ECA (Victorian Branch) SIG Policy

Version 2017/1
Updated: 23 February 2017

2.8 Special Interest Groups (SIG)

Purpose
ECA Victorian Branch operates with a number of special interest groups that support the needs and interests of ECA members. This policy outlines the focus, rationale and procedure for the establishment and operation of these groups.

Membership
Members of the SIG must be either individual or organisational members of Early Childhood Australia. The SIG must be open to all members of ECA.

What is a SIG
A Special Interest Group (SIG) is a community of people, with an interest in advancing a specific area of knowledge or learning. These members meet to share ideas, network, research information and to produce solutions and advocacy within their particular field.

Furthermore, a SIG has the following requirements:

- A subject – A statement of intent
- Values – should align with organisation, benefit organisation
- Needs a convenor and co-convenor – to maintain the relationship between convenor and organisation
- Benefits to members – education, professional learning and networking
- SIG’s must do something – take action
- SIG’s are fluid and evolve
- A participant must be an ECA member to be involved in SIG
- Code of Ethics policy and our governance procedures apply

Rationale
The benefits of SIG’s within the ECA organisation are to support member’s specialist interests through a community of practice.

Vision
Advocacy: Advocate for children, educators, families and issues that relate to early childhood education and care
Education: Develop awareness and knowledge to inform practice

Networking: Encourage collaborative discussions, projects and relationships

Procedure
- Members considering developing a SIG need to complete an ‘Expression of Interest Form’ and submit to ECA Vic. Branch Executive Committee.
- Approval granted by ECA Vic. Branch Executive Committee in writing.
- There are no funds automatically available but SIGs can apply for resources/project funds

Role of the SIG Liaison Officer
The committee will appoint annually, a SIG Liaison Officer, whose role it is to coordinate the SIG’s and ensure that the SIG policy is adhered to. Tasks attributed to the SIG liaison officer would include
- reviewing applications for the establishment of a SIG and
- making recommendations to the committee
- approving SIG events that require a payment and could therefore incur a financial loss to the organisation

Role of the convenors
- There will be a minimum of two convenors of the SIG
- Convenor writes an invitation to members to join the SIG. This should be a half to one page article outlining:
  - Convenor introduction
  - Contact details - email and phone
  - Focus of the SIG
  - Rationale
  - Benefits to members
  - First meeting date and venue
- Statement of Intent will be written for the SIG
- Submit reports for the ECA Victorian Branch committee outlining the SIG’s progress, projects and events
- Share events and progress in branch publications
- Write SIG report for ECA Victorian Branch annual report
- The SIG convenor must attend ECA Victorian Branch Annual General Meeting.

First meeting:
- SIG members who are not ECA members may attend (one) initial meeting to see if the group meets their needs and interests.
- Delegate roles for members if relevant. (Convenors, E-Bulletin, email and administration tasks)
- Develop a members contact list including group email
- Organise a minimum of four meetings and venues for the year
- Discuss advocacy projects
- Discuss publication topics

General procedures:
- Consider promoting the SIG through ECA publications (Every Child and AJEC)
- Ensure meeting venues are covered with public liability insurance
- Ensure all activities are notified through the ECA Victorian office by email.
- The ECA Code of conduct is applicable for all SIG members
- All member will be informed about the SIG meetings
- A Member database will be maintained at the ECA office
Financial procedures:
- All events that incur a fee must be approved by the SIG Liaison officer
- SIG convenors may apply to the ECA VIC Branch committee once each year for funds for special events
- Additional events where a speaker or service is paid must be funded by SIG members
- SIG Events must be booked through the Branch office and setup through Event Brite six weeks prior to the event
- If costs cannot be covered for the SIG event this may be cancelled in consultation with the SIG Liaison officer at least two weeks before the event date

The status of the SIG’s
The status of the SIG’s shall be recorded.

1. Reconciliation Active Start date 2015
2. Let’s Reflect Active Start date 2017
3. Sustainability On Hold Suspended 2015
4. The Arts in ECEC On Hold Suspended 2015
5. Children/Trauma On Hold Suspended 2015