

## **EuGMS – Special Interest Groups General Rules**

**These rules apply to all Scientific Special Interest Groups and Task and Finish Groups, to the Early-Career Geriatricians Initiative (ECGI) and Global Europe Initiative (GEI)**

### **1. DEFINITION OF SIGs**

**Special interest groups (SIGs)** are defined in article 41 of the EuGMS Bylaws ([https://www.eugms.org/fileadmin/eugms-data/legal\\_and\\_statutory/EuGMS AISBL - By-Laws - Final - ENG - EY Law.pdf](https://www.eugms.org/fileadmin/eugms-data/legal_and_statutory/EuGMS_AISBL_-_By-Laws_-_Final_-_ENG_-_EY_Law.pdf)).

These are specific groups within EuGMS, which provide their members with an opportunity to share ideas or network on the discussion forum, exchange views and share best practice with their peers and to develop policy positions, original research and scientific papers. Joining a SIG enables the members to: gain insight into topical, relevant and challenging issues in specialist areas, further develop and apply their knowledge and make new contacts to drive improvement in the advancement of the SIG and of EuGMS as a whole.

SIGs are part of the EuGMS and they perform activities relevant to the EuGMS. Members of the groups should consider they are working within this society in all the activities they perform for the Group. All the SIGs will be at all times subject to the EuGMS bylaws, rules and regulations.

### **2. CREATION OF SIGs**

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) will be created at the request of a minimum of 5 members from at least 5 different member countries.

Promoters of SIGs will present a written application to EuGMS Academic Board and may contact the Academic Director first for discussion and clarification. This application shall include information about the name and precise aims of the group, the relevance of these aims for the purposes of the EuGMS, the expected method of work, the first expected outcome, the initial chairpersons, and the professional background of its anticipated members, communication among members, planning of meetings and actual or potential sources of funds. A template to be filled by the promoters of the SIG will be provided by the EuGMS secretariat.

Once the application has been reviewed by the Academic Director and discussed within the Academic Board, if it receives Academic Board support, then it will be passed to the Executive

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Board for approval. The decision will be communicated to the chairpersons of the proposed SIG and to the Full Board.

### **3. MEMBERSHIP**

There is no upper limit to the number of members of a SIG. Membership includes individuals with relevant scientific interests who are not necessarily associated with national societies which are members of the EuGMS General Assembly but would be expected to join their national society if eligible to do so. At least 60 % of the SIG members must be members of their national EuGMS member society.

ECGI membership: taking into account the characteristics of the group, as defined at a particular stage of professional development, the duration of membership is set at a maximum of five years. In addition, the eligibility criteria for ECGI membership extend to a maximum of five years after obtaining the qualification of geriatrician; in countries where geriatrics is not a specialty, a resident in internal medicine or family medicine could be considered an ECGI if this is the purpose of the training and is consistent with his or her professional goals.

GEI membership: The GEI aims to have members from all countries that are represented in our Society. To be able to fulfil this mission, members should:

- exhibit a real interest in the promotion of GM in their countries and engage to scientific activities towards this direction and/or
- be willing to contribute and engage in the mission of promoting GM all across Europe.

The request to become member of a SIG, together with updated information about professional experience, will be done through an online form. Applications should be approved by the SIG Chairs for the SIGs, by the General Secretary for ECGI and by the GEI Coordinator for the GEI), who have the task to evaluate the requests and accept them or not. Representatives from industry (or other external funding or sponsorship organisations) will not be members but will be allowed to participate in activities and attend meetings in the role of observers, therefore without voting rights.

Members of SIG accept to:

- a) do their best to attend regular actual or virtual meetings of the group (ECGI and GEI members, to be considered such, are requested to attend at least half the meetings held by the Group during the year).
- b) provide their experience and knowledge to promote the aims of the group.
- c) participate in the preparation of reports or documents that may arise as a result of the work of the group.
- d) regularly participate in tasks that will lead to the fulfilment of the aims of the group.

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- e) have their name and e-mail publicly posted in the EuGMS website (in the section open only to registered users).

Information regarding member's details of specialist practice-based interests, research interests and membership of external groups/committees of interest to the SIG may be added to EuGMS database. This might be used to direct information, questions and queries from the membership.

#### **4. CHAIRPERSONS AND OFFICERS**

SIGs, ECGI and GEI The group shall appoint two chairpersons.

ECGI and GEI as groups with a strategic mission, are also chaired by a member of the Executive Board. General Secretary will chair the ECGI. For the GEI, the ExecB will design a member of the Board or a representative who will supervise the works of the GEI and report to the ExecB, the evolution of the activities and proposals of the GEI.

