

SPECIAL INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP
ON MENTAL HEALTH AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

BYLAWS (Draft Proposal v.1– April 15, 2001)

1.0. Statement of Purpose

The Special Interest Research Group on Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities (MH-SIRG) is a duly authorized special interest research group within the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities. The MH-SIRG has as its general purpose the planning, coordinating and conducting of activities relevant to all aspects of mental health and intellectual disabilities consistent with the purposes and means of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities. It functions within the BYLAWS of the IASSID.

The mission of the MH-SIRG is to:

1. Provide a focus for the worldwide exchange and dissemination of research and practice, as well as networking, in the field of mental health and intellectual disability. Mental health is meant in a broad sense, encompassing specific diagnosed conditions occurring concurrently with intellectual disabilities, as well as those related to adjustment and well-being. A wide variety of professional groups are potential contributors and no specific profession is considered to have predominance in this respect.
2. Promote cross-national, multidisciplinary collaboration in the area of mental health and intellectual disability. The ultimate aim of the group is to improve the quality of life or and services for people with intellectual disabilities, their carers, and their families.
3. Provide a framework for the collation of information relating to the research interests, expertise, and publications of group members. Within the overall process of collaboration, the views and contributions of nonprofessionals, including people with intellectual disabilities and their families and friends, are a fundamental component, and will be given the priority they deserve.

In furtherance of its mission, the MH-SIRG will:

- 1.1. Abide by the intent, spirit, letter, and regulations established by the Council of the IASSID for special interest research groups (SIRGs) as outlined in the Articles of Incorporation of the IASSID.
- 1.2. Serve as a medium for deliberation, for exchange of ideas, knowledge, skills and experiences and for compilation and dissemination of information.

- 1.3. Organize international and regional congresses, conferences and seminars.
- 1.4. Encourage research in the field of mental health and intellectual disabilities, including causes, prevention, diagnosis, evaluation, therapy, management, advocacy, education and social habilitation of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families.
- 1.5. Produce and distribute publications about the scientific study of mental health and intellectual disabilities and of the services and supports to such persons and their families.
- 1.6. Foster, encourage and promote membership in the various professional disciplines and national organizations concerned with the scientific study of mental health and intellectual disabilities.
- 1.7. Collaborate with national organizations concerned with the scientific study of mental health and intellectual disabilities.
- 1.8. Promote cooperation with the other associations or organizations directly or closely related with the scientific study of mental health and intellectual disabilities.
- 1.9. Provide information, consultation and advice to international, national, and other governmental and non-governmental bodies related to the mental health of persons with intellectual disabilities.
- 1.10. Coordinate its activities with other SIRGs and bodies of the IASSID as applicable.
- 1.11. Apply for and administer intramural and extramural funds related to its purpose and mission.

2.0. Organization and Administration

- 2.1. The MH-SIRG shall have an Executive Committee and Steering Committee as its governance.
- 2.2. MH-SIRG members with voting rights shall elect or designate a Steering Committee that is representative of the regions of the world. Included among the Steering Committee members shall be the members of the MH-SIRG with strong interest in the welfare of the MH-SIRG and the Chairs of the local organizing committees of the MH-SIRG's roundtables (who shall automatically become members following the roundtable for at least five years).
- 2.3. The Executive Committee is responsible for the administrative affairs of the MH-SIRG. It is composed of a Chair or Co-Chairs, up to three other designated

officers, and up to six members at large who are elected by MH-SIRG members with voting rights, the immediate past Chair, and chairs of committees established by the Executive Committee. The elected officers should be drawn from the Steering Committee.

- 2.4. Officers and Steering Committee members must be individual members of the IASSID.
- 2.5. The terms of office and composition of the Executive and Steering Committees shall be set by the Executive Committee. Officers or members of the Steering Committee may be removed for cause and after a vote of the Executive and Steering Committees.
- 2.6. The Executive Committee may create subcommittees, standing committees, ad hoc committees or work groups as it sees fit. Formal designation shall be made by the Chair, or Co-Chairs, upon consultation with the Steering Committee and the MH-SIRG members.
- 2.7. All members of the IASSID are eligible to join the MH-SIRG. Non-members of the IASSID may affiliate with the MH-SIRG upon application to the chair of the membership committee.
- 2.8. The MH-SIRG shall hold, as a minimum, a meeting at the IASSID Congress (or more often as desired). At least two months advance notice of such a meeting must be given to members of the MH-SIRG and the IASSID Council. These notices may be given by letter, facsimile, newsletter, email, or may be placed in any IASSID publication.
- 2.9. At least one member of the Executive Committee of the MH-SIRG should attend the quadrennial meeting of the IASSID General Assembly.
- 2.10. The MH-SIRG Executive Committee shall nominate from its Steering Committee one member to represent the MH-SIRG on the IASSID Council, in accord with the by-laws of the IASSID. The nomination will be presented to the members for confirmation or acceptance. The MH-SIRG Council representative shall attend all Council meetings during his or her term. The Executive Committee Chair of the MH-SIRG may designate an alternate SIRG member to attend Council, if the designated member is unable to do so. At its discretion, the Executive Committee members may designate consumers who are not members of the MH-SIRG, or for whom membership requirements (e.g., dues) have been waived, as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.
- 2.11. The MH-SIRG is required to maintain a statement of Purpose and Bylaws on file with the IASSID, which should be updated as necessary.

