

# Special Interest Group (SIG) Handbook

Resources and background for SIG Steering  
Groups

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# Introduction

Networking with colleagues is of high value to our all segments of our membership. Recent member outreach through the SP4 and Governance Task Force work, as well as the member survey, has also indicated that members are looking for more opportunities to engage with our Society and to connect with members who have similar research and practice interests. In addition, the Knowledge Integration Task Force identified topic-specific communities as an approach to delivering value to our members and creating a way to make connections.

Many scientific and medical organizations have established member “groups” to meet this member need. They have different names – focus areas, special interest groups, communities of practice, communities of interest – and range from organic groups to more formal networks. Regardless of the name, these groups are often created to make larger organizations feel smaller, to provide a forum for exchange of ideas and program development and to foster an environment to cultivate new leaders. These groups primarily focus on community building and strengthening member value and are not part of an organization’s formal governance structure.

In 2019, the Endocrine Society Board of Directors approved the formation of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to meet the member demand for more networking. The inaugural SIGs focus on Adrenal and Pituitary, Early Career, Entrepreneurship, and Transgender Medicine and Research. Each SIG is lead by a steering group of 3-7 members.

This guide is a resource for Special Interest Group steering groups to help understand the expectations for their roles as SIG leaders and also to provide resources to assist with annual planning. It also outlines SIG processes and procedures.

If you have any questions about SIGs or the content of this guide, please contact [community@endocrine.org](mailto:community@endocrine.org).

## What is a SIG?

**Special Interest Groups (SIGs)** are member-initiated or Society-initiated groups focused on a topic/area of interest (scientific, clinical, or professional development). The SIGs are led by Steering Groups comprised of members

and are responsible for facilitating information exchange and member to member networking. This may include serving as curators and hosts of an online community group, hosting quarterly videoconferences on a topic of interest, generating ideas to submit for ENDO through the symposium suggestion form, serving as a source for ongoing environmental scanning, and hosting “meetups” at ENDO and CEU. SIGs have designated staff to partner with the Steering Groups on these activities. Members can apply to create a new SIG, or new SIGs may also be established by the Board of Directors. New SIG requests will be reviewed and authorized by the Board of Directors.

## What is an Online Community?

**Informal Online Networking Communities** are online groups that are focused on personal and professional needs. Members may request to initiate a group by emailing [community@endocrine.org](mailto:community@endocrine.org). These groups are informal and can be created and sunset based on member interest. If there is substantial interest in an online community, members can apply to become a SIG. Online communities will be deactivated after six months of inactivity. Before deactivating an online community, the member who initiated the online community will be contacted. There are no formal programmatic expectations, formal leadership, or additional society support for online communities.