Chairpersons have to be members of their national society and at least one of these must be a member of a EuGMS Full Member National Society (<https://www.eugms.org/our-members/national-societies.html>). Except when the group is constituted, the chairpersons should be elected by the members of the group for a term of 2 years, renewable for another 2 years. The initial election should take place within 12 months of the SIG's creation. After a mandate of 2 years (or 4 in case of re-election) at least 4 years have to elapse before a someone can be elected anew in the role of chairperson (not applicable to ECGI). If there are more than 2 applicants, the two members who get the majority of the votes will be elected, consistent with the requirement for at least one to be a member of a EuGMS national society. The elections shall be ratified by and shall be accountable to the Academic on behalf of the Executive Board. Any controversies will be solved together with the Academic Board.

The chairpersons will be responsible to:

- a) promote and coordinate all the activity of the SIG by convening meetings (at least 2 per year, one of them near to or at the annual congress) and regulating the activities of the group.
- b) have the final responsibility for the results of the work of the group.
- c) represent the SIG maintaining the relationship with the EuGMS Academic and Executive Boards
- d) keep records of the activities, meetings, documents or results of the work of the group, and deliver them as requested to the Academic Board, via the EuGMS secretariat.
- e) relate with EuGMS secretariat in all the procedural and logistic aspects of the work of the group.
- f) coordinate the search for sponsorship to fund SIG activities, if needed, in agreement with the EuGMS Executive and Academic Board and Global Coordinator. The contract with the sponsor shall be the EuGMS standard

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Agreement for financial support and the signature should be of the EuGMS President and Academic Director. The Agreement is published on the EuGMS website ([https://www.eugms.org/fileadmin/eugms-data/Financial Data/EuGMS standard Agreement for financial support.pdf](https://www.eugms.org/fileadmin/eugms-data/Financial%20Data/EuGMS%20standard%20Agreement%20for%20financial%20support.pdf)).

Further details are provided in article XX Finances

- g) Participate in the annual meeting of all the EuGMS SIG leaders

Additional officers, e.g. secretary, social media manager or treasurers, may be elected or appointed by the Chairpersons. In total at least 50% of officers must be members of EuGMS Full Member national societies (<https://www.eugms.org/our-members/national-societies.html>).

Officers shall hold office for two years and can be re-appointed for two more years. The elections shall be ratified by and shall be accountable to the Academic and the Executive Boards.

## **5. ACTIVITIES AND REPORTS**

SIGs are required to maintain regular contacts with their members for the proper development of their activities.

Each SIG shall organize the following activities to fulfil the aims of the Group:

- at least one general meeting in every calendar year. The annual general meetings will approve the annual accounts, if applicable, and pass any agreement governing the policy structure and mode of operation of the group. Every two years, the general meeting will serve the purpose of (re)electing the chairpersons and (re)appointing additional officers.
- at least 2 events (seminars, workshops, symposia) per calendar year, online or in person
- deliver a short annual report of their activities, which will be approved by the Academic Board.

In addition, the Group should demonstrate its activities through several outputs:

- contribution to the EuGMS congress (submissions of abstracts and symposia),
- research projects,
- publications,
- surveys,
- participation in or contribution to European Projects (under the coordination of the EuGMS Scientific Liaison Officer)
- etc.

The SIGs may engage with the Editor-in-Chief of European Geriatric Medicine to publish special issues, usually with appointed Guest Editor. European Geriatric Medicine, as the

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official EuGMS journal, should be the preferred point for publication of the scientific outputs of SIGs.

SIGs are sovereign in the form of organisation and conduct of their meetings and activities on an autonomous and self-sufficient principle in the conduct of their activities. However, the chairpersons of each SIG will keep records of these meetings and activities, and regularly and beforehand inform the Secretariat to activate the procedure to receive support from The Academic and executive Boards.

Each new project agreed among the SIG has to be presented to the Academic Board using the EuGMS standard project submission form ([LINK to EuGMS website for download](#)).

Any agreement, document, report of activity of the group should be approved at a general meeting of the group (either virtual or in person) .

Materials and documents produced by the SIG, in whatever format they are (e.g. video, written, digital or in paper) constitute visible expressions of the EuGMS and will therefore have to be included in the annual report. All the documents or materials produced will have to be presented to the Academic Board. Position Papers and contributions to external guidelines will need a final approval from the Academic and Executive Boards, before they become available to others in paper or electronic format. Development of guidelines or contributions to external guidelines shall be compliant to the Rules for EuGMS guidelines or endorsement of External guidelines (currently in progress).

## **6. FINANCE, ACCOUNTS AND RELATIONSHIP WITH EuGMS**

EuGMS will support and promote the SIG by:

- a) offering logistic support for group online or in-person meetings and activities in a way that it is seen equitable for all SIGs and is feasible within the workload of the Secretariat.
- b) helping SIG members in the creation of links with other societies and organizations, including those that may help obtaining financial support for the group,
- c) bringing to the SIG all the information that is available to EuGMS and may be linked with the activities of the group.
- d) using SIG members as first contacts in any scientific activity that is related to the Group area of expertise.
- e) opening a specific area within the website of EuGMS to the needs of SIG.

SIGs, although self-financing, will receive a limited annual financial support from EuGMS. This sum is subject to annual review when the overall EuGMS budget is set for the forthcoming year by the Executive Board.

