SIG Program Review Task Force

December 31, 2024

Final Report

Comprehensive Review of the ASHA Special Interest Groups Program and Recommendations for Its Future

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SIG Program Review Task Force has conducted a thorough examination of the SIG Program to determine which elements should be maintained, changed, or eliminated and has explored alternatives for optimizing member connections and community. This summary report details recommendations for creating a sustainable, scalable, and cost-effective member benefit that establishes community in alignment with content and program strategies that enhance member value.

GOAL

The goal of this task force was to examine the extent to which ASHA's Special Interest Group (SIG) program is able to expand its reach to ASHA members and to determine how it may best support the Association in fulfilling its goal of providing members with community around shared interests with opportunities for engagement, volunteerism, leadership, scholarship, mentoring, and professional support, and how it may do so in a sustainable, scalable, and cost-effective manner that is aligned with the goals of the Association.

FACTORS DRIVING THE NEED FOR CHANGE

- Participation declining to its lowest level since 2007, with fewer than 15% of ASHA members choosing to affiliate with a SIG

- Members creating their own communities outside of SIGs

- Program reaching maximum capacity (20 SIGs) for IT and staff support

- Cost barriers associated with additional membership fees

- Fragmented content delivery across multiple platforms

- Limited mobile accessibility

- Difficulties in content search and navigation

- Duplicate content across SIG communities

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations from the SIG Task Force aim to modernize and enhance the Special Interest Group (SIG) program to better serve ASHA members' needs while improving accessibility and engagement. These changes focus on creating an inclusive, technologically advanced, and member-centric program that facilitates professional development and networking.

1. Universal Access

Expand program accessibility by:

- Including all ASHA and NSSLHA members in the SIG program
- Extending access to Assistants and International Affiliates
- Eliminating additional fees beyond standard ASHA membership dues

2. Publication Structure Revision

Reform the current publication model by:

- Separating *Perspectives* from the SIG program
- Creating dedicated space for translational research within the ASHA Journals program
- Ensuring continued support for practice-based research dissemination

3. Program Rebranding

Undertake a comprehensive rebranding initiative that:

- Leverages Creative Media team expertise
- Incorporates member feedback
- Reflects key program elements:
  - Special interest focus
  - Professional networking
  - Knowledge sharing
  - ASHA member identity

4. Enhanced Digital Platform

Implement a new "Connections" platform featuring:

- Simplified user experience
- Mobile-first design architecture
- Consolidated discussion space for all special interest topics
- Intuitive navigation and search functionality

5. Improved Continuing Education Integration

Implement integrated learning opportunities by:

- Embedding ASHA CEU-eligible content/events within the Connections platform
- Collaborating with ASHA Professional Development to streamline access to professional development resources including the ASHA Learning Pass
- Interacting with ASHA Practices teams and other clusters (Academic Affairs, Audiology, Clinical Issues, Healthcare Services, International Programs, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and School Services) to align with and elevate their priorities

6. Journal Club Enhancement

Establish an improved journal club experience featuring:

- Live discussion opportunities
- Archived content with search capabilities
- Expert commentary from researchers and clinicians
- Interactive engagement features

7. Subject Matter Expertise

Maintain pathways for members to demonstrate expertise through:

- Practice Portal contributions
- Convention Program participation
- Media champion opportunities
- Mentorship programs
- Integration with existing ASHA resources

8. Volunteer Structure Modernization

Transform volunteer engagement by:

- Transitioning away from formal Coordinating Committees to more nimble leadership options
- Implementing flexible microvolunteering opportunities
- Aligning volunteer commitments with member availability
- Creating more accessible entry points for involvement

In summary, the Task Force members determined that offering SIGs universally to members, in a no-additional-cost model, was significantly preferred over the alternative of a premium membership SIG program. A premium SIG program would not support a flexible, responsive structure to provide the desired deliverables to members. It would maintain the need for costly structures and programs, including elected volunteers plus significant ASHA paid staff support. And, of central concern, a premium program would reinforce the current perception of many ASHA members that SIGs and ASHA are focused on a specific sector of the professions, predominantly academics, rather than predicated on engaging with the membership as a whole. The above set of recommendations represents the critical components that maintain what SIG members have enjoyed about affiliation but expand upon them for broader, more effective, and engaged participation by all ASHA members.

OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Over its nearly 40-year history, the ASHA Special Interest Groups (SIGs) have engaged members in a wide range of activities centered around building connections through peer exchange, content development, and volunteer service for advancement of knowledge and excellence in clinical practice.

Although the SIGs were once a primary means for ASHA members to connect and learn, the massive online information and networking changes in just the past decade alone have fundamentally altered that premise. Individuals now have numerous ways to build professional connections, and an "information firehose" of resources is readily available to them. Moreover, a great many of these mechanisms and sources are free and actively in use by peers and colleagues.

As a result (and for a number of additional reasons detailed throughout this report), fewer ASHA members have seen the value in committing scarce dollars to the additional membership that SIG affiliation represents. SIG affiliates have traditionally been some of the most engaged ASHA members, so this decline in numbers of affiliates amid steady growth in the overall ASHA membership is doubly unfortunate: It has placed significant stress on the financial viability of the program while also decreasing the extent of involvement of these most-engaged ASHA members. This effect is compounded when the low levels of affiliation only further reduce the visibility and perceived relevance and value of the SIG affiliation option.

To complicate matters further, the operating structure of the SIG program has encountered both staffing and technology infrastructure limitations that severely limit its ability to nimbly respond to these conditions.

In light of these multiyear trends, and coincident with research associated with the Member Value Proposition (MVP) and Content Strategy project, a SIG Program Review Task Force was established to fully explore the challenges and opportunities before the SIG program and to detail recommendations for its future.

The Task Force was approved by Resolution BOD 23-2023 (see Appendix A) and began work in January 2024, with its charge being the following:

1. Examine the current SIG Program to determine elements that should be maintained, changed, or eliminated, including an evaluation of the pros and cons of the SIG scholarly review journal *Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups*.
2. Explore alternatives for optimizing member connections and community.
3. Make recommendations for creating a sustainable, scalable, and cost-effective member benefit that establishes community in alignment with strategies to enhance member value and content strategy.

Members of the Task Force were a mix of volunteers and ASHA staff who play or have played key roles in the SIG Program; these individuals are listed below:

- Barbara Zucker, CCC-SLP (Chair, Board of Special Interest Group Coordinators [BSIGC])
- Brenda Beverly, CCC-SLP (former *Perspectives* editor and editor-in-chief)
- Lynne Brady Wagner, CCC-SLP (past SIG 13 Coordinator)
- Jeanane Ferre, CCC-A (former Chair, BSIGC)
- Jerry Hoepner, CCC-SLP (SIG 20 Associate Coordinator)
- Hsin-Wei Huang, CCC-A (early career professional, audiologist, never a SIG affiliate)
- Ryan Lee-James, CCC-SLP (2024 Vice President for Speech-Language Pathology Practice)
- Janet Patterson, CCC-SLP (ASHA Financial Planning Board representative and former Chair, BSIGC)
- Kelley Shaw, CCC-SLP (Leadership Development Program graduate working in the schools; never a SIG affiliate)
- Pam Smith, CCC-SLP (SIG 15 Coordinator)
- Janice Trent, CCC-A (2024 Vice President for Audiology Practice)

ASHA Staff

- Mary Casper, CCC-SLP, Senior Director, Special Interest Groups (ex officio)
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- Kate Stephens, Senior Director, Membership & Communications

To undertake this work, the Task Force held a two-day in-person meeting in February 2024 to establish a work plan, roles and responsibilities, and scope of work necessary to meet its charge and deliver a summary report and recommendations to the ASHA Board of Directors by December 31, 2024.