# SIG Formation Process: Member-Initiated

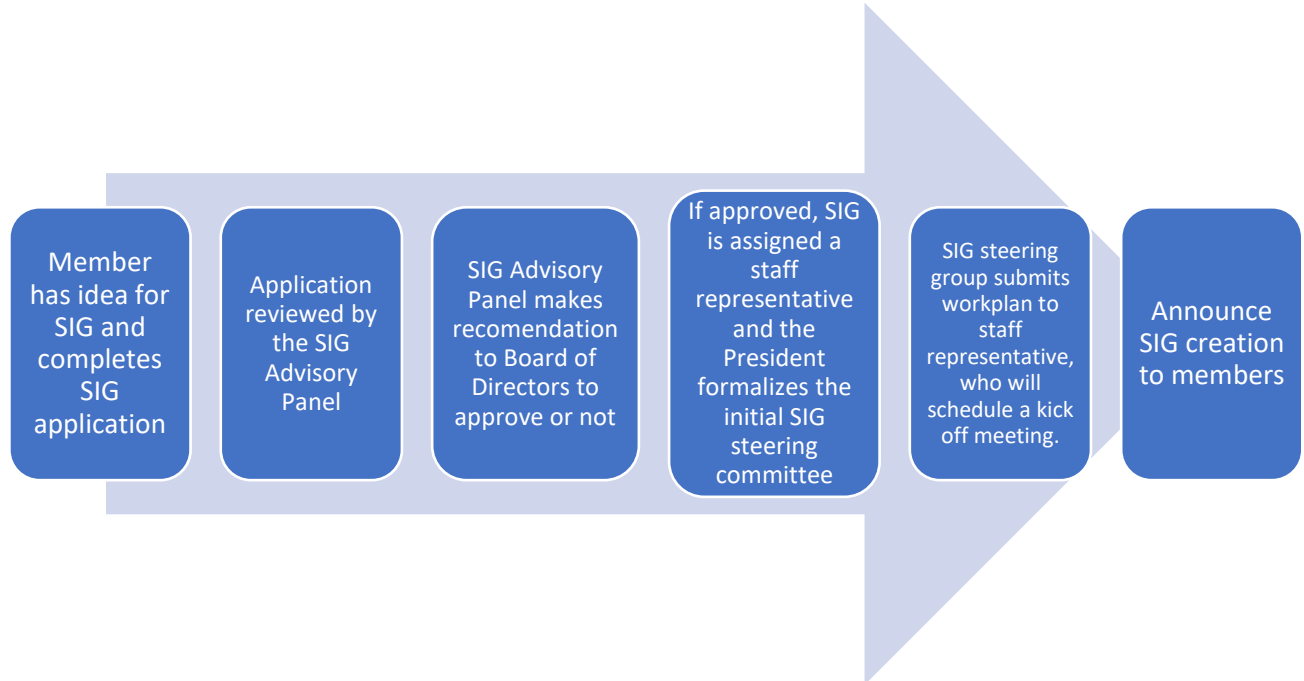


Figure 1: Process for creating a member-initiated SIG

## Member-Initiated SIGs

Member-Initiated SIGs will be created when members complete a brief questionnaire that clarifies the focus of the group and demonstrate that there is no overlap with an existing SIG. It is suggested that members completing the questionnaire identify a small leadership team as well as a core group of at least 30 members who have indicated interest in participating in the SIG. It is important to have a critical mass of members to be able to sustain a community. Examples can include Infertility and Reproductive Medicine, Entrepreneurs in Endocrinology, Aging and Endocrinology, etc.

To apply to create a new SIG, complete an [application](#) and email it to [community@endocrine.org](mailto:community@endocrine.org). The SIG application will be reviewed by the Endocrine Society SIG Advisory Panel, which is composed of a staff representative and three Society members appointed annually by the President-Elect, one of whom must be a current Board member. The ES SIG

Advisory Panel will present recommended SIGs to the Board of Directors for approval.

