

Forming an ISTE Special Interest Group (SIG)

The Special Interest Group (SIG) Program offers ISTE members year-round opportunities to connect and collaborate with like-minded colleagues. SIGs are groups of educators with similar passions, goals, and challenges. Each ISTE SIG is a community that has formed to connect members with similar backgrounds, needs, and experiences to work together to achieve a common purpose.

The SIG Program is a three-tier structure that's designed to allow SIGs to form, develop, and operate at the level that matches their size and interest. The three levels are Topic, Forum, and Division, and each has a different set of responsibilities and resources.

The entry level for new SIGs is at the Topic level. Topic-level SIGs are loosely affiliated groups of members who engage in discussion on narrowly focused topics or leading edge innovations within the Ed Tech field. These SIGs are coordinated by 1-2 volunteer leaders and mainly convene at ISTE's annual conference with a small handful of communications during the year. The changing nature of emerging technologies and topics means that there is a high degree of flux in this group type, with groups forming and disbanding on a regular basis. By forming a SIG, however, a group can establish and cultivate its community. A SIG allows for greater visibility and provides members with resources and expertise to develop professionally.

The first step to forming a new, Topic-level SIG is to hold a Birds of a Feather gathering (BOF) at the ISTE conference. A call goes out to members in early February with information on how to request a BOF but you can also contact ISTE staff at any time to receive more information on the process.

Following the ISTE conference, a proposal to form a new SIG must be submitted to the ISTE staff by **August 15** (see below for a list of what the proposal needs to include).

ISTE staff will review all new SIG proposals and determine if the organization has the resources available and members support necessary to bring additional groups in the SIG Program.

Responsibilities of a Topic-level SIG:

- Maintain one coordinator/point of contact for the group who is an ISTE member in good standing
- Hold a Birds of a Feather meeting at the ISTE conference
- File an annual report
- File an annual plan
- Communicate with group members at least quarterly
- Maintain a wiki (wikis are provided to each SIG by ISTE)
- Attend quarterly SIG Council call (optional)

Resources available to a Topic-level SIG:

- A Birds of a Feather gathering space and time at the ISTE conference
- An ISTE Wiki
- A Ning group on the ISTE Community Ning
- An ISTE announcement Listserve
- Listing on the ISTE SIGs homepage

Proposal to form a Topic Level SIG:

Your proposal should include the following information. *This proposal needs to be submitted to the ISTE staff no later than August 15.*

Proposed name of the new SIG

Date

Petitioner Name and email address

Petitioner's membership status at ISTE and year he/she became an ISTE member

Other volunteer leaders (include email addresses)

Describe any previous volunteer or professional service with ISTE by the petitioner

Group Purpose (1-2 paragraphs)

Why do you think this topic should become the focus of an ISTE SIG? (1-2 paragraphs)

Group Goals and Objectives (1-2 paragraphs max)

If you have any questions about the proposal or review process, please contact Colleen Kimball, Member Communities Manager at ckimball@iste.org or 541.434.8912.