3.0 Members

Membership in the MH-SIRG consists of:

- 3.1. Full members are members of the MH-SIRG and IASSID. Such members shall pay dues, be eligible to be officers or members of the Steering Committee, and have full voting rights.
- 3.2. Associate members are members of the MH-SIRG, but not members of the IASSID. Such members shall not be eligible to be officers or members of the Steering Committee, shall pay dues, and shall have limited voting rights as set by the Executive Committee.
- 3.3. Student members are members of the MH-SIRG and student members of the IASSID. Student members are not eligible to be officers or members of the Steering Committee, shall pay dues, and shall have limited voting rights as set by the Executive Committee.
- 3.4. Affiliate members are members of the MH-SIRG but not members of the IASSID. Affiliate members do not pay dues, are not eligible to be officers or members of the Steering Committee, and shall have no voting rights.
- 3.5. The MH-SIRG will maintain and regularly update membership registers, noting the name and mailing address of members. A copy of the register will be filed with the Secretary of the IASSID annually (on March 1st of each year). The chair of the membership committee will be responsible to maintain the membership register.
- 3.6. The membership of the MH-SIRG is inclusive, not exclusive. Any active IASSID member is eligible for membership. Persons who are not members of the IASSID may be admitted to membership at the discretion of the MH-SIRG Executive Committee, in consultation with the Steering Committee and the members.
- 3.7. The MH-SIRG shall, upon authorization by the Executive Committee, collect an annual membership fee to cover operational expenses, and set charges for attendance at MH-SIRG functions, such as workshops or seminars. The Executive Committee, in consultation with the Steering Committee and the members, shall have the authority to waive annual membership fees.
- 3.8. Only those persons whose memberships have been officially recorded prior to the date of an MH-SIRG meeting (defined as the time the meeting was called to order) will be entitled to vote on matters relating to the MH-SIRG at that meeting. The MH-SIRG may admit visitors or guests to its meetings and may charge whatever fee appropriate for such admission.
- 3.9. Only members of IASSID shall be eligible to hold elected or designated office, be

members of the Steering Committee or otherwise participate in the governing structure of the MH-SIRG. The MH-SIRG Executive Committee, in consultation with the Steering Committee and the members, may designate non-members of the IASSID as ad hoc committee or workgroup chairs or members.

- 3.10. The chair of the membership committee of the MH-SIRG will notify the Secretary of IASSID of the names of all its members.

4.0 Responsibilities

- 4.1 The MH-SIRG shall plan and conduct activities appropriate to its mission. These activities might include, but not be limited to conferences, roundtables, workshops, and dissemination of newsletters.
- 4.2 The MH-SIRG may conduct its official business, including issues that need approval by vote, by electronic mail. An issue shall pass if voted on by at least 20% of the voting members.
- 4.3 The MH-SIRG shall provide the IASSID Council with an annual report of activities. This report must be submitted no later than March 1st of each year.
- 4.3 At its annual general meeting, the MH-SIRG Executive Committee, in consultation with the Steering Committee and the members, will nominate one of its members as its representative to the Assembly of IASSID.
- 4.5 At its annual general meeting, the MH-SIRG Executive Committee will nominate one of the members of the Steering Committee as MH-SIRG representative to the Council of IASSID.
- 4.6 The Executive Committee Chair, or Co-Chairs, of the MH-SIRG shall be responsible for coordinating SIRG activities with Council and the officers of the IASSID. A member of the Executive Committee shall assume these responsibilities in the absence of a Chair or Co-Chair. The Chair or Co-Chairs shall chair Executive and Steering Committee meetings.
- 4.7 The chair of the membership committee of the MH-SIRG shall maintain the records of the MH-SIRG, maintain the membership register, and file reports to the IASSID Secretary as required.
- 4.8 A member of the Executive Committee will be elected as Treasurer. The Treasurer of the MH-SIRG shall maintain all currency accounts of the MH-SIRG, file annual (and requested) financial statements with the MH-SIRG and the Treasurer of the IASSID, and maintain responsibility for the accounting and accuracy of all funds held by and for the MH-SIRG. The Treasurer shall prepare and ensure delivery of financial statements for the annual meeting.

- 4.9 The MH-SIRG designated Council member shall represent the MH-SIRG at all Council meetings and, in consultation with the Executive Committee, vote on matters of import to the MH-SIRG at Council.
- 4.10 The MH-SIRG designated Assembly member shall represent the MH-SIRG at all Assembly meetings and, in consultation with the Executive, vote on matters of import to the MH-SIRG at meetings of the General Assembly.

5.0 Fiscal and Legal Status

- 5.1 The MH-SIRG is responsible for any financial arrangements or debts incurred by the MH-SIRG.
- 5.2 The MH-SIRG may, in consultation with the IASSID Treasurer, open a currency account to administer funds procured through fees, donations or extramural grants. When such an account is held, it shall be administered by the Treasurer. All payments or disbursements from the MH-SIRG account (or accounts) shall be authorized by the Chair and Vice Chair and checks are issued by the MH-SIRG Treasurer. The MH-SIRG Treasurer shall submit a statement of accounts annually to the IASSID Treasurer.
- 5.3 The MH-SIRG may pay honoraria, fees, and/or travel expenses associated with obtaining the service of lecturers or presenters at its meetings, special events, conferences, or the IASSID quadrennial congress. Such remuneration can be provided to MH-SIRG members when appropriate and approved by the Executive Committee.
- 5.3 The MH-SIRG may authorize reimbursement of full or partial expenses associated with the maintenance of each office or with official travel to meetings of the MH-SIRG for officers or other members designated and authorized to represent the MH-SIRG as prescribed by the rules of the MH-SIRG.
- 5.4 The MH-SIRG may request funds from the IASSID when the request is consistent with IASSID rules and operating procedures.
- 5.5 The MH-SIRG may be dissolved only by a vote of the membership or by the IASSID Council for cause. All assets of a MH-SIRG, on dissolution, shall become the property of the IASSID. The IASSID shall not be responsible for the payments of any debt incurred by a dissolved group in excess of the assets remaining.

By-laws adopted _____