies Association of Ireland

## Special Interest Groups

### Proposing a Special Interest Group

The ESAI is introducing the opportunity for the formation of ESAI Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to support current and future practitioners and researchers in education in Ireland. ESAI members who are interested in formation of a SIG should submit a formal proposal to the ESAI Executive. A proposal to form a SIG must give evidence of the ability to sustain the SIG and to warrant investment of ESAI funds. In 2015-2016 up to five SIGs will be established and reimbursed expenses that are submitted in a timely manner up to a maximum of €2,500.00 over two years.

The Call for Proposals will be launched at each Annual Conference; the first call was made at the 2015 Maynooth Conference. Proposals for 2015 must be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015 and decisions will be announced by 18<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

The following are the guidelines for writing and submitting a proposal for a SIG.

#### **1. Content of Proposal**

A detailed proposal should be forwarded to the following email address: [sigs@esai.ie](mailto:sigs@esai.ie). The proposal must include:

- SIG name
- Aim of the group and how it will further the interests of an identifiable educational research and practitioner community (including current and emerging researchers)
- The proposed content boundaries of the group (what will be its substantive focus e.g. inclusion, widening participation and access in third level, mathematics education etc.)
- A detailed plan for operating the SIG which needs to include information on:
  - *What activities does it propose and the suggested timeline for implementation*
  - *How will it communicate with its members and potential members*
  - *What will be the expected minimum numbers of members*
  - *What will be the minimum activity (involvement in conference planning and other activities as detailed) expected for the group*
  - How the SIG will usually meet and co-ordinate its activities.
- A description of the potential leadership pool available to provide leadership in the form of a convener of the SIG (e.g. names of those who are willing to act as a convener). Contingent upon the size and nature of the SIG, co-convenors may also be nominated to support the work of the main convener.

## **2. Co-ordination of the SIG**

It is expected that each SIG will have a convenor and where applicable (contingent upon size and nature of the SIG) a co-convenor. Applicants are asked to describe how this will be established and maintained within the proposed SIG. This description must include the names of individuals who are willing to serve as convenors. One of the primary roles of the convenor will be to act as a representative of the SIG to the ESAI. Leadership should circulate on an annual basis.

## **3. Reporting Mechanism for the SIG**

The SIG will submit to the ESAI executive a bi-annual report of its activities, including any financial transactions which relate to the use of the funds provided by the ESAI. The first report will be submitted six months after the SIG has been formally constituted (see below) and then six months hereafter.

## **Criteria for Approval**

In assessing the proposal, the ESAI executive will consider it against the following criteria:

- That the SIG has a coherent and cohesive focal point which in turn reflects the collective interest of the initial group of members named in the proposal and the interest of ESAI Members more importantly.
- The proposed objectives fall within the scope of those specified for ESAI<sup>1</sup>.
- Affiliation is not restricted on any basis other than professional interests, but all SIG members must also be current members of the ESAI.
- That the SIG represents a distinct and definable body of knowledge; this can of course be inter-disciplinary as well.
- It includes the pursuit of basic and applied empirical as well as non-empirical research.

Following approval, ESAI members are informed of the names and terms of the SIG's initial convenor(s) through announcements in any newsletter, and other ESAI communication vehicles, specifically including the website and social networking formats.

A new SIG is constituted when it holds its first business meeting, which should occur within four months of its becoming operational. As part of the reporting mechanism it is incumbent upon the convenor to inform the ESAI executive of this initial meeting.

## **Candidate Status of the New SIG**

Please note that to ensure sustainability and saliency, SIGs holds candidate status for an initial period of 2 years, during which time they:

- maintain a presence on the ESAI website,
- conduct between ESAI annual conference activities (e.g. workshops, seminars),

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.esai.ie/aboutus#Article2>

- are involved in ESAI conference planning,
- conduct at least one face-to-face coordinating committee meeting at the annual conference,
- submit bi-annual reports to the Executive describing their activities.

At the end of the candidacy period, ESAI Executive vote on permanent status for the SIG. However, please note that funding for the SIG via the ESAI after these first two years is dependent on future resources of the ESAI. However, the Executive will encourage and support SIGs to develop their own resources within the parameters of the ESAI and the aims of the SIG.