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The SIG will have to warrant the financial viability of its activities. Should a commercial company support the activity, EuGMS, based on a written agreement, will ask for a handling fee for the use of its name and reputation and to meet real handling time and expenses. The agreement shall use the EuGMS Standard Agreement for Financial Support ([https://www.eugms.org/fileadmin/eugms-data/Financial Data/EuGMS standard Agreement for financial support.pdf](https://www.eugms.org/fileadmin/eugms-data/Financial%20Data/EuGMS%20standard%20Agreement%20for%20financial%20support.pdf))

SIG chairpersons will be responsible for the management and recording of the finances of the group (i.e. incoming support, reimbursement of travel fees, etc.) after approval of the EuGMS Financial Directors and the Executive Board to ensure transparency and ability to render clear accounts for the Auditors.

The EuGMS Executive Board should use MOUs to establish official partnerships as a formal agreement between two or more parties, excluding commercial companies. MOUs are not legally binding, but they carry a degree of seriousness and mutual respect, stronger than a gentlemen's agreement.

All existing and new MoUs, i.e. contracts with partner societies and organisations regarding a certain domain, are under the sole responsibility of the Executive Board, use the standard EuGMS MoU template and put under the umbrella of the SIG related to the domain of the partner society or organisation.

Should a conflict of interests between different SIGs arise, the Academic Board will decide on the mechanism for conflict resolution. If conflict persists, the Academic Board will make a final decision.

## **7. TERMINATION**

SIG will be terminated in any of the following circumstances:

- a) by a reasoned written request of the majority of its members.
- b) when the activities of the SIG cease to exist for two years, and the Academic Board proposes to the Executive Board the dissolution of the group.
- c) when the SIG does not meet the minimum requirements for size, country representation or activities.
- d) when it deviates from the objectives that led to its creation or is unable to comply with its aims.

Termination of a SIG will have to be approved by the Executive Board after receiving the advice of the Academic Board.

## **8. DEFINITION OF TASK AND FINISH GROUPS (T&FGs)**

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## **TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

**Task and Finish (T&F) groups** may be established by decision of the Academic Board for the purpose of performing a specific task relevant to the EuGMS (i.e., conducting an in-depth review of any service, research, policy or scientific issue). T&F groups will be hosted and managed within the most suitable SIG, subject to the agreement of that SIG leadership. Suggestions for establishment of a T&F will usually be from a SIG, in pursuance of their agreed objectives, but may be initiated by the Executive board or Academic board itself.

When approving the establishment of a T&F group, the academic board will clarify its mandate, including the background to and reasons for the task, the broad objectives, an outline scope, any constraints, quality expectations and an indication of any deadline. A draft of these considerations is expected to be provided along with the suggestion from a SIG (or Executive Board) to the Academic Board to establish the T&F group.

On approval of a T&F group, arrangements for funding should be clarified, including whether the Group must be self-financing or seek external funding.

Once the task has been accomplished/completed (or if it cannot be completed), the T&F group will produce a report to be submitted to the host SIG outlining details of the work performed, conclusions and, where appropriate, subsequent recommendations.

### **Conduct of the T&F Group**

- a) The SIG will appoint, from its members, a chairperson of the T&F group to undertake preliminary planning.
- b) The SIG will appoint the members of the group, having received advice from the nominated chairperson, the numbers should be proportionate to the likely scale and complexity of the task and have a fair representation of the different European countries. Each should also have knowledge and skills related to the task. Input from all EuGMS boards, especially the Full Board, may be useful at this point.
- c) The Chairperson (with support of the SIG as necessary) will ensure that the mandate for the Task & Finish Group is clearly understood and agreed by all members of the group. Any misunderstandings, disagreements or proposed variations or deviations from the mandate which cannot be resolved by the SIG leadership will be deferred to the Academic Board.
- d) The T&F group (with support of the SIG as necessary) will (i) agree its working and communicating methods, the contributions to be expected from its members, and timescales for actions (ii) identify and carry out actions including gathering information on the area or activity to be investigated, including external sources if necessary, (iii) as necessary, co-opt other members on to the group from relevant partners, organisations or

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community groups, and (iv) (if relevant) seek and manage external funding, subject to the general EuGMS rules for financial support and endorsements.

## **9. PRIVACY POLICY**

The EuGMS is compliant to the EU regulation 2016/679 - General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and has updated its Privacy Policy to reflect the transparency this law requires about personal data collection and usage. The updated privacy policy has taken effect on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2018.

Any member of the SIG is invited to go through the updated Privacy Policy to gain a detailed understanding of how we collect, store and process data: <http://www.eugms.org/legal-and-ethical-issues/privacy-policy.html>

By accepting to become a member of a EuGMS Special Interest Group or Task and Finish Group, individuals accept the EuGMS General Rules on Special Interest Groups and acknowledge and agree to our updated Privacy Policy.

EuGMS, and by extension the IT company that hosts the EuGMS member database, will not under any circumstance share or provide access to the content of the member database to any outside organization or company.

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