

Guidelines for proposals for IUSSP Scientific Panels

Scientific Panels play an important role in the work of the Union. They provide a way for members to contribute to advancing specific research themes and to participate in the activities of the Union. While the number and selection of Panels are determined by the IUSSP Council, most panel topics arise from proposals put forward by the Union's membership. This ensures that the activities of the Union reflect the research priorities of its membership. The Council may accept members' proposals as is, but at times may also suggest modifications, merge proposals, or propose other individuals for the panel's steering committee.

In reviewing proposals for the establishment of new panels, the Council places priority on panels that address pressing or emerging population issues, that seek to develop or make use of innovative approaches, that are interdisciplinary in nature and that actively engage early career population scientists. Members are also encouraged to make efforts to engage a broader set of demographers, such as, for example, maintaining an email list-serve or blog (or other low-cost approaches), or holding seminars in conjunction with regional conferences.

The purpose of this note is to offer guidance to members wishing to propose a new panel to the Council. Because the nature of the panels can widely differ, a one-size-fits-all approach to standardizing the elements, format and content of proposals is unsuitable. However, the Council recommends that proposals for Scientific Panels at least contain the following elements and consider the aspects set out below.

1. **Title:** Offer a clear and informative title for the panel. The subject of the panel should be neither too narrow nor too wide and should be relevant in the field of population studies.
2. **Justification:** Provide a short justification of the relevance of the topic for the Union and motivation as to why the panel should have priority in the Union's scientific agenda. Briefly present how the panel will build on current knowledge in the field, advance that knowledge, and how that knowledge will feed into current scientific and public policy debates. Make sure to indicate the relevance of the topic from a policy and user perspective. Proposals should also take into consideration how the proposed topic builds on, complements or differs from current and recent past IUSSP Panels on related subjects. A list of [past](#) and [current](#) panels is available on the IUSSP website.
3. **Duration:** In general, panels are established for a period of two years; panels with a broad focus can be established for a longer period up to a maximum of 4 years. Subject to the decision of the Council, panels may be extended for a limited time to allow for planned activities to be completed or their mandate can be renewed.
4. **Activities:** Describe the planned panel activities including a tentative time schedule. The program of work varies among panels and activities may take various shapes, including (cyber) seminars, (training) workshops, (policy) debates, special sessions at conferences (organized by the IUSSP or by others) or maintaining an email list-serve or blog on a given topic.
5. **Dissemination of findings:** Indicate how the panel's findings will be disseminated, for instance through a N-IUSSP article, a special issue of a journal, as separate papers in different journals or through other means like social media. While a published volume making use of the Union's arrangements with Springer can also be considered, this tends to require additional

costs and time. When a special issue of a journal is envisaged, potential publishers or journals should be identified and contacted as early as possible.

6. Outputs: Specify the outputs anticipated from the panel's activities, paying attention to dissemination and outreach to audiences outside academia including policy specialists and general audiences. Consider how to inform and engage the membership of the Union and other interested parties in the activities of the panel, through the Union's website, list serve communication, social media and the like. If the panel seeks to produce policy-relevant outcomes, consideration should be given to how the results will be communicated to policymakers. For panels with a training component, consideration of how the effectiveness of the training will be evaluated is desirable.
7. Panel chair: Include the name, affiliation and email of a potential chair (or co-chairs) of the panel. Members proposing other people to be panel chair should ensure their agreement to taking on this role. The final decision on the appointment of a chair rests with the Council. Note that the panel chair should be a member of the Union.
8. Steering committee membership: The proposal may provide a list of potential members for the Panel's steering committee. The steering committee should be constituted with due regard to gender and geographic representation, and the Council strongly encourages including at least one mid-career scholar. For the sake of efficiency, the panel's steering committee should ideally not exceed six members, including the chair. If names of potential steering committee members are suggested, indicate whether these people have been approached, and if so whether they have agreed to be considered for the panel's steering committee. Note that the activities of a panel should in principle be open to all IUSSP members and are not restricted to members of the panel's steering committee. In fact the Council strongly urges its panels to reach out to outside participants.
9. The IUSSP Council urges panels to involve early and mid-career population scientists in their work. In addition to encouraging their attendance at and participation in panel activities, additional roles could include helping to organize panel meetings, summarize meeting findings, or draft policy briefs for the panel. The IUSSP Secretariat may be able to assist with funding specifically aimed at encouraging this kind of involvement.
10. The panel is responsible for raising funds to support its activities. While the Union may help to seek (co-) funding to support the activities of panels, full funding from the IUSSP cannot be guaranteed. Some seed money (up to a maximum of Euro 2,500 for a two-year period) will be made available to panels. Note that organizations providing core financial support to the Union (currently UNFPA, the Hewlett Foundation and the French government) should not be approached without first discussing the matter with the Secretariat.