## SIG FORMATION PROCESS: Board of Directors Initiated

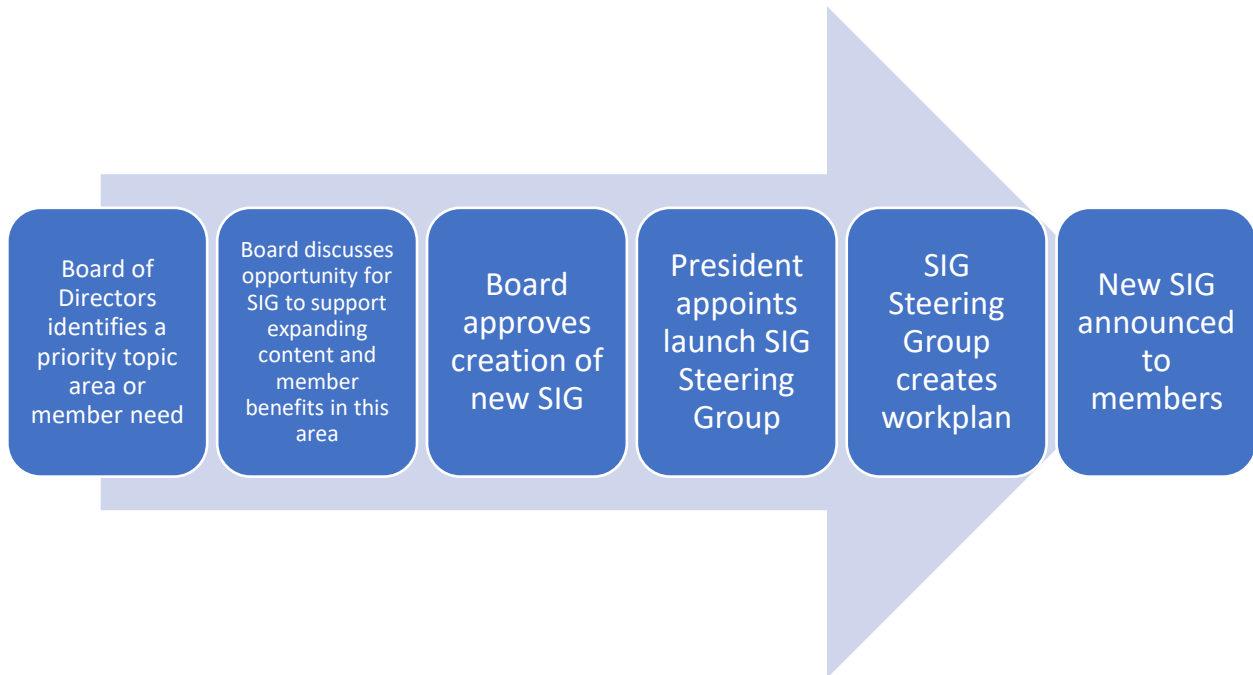


Figure 2: Process for creating a Board of Directors initiated SIG

### Board of Directors-Created SIG

Through partnerships and/or environmental scanning, the Society may identify areas where it would like to proactively establish SIGs. These could be areas of emerging science, a therapeutic area, a career stage, or other identified priority area. These SIGs would follow the same minimum requirements and would have staff support to launch. In this case, the President would appoint the initial Steering Group and may provide some guidance on the focus for the SIG's workplan. These SIGs would also be asked to support the development of a content strategy for resource creation.

# Expectations of SIGs

SIGs are required to maintain some level of activity in order to maintain an “active” status. The minimum SIG activities that are expected annually to encourage member value and engagement are:

- Curate at least two monthly discussion board posts (with answers/engagement).
- Host a minimum of four virtual events annually (one per quarter). These events can be educational webinars, live discussions, Twitter AMAs (Ask Me Anything), grand rounds, etc.
- Hold an annual networking session at ENDO (could be separate or in conjunction with other SIGs).

SIGs are also encouraged, though not required, to create member value via the following:

- Submit session ideas for the Annual Meeting Steering Committee to consider for ENDO.
- Recommend and submit topics/article ideas for *Endocrine News*.
- Participate in Endocrine Society communication channels, including podcasts, and social media.
- Suggest, comment, and/or participate in creating position statements and contributing to advocacy efforts under the direction of the appropriate ES committee

SIGs should maintain a minimum of 50 members annually after the initial two-year launch period. If, upon reviewing the SIG’s annual report and plan of work, the SIG Advisory Panel deems the SIG to be inactive (not meeting active criteria), the SIG will be put on a one-year probationary period. If the SIG is still inactive at the conclusion of the probationary year, the SIG will be disbanded. SIGs can also be disbanded by the SIG members, if they believe it is no longer relevant or productive or they can be transitioned into informal online networking communities.

SIGs are networking groups within the Society and support organizational activities. They are not autonomous entities. Specifically, SIGs:

- May not use the Society's name or logo without authorization.
- Will not act independently in the name of or on behalf of the Society, including seeking outside funding.
- Will not promote paid-for product, services, or meetings without approval from the ES SIG Advisory Panel.
- Are not authorized to develop new policies.

## Society Committee Recommendation Process

While SIGs are not committees, SIGs can submit recommendations to Society committees. SIG Steering Groups are to submit a memo to their staff representative that addresses the following:

- Describe what the topic is.
- Why is there a need?
- What is the problem they are trying to solve?

Upon receipt of the SIG memo, the respective Society committee will consider whether there is a consensus on what is being recommended within the Society as well how the subject can be objectively covered. If the committee determines there is no consensus, the committee may consider identifying gaps.

For reference, below are the official Society communications:

- Clinical Practice Guidelines are developed by an Endocrine Society appointed task force, are evidence-based, and provide graded clinical practice recommendations. These are developed with input from Society committees and members.
- Clinical Practice Guideline Meta-analyses are commissioned by the Endocrine Society to provide statistical analyses to support its Clinical Practice Guidelines.
- Clinical Practice Guideline Systematic Reviews are commissioned by the Endocrine Society for its Clinical Practice Guidelines. These



reviews address a defined clinical question by collecting and summarizing empirical evidence that fits pre-specified eligibility criteria.