Materials that the Task Force were asked to review prior to the meeting included an overview of the MVP and Content Strategy reports, 2022 SIG Stocktaking Internal Working Group Report, 2010 Special Interest Division Task Force Report, SIG budget presentations from 2021 and 2022, SIG

Community Engagement Data, SIG Membership Data Overview, SIG Convention Registration Counts 2018 to 2023, SIG Affiliate Satisfaction Survey summaries, the BOD Resolution enabling the Task Force, and the Standard Operating Procedures for the SIG Program Review Task Force.

TASK FORCE KICKOFF

The Task Force began its work with a pivotal two-day in-person meeting at the ASHA National Office. This intensive session laid the foundation for reimagining the SIG Program through a series of structured activities and strategic discussions.

The meeting opened with a "State of the SIGs" presentation, which highlighted critical challenges relating to financial sustainability, member engagement, and the changing landscape of professional associations. A key insight emerged: While SIG affiliates are among ASHA's most engaged members, it wasn't clear whether SIGs created engagement or simply attracted already-engaged members.

Through ideation sessions and facilitated discussions, the Task Force identified core aspirations for the future program:

- Sustainability and fiscal responsibility
- Inclusivity for all ASHA members
- Connecting ASHA members to evidence and resources around their professional interests
- Strong community connections
- Enhanced learning and mentorship opportunities

With these core aspirations in mind, the group then engaged in extensive discussions about two potential models for a reimagined SIG Program: (1) an opt-in premium model emphasizing specialization and exclusivity or (2) a more inclusive model making SIGs available to all ASHA members.

This led to rich dialogue about fundamental questions:

- Who are we really building this program for?
- How do we make it more inviting to all types of ASHA members in all settings?
- How can we create more accessible pathways to member engagement and leadership?
- What is the true value proposition for different member segments?

The meeting integrated insights from ASHA's Content Strategy and MVP initiatives, identifying four critical areas that members consistently identify as essential to their professional success:

- Professional Advocacy: Supporting members through legislative action, defending patient access to care, and advancing the professions of speech-language pathology and audiology at state and national levels

- Public Understanding: Building broader awareness of SLPs' and audiologists' crucial role in health care, education, and research, helping the public better understand the full scope and value of our services
- Knowledge Access: Providing members with immediate access to clinical resources, research updates, and professional guidance when they need it most, ensuring they can stay current in their practice
- Professional Community: Creating meaningful opportunities for members to connect, share experiences, and learn from colleagues who face similar challenges, fostering a supportive professional network

The Task Force focused in particular on content strategy requirements, recognizing the following needs as paramount:

- Structured, easily discoverable content within and across diverse aspects of the professions
- Personalized user experiences
- Consolidated platforms with consistent navigation
- Mobile-friendly access
- Clear alignment with strategic organizational priorities

A World Café experience allowed participants to explore an issue by discussing it in small table groups. Discussion was held in multiple rounds, with the café ambiance intended to allow for more relaxed and open conversations to take place. Task Force members heard from six ASHA teams that interact with the current SIG program. Staff from Advocacy, ASHA Professional Development, Marketing and Sponsorships, Publications, ASHA Community (Digital Communications), and Surveys and Data Analytics teams shared brief presentations then answered questions from the Task Force members.

Through empathy mapping exercises, the group explored the perspectives of different member personas including:

- Multiple SIG affiliates
- Disengaged members
- Non-affiliates
- SIG Coordinating Committee members
- New members of large SIGs

This deep understanding of varied member experiences helped shape the Task Force's subsequent work and recommendations.

At the conclusion of the in-person meeting, participants formed four thematically oriented small groups to complete the work of the Task Force:

- Structure

- Volunteer Opportunities
- Connections
- Knowledge Generation and Acquisition

INVESTIGATION AND INFORMATION GATHERING

Following the February in-person meeting, the Task Force continued its work by gathering additional information, meeting virtually as a whole on a monthly and then biweekly basis, and meeting in small groups on an ad hoc basis for strategic recommendation development.

DATA ANALYSIS & PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

In February, the Task Force conducted a comprehensive review of the SIG program using Power BI analytics, led by Evan Reid, ASHA's Senior Director of Surveys and Analysis. A key focus of this analysis centered on the question, "Without time and money, what would attract you to the SIG Program?" The analysis examined several key areas, including demographic patterns of past and current affiliates, distribution across career stages, representation across work settings, and trends in multiple SIG affiliations. A notable finding was that affiliate membership had reached its lowest point since 2007. These findings prompted the Task Force to develop and field a comprehensive survey to better understand the barriers to participation and identify potential program enhancements.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

ASHA Chief Financial Officer Yvonne Kankam-Boadu delivered a detailed financial presentation covering the SIG Program's current operational model. The presentation addressed several critical financial issues:

- Revenue streams from advertising and sponsorship
- Subscription and publication revenue categorization
- Allocation of revenues from the $5 *Perspectives* CE fee
- Expense allocation methodology
- Service cost coverage, including:
  - Online meetings platform
  - Community platform
  - Election systems
- Current personnel allocation supporting the SIG program

TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

In April, ASHA Chief Information Officer Jeffrey Raymond presented an overview of the SIG Technology Landscape, highlighting key technological considerations and future recommendations. Particularly notable was that the association management system currently faces a limitation of supporting only 20 SIGs, although this constraint can be resolved through

programming solutions. Raymond emphasized that addressing this limitation should be a priority recommendation from the Task Force, as it will persist regardless of any structural changes to the SIG program.

The assessment also examined the current ASHA Community platform. Looking toward future improvements, several desired features were identified to enhance member engagement and collaboration. These include implementing real-time chat capabilities, activity feeds, and coaching facilitation tools. The platform would benefit from AI-based moderation capabilities and improved document collaboration features, all while ensuring an excellent mobile user experience.

The learning component of the SIG program currently operates through online webinars and the ASHA learning management system. Future development plans emphasize integrating learning opportunities directly into the Community experience, with a focus on creating structured learning paths within the platform itself. This integration would create a more cohesive and accessible learning environment for SIG members.

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS

The SIG Task Force members continued their investigation and analysis by composing and conducting a comprehensive survey to understand current member engagement with the SIG program and gather insights about desired future directions (see Appendix B). The survey was sent to a sample of 15,000 ASHA members, including current SIG affiliates, former affiliates, early career professionals, and members who had never joined a SIG. It was also posted on various ASHA digital properties. This broad sampling elicited 1,600 responses and helped ensure the Task Force captured diverse perspectives from both engaged and non-engaged members from across the membership spectrum.

Survey findings revealed significant insights about current participation patterns. Notably, 45% of respondents had never joined a SIG, while 25% belonged to just one SIG. This high percentage of non-participation, combined with single-SIG membership patterns, suggested that the current model's cost structure and access barriers were limiting broader engagement. For those who did participate, in-person conferences (74%) and virtual events (78%) proved most valuable, while traditionally emphasized offerings for SIG affiliates like journal clubs (10%) and *Perspectives* self-study continuing education offerings (17%) showed low utilization rates.

