



# INTEREST GROUP **LEADERSHIP TOOLKIT**

2021-2022

## Managing a Thriving Interest Group (IG) and Engaging IG Members Throughout the Year.

AcademyHealth's Interest Groups are dynamic communities that bring members with similar interests together. Serving as an Interest Group (IG) advisory committee member is a great opportunity to increase your professional network and be in the center of the action for your area of interest.

The Interest Groups are very popular among the AcademyHealth membership. As of July 2021, more than 41% of all AcademyHealth members were signed up to be in one or more Interest Groups.

This quick reference guide provides you the most essential information you need to take action and:

- enhance the visibility of your IG and your IG members
- facilitate networking and collaboration, and
- diversify your IG's membership

## Enhance the Visibility of your IG and your IG Members

In surveys, one of the top challenges members report is gaining visibility for their research. There are several ways your IG can help members bring their research to the forefront and promote the IG at the same time.

1. **"IG Spotlight"** – Promote your IG and IG members in front of AcademyHealth's members. The "IG Spotlight" in the Member Update e-Newsletter is the perfect place to help you highlight the valuable resources you are creating. This e-newsletter is a key resource for AcademyHealth's members to learn about the latest professional development and learning opportunities for the field. [Review the IG Spotlight submission guidelines](#) and start promoting your IG and IG members.
2. **Write a blog post for the AcademyHealth blog** – This is an excellent way to showcase the work of your Interest Groups and IG members. AcademyHealth's blog is widely read by the health services research community and puts your IGs work in a prominent position. [Review the blog guidelines](#) and pitch your idea to our blog editor.
3. **IG Newsletter – Share what's happening with your IG members on a regular basis.**  
IG members are excited to be a part of the IG and want to know how they can get involved and interact with other IG members. An IG newsletter is an easy way for you to send your IG members the latest information and opportunities. [Review the AcademyHealth Design Guidelines](#) to learn about the approval process for the creation of print materials, webpages, and social networking pages and groups.
4. **IG Listserv – Communicate directly with your IG members**  
The listservs are an exclusive benefit of IG membership and allow for ongoing dialogue between IG members. This is an easy way to generate conversations and engagement by continually encouraging IG member involvement.  
  
**Utilize the IG listserv to:**
  - Disseminate interesting publications and research;
  - Announce events, conferences, and meet-ups related to the IG; and
  - Promote IG-related information (e.g., IG newsletter, speakers at IG meeting, IG call for abstracts, etc.).Look up your [IG Listserv email address](#) and send out your notification to members.
5. **Use Twitter to follow and share IG-related topics**  
AcademyHealth created a hashtag for each IG. This can be another way of promoting the IG and nurturing communication with and amongst members. AcademyHealth does not recommend or endorse the creation of individual IG Twitter handles. [Look up your IG's hashtag](#) and share your news on social media.

## Facilitate Networking and Collaboration through IG Convenings

Health services researchers are consistently looking for aligned collaborators and partners. Your IG is a great place to facilitate convenings throughout the year to support the professional development and group of the IG members.

### 6. Host Informal Conference Calls and Online/In-Person Meetups

Coordinate informal meet ups throughout the year to provide a two-way conversation between the IG Advisory Committee and IG members. Sessions can be formal or informal opportunities to share insight and best practices.

- Provide your members with the opportunity to have collaborative discussions like:
  - “Question & Answer” or “Ask Me Anything”
  - “Journal Chat Groups”
  - Mentor meet-and-greet sessions to focus on research in progress, professional development tips, etc.
- Host an Informal Happy Hour / “Meet Up” at an in-person or virtual conference – either one organized by AcademyHealth or any relevant organization that your members tend to attend.

### 7. Host a formal Webinar/Online Learning Session

IG Members are interested in learning from their peers and learning about new research and methods. A great way to highlight the rising stars in your area of expertise is to feature them on webinars you host. AcademyHealth encourages you to host the webinar on your organization’s platform. We will post the video recording and slides for AcademyHealth’s members only on our website.

### 8. Host an IG Meeting at the Annual Research Meeting (ARM)

The Annual Research Meeting is a popular place to gather your Interest Group members for networking and professional development. IG meetings are 60-minute concurrent sessions held during the ARM. Full details will be provided this fall to help you plan your 2022 IG meeting. Based on this structure, IGs are not required to fundraise to host a meeting. Any additional items (e.g. awards, honoraria, registration, etc.) will require your IG to fundraise. See the [IG Fundraising](#) document for more details.

AcademyHealth is committed to IG representation on the ARM Planning Committee and follows a three-year rotation schedule.

[See the ARM IG Rotation Schedule](#) for details.

### 9. Encourage your IG Members to Volunteer as Theme Reviewers for AcademyHealth conferences

To broaden your IGs involvement in AcademyHealth, we encourage you to ask your members to volunteer as themes for Academy Health conferences, such as the Annual Research Meeting (ARM), National Health Policy Conference (NHPC), and Health Datapalooza.

## Managing a Thriving and Growing IG – Encourage non-members to join AcademyHealth, which includes the benefit of joining an Interest Group

Managing an IG requires dedicated time and focus, and we commend you for your efforts. IGs activities are a benefit for AcademyHealth members. Bringing in new members to the IG helps expand the expertise available and networking opportunities for existing members, thus further enhancing the value of participation in the IG. You can do this by encouraging non-members to join AcademyHealth (and existing members to renew) at:

- Industry conferences and events;
- Informal conference calls;
- University/Institutional events;
- Within your professional network; and
- Your place of employment.

### Additional Resources to Manage your IG

- [IG Advisory Committee Roles and Responsibilities](#)
- [Application & Requirements to Create a New AcademyHealth Interest Group](#)