- Clinical Practice Guideline Communications are derivatives of the Endocrine Society's Clinical Practice Guidelines that supplement or comment on developments in the disease area since the time of publication of a Guideline.
- Clinical Practice Guideline Updates are developed to address interim changes in prevention, diagnosis, or management in an existing Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline since the time of publication of a Guideline.
- Clinical Practice Guideline Alerts are focused communications in response to new developments that significantly alter recommendations in an existing Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline (e.g., important new drug approval(s), important drug withdrawal(s), important new risks or harms). These address changes that impact the validity of a guideline and affect patient safety.
- Policy Perspectives are based on established Society policy positions and developed by the Advocacy & Public Outreach Core Committee with input from the membership.
- Research Guides are developed by an expert writing group under the direction of the Research Affairs Core Committee.
- Scientific Statements are developed by an expert writing group under the direction of an Endocrine Society appointed Chair with input from Society committees and the membership.
- Consensus Statements are developed by an expert writing group under the direction of an Endocrine Society appointed Chair with input from Society committees.
- Position Statements are documents that reflect the Society's position or response to an issue. They are developed in consultation with member experts and under direction of a Committee. They are vetted by a Committee or Task Force; undergo a public comment period, if appropriate; and are approved by the Society's Board.

# Join a SIG

Society members can join SIGs by updating their member profiles on [endocrine.org](http://endocrine.org) under the Manage My Account > Online Community Groups.

Participation in SIGs is a member benefit. Members can join as many or as few SIGs as they would like. Members are also able to join SIGs through the “join” and “renew” process on [endocrine.org](http://endocrine.org).



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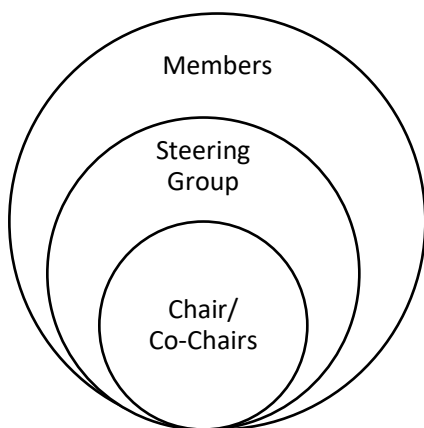
Add/Edit Bio

My Account Links

[Account Home](#)  
[Personal Profile](#)  
[Professional Profile](#)  
[Speaker Profile](#)  
[Social Communities Links](#)  
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[Events](#)  
[Transaction History](#)  
[Invoices](#)  
[Committees](#)  
[Get Involved - Volunteer Opportunities](#)  
[Leadership Profile](#)  
[Disclosures Form](#)  
[Center for Learning](#)   
[Change Password](#)  
[Communication Preferences](#)  
[Journal Email Alerts](#)  
[Community Connect](#)

# Roles and Responsibilities

As a SIG Steering Group member, your contributions are invaluable to our



Society. Our member leaders help create engaging experiences and products for all our members, leading to higher retention rates, more members, and a united global endocrine community. A broad array of perspectives across career stages is important. Members who have participated in other organizations' communities of practice is essential. Ideal participants will be “make it happen” people who are willing to champion new initiatives for our Society.

The following are general roles and responsibilities for the different SIG contributors. These are guidelines for participation in the different SIGs and the chair/co-chairs are encouraged to work with their staff representatives on operationalizing these responsibilities. Groups will work differently depending on their needs, but the following general responsibilities apply to the group members. All SIG members and leaders must hold an active Society membership.

## Chair/Co-Chair(s)

The Chair/Co-Chair are the SIG stewards. Specific responsibilities include:

- Spearheading SIG workplan development and implementation, including linking SIG priorities to SP4 and the Board-identified annual priorities
- Leading SIG activities
- Ensuring SIG meets minimum criteria for maintaining “active” status
- Contributing to online community platform

## Steering Group

SIG Steering Groups are the leadership teams working with the SIG Chair/Co-Chairs to champion SIG activities. SIG steering groups function best with a minimum of 3-5 members. The maximum recommended size of a Steering Group is 10 members. Specific Steering Group member responsibilities

include:

- Contributing to annual report and annual workplan development and implementation
- Leading and participating in SIG activities
- Contributing to online community platform

### Online Community Lead

- Designated member of SIG Steering Group
- Championing online community platform
- Post resources online
- Coordinate posts with other SIG members
- Ensure posts have responses and comments
- Work with SIG steering group to keep the online community engaging and relevant for members

### SIG Members

- Participate in SIG activities
- Participate in online community
- Suggest programs and other ideas to the SIG Steering Group

## Leadership Selection and Terms of Service

### Selection of Leadership Teams

The inaugural launch SIG Steering Groups were appointed by the President and have terms through March 2021. At the conclusion of these terms, SIG Steering Groups will be asked to submit a slate of names to the Society President for approval as the next SIG Steering Group. This includes recommendations on the next SIG chair/Co-Chairs. Moving forward, SIG Steering Groups, including chairs/co-chairs, will be invited to serve a two-year term.

