



**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES OF THE  
SCIENTIST PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**VERSION: 8.0**

**July 18, 2020**

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8.0	L. Rodgers/ J. Wilken/ D. Chu		Major revisions undertaken: Renamed SciPAC COF Liaison to Executive Liaison and updated duties; Included information on terms and eligibility for EB; Updated information for Immediate Past Chair, CPO, and Scientist

			liaison officers; Revised information for Career Development, Recruitment & Retention, Rules & Membership, Science, Visibility, and Website SC; Removed discussion of finances throughout; Simplified SC SOP submission and approval process section and selection of voting members.
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## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to supplement the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) Charter by providing specific and detailed information on the duties and responsibilities of SciPAC voting and non-voting members, Executive Board members, and ex-officio officers, as well as the operations and procedures currently employed by SciPAC. This SOP functions as the bylaws for the organization.

## **