ASHA members expressed clear preferences for the future direction of the program. The most consistent feedback centered on eliminating additional fees beyond ASHA membership, with many respondents indicating that cost was a primary barrier to participation. There was also strong support for maintaining specialized topic areas rather than consolidating into broader categories, suggesting that members value targeted, specific professional communities. Consistent with findings from previous SIG Affiliate Satisfaction Surveys, ASHA members stated that learning opportunities available for ASHA CEUs would be strongly appreciated.

The survey also highlighted significant technological and accessibility challenges with the current peer-to-peer engagement platform, the ASHA Community. Members expressed frustration with limited mobile accessibility and difficult content search and document sharing capabilities. These technical limitations appeared to be hampering engagement even among those who had already invested in SIG membership.

Overall, the survey findings pointed to several critical barriers:

- Cost: Additional fees beyond ASHA membership deterred participation, particularly for early-career professionals who could benefit most from SIG involvement.
- Access: The current, siloed (20 separate SIGs) approach to content limited reach and impact.
- Technology: Members expressed frustration with platform limitations, particularly mobile access and content searchability.
- Engagement: Traditional SIG Program volunteer structures didn't align with contemporary professional life and preferences (e.g., wherein people prefer shorter commitments and a more fluid engagement in topics as life and career needs warrant).

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

After considering the findings from extensive investigation and information gathering, and after conceiving what a future SIG Program might look like when meeting both the participants' needs and ASHA's strategic objectives, the Task Force identified a number of recommendations pertaining to the broader themes of Connections, Knowledge Generation and Acquisition, and Volunteer Engagement. However, for those to be a viable set of recommendations, consensus needed to be reached on the overall operating structure of the program.

To that end, the Task Force deliberated on and voted in favor of a foundational recommendation that the future SIG Program be made available to all ASHA members (including NSSLHA members, International Affiliates, and Assistants) as an exclusive member benefit at no additional fee beyond membership dues.

FOUNDATIONAL RECOMMENDATION: THE SIG PROGRAM AS A MEMBER BENEFIT

Professional associations across health care and related fields are increasingly recognizing that siloed, premium-cost communities can inadvertently create barriers to member engagement and professional development. The modern association landscape demonstrates that integrated special interest communities drive stronger member engagement and organizational relevance.

In examining industry benchmarks, we see compelling evidence for this shift. The American Psychological Association (APA) serves as a particularly relevant example, having successfully integrated its divisions into its core membership structure. Under this model, members can join up to four divisions at no additional cost. These results suggest to us that when members can freely

explore different specialty areas, they become more engaged with the broader organization and its resources.

This trend extends beyond the APA. The American Physical Therapy Association has adopted an integrated sections model, while the American Occupational Therapy Association has embraced practice communities as part of their core membership benefits. The American Nurses Association has similarly moved toward integrated specialty nursing communities. These transitions reflect a fundamental shift in how professional organizations view specialized communities—not as premium add-ons, but as essential components of professional growth and development.

The evolution of speech-language pathology and audiology demands a more dynamic approach to professional development and community building. Including SIG access within exclusive member benefits represents ASHA's commitment to supporting members throughout their career journey in an increasingly complex professional landscape.

Professional development in our field has become more nuanced and multifaceted than ever before. By removing financial barriers to SIG participation, ASHA enables members to explore emerging special interests organically, facilitating natural career progression and skill development. This approach recognizes that modern practitioners often need to build expertise across multiple practice areas, responding to the complex needs of their clients and the evolving health care environment.

The impact of this change on professional communities would be transformative. Early-career professionals would have immediate access to special interest areas, accelerating their professional growth through mentorship and knowledge sharing. More experienced practitioners would find it easier to contribute their expertise across different domains, creating more inclusive and dynamic communities of practice. This free flow of knowledge and experience naturally leads to member-driven innovation and the development of best practices.

Enhanced SIG access naturally amplifies member engagement with ASHA as a whole. As members explore different special interest areas, they gain greater exposure to ASHA's full range of professional resources. This creates natural pathways to deeper organizational involvement and strengthens peer-to-peer learning networks. The resulting professional relationships become more dynamic and multifaceted, enriching the entire ASHA community.

Integrating SIGs into member benefits with no additional fee directly advances ASHA's efforts to strengthen the member value proposition. This approach strengthens ASHA's position as the comprehensive home for all special interest areas within the field of communication sciences and disorders. By removing barriers between special interests, we reduce the fragmentation of professional communities and create stronger alignment between special interests and organizational goals. This unity enables more coordinated advocacy efforts and professional advancement initiatives.

Professional innovation flourishes in this integrated environment. As members freely explore emerging practice areas, ideas naturally cross-pollinate between special interests. This cross-fertilization supports the development of new approaches to clinical challenges and creates opportunities for interprofessional solution development. The result is a more innovative and adaptive profession.

Looking to the future, this model better prepares our professionals for evolving health care landscapes. It enables more agile responses to emerging practice needs and creates stronger pathways for professional growth and development. Most important, it reinforces ASHA's commitment to supporting lifelong learning and skill development across all career stages and specialty areas.

The consensus of the Task Force is that this paradigmatic change is not only critical to the future of the SIG Program but also a key means by which ASHA can most effectively achieve its strategic objectives. Given the broad and diverse skill sets and patient/client populations served by our two professions, ASHA cannot successfully engage members without assisting them in connecting with others who have similar work settings, interests, or needs. It is via SIG affiliation, at no additional charge and structured as flexibly as possible, that ASHA can most effectively continue to serve the membership. Without this, our colleagues will continue to divide into subgroups and seek activities outside of our member organization. Affiliation with others within ASHA who have similar special interests enables members to see themselves within our one large professional organization.

CONNECTIONS – A NEW DIRECTION

With the foundational premise that all ASHA members can have unlimited access to all SIGs, the other key principle considered was that we can no longer have an artificial limitation on the number of SIGs or even the names or specific "brands" of them. Instead, SIGs need to be about member needs rather than program needs. Rather than 20 SIGs (and only 20 SIGs) focused on specific groups of topics or for specifically identified audiences, SIGs need to be more granularly focused, flexible, and fluid. Having topic-based communities—whether by subject matter or by type of interest (e.g., career changers)—that are readily connected to ASHA resources as well as to professional peers will more overtly position ASHA in the "convener" role that it should be in as the Association.

TOPIC-BASED COMMUNITIES

ASHA is currently engaged in content strategy and MVP initiatives that are very topically focused and taxonomy/ontology-driven. The SIGs in their current structure can be thought of as an early form of taxonomically matching members up with resources likely to be of interest to them. Just like any effective taxonomy, though, such a structure needs to continually adapt and evolve as the discipline it is about continues to evolve. The traditional numbered SIG structure with specific, distinct resources for specific, distinct groups of individuals—originally an innovation—is now

archaic. It is now inconsistent with how people find and use resources, engage around issues, and even identify. Instead, people are now much more attuned to filtering and faceting online information as well as choosing and participating in communities. Likewise, the maturity of online engagement models in a range of social media and other contexts has brought about a desire for much more flexible engagement opportunities, wherein users may join, exit, or re-enter communities as their needs demand. This again is inconsistent with the paid, term-limited membership approach currently in use for the SIG Program.

