



International Association
of Business Communicators
British Columbia

Tips for starting a successful SIG program

Thank you to IABC British Columbia for sharing their tips on creating a successful SIG program:

Have a dedicated board member or program manager.

Whether part of a portfolio, an individual board role on your board, or a volunteer program manager, ensure someone owns the program to be consistent with registration, marketing and communications, and liaise with the SIG chairs.

Know your membership.

Look at your segmentation from experience level to industry sectors. Start with interest group themes that appeal to these groups to better serve their interests.

For example, we have a strong segment of communicators in medical or health related organizations, and our Health Communicators SIG is one of the most popular.

Find SIG chairs/champions, based on these member segments.

Our SIGs this year included: senior communicators, independent communicators, health communications, internal communications, and digital strategy communications. We are looking at groups on education, non-profit organizations, and B2B communications this coming year.

Program structure and setting expectations

What is your minimum request of each chair? Start with one meeting on a set day each month, or a minimum of four meetings throughout the year. Ask chairs to commit to draft topics for each meeting and tentative dates for each meeting in the year. Then follow up to confirm as each date approaches.

Avoid scheduling a SIG that conflicts with your other programs or events.

Informal meetings focused on discussion

No formal agenda or presentation required.

Chairs ask a few questions to spark discussion and conversation unfolds from there.

Invite a special guest to speak to their experience like a mini-case study discussion.

Use existing systems



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Once chairs, topics and dates are identified, use your existing event registration system and communication channels to promote the meeting like all your other events.

Profile your SIGs and chairs

Include them on your website: [take a look at SIGs in IABC/BC](#).

Crowdsourcing power

If your chairs don't know what your members want to discuss, ask them at the first meeting, and plan discussion topics from there.

SIG chairs are the event managers

Chairs identify the free venue space and the topic and bring in their special guest speakers. The chapter manages the registration and marketing.

The success of our SIG program has led us to create a dedicated board role for the 2017–2018 year and look at further growth opportunities for this program. Our new director of SIGs will manage the overall program.

We also must share kudos to IABC/Calgary for a strong [SIG program](#), which we've taken notes from and adapted for our chapter.