Individual SIGs can determine how they would like to select the slate to serve as the next Steering Group. They can conduct a formal election, request volunteers and have the Steering Group approve the slate, or determine another method that works best for the SIG. In order to be eligible to serve on the SIG Steering Group, members must maintain an active Society membership for the duration of their terms.

## Workplans & Annual Report

Each SIG is asked to complete an annual workplan and submit an annual report. Both documents will be reviewed by the SIG Advisory Panel to ensure that the SIG is focused, and the work is aligned with organizational priorities. An overview of the Society's Strategic Plan and annual priorities are in Appendix 2. A template for the workplan is in Appendix 1. Completed workplans should be submitted to the SIG Advisory Panel annually by April 30. Annual reports should be submitted annually by January 31 and should follow the template in Appendix 3.

## Resources for SIGs

The Endocrine Society provides various resources to SIGs to support the activities and ongoing work of each SIG. Commonly used resources include Zoom for video conferencing and an online group at [community.endocrine.org](https://community.endocrine.org). SIGs do not have separate budgets. Resources for SIG networking events at ENDO are included in the annual operating budget. If specific activities in a SIG workplan require additional staff or financial resources, that information should be submitted along with its workplan. The staff representative will work with the Finance Committee to secure funding through the annual budgeting process.

For questions or more information on resources available to your SIG, contact [community@endocrine.org](mailto:community@endocrine.org).

# Appendix 1 – Workplan Template

Each SIG's membership is diverse. Members can range from trainees to experienced professionals, some always attend ENDO, while some do not have the resources to attend ENDO. The most successful SIGs are ones who identify the varieties of member segments and ensure that needs are prioritized in the Workplan.

- a. List the priority member audiences for your SIG for this year.
- b. Identify the top issues and opportunities to help meet these members' needs and the different resources that could help them.
- c. Based on the answers to questions a and b, list three overall goals your SIG has for creating and/or identifying content and encouraging networking.

Required Activities				
	Activity	Volunteers/ Steering Group Lead	Key dates (milestones, deadlines, etc.)	Progress-to-date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Virtual: Two monthly discussion board posts			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Virtual: Quarterly virtual events			
<input type="checkbox"/>	In-Person: Annual networking session at ENDO			
Example Activities				
	Activity	Volunteers/ Steering Group Lead	Key dates (milestones, deadlines, etc.)	Progress-to-date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit session suggestions to the Annual Meeting Steering Committee for ENDO			

<input type="checkbox"/>	Recommend and submit topics/articles for <i>Endocrine News</i> .			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a white paper on an issue of importance to the SIG topic			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggest, comment, and/or participate in creating position statements			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggest patient-facing materials			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggest, comment, and/or participate in advocacy efforts			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit Laureate Award nominations			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit nominations for members to serve on the Board of Directors			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Track subjects of interest via social media, e.g., Twitter and LinkedIn and share interesting articles or perspectives			

#### Other Activities/SIG Identified Priorities

	Activity	Volunteers/ Steering Group Lead	Key dates (milestones, deadlines, etc.)	Progress-to-date
<input type="checkbox"/>	*Insert title of activity here			
<input type="checkbox"/>	*Insert title of activity here			

# Appendix 2 - Highlights of SP4 & Annual Priorities

## WHO WE ARE

We are a global community 18,000 strong energized by the promise of unravelling the mysteries of hormone disorders to care for patients and cure disease. We are devoted to advancing hormone research, excellence in the clinical practice of endocrinology, broadening understanding of the critical role hormones play in health, and advocating on behalf of the global endocrinology community.

Simply put: *We unite, lead, and grow the endocrine community to accelerate scientific breakthroughs and improve health worldwide.*

## OUR PRIORITIES

**COMMUNITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP:** We will build dynamic, interdisciplinary communities that create innovative solutions to important endocrine problems.

**SCIENCE AND CLINICAL INNOVATION:** We will accelerate innovative initiatives and create tools and resources to advance discovery and care.