A new approach involving flexible, topic-based communities to accommodate the needs and interests of the freely flowing full ASHA membership will warrant investment in a new, more robust online community platform, such as one depicted in Appendix C, offering a feature set built for personalized content experiences that promote deeper engagement

PERSONALIZED CONTENT EXPERIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT

This new community platform concept prioritizes mobile-first design to address one of members' primary pain points. Rather than navigating separate SIG communities, members will be able to follow specific topics using a hashtag-based system aligned with ASHA's broader taxonomy in one platform. This approach not only simplifies the user experience but also creates natural connections between related content across different practice areas.

Key innovations include the following:

- Topic-centric organization replacing numbered SIGs
- Real-time engagement capabilities that move beyond traditional discussion boards
- Hashtag-based following system aligned with ASHA's taxonomy
- Mobile-first design prioritizing accessibility
- AI-assisted moderation to maintain professional standards, potentially reducing staff workload
- Enhanced search functionality to improve content discovery
- Integrated event hosting
- Collaborative resource sharing
- Potential for personalized content delivery
- Support for opportunities to expand non-dues revenue and help subsidize the program

A new form of community platform such as this aims to bridge the gap between academic and clinical perspectives, creating an environment in which both research and practical applications can thrive. The platform would represent a significant but very strategic investment in ASHA's digital future.

PROGRAM REBRANDING: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS

The SIG Task Force's comprehensive review identified that the current "Special Interest Group Program" designation may not effectively represent the evolving nature and expanded scope of the

initiative. Through extensive deliberation, the Task Force explored various naming conventions that would better reflect the program's future direction while maintaining its core mission of fostering professional growth and collaboration. The Task Force thus further recommends that a full rebranding of the program be undertaken.

STRATEGIC RATIONALE

The proposed rebranding initiative extends beyond a simple name change. It represents a strategic shift to engage a broader spectrum of ASHA members by creating a more inclusive and accessible professional community. The new branding will reflect the program's dual nature: serving both as an entry point for members seeking basic professional resources through asha.org, and as a deeper engagement platform for those who choose to participate more actively through the program's enhanced features.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MODEL

The rebranded program will support multiple levels of member participation. Members can customize their involvement based on their professional needs and preferences, ranging from content consumption to active contribution. This flexibility allows for both passive engagement through content access and active participation through knowledge sharing and community involvement. We envision that access to enhanced features will be available through a secure member portal, with an intuitive, mobile-ready interface designed for convenient engagement.

NAMING CONSIDERATIONS

The Task Force explored various naming options that emphasize different aspects of the program's value proposition. Key themes emerged around professional community building, knowledge sharing, and specialized learning. Some compelling options included the following:

- Professional Communities Network
- Learning Communities Network
- Professional Connections Network
- Professional Community
- Professional Pathways
- Knowledge Communities

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The rebranding process would need to be executed through a collaborative effort that brings together ASHA's Creative Media Team expertise to leverage professional design and branding capabilities to develop a compelling visual and verbal identity that resonates with members. The approach would incorporate member feedback, seeking input from current and potential program participants to ensure the new brand reflects their needs and expectations. Core program elements would maintain a focus on these (and potentially other) essential components:

- Special interest focus and expertise development
- Professional networking opportunities
- Knowledge sharing and collaborative learning
- Strong connection to ASHA member identity

The rebranding initiative will be carefully managed to maintain program recognition while positioning it for future growth and expanded member engagement. This transformation will help create a more dynamic, accessible, and valuable resource for ASHA's diverse membership.

KNOWLEDGE GENERATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Knowledge Generation and Acquisition Small Group conducted an extensive evaluation of scholarly publication and continuing education within the SIG program, leading to several transformative recommendations to the entire Task Force.

DECOUPLING PERSPECTIVES FROM THE SIG PROGRAM

A cornerstone decision is the proposal to decouple the *Perspectives* journal from the SIG Program. This change addresses multiple long-standing challenges, including:

- Lack of Journal Impact Factor score and absence of PubMed indexing for *Perspectives*
- Limited ability to attract high-quality submissions, in part due to the above factors
- Current restricted audience reach (only available to SIG affiliates), which is inconsistent with the stated ASHA member benefit of access to ASHA-published journals
- Time, effort, and energy from volunteers and staff to support this publication, with the current structure tightly aligned to the SIG Coordinating Committees, unlike the other ASHA journal structures

By separating *Perspectives* from the revised SIG program, strategies to address the lack of a Journal Impact Factor score and PubMed indexing can be more effectively pursued. Limiting the journal to only paying SIG affiliates and not to a larger readership (i.e., all ASHA members) makes it unlikely that *Perspectives* can achieve key publication milestones needed to continue to attract submissions over the long term.

The recommendation acknowledges that the journal's functionality has evolved significantly since *Perspectives'* inception. *Perspectives* began as a newsletter for each Special Interest Division in the early years of the program. It developed into a peer-reviewed publication that offered ASHA CEUs for each issue containing three to six thematic articles of 3,000 to 6,000 words each. During the comprehensive Special Interest Division program review from 2008 to 2010, the delivery of ASHA CEUs was maintained as a component and positioned as a low-cost benefit for SIG affiliates. In 2017, individual SIG *Perspectives* were consolidated into one publication formally designated as peer-reviewed and in 2019 it became a journal. Currently, each SIG has an editor, and *Perspectives* has four editors-in-chief, each supporting an array of related SIGs. The minimum requirement for publication in the current SIG program is to publish sufficient content to offer at least one 3-hour

ASHA CE activity per year. *Perspectives* strives to offer easily digestible, translational research, and SIG affiliates have reported that they value access as a benefit.

Transitioning oversight to ASHA's Publications team and Journals Board opens opportunities for transformation while preserving the valuable focus on clinical application of research.

Traditional publication channels are slow and often ineffective in communicating evidence-based practices for implementation by practitioners. Thus, the Task Force envisions SIGs playing a more integrated role in ASHA's knowledge translation efforts through alternative methods that accelerate access and increase the likelihood of implementation. Specifically, we foresee:

- Increased involvement in Practice Portal development and monitoring
- Enhanced connections to ASHA's existing publication channels
- Direct pathways for subject matter experts to contribute
- Continued relationships with Convention program content
- Integration with existing ASHA mentoring programs

The Task Force recommends the approach to decoupling *Perspectives* from the SIG program, with the caveat that the Publications team would be strongly encouraged to find spaces for ASHA journals to publish translational research similar to the current content of this journal.

RECONFIGURING JOURNAL CLUBS

The current SIG program offers journal clubs, during which authors of selected articles give background on their research and discuss their findings with interested participants via Zoom. The Task Force proposes transforming these traditional journal clubs into more dynamic, technology-enabled learning experiences. Moving beyond conventional webinar formats, the new model will feature:

- Interactive learning platforms enabling real-time resource sharing
- Expert-led discussions maintaining high content standards
- Multimedia integration supporting diverse learning styles
- Archived learning artifacts creating lasting educational resources in the form of user-generated content
- Potential continuing education credit opportunities

This reimagined approach emphasizes the interconnected nature of professional learning and practice. By facilitating deeper engagement with content, members can actively participate in building collaborative learning communities that support their professional growth. The model recognizes that evidence-based practice implementation requires both flexibility in access and direct connections between research and clinical practice. Rather than treating these as separate elements, the new approach creates an integrated learning environment where clinicians can engage with content in ways that directly inform their practice, while researchers and content experts can better understand the practical implications of their work. This symbiotic relationship

between research and practice, supported by flexible access to professional development opportunities, strengthens the entire professional community.

