

# Establishing Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within BAAL

## 1 Setting up a SIG

Make contact with the BAAL SIG Co-ordinator for advice. The current Co-ordinator is John Field. Ensure that you keep the Co-ordinator informed of developments.

Familiarise yourself with the procedures for running a SIG within BAAL.

If possible, organise a planning meeting to discuss the aims, title, and activities of the SIG.

Announce your intention to form a SIG via the BAAL mailing list. Invite potential members to contact you.

In consultation with interested members, draw up a detailed proposal to be submitted to the BAAL Executive Committee. Click here for a model proposal. It should contain:

- a clear outline of the specialist area within Applied Linguistics 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 BAAL SIGs
- a set of goals for the SIG
- proposals for the SIG's first year of operation, including
- plans for an event for members
- arrangements for some kind of formal election procedure
- the names of 15 members of BAAL who support the formation of the SIG, and the names of four who are prepared to become actively involved
- an undertaking that the proposer has read and will adhere to the rules for the operation of a SIG within BAAL

The proposal must reach the SIG Co-ordinator fourteen days before the December meeting of the BAAL Executive Committee to enable the Exec to consider it.

If the proposal is accepted, it means that your SIG has been approved for a probationary year. You will have access to a non-refundable start-up float of £200, to be set against expenses incurred. The BAAL Treasurer may require evidence of what those expenses are.

When planning your first event and before announcing it, submit a budget for approval by BAAL using the standard form. When the event is fully planned, you should

- tell the SIG Co-ordinator of time, place and speakers
- publicise the event to all members on your membership list and subsequently to the full BAAL membership via BAALmail
- submit a report on the event to the SIG Co-ordinator for inclusion in BAAL News

At the end of your first year of operation, you will be expected to submit a detailed report to the next meeting BAAL Executive. The report must include

- the current number of members
- details of events held in the probationary year
- details of the business meetings and formal election procedures that have taken place
- full accounts of the SIG up to date
- a full list of current members of the SIG

## **General rules for the running of SIGs within BAAL**

### **Designing a proposal**

To set up a SIG within BAAL, interested parties should draw up an initial proposal, specifying:

- the area of interest, a rationale and an initial statement of aims (including an indication of its distinctiveness vis-à-vis other BAAL SIGs)
- the steps to be taken developing the SIG over a one-year period of consultation. This should include publicity and an exploratory meeting among potential SIG members
- the names of 15 BAAL members who would like to participate, including at least four who would be willing to organise it

The proposal should be submitted to the SIG Co-ordinator on the BAAL Executive Committee. If the EC agrees to the proposal, it will provide start-up funds of £200. If there are a substantial number of new SIG proposals in any one year, the EC may have to limit those officially entering the consultation period.

After a one-year period of consultation, the proposers should submit to the EC

- a report of their activity during the consultation year, including a list of interested participants
- a statement of aims, organisation and procedures for the new SIG (consistent with BAAL's own constitution)

The BAAL EC can then approve its establishment.

### **Membership**

BAAL members should be entitled to free membership of any/all SIGs.

Non-members of BAAL can belong to a SIG, but they need to pay an annual fee for membership of the SIG which is not less than BAAL's concessionary membership subscription rate.

There is no discount for institutional members.

### **Organisation**

A SIG must have a convenor as well as, preferably, a small organising committee, all of whom are members of BAAL. There should be elections for the convenor and committee once every two years.

Each SIG must have a statement of aims, organisation and procedures.

There should be a yearly business meeting.

The convenor is responsible for ensuring the submission of:

- an Annual Report to the BAAL SIG Co-ordinator for transmission to the BAAL Secretary, the BAAL Newsletter Editor, and the BAAL Web Editor] by July 16th every year
- a list of SIG members [orig: to the Membership Secretary on July 16th every year] to the Executive Committee on November 30th every year.
- a detailed financial statement to the BAAL Treasurer by June 15th every year, for onward transmission to the BAAL accountant for auditing.

### **Finances**

SIGs should work to the same financial year as BAAL, that is, the calendar year, 1 June to 31 May. SIGs should maintain full, accurate and auditable accounts. These should be submitted to the Treasurer by June 15th every year for submission to the BAAL accountant for auditing alongside - but separate from - the main BAAL accounts.

BAAL will provide a start-up allowance of £200 against receipted expense claims (see 1.2 above).

Thereafter, the SIG should be self-supporting, and all profits should be used in pursuit of the SIG's stated aims. SIGs may also seek sponsorship, although the BAAL EC must be fully informed of all plans and developments in this regard.

The BAAL EC may (without obligation) consider requests for additional funding for specific anticipated activities. SIGs may also apply for funding within the BAAL/CUP seminar scheme.

The SIG must submit to the SIG Co-ordinator 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 BAAL.

### **Activities**

The purpose of SIGs is to promote/enhance focused discussion within particular fields of applied linguistics. Ways of achieving this lie largely within the SIG's discretion.

SIGs are expected to hold an academic event and a business meeting within the BAAL Annual Meeting, and organisers can apply to hold events lasting for up to a maximum one whole day (or two consecutive half-days). Anyone attending the AM only for the duration of the SIG event must pay the day conference fee. The timetabling of the SIG event will be at the discretion of BAAL Meetings Secretary and the local AM organisers.

A SIG will normally be expected to hold at least one meeting between BAAL Annual Meetings.

SIGs are expected to publicise their activity through the BAAL Newsletter and on the BAAL Website.

### **Terminating SIGs**

The BAAL EC will close a SIG if there has been no annual report for two years and if there has been a lack of substantive activity for one year.

If a SIG becomes a separate organisation, the initial subsidy and all other financial support should be repaid to BAAL, unless otherwise agreed.

*These rules are modelled on those used by the British Sociological Association (BSA) and the International Association for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL)*

## **Example of a Proposal for a SIG**

# **PROPOSAL FOR A *[insert name]* SIG WITHIN BAAL**

### **Goals**

The term *[insert name]* ...

should be taken as encompassing those areas which are generally covered in courses in the subject and in journals specific to the field, namely:

*[list areas to be covered by the SIG]*

### **Rationale**

*[Explain why this SIG is needed, what it will do that is not done elsewhere, how it will support the applied linguistics community, how it will advance work in the field]*

### **Aims of a possible SIG**

*[Set out the objectives of the SIG, the processes by which these objectives will be achieved, and the structures which will support the processes.]*

### **Initial Steps**

*[Set out the steps by which the SIG will be initiated. Make sure that these steps are reasonable and achievable within the resources available. If particular roles are necessary, try to allocate names to those roles. If finance is needed, try to identify the sources.]*

### **Proposers**

The following 15 members of BAAL have indicated their support for the formation of the SIG:

*[NAMES – all must be current members of BAAL]*

Of these, the following 4 are prepared to be actively engaged.

*[NAMES]*