

DMSS Terms of Reference: Interest Groups

Revised May 8th, 2018

Part 1 – Purpose

- a. To define a set of parameters by which Dalhousie Medical Student Society (DMSS) Interest Groups, in Halifax and Saint John, may be established, renewed and funded.

Part 2 – Interpretation

2.1 For the purposes of this Terms of Reference:

- a. “Student Interest Group Committee” (SIGC):
- i. In Halifax, is composed of the following members: Med1 President, Med1 Treasurer, Med2 President, Med2 Treasurer, DMNS Global Health Liaison Sr., DMNS Sports and Wellness Representative, DMSS VP Internal, DMSS VP Finance, Past DMSS President. The SIGC will make decisions on the status and funding of IGs.
 - ii. In Saint John, is composed of the following members: DMSS VP NB, DMNB Sports and Wellness Representative, DMNB Treasurer, NB External Liaison, DMNB Humanities Representative, DMNB Technology and Communications Representative, Global Health Liaison Sr
- b. “Interest Group” (IG) refers to any DMSS certified association of members of Dalhousie’s medical school. An official IG is an entity composed of DMSS members.
- c. A “New IG” refers to any IG applying for official IG status that does not meet all of the requirements for a Returning IG.
- d. A “Returning IG” refers to any IG that is applying for official IG status that has been an official IG during at least the fall or winter funding cycle in the previous year.
- i. Returning IG applications are only accepted in the fall funding cycle.
- e. A “Medical Specialty IG” refers to an IG that organizes events for the purpose of providing information, knowledge and skills relevant to various medical specialities.
- i. This distinction is made at the discretion of the SIGC and may not be the same distinction made by UGME with regards to the Medical Student Performance Report (MSPR).
- f. “Executive” refers to IG leaders – be they referred to as President, Chair, Coordinator, or any other leadership title.
- i. IG’s must have, at maximum, two executives responsible to the DMSS. Other roles may be created within an IG structure as needed, but would not be Executives from the viewpoint of DMSS.
- g. “IG Fair” (DMNS) and “IG Night” (DMNB) refers to an event which showcases all official IGs from the previous year to the DMSS student body.
- h. “IG Executives’ Roundtable” (both NS and NB) refers to a meeting held in both the fall and winter semesters where IG Executives will review the application process for IG funding with the treasurer from each campus, and will discuss their activities with the aim of fostering further inter-IG collaboration.

Part 3 – IGs in General

- a. All DMSS members have the right to participate in, apply to lead, or apply to create an IG.
- b. IGs must be accessible to the entire DMSS Student Body regardless of an individual's gender, race or religion.
- c. IGs must seek to provide programming that complements rather than reproduces medical curricula.
- d. IGs must maintain an up-to-date attendance list for each event. This list must be included in the end of year report.
- e. IGs must attend the IG Night, held every fall and organized by the VP Internal (NS) and VP NB (NB).
- f. IGs must hold a minimum of:
 - i. NS: three (3) events per funding year (November 1 – October 31 of the following year).
 - ii. NB: one (1) event per funding year (September 10 – October 31 of the following year).
- g. IGs must submit requests to the DMSS VP Communications (NS) and DMSS DMNB Technology and Communications Rep (NB) to have their event included in the DMSS calendar. Requests must be made at least one week before the event.
- h. IGs must strive to maintain an average attendance of at least 10% (i.e., 16 students) of the pre-clerkship class size over all sessions.

Part 4 – Application for New and Returning IGs**4.1 Procedure:**

- a. A call for applications will be disseminated via the DMSS e-mail account by the VP Communications and the DMSS DMNB Technology and Communications Rep (NB) by:
 - i. NS: October 1 for New and Returning IGs and February 14 for New IGs for the fall and winter funding cycles, respectively.
 - ii. NB: August 1 for Returning IGs (Following an “Interest Group Roundtable Meeting” led by the IG Committee, with mandatory attendance by IG Executives, to discuss IG funding sources and allocation, the funding application process, and budgeting for Interest Groups at DMNB). A second cycle of IG applications, for New IGs, will be disseminated during the second week of Fall classes, following the DMNB “IG Night.”
- b. Applications for Returning IGs must be received by:
 - i. NS: October 8 for the fall funding cycles. Approved Returning IGs will be considered an ‘official’ DMSS IG for one fall and one winter funding cycle.
 - ii. NB: September 1 for the fall funding cycles. Approved Returning IGs will be considered an ‘official’ DMSS DMNB IG for the yearly funding cycle (September 10-October 31 of the following year)
- c. Applications for New IGs must be received by:

- i. NS: October 8 and February 21 for the fall and winter funding cycles, respectively.
 - ii. NB: October 8 for the yearly funding cycle.
 - d. In order to receive official DMSS recognition, IGs must be approved by the SIGC. Final decisions will be made by:
 - i. NS: October 15 and February 28 for the fall and winter funding cycles, respectively.
 - ii. NB: September 10 and October 15 for the Returning IGs and New IGs, respectively
 - e. The IG application (see 4.2 for New IGs and 4.3 for Returning IGs) will be evaluated by each member of the SIGC. The SIGC will then come a consensus whether an IG will be created or renewed (see 4.1.e.I.a-c).
 - i. Should a member of the SIGC sit on an IG Executive, they will abstain from both discussions and decisions regarding their groups' IG formation, renewal or funding during SIGC meetings. This member of the SIGC will be asked to leave the room when said group is being discussed. All discussions that occur when this SIGC member leaves the room will be *in camera*.
 - f. If the application is approved, the amount of funding available to the IG will be determined by the SIGC, see Part 5.
 - g. If an IG is refused official IG status, a written explanation, prepared by the SIGC will be provided to the Executives.
 - h. The SIGC reserves that right to disallow the formation or renewal of an IG on the basis of:
 - i. Overlap with another IG in terms of mandate, medical specialty and/or programming;
 - ii. Not providing sufficient value-added educational, career, extracurricular or life-experience component to members of the IG or the student body as a whole;
 - iii. SIGC discretion
 - i. IGs whose formation or renewal was refused may submit a written appeal to the DMSS President within one (1) week of learning of the decision. The DMSS President will review the appeal and must bring it to DMSS Council to be discussed and voted upon at the next DMSS Council meeting.
 - j. Voting members of DMSS Council, who are also members of the SIGC may engage in this discussion, but shall abstain from the final vote.
- 4.2 Applying for New IG status:
 - a. In order to apply for official New IG status, the Executives must submit a completed DMSS IG Application Form to the SIGC by either October 8 or February 21 for the fall and winter funding cycles (NS), or by September 1 or October 8 for the Returning and New IGs respectively. The application form shall include:
 - i. A formal mandate consisting of the purpose and detailed objectives of the IG;

- ii. A description of the IG, which will be displayed both on the DMSS and Student Affairs websites;
- iii. The names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of the two (2) Executives (an appeal may be made to the SIGC if more than two (2) Executives are needed);
- iv. A signature of support of a minimum of fifteen (15) medical students who are not this IG's Executives;
 - 1. An IG may present a written explanation for circumstances that preclude them from obtaining fifteen (15) signatures. The explanation should include reasons how their IG would provide benefit for the student body at Dal Med.
- v. A proposed budget for the year (list of activities and when they will be held, estimate of number of students that each event will impact, and any projected costs and revenues);
- vi. A proposed schedule of events for the upcoming year;
- vii. New Medical Specialty IGs are asked to indicate their desire for a Lifestyles in Medicine Night, see Part 5.4.

4.3 Applying for Returning IG status:

- a. In order to renew IG status as a Returning IG, the Executives must submit a completed DMSS IG Renewal Form to the current SIGC by September 1 (NB) and October 8 (NS). The renewal form will include:
 - i. A formal mandate consisting of the purpose and detailed objectives of the IG;
 - ii. A description of the IG, which will be displayed both on the DMSS and Student Affairs websites;
 - iii. The names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of the two (2) Executives (an appeal may be made to the SIGC if more than two (2) Executives are needed);
 - iv. A final budget for the current year;
 - v. A report on activities undertaken during the year (including attendance for each event and which faculty or residents were in attendance, if applicable);
 - 1. NS: Failure to hold three (3) events will be taken under heavy consideration.
 - vi. A proposed, detailed budget for the upcoming year (i.e., list of activities and when they will be held, and any projected costs and revenues);
 - vii. A proposed schedule of events for the upcoming year;
 - viii. Medical Specialty IGs are asked to indicate their desire for a Lifestyles in Medicine Night, see Part 5.4.

Part 5 – Funding Allocation Procedure

5.1 Funding Eligibility

- a. To be eligible for DMSS Council funding, an itemized, established budget must be provided during the application periods specified in Part 4.1:

- i. IG budgets must include assessments of known or projected costs for all planned events, as well as any known or projected revenues and donations to be collected during the year.
 1. For returning IGs, an itemized budget of the previous year is required
 2. Should a member of the SIGC sit on an IG Executive, they will abstain from both discussions and decisions regarding their groups' IG funding. This member of the SIGC will be asked to leave the room when said group is being discussed. All discussions that occur when this SIGC member leaves the room will be *in camera*.
- ii. Funding will not be given to IGs or IG events where there is not a value-added educational, career, extracurricular or life-experience component to members of the IG or the student body as a whole (i.e., Executive of IGs may not use funds to purchase food for the Executive or IG meetings).
- iii. If an IG is denied funding, a written explanation, prepared by SIGC, will be provided to the Executives.
- iv. IGs who did not receive funding or less funding than they had asked may submit a written appeal to the DMSS President within 1 (one) week of learning of the decision. The DMSS President will review the appeal and must bring it to DMSS Council to be discussed and voted upon at the next DMSS Council meeting. Voting members of DMSS Council, who are also members of the SIGC may engage in this discussion, but shall abstain from the final vote.
 1. Funding may increase or stay the same for those IGs who received less funding than they asked and submitted a written appeal.