The proposed journal clubs would serve as an enduring educational resource modeled after successful platforms like the AMA Ed Hub™ site *JN Learning*. While maintaining the value of live author discussions, this new format creates a persistent, interactive learning environment where clinicians can engage with research on their own schedule, addressing a key barrier to participation. Each article discussion could generate lasting resources including annotated summaries highlighting direct clinical applications, expert-curated clinical pearls that bridge research-to-practice gaps, and real-world case studies demonstrating implementation. Participants can contribute their own implementation experiences and questions, creating a growing knowledge base that connects research findings to diverse clinical settings. The platform preserves expert author insights while allowing ongoing professional dialogue around practical application.

While the SIG Task Force Survey showed relatively low participation in traditional journal clubs from amongst SIG affiliates, a deeper analysis of survey comments revealed significant interest in opportunities to better understand and apply research findings to clinical practice. This seeming disconnect suggests that clinicians value research interpretation and application but need a more flexible and practice-oriented format than conventional journal clubs provide.

The proposed platform responds directly to this feedback by transforming research interpretation from a scheduled event into an accessible, practice-focused resource. By combining expert guidance with user-contributed clinical applications, this approach addresses what survey respondents really seek: practical ways to translate research into evidence-based practice.

This approach transforms a time-bound event into a dynamic professional learning tool that continues to grow in value through user contributions. The potential to offer ASHA CEUs related to this sort of journal club adds appeal for ASHA members, consistent with the desires expressed in the MVP work as well as the SIG Task Force Survey. For clinicians seeking to implement evidence-based practice, this creates a more accessible and practical way to connect research evidence to clinical decision-making. For researchers, it provides valuable insights into how their work translates to various clinical contexts.

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT REIMAGINED

One recommendation from the Volunteer Opportunities Small Group to the Task Force involves restructuring volunteer engagement. It is recommended that the traditional model of elected Coordinating Committees and long-term commitments be replaced with a more flexible, responsive system aligned with contemporary volunteering preferences and professional needs. This also changes the ASHA staff support for the program, currently in the form of ex officios for each SIG, at 0.25 FTE per SIG.

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

Overall, the leadership structure anticipated for the revised SIG program is likely to involve significantly fewer people and committees, because of the emphasis on dynamic communication via enhanced technology and community-connected platforms. One option would be to create a single Member Advisory Group of 8 to 12 volunteer members who will provide strategic leadership without the formal constraints of the current Coordinating Committee and Board of SIG Coordinators structure. This allows for:

- More dynamic response to emerging needs
- Maintenance of program quality and professional standards
- Integration of clinical practitioners in leadership roles
- Dedicated positions for early-career professionals and students
- Removal of costs for elections
- Addressing perceived barriers to participation

Additional details regarding the appointment of this leadership group are not outlined here. If the recommendations of the Task Force are adopted and a transition plan is initiated, then decisions regarding the size of the advisory group, their selection, terms of appointment, and key responsibilities will need to be detailed.

ESTABLISHING A "CURATOR" ROLE

A key volunteer role within the Connections platform that reimagines community leadership is the "Curator." Unlike traditional committee positions with rigid responsibilities, these community leaders will serve as cultivators of professional growth and engagement. They will nurture their topic areas through thoughtful content curation, active community facilitation, and strategic discussion moderation. Beyond managing content, they will play a crucial role in growing the community by identifying and recruiting additional volunteers, ensuring the sustainability of the program.

These roles call for individuals who embody a unique combination of qualities. The ideal candidates will demonstrate a naturally proactive approach to engagement, bringing energy and initiative to their communities. Their deep knowledge of their topic areas will be matched by their commitment to continuous professional growth, recognizing that leadership involves both teaching and learning. Perhaps most importantly, they must excel at community building, understanding how to create welcoming spaces that encourage participation and foster meaningful professional connections. This combination of expertise and interpersonal skills will enable them to cultivate vibrant, sustainable professional communities that serve members' evolving needs.

MICROVOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

The new structure emphasizes accessible, flexible engagement designed to meet the realities of busy professionals' lives. Understanding that traditional long-term commitments often create

barriers to participation, the Task Force envisions a more dynamic approach to volunteer engagement. Members can contribute through focused, project-based opportunities that align with their interests and availability. These might involve facilitating a single journal club session, leading a professional development event, or serving as a media champion for a specific initiative. Each role creates clear connections to professional development, allowing volunteers to build specific skills while contributing to the community. This approach acknowledges that valuable contributions can come in many forms and that even limited time commitments can have significant impact when properly structured and supported. The flexibility of these opportunities creates natural entry points for involvement, particularly for early-career professionals or those new to leadership roles.

REFRAMING ASHA STAFF ON THE SIG TEAM

ASHA staff on the SIG team will provide support to these volunteers who want to be engaged in the work of the organization. Different from the current structure of elected Coordinating Committee members for each separate SIG, this new approach creates a more fluid and responsive volunteer ecosystem. While the traditional model assigned fixed terms and predetermined responsibilities to a limited number of elected or appointed positions, the new structure enables staff to:

- Provide targeted mentoring and resources based on volunteers' specific interests and skills
- Foster organic collaboration across topic areas and special interest groups
- Scale volunteer engagement up or down based on individual capacity and availability
- Facilitate knowledge transfer and cross-pollination of ideas between different community segments
- Offer just-in-time training and support as volunteers explore new leadership opportunities
- Help identify and develop emerging leaders through graduated responsibility levels

This shift from a rigid committee-based system to a more dynamic community-driven model allows for greater adaptability while maintaining clear paths for professional growth and meaningful contribution. Staff on the SIG team in the future program will serve as partners in volunteer success.

The SIG Task Force approved the recommendations from the Volunteer Opportunities Small Group to restructure volunteer opportunities in this way as we aim to create organic, accessible pathways to leadership while maintaining professional standards. This restructuring acknowledges members' desire to contribute expertise through flexible options that align with their professional and personal commitments, while ensuring the program continues to deliver high-quality professional development opportunities.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

Based on extensive analysis and member feedback, the Task Force recommends implementing a model for a new SIG program that best aligns with the six core goals identified for the future SIG program:

1. STRENGTHEN PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITIES

The recommended model creates dynamic, inclusive spaces where members can connect and collaborate through a new Connections platform. This platform could host four to eight community engagement activities annually, including virtual meetups and networking events, facilitated by peers and ASHA staff.

2. ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

The program will produce four to eight SIG-exclusive themed content pieces annually (such as web chats and podcasts), ensuring consistent knowledge dissemination while maintaining quality and avoiding redundancy. Content creation will involve collaboration across ASHA business units, such as the *ASHA Leader* team and volunteer subject matter experts.

3. ENHANCE MEMBER VALUE

The Task Force recommends including SIG participation as a benefit of ASHA membership with no additional fees. This addresses a primary barrier to participation while creating new opportunities for revenue through sponsorships and targeted advertising in the Connections platform.

4. FOSTER LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The new structure provides both substantial leadership roles through the Member Advisory Group (8–12 volunteers), volunteers serving in the "Curator" role, and microvolunteering opportunities (13+ positions), creating multiple pathways for involvement and professional growth.

5. DRIVE INNOVATION

The program will offer 5–10 learning events annually, including journal clubs and webinars, with ASHA CEUs available through ASHA Learning Pass.

6. SUPPORT ASHA'S STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR 2026

All activities will align with ASHA's broader priorities through structured collaboration between SIG staff and other business units.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

These recommendations should be implemented with attention to:

- Member feedback and needs
- Technical infrastructure requirements
- Resource allocation
- Timeline development
- Change management strategies
- Communication planning

The successful execution of these recommendations will result in a more dynamic, accessible, and valuable program that better serves ASHA's diverse membership while maintaining high professional standards and engagement opportunities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Task Force identified several key financial components associated with the aforementioned recommendations but noted that additional financial modeling would be needed as potential avenues for implementing the recommendations may be pursued.

The Task Force has identified several key financial components of the proposed model.

1. Recommendations
   - The core SIG Program will be made available to all ASHA members (including NSSLHA members, International Affiliates, and Assistants) as an exclusive member benefit at no additional fee beyond membership dues.
   - Eliminate the SIG *Perspectives* – potential savings of $195,300.

2. Personnel Costs
   - Proposed personnel to support the new program – 3.5 FTE.
   - Estimated cost at $562,000 for the new dedicated team structure:
     - Content development
     - Community management
     - Continuing education administration
   - Eliminate current Ex Officio support structure that allocates 0.25 FTE for each SIG and other direct program support:
     - Reallocation back to other programs/Teams – $767,000 for current ex officio positions and $244,400 for other direct support.
     - Positions are currently distributed at 0.25 FTE across these teams:
       - Schools (0.75)
       - Clinical Issues (1.0)
       - Healthcare (1.25)
       - Audiology (1.0)
       - International (0.25)
       - Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) (0.25)
       - Academic Affairs (0.5)
   - These positions will transition back into their respective teams.

3. Ongoing Operational Costs
   - Archiving *Perspectives* content – $53,000.
   - Facilitating in-person member networking at Convention and other events – $60,000.
   - Maintaining a Connections platform to ensure sophisticated features for:

- Community engagement
          - Content delivery
        - Depending upon the system needs, this platform may be part of an ASHA enterprise-wide platform, thereby incorporated into the organization systems budget.
  4. Revenue Opportunities
      - Sponsorship activities – $60,000, including:
          - Sponsored online chats
          - Virtual open house events
          - Networking meetings
          - Convention-related activities

AREAS REQUIRING FURTHER FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

As ASHA moves toward implementing this program as an organizational priority for 2025, several financial elements remain to be fully quantified. Transition costs from the current program to the new model will need to be determined, including expenses related to:

- Requests for proposals for recommended new technologies
- Program launch activities and materials
- Branding initiatives
- Member recruitment campaigns
- Content migration and system integration

These implementation costs will be better understood as ASHA develops detailed transition plans and timelines. The Task Force recommends maintaining flexibility in budgeting to accommodate these emerging needs while ensuring the program's successful launch and sustainable operation.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

ASHA Resolution Form: Part I

A. **Abstract:**
B. Establish a task force to review the long-term sustainability of the ASHA Special Interest Group (SIG) Program

B.
C. **Document Changes:**

ASHA Bylaws – Routine

ASHA Bylaws – Urgent

Board of Directors (BOD) Operational Procedures

Code of Ethics

No Change Needed

C. **Resolves:** (use numbered lines only)

RESOLVED, That the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Board of Directors (BOD) approve the formation of a Task Force to review the Special Interest Group (SIG) Program as a member benefit. This Task Force will be charged with 1) examining the current SIG Program to determine elements that should be maintained, changed, or eliminated, including an evaluation of the pros and cons of *Perspectives*, 2) exploring alternatives for optimizing member connections and community, and 3) making recommendations for creating a sustainable, scalable, and cost-effective member benefit that establishes community in alignment with strategies to enhance member value and content strategy; and further.
RESOLVED, That the SIG Program Review Task Force (hereafter, "Task Force") comprise volunteers and staff—including one Chair, six members from the audiology or speech-language pathology

professions with prior ASHA SIG experience, and one current Financial Planning Board member—to be appointed by the Committee on Committees (CoC), along with staff who work on the various components of the SIG Program; and further

RESOLVED, That the ASHA Vice President for Audiology Practice and the ASHA Vice President for Speech-Language Pathology Practice serve as the BOD Liaisons; and further

RESOLVED, That the staff members of the Task Force be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer including the ex officio; and further

RESOLVED, That ASHA provide for travel and per diem expenses for the Task Force appointees to support their attendance at one 2-day, in-person meeting at the ASHA National Office to establish a work plan, roles and responsibilities, and scope of work to accomplish the aims of the Task Force; and that additional meetings will be held virtually; and further

RESOLVED, That the SIG Program Review Task Force complete its work and report back to the BOD no later than December 31, 2024; and further

RESOLVED, That the CoC appoint the following individuals to serve on the SIG Program Review Task Force:

- Barbara Zucker (BSIGC Chair)
- Brenda Beverly (past SIG 1 Editor)
- Lynne Brady-Wagner (past SIG 13 Coordinator)
- Jeanane Ferre (member of SIGs 6, 7, 8, and 9; past BSIGC Chair)
- Jerry Hoepner (SIG 20 Associate Coordinator)
- Pam Smith (SIG 15 Coordinator)
- Jessica R. Sullivan (past SIG 7 Editor)
- Kelley Shaw (Leadership Development Program graduate working in the schools, never a SIG affiliate)
- Hsin-Wei Huang (Early Career Professional, Audiologist, never a SIG affiliate)
- Janet Patterson, representative from the Financial Planning Board (past BSIGC Chair)
- Janice Trent, Vice President for Audiology Practice
- Ryan Lee-James, 2024 Vice President for Speech-Language Pathology Practice; and further

RESOLVED, That the Policy section of the *Standard Operating Procedures of the ASHA SIG Program Review Task Force* be approved.

    D. **Rationale:** *(Statement telling why this resolution was prepared. Indicate issue of concern. Include reference to related policies.)*

ASHA's Member Value and Content Strategy Project research indicated that members are seeking out and creating their own communities rather than considering ASHA's Special Interest Groups. Members are seeking connections with colleagues to share experiences and best practices in ways that acknowledge and address constraints on their time, money, and resources. The SIG program has been the mechanism for building community among members, but the existing SIG framework may not be the best way forward. The SIG Program is a key component of the ASHA membership experience for fewer than 15% of ASHA affiliates, who are among the most engaged ASHA members, yet the percentage of ASHA members who choose to affiliate with a SIG is in decline. Additionally, the SIG Program is at its maximum capacity of 20 SIGs in terms of IT and staff support. This Task Force is needed to examine financial resources, human resources, IT resources, affiliate benefits, features of SIGs, scholarly publications, continuing education, advocacy, leadership opportunities, and all other aspects of the SIG

Program—and recommend benefits that ASHA can sustain over the long term. A concentrated review by select ASHA staff was conducted in December 2022 (the "Stocktaking Report") that revealed where opportunities exist to update the structure and function of the SIG Programs within ASHA and can be used as a starting point for the Task Force.

E. **Explain how this resolution aligns with the *Strategic Pathway*. Include the *Strategic Objective* to which the resolution relates.**

The mission of the SIG Program is to advance ASHA's mission. Each SIG's workplan is directly tied to the *Strategic Pathway,* and each SIG is expected to review the *Strategic Pathway* and *Strategic Objectives* at their annual Coordinating Committee meetings. The SIG Program Review Task Force relates to SO3, SO4, SO5, SO6, SO7, SO8, and SO9. The SIG Program addresses publication, knowledge translation, service delivery, effectively demonstrating the value of services, and empowering and educating patients and clients to understand access and reimbursement in the area of special interest. SIG 14, which is specific to culturally and linguistically diverse populations, addresses the quality of care for all populations. SIG 17, which is specific to global practices, seeks to be engaged internationally with service providers, educators, scientists, and other groups to proliferate research and to improve professional preparation and service delivery. All SIGs support continuing education and professional development for their affiliates and serve as a vehicle for lifelong learning of the affiliates.

F. **Resolution Contact Designee:**

Name:
Mary Casper
Phone:
301-296-5694
Email:

mcasper@asha.org

G. **Submitted to:**
H. Board of Directors
By:
Janice Trent, Vice President for Audiology Practice
      Linda Rosa-Lugo, Vice President for Speech-Language Pathology Practice

ASHA Resolution Form: Part II—Budget

A. **Financial Data**

1. Budget year:
2. 2023
2. In budget for specified year?
3. Yes
4. No
3. If yes, source of funds (program) and amount:
4.
5. $
4. If not in budget, source of funding and amount:
5. Board Contingency Fund
6. Not to

exceed $12,396

B. **Budget Impact**

1. Estimated Revenue:
2. $0
3. [Total Estimated Revenue]
2. Estimated Expense:
3. $12,396
4. [Line A3 or A4 – Total Direct Expense on p. 3, line B(3)]
3. Estimated Net:
4. ($12,396)
5. [Revenue – Expense]

C. **Staff Impact** *(Incumbent staff)*

1. Estimated number of hours:
2. See table below
2. Estimated cost per hour:
3. Total staff impact (# of hours $\times$ cost/hour):

Staff	2024 Hours	Cost/hr	Total
Cluster Leader	730	$109	79,570
Home Team Leader	380	$86	32,680
Non-Exempt	510	$43	21,930

Total			**$134,180**

D. **Fiscal Projection**

1st Year: 2023/2024	2nd Year:
0	
12,396	

Specify Year
Revenue:
Expense:

ASHA Resolution Form: Part III—Budget Worksheet

A. **Revenue** *(Specify source from which this activity will generate revenue—including, where applicable, the number of estimated attendees and registration rate, the sale price of a resulting publication, etc.)*

1. Source:
2. $
2. Source:
3. $
3. Source:
4. $
4. Total Estimated Revenue:
5. $

B. **Expense** *[Itemized detail(s) must be attached.]*

1. **Non-Personnel Expense—Direct**
   a. Telephone
   b. $
   b. Travel
   c. $12,396
   c. Professional services *(e.g., consulting services, workshop expenses)*
   d. $
   d. Other
   e. $
   e. **Total Non-Personnel Expense—Direct** *(add lines a through d)*
   f. $12,396

2. **Personnel Expense**
   a. Incumbent staff [*transfer amount from p. 2, line C(3)*]
   b. $134,180
   b. **Additional staff**
   c. $

3. **Total Direct Expense** *[Total Direct Expense – Budget Impact]*
   Add Lines 1e and 2b (above, this section)
   $12,396

Instructions for ASHA Resolution Form: Part III—Budget Worksheet

Revenue: Follow instructions on Part III—Budget Worksheet (p. 3).

Total Estimated Direct Non-Personnel Expense and Personnel Expense should be calculated as follows:

A list of items that could comprise Non-Personnel Expense—Direct (p. 3, line B(1) is given. Estimate the cost involved for each item listed. If a more detailed expense breakdown is desired, attach a separate schedule to this form, but show the total of each separate schedule under p. 3, line B.

Note: Under Personnel Expense, p. 3 line B(2), distinguish between personnel already working with ASHA ("Incumbent staff" [p. 3, line B(2)a]), who are expected to use some or all of their time on the proposed program/activity, and personnel who must be newly hired ("Additional staff" [p. 3, line B(2)b, p. 3]) on either a permanent or temporary basis to complete the project. Estimate Personnel Expense by performing all of the following actions:

1. Select from the following classification levels:
Chief Executive Officer
$2,348 daily/$313 hourly
Chief Staff Officer
$1,448 daily/$193 hourly
Service Cluster Leader
$818 daily/$109 hourly
Home Team Leader
$645 daily/$86 hourly
Home Team Member (Exempt)
$495 daily/$66 hourly
Home Team Member (Non-Exempt)
$323 daily/$43 hourly
2. Determine how many in each classification will be required.
3. Estimate the number of days required.
4. Multiply the number in each classification by the daily rate indicated above by the number of days required.

5. Add all of the above, and enter the total on Line a ("Incumbent staff" [p. 3, line B(2)a]) or Line b ("Additional staff" [p. 3, line B(2)b]).

Transfer the following items from Part III—Budget Worksheet to Part II—Budget (p. 2, Section B, "Budget Impact").

- Revenue (Total Estimated Revenue; p. 3, line A[4])
- Expense (Total Direct Expense; p. 3, line B[3])

If revenue and expense vary from year to year, you may wish to prepare a separate Part III—Budget Worksheet for each of the first 2 years of activity related to the resolution. Resolutions affecting only 1 year will require only one Budget Worksheet.

Transfer the totals from p. 2, lines B(1) (Revenue) and B(2) (Expense) to the appropriate areas in the Part II—Budget, Fiscal Projection table (p. 2, line D), and enter the year in the table header titled "1st Year: 20xx." If more than one year has been projected, transfer the appropriate totals to second column, and enter the year in the table header titled "2nd Year: 20xx."

Note: National Office ex officios are responsible for completing Parts II and III in consultation with committee/board chairs. Members needing assistance may call the National Office at (301) 296-8640 and speak with the Director of Budget and Pensions.

Instructions for ASHA Resolution Form: Part IV—Creation of a New Committee, Board, or Council

When preparing a resolution for the creation of an ad hoc or standing committee, board, or council (CBC), the following information should be included to help inform the BOD of the work and structure of the proposed CBC. In addition, a copy of the proposed CBC's *Standard Operating Procedures* utilizing the standard template should accompany the resolution when submitted to the BOD for consideration.

Specific information in the enabling resolution should include the following items:

Charge: A CBC mission, purpose, or rationale statement should clearly identify the CBC alignment with ASHA's strategic goals and with any membership needs' statements that were developed to guide creation of this CBC.

Defined Products, Services and Outcomes: Clearly identify products, services, or outcomes that the CBC is expected to produce in service to its mission and the timetable in which this will be accomplished.

Defined Timeline: Every ad hoc CBC should have a defined beginning and end for meeting its charge. Clearly state in the resolution the start and end dates for the ad hoc CBC.

Specification of Chair and Vice Chair Roles and Responsibilities: The resolution should include well-defined CBC chair selection processes. If there is a vice chair, their roles and responsibilities should also be defined. Among the processes that should be included for both a chair and a vice chair are:

- the chair's term and the number of terms that they can serve;
- the process for appointing or selecting the chair;
- definition of the body who appoints or selects the chair;
- the chair's voting privileges;
- the chair's temporary replacement process;
- whether the chair serves concurrently as a member of the committee and as the chair; and
- the policy on term extensions if the chair's term extends beyond their CBC appointment term.