**TRUSTED ADVISOR AND ADVOCATE:** We will be sought out as a trusted educational resource for the media, policymakers, and the public, ensuring that scientific discovery is appropriately funded, and advocating for healthcare policies that benefit patients and providers.

**CHAMPION OF THE PROFESSIONAL:** We will be the primary professional home for endocrine scientists and clinical practitioners by supporting and valuing them through all career stages.

## WHAT WE BELIEVE

Our core values shape our work and embody how we serve our members, foster community, and lead discussions that advance science, medicine, and policy.



### INNOVATION:

We promote breakthroughs in scientific discovery and care through collaboration and bold ideas.



### EXCELLENCE:

We aspire to the highest standard of scientific rigor, integrity, data-driven decision making, and clinical care.



### STEWARDSHIP:

We commit to nurturing every member and ensuring the long-term growth of the field.



### COMMUNITY:

We embrace inclusiveness and respectful interactions throughout our diverse and global community.

## IMAGINE A WORLD... OUR ENVISIONED FUTURE

We imagine a world in which advances in endocrine science, education, and care promote optimal health and well-being. In this future,

- Interdisciplinary teams accelerate and translate scientific discoveries to prevent and cure endocrine disorders.
- Endocrine researchers and clinicians are sought after sources of reliable information for patients, policymakers, and the media.
- Technology increases the pace of scientific discovery.
- The best and brightest actively seek careers in endocrine research and practice.
- Providers and patients actively influence healthcare policy.
- Global collaborations, innovations in therapies and care models, and new technologies expand access to care and eliminate health disparities.





## 2020-2021 Board Priorities

Each year, the Board of Directors reviews our strategic plan to ensure that it is timely, relevant, and identifies any new, urgent priorities. They also use this time to identify annual priorities. The following image shows how our strategic plan is the foundation for all organizational initiatives.

### Aligning Planning & Budgeting



The annual operating plan is used to focus our member and staff efforts, and the annual budget is created based on these priorities. Moving forward, we are asking each committee to review these annual goals and focus their annual workplan to support these priorities. The priorities for 2021 are as follows:

*Community Building and Leadership/Champion of the Professional:* Assert leadership position and be the hub for emerging and rare fields in endocrinology

*Trusted Advisor and Advocate:* Become the leading and most trusted source of endocrine content in the world and to all the Endocrine professionals

*Science and Clinical Innovation:* Position Endocrine Society as the leader in

scientific discoveries that transform clinical care

To respond to these broad areas, FY 2020 priorities are based on our stated purpose to unite, lead and grow the endocrine community worldwide. Specifically,

- Invest in digital education expansion to promote worldwide access to our endocrine content
- Grow the field by championing and nurturing emerging topics in basic science
- Champion and protect endocrinology as a medical specialty
- Strengthen and grow core programs

Please think about how your Special Interest Group can help support these priorities.

## Appendix 3 – Annual Report Template

Required Activities				
	Activity	Volunteers/ Steering Group Lead	Key dates (milestones, deadlines, etc.)	Outcomes and Success Metrics
<input type="checkbox"/>	Virtual: Two monthly discussion board posts			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Virtual: Quarterly virtual events			
<input type="checkbox"/>	In-Person: Annual networking session at ENDO			
Example Activities				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit session suggestions to the Annual Meeting Steering Committee for ENDO			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recommend and submit topics/articles for <i>Endocrine News</i> .			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a white paper on an issue of importance to the SIG topic			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggest, comment, and/or participate in creating position statements			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggest patient-facing materials			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggest, comment, and/or participate in advocacy efforts			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit Laureate Award nominations			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit nominations for members to serve on the Board of Directors			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Track subjects of interest via social media, e.g., Twitter and LinkedIn and share interesting articles or perspectives			
Other Activities/SIG Identified Priorities				

	Activity	Volunteers/ Steering Group Lead	Key dates (milestones, deadlines, etc.)	Progress-to-date
<input type="checkbox"/>	*Insert title of activity here			
<input type="checkbox"/>	*Insert title of activity here			

## Appendix 4 – SIG Recommendation Memo Template



To: [Insert Name of Committee]  
Cc: [Insert Name of Staff Liaison]  
From: [Claudia Barrett] on behalf of the [Insert Name of SIG]  
Re: [SUBJECT OF MEMO]  
Date: [DATE SUBMITTED]

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INSERT TEXT OF MEMO HERE