

Best Practices: How to Start a MANA Interest Group

OVERVIEW:

The Metabolomics Association of North America (MANA) promotes the advancement of metabolomics science in North America. It provides a platform for researchers, professionals, and students to exchange ideas, collaborate, and share knowledge in the field of metabolomics, in part through interest groups (IGs) such as Early Career Members (ECM), WomiX: Womxn in Metabolomics, NMR Metabolomics, Microbiome, SODA, Metabolomics in Precision Medicine, and Metabolomics Cores. For more information on these groups, see our website [here](#). These groups facilitate networking and collaboration opportunities, provide a forum for discussing current trends and developments in the field, and take action to provide scientific guidance to funding agencies and the community, e.g. through responding to requests for information and publishing perspective papers. They also enable students and early-career researchers to gain valuable insights from senior researchers. MANA's IGs are run and supported by volunteers who organize events, develop educational materials, and provide mentorship. This grassroots approach ensures that the groups remain responsive to the needs of the community, fostering collaboration and a sense of community among members.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF AN INTEREST GROUP:

The MANA Bylaws provide some guidelines for IGs, please see MANA Bylaws [here](#). In addition, please consider the following:

- **The MANA IGs are formed by MANA members**
 - The MANA IGs are led by a Chair and may include one or more Co-Chairs
 - It is not required but highly recommended that the Chair and Co-Chair(s) each have up to a two-year appointment and stagger their term to ensure continuity of the IGs while providing other members with opportunities to take on leadership roles and help infuse fresh perspectives and ideas into the IG.
 - The IG Leadership Team may include other MANA members.
 - There is no restriction on the number of chairs or IG members.
 - It is recommended that an Early Career member co-lead an IG (e.g. as co-chair or other position in the IG Leadership Team).
 - An Early Career member is defined as someone who is within 10 years of their highest academic degree.
 - The Early Career member would be the designated point of contact between the IG and MANA ECM.
 - It is recommended that a MANA Board Member participate in an IG
 - Please see a list of board directors [here](#).
 - A designated member from the IG Leadership Team would be the point of contact between the IG and the MANA Board.
 - IG meetings:
 - It is recommended that MANA Interest Groups meet on a regular basis using videoconferencing tools such as Zoom. Please see the ACTIVITIES section below for details on acquiring a Zoom account from MANA.
 - Logistics of the meeting (i.e., agenda, meeting minutes, recording of the meeting, frequency, duration, etc.) can be decided by the IG Leadership Team and ultimately the IG's needs and may change as needed.

MEMBERS:

Any MANA member can join an IG. To join MANA as a member, please click [here](#) to view MANA IGs.

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Besides the monthly videoconference, the primary form of communication between IG Leadership Team and IG members can be through a MANA-provided email account. Requests to create accounts should be sent to the MANA President email: president@metabolomicsna.org
- IGs are encouraged to further increase their visibility using one or all of the following approaches:
 - IG summaries can be posted on the main website.
 - Please contact MANA's Communication & Outreach Committee Chair Dr. Ewy Mathé (ewy.mathe@nih.gov) to request addition of new information or changes/updates to the website.
 - IG current news or other content (i.e., events, general information, upcoming meetings, etc.) can be published in the [MANA quarterly Newsletter - "The Brief."](#)
 - Content requests will be sent out a month prior to the publish date.
 - To contribute to the newsletter contact co-editor Dr. Arpana Vaniya (avaniya@ucdavis.edu).
 - IGs can create social media or messaging platforms (e.g. LinkedIn, X formerly known as Twitter, Slack, etc.).
 - See guide on how to create a LinkedIn Page [here](#).
- It is recommended that all meeting times be shared with the board and on the MANA IG page [here](#). Please contact MANA's Communication & Outreach Committee Chair Dr. Ewy Mathé (ewy.mathe@nih.gov) to establish a process for sharing meeting times and links.
- All IG Leads (Chair and/or Co-Chairs) are strongly encouraged to meet bi-annually with each other and with the Board. The intent is for IGs to be aware of each other's activities, promote joint activities across IGs, and have regular exchange of ideas with the Board.
 - One meeting will be held in April virtually, while the other will be held during the annual meeting in-person.
 - IGs are encouraged to present their mission/goals, what they want to accomplish, and how this would benefit MANA members and the broader metabolomics community.
 - These meetings provide an opportunity for IG leads to bring forth any issues or additional needs for support.
 - Any questions or concerns about the IG Leads meeting can be directed to Please contact MANA's Communication & Outreach Committee Chair Dr. Ewy Mathé (ewy.mathe@nih.gov).

ACTIVITIES:

- Each IG will be represented at the annual MANA conference.
 - IGs should provide one or several slides that summarizes their group's goal and activities.
 - Optionally, IGs are encouraged to present a poster or host a workshop.
- Examples of virtual or in-person events that can be hosted by an IG: include workshops, training sessions, seminars/webinars, symposium, networking events, journal clubs, discussion panels, etc.
 - For virtual events, a Zoom account can be made specifically for a given IG. MANA

provides a Zoom account for use by each of its IGs. Requests must be sent to the MANA President email: president@metabolomicsna.org.

- Suggestions:
 - Keep record of registration numbers and attendance numbers to track progress
 - Registration link can be branded or have additional questions to survey registrants
 - Record to the cloud, save Zoom recording to edit and add to MANA YouTube Channel
- Scientific outreach activities could include:
 - IG led publication or perspective paper
 - **Example:** NMR Metabolomics IG, "[NMR and Metabolomics-A Roadmap for the Future](#)" in *Metabolites*, 2022, 12:678.
 - Representation at other conferences (e.g. ASMS, Metabolomics Society Annual meeting, ILS) through presentations, posters, workshops, networking events or other activities.
 - MANA can provide financial support to IG events, depending on the availability of funds. Please contact the MANA Treasurer email treasurer@metabolomicsna.org to request support for your event.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/BEST PRACTICES:

- Create a document that includes a mission/goals statement for the IG and other processes relevant for the IG (e.g. process for voting in co-chairs, responsibility of chairs and members, activities, etc.). Several IGs have created such a document that could be used as a starting point if helpful. Please reach out to IG leads to request (they are listed on the MANA website [here](#)).
- Create a high-resolution logo for the IG.
- Think about the IG's brand. *Branding is an important way for IG to establish its identity, build credibility and trust, increase visibility and awareness, and foster a sense of community among its members and supporters.*
- Keep record of accomplishments, on-going activities, IG Leads, and members (i.e., start/end time, roles, etc.)
- Use Canva (free) or Adobe Express (free) to create flyers, content, graphics, etc.
 - Help find color palettes fast with this generator: <https://colors.co/>
 - Use ChatGPT to create written content for advertisement or emails: chat.openai.com. If using ChatGPT, please be sure to carefully edit.
 - To generate QR Codes: <https://www.qrcode-monkey.com/>
 - To generate Bitly links (short links): <https://app.bitly.com>
- Consider collaborating with existing MANA IGs or other groups in the metabolomics community.
- Consider creating a webpage for the group under the MANA website.
 - Please contact MANA's Communication & Outreach Committee Chair Dr. Ewy Mathé (ewy.mathe@nih.gov)
- Monitor regularly IG email account and welcome new members to IG on regular basis.
- Hold regular meetings and encourage discussion and consensus-building among IG members