

## **Establishing Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within The University of Sydney Cancer Research Network**

Make contact with the Cancer Research Network SIG coordinator for advice. The current coordinator is Dr Angela Beaton (02) 9036 6309, email [cancer-research@med.usyd.edu.au](mailto:cancer-research@med.usyd.edu.au). Please ensure that you keep the coordinator informed of developments.

Familiarise yourself with the procedures for running a SIG within the Cancer Research Network, and if possible, discuss the aims, title, and activities of the SIG with a small group of interested members.

Your intention to form a SIG will be announced by the SIG coordinator via the Cancer Research Network mailing list, inviting potential members to contact you. In consultation with interested members, draw up a detailed proposal to be submitted to the Cancer Research Network Steering Committee. It should contain:

- a clear outline of the specialist area within Cancer Research to be served by the SIG
- a rationale explaining why the SIG is needed and how its area of interest is distinct from that served by other existing SIGs
- a set of goals for the SIG
- proposals for the SIG's first year of operation, including -
  - plans for meetings for members
  - arrangements for some kind of election procedure (Chair and Secretary)
  - the names of  $\geq 5$  members of the Cancer Research Network who support the formation of the SIG (and who are prepared to become actively involved)
  - an undertaking that the proposer has read the guidelines for the operation of a SIG within the Cancer Research Network

If the proposal is accepted, it means that your SIG has been approved. You will have access, through the SIG coordinator, to a small amount of funding per year

from the Cancer Research Network to cover costs associated with establishing and running the SIG.

When planning a meeting, you should –

- tell the SIG coordinator of the time, place and speakers
- publicise the event to all members on your membership list and subsequently the SIG coordinator will publicise the event to the full Cancer Research Network membership via email (and list it on the website)

At the end of your first year of operation, you will be expected to submit a detailed report. The report should include –

- details of events/meetings held during the year
- names of the current Chair and Secretary of the special interest group
- accounts of the SIG up to date
- a full list of current members of the SIG

## **General guidelines for the running of SIGs within the Cancer Research Network**

### ***Designing a proposal***

To set up a SIG within the Cancer Research Network, interested parties should draw up an initial proposal, specifying:

- the area of interest, a rationale and an initial statement of aims
- the steps to be taken developing the SIG over the next year. This should include publicity and an exploratory meeting among potential SIG members
- the names of >5 Network members who would like to participate, including at least two who would be willing to organise it

The proposal should be submitted to the Cancer Research Network SIG coordinator. If there are a substantial number of SIG proposals, the Steering Committee may have to limit the number, or may suggest that some groups be merged.

### ***Membership***

Cancer Research Network members should be entitled to free membership of any/all SIGs.

### ***Organisation***

A SIG must have a Chair/Convenor as well as a Secretary. Each SIG must have a statement of aims. The Chair/Convenor is responsible for ensuring the submission of a brief annual report to the Cancer Research Network SIG coordinator, highlights of which will be included on the Cancer Research Network website and emailed to Cancer Research Network members in one of the regular newsletters.

### ***Finances***

The Cancer Research Network Steering Committee may (without obligation) consider requests for additional funding for specific anticipated activities. The SIG must submit to the SIG coordinator a detailed budget for any proposed event, following an agreed format. The event should not be publicised until formal approval of the budget has been given by the Cancer Research Network.

### ***Activities***

The purpose of SIGs is to promote/enhance focused discussion within particular fields of cancer research. Ways of achieving this lie largely within the SIG's discretion. A SIG will normally be expected to hold at least one meeting between Cancer Research Network Annual Meetings. SIGs are expected to publicise their activity through the Cancer Research website and regular emails to members (this will be managed by the SIG coordinator).

### ***Terminating SIGs***

The Cancer Research Network will close a SIG if there has been a lack of substantive activity for one year.