5.2 Funding will be allocated by the SIGC using the principles for review of budget requests, including:

- a. Extent of external funding received from existing funds (i.e., existing bank accounts) and/or third-party funding;
- b. Evaluation of the degree of medical student attendance;
- c. Demonstrated successful use of previous IG funding;
- d. Number of planned events;
- e. Funds estimated to be necessary for planned events (based on size of planned events, as well as expected attendance);
- f. Practicality of budget request;
- g. Total available funds for that period.
- h. Following funding allocation, the SIGC will publish the full list of IGs that were funded and the amount they received.

5.3 In addition to the aforementioned principles:

- a. Food for IG events will not be funded in lieu of opportunities to fund practical learning experiences;
- b. Speaker gifts may be submitted in budget requests, but will only be considered should there be sufficient total available IG funds for that period

5.4 Funding for Lifestyles in Medicine Nights will be distributed by the Dalhousie Medicine Student Affairs Office through the DMSS:

- a. Funds will only be available to Medical Specialty IGs.
- b. Interest to obtain funding for a Lifestyles in Medicine Night must be indicated in the Medical Specialty IGs application DMSS funding (whether the IG be New or Returning).
- c. Only one Lifestyles in Medicine Night will be granted to each Medical Specialty IG.
- d. Money available from the Dalhousie Medicine Student Affairs Office will then be split evenly among each Medical Specialty IG that indicates their intent to obtain Lifestyles in Medicine Night funding.

5.5 Calls for Funding:

- a. Two calls for funding will be disseminated via the DMSS e-mail account by the VP Communications on:
 - i. NS:
 1. One by October 1 with funding allocated for November 1 to March 15.
 2. One by February 14 with funding allocated for March 16 to October 31 of the following year.
 - ii. NB:
 1. One by August 1, for Returning IGs, with funding allocated for September 10 to October 31 of the following year
 2. One by September 15, for New IGs, with funding allocated for October 15 to October 31 of the following year

5.6 Reimbursement of Costs:

- a. Receipts must be submitted to the DMSS VP Finance by funding request deadlines of December 1st, March 1st and June 1st.
- b. Requirements for reimbursement:
 - i. Original, itemized receipt
 - ii. Expense Summary Sheet
- c. Money will NOT be transferred in advance of any proposed event.
- d. Funds approved, in principle, for a student group, but not utilized by that group will NOT be carried over multiple years for that group.

Part 6 – Executive Responsibilities:

- a. In addition to duties outlined above including, but not limited to, forming or renewing IGs and reporting relevant to both, Executives have the following responsibilities:
 - i. Attend (or delegate another student to attend) the IG Fair (NS) or IG Night (NB) in early September (to occur by September 15);
 1. NS: Attend (or delegate another student to attend) the IG Executives' Roundtable in both the fall and winter semesters in late September and late January, respectively.

1. Events specified in 6.a.I. and 6.a.II. will occur at a date specified, at least one (1) week in advance, by the DMSS VP Internal (NS) and DMSS VP NB (NB).
2. NB: Mandatory attendance by at least one (1) of two (2) IG Executives (or delegate another student to attend) to the Interest Group Roundtable Meeting led by the IG Committee, held in early August. The meeting will discuss IG funding sources, funding allocation, the funding application process, budgeting and scheduling for Interest Group events.
- ii. NS: Attend (or delegate another student to attend) the Dalhousie Medical Alumni Gala Dinner (normally held in the Fall of each year)
- iii. Outgoing Executives must advertise their leadership positions for at least two (2) weeks prior to selecting the incoming Executive.
- iv. Outgoing Executives must choose the Incoming Executives in the most democratic way possible:
 1. Complaints arising from these procedures may be addressed to the SIGC;
 2. If the complaint is found to have merit, the SIGC will then choose who the Incoming Executives for this IG will be.
- v. Outgoing Executives must prepare an end-of-year handover report to the Incoming Executives and DMSS including:
 1. Final budget for previous year
 2. Summary of events
 3. Contacts of key stakeholders for the IG