Service Eligibility Requirements: Are there any requirements to serve on the committee? (e.g., to serve on Committee ABC, an individual has to be an ASHA Fellow.) In addition to what is required to serve, indicate any DESIRED qualifications/experiences for serving on the CBC.

Composition of the CBC: Note the makeup for the committee.

- How many members make up the committee?
- How many members are there from each profession?
- Are there any other criteria used to ensure a diverse range of members?
- Are there any requirements for a member to serve on this committee?
- How are members selected for this committee? (e.g., appointed by the Committee on Committees, elected by the membership, some other process)

Term of Office: Note the term of office for each committee member.

BOD Liaison: Include the BOD position that should serve as the BOD liaison to this CBC.

A task force consisting of key stakeholders (members and staff) are reviewing ASHA's Special Interest Group (SIG) Program to ensure that the objectives, benefits, and offerings are valuable to ASHA and NSSLHA members.

The task force is exploring various options for fostering communities of professionals within the ASHA membership.

In this survey we will use the term "special interest groups" or "SIGs" to refer to communities of professionals passionate about specific topics related to communication sciences and disorders. The name and offerings of the future SIG Program have yet to be finalized, and will be informed in part by the feedback we receive from this survey.

It's very important to us that the next iteration of the SIG Program reflects the desires and needs of ASHA and NSSLHA members. The future program's goals and offerings will benefit from your feedback.

We will begin by asking for your feedback about how the special interest groups could be organized.

1. How many Special Interest Groups (SIGs) do you currently belong to? (0-20)

2. If zero, have you ever belonged to a SIG?

3. What is your ASHA account number?

4. What are the primary benefits you would like to see from a special interest group? (Select the top 3)
   ● information and resources related to the interest group
   ● easy access to content
   ● access to continuing education at a discounted rate
   ● access to continuing education at no additional cost
   ● scholarly journal articles pertaining to the special interest
   ● opportunities to engage with members with similar interests
   ● opportunities to contribute to knowledge
   ● opportunities to provide continuing education
   ● leadership opportunities
   ● I don't think an interest group would be of value.
   ● other (describe)

5. Currently there are 20 SIGs ranging in focus from population (e.g., Pediatric Hearing and Hearing Disorders) to setting (e.g., School-Based Issues) to specific areas of practice (e.g., Dysphagia). In your opinion, should there be:
   ● Fewer groups with broad topic areas
   ● More groups with specific topic areas

6. How would you organize these groups?
   ● Clinical approaches
   ● Populations
   ● Settings
   ● Combination of the above
   ● Other (describe)

7. How can special interest groups meet the needs of students?

8. How can special interest groups meet the needs of early career professionals?

9. What pricing structure would be most appealing to you if you were considering joining an interest group?
   ● No extra cost for affiliation, but pay for activities and events.
   ● I prefer to pay up front for my affiliation and have things included.
   ● I'm not interested in joining an interest group.
   ● Other (describe)

The primary benefits of the current SIG Program fall into three categories—knowledge generation and acquisition, connections, and volunteer service opportunities. We are interested in maintaining these key benefit categories but are looking at opportunities to modify and enhance the benefits.

Knowledge generation and acquisition currently happens through SIG-sponsored content in the Convention Program, publication of the scholarly journal Perspectives, low-cost self-studies of Perspectives articles offered for ASHA CEUs, virtual professional development events, and journal clubs.

10. What types of professional learning activities do you like to use to grow your knowledge base and earn continuing education credits? (select all that apply)
    ● I attend in-person events and conferences.
    ● attend live virtual events, including live webinars.
    ● I watch virtual on-demand content.
    ● I attend free virtual professional development events organized by a SIG.
    ● I read scholarly journals.
    ● I listen to podcasts.
    ● I participate in SIG-sponsored Journal Clubs.
    ● I participate in employer-based in-services or other educational activities offered by my employer.
    ● I complete *Perspectives* self-study activities.
    ● Other (describe)

11. What motivates you to pursue the continuing education indicated in the previous question? Select all that apply.
- Cost
- Time
- Specific content
- Current client / patient / student needs
- Employer / compliance / licensure requirements
- Other (describe)

12. List other forms of knowledge generation/acquisition that appeal to you that have not already been mentioned.

Now we want to ask more questions about networking and connecting to other professionals who might share your specific interests. Because ASHA members are dispersed geographically, a key component of the current SIG Program is an online engagement and networking platform. We're interested in learning more about how you're likely to engage when using an online professional community, such as a forum for a specific topic or a LinkedIn group.

13. Where do you currently go to find a professional community and information?

14. Thinking of an online professional community, what is your engagement style?
- I actively post and reply to other people's posts.
- I use reaction buttons for posts/replies (e.g., like, love, laugh, etc.)
- I read most of what is posted, but I never post or reply.
- I read a summary of the content provided outside of the platform (e.g., email digest).
- I join, but I don't keep up with what is shared on the platform.
- I don't participate in online platforms.

15. Keeping in mind your engagement style, what features of a professional community platform are important to you? Check all that apply.
- Read discussion posts
- Post comments or reply to a discussion post
- React to posts/replies with "like, love, laugh" etc.
- Search discussion posts to find an answer or resources
- Share resources with other members
- Learn about events
- Share information about events
- Earn CE within the platform
- Searchable member directory
- Ability to post anonymously
- Something else (please share)

16. What is your preference for accessing an online community platform?
    - I prefer to log into the platform from a computer.
    - I prefer to access the platform via a mobile app.
    - I prefer to access an online professional community via social media.
    - I don't want to have to log into something else. Send me an email digest or newsletter with missed activity instead.

17. What is your preference for networking with other professionals with similar interests and/or expertise?
    - Online via a community platform
    - In-person at ASHA Convention via networking meetings
    - Online during special events, like open houses and professional development
    - Smaller, in-person meet ups in your local area
    - Online via social media
    - Other (describe)

Now we want to ask you about volunteer service and leadership development opportunities that might emerge from your participation in a special interest group.

18. What kind of service opportunities would you like to see related to interest groups? (tick one)
    - Short-term project-based opportunities.
    - Longer-term opportunities, such as serving on a committee.
    - Opportunities focused on a specific topic or area, such as advocacy or professional development.
    - A combination of service structures.
    - Opportunities to engage with or mentor students and early career professionals.
    - Other (describe)

19. Which of the following service activities do you think are or would be useful for both individual members and the association? (tick all that apply)
    - Speaker's Bureau for state associations or other groups
    - Provide input and feedback for the ASHA Practice Portal
    - Subject matter experts
    - ASHA Convention planning
    - SIG-based professional development
    - Solicit contributions for journals
    - Solicit participation in online forums (ASHA based)
    - Solicit participation in online forums (outside ASHA)

20. What would motivate you to take a more active role in service of building a special interest community? (select all that apply)
    ● Giving back and helping my profession
    ● Giving back and helping others interested in the same areas of practice
    ● Advocating for changes related to an area of practice
    ● Having an impact on the next generation of clinicians
    ● Adding leadership skills to my resume
    ● Meeting new colleagues and growing deeper professional relationships
    ● I have free time or the opportunity is convenient
    ● My employer rewards my service
    ● Someone I respect invited me to serve
    ● Other (describe)

21. Please use the space below to provide any additional feedback you have about how a SIG program can support your professional goals and needs.

Features of a new Connections platform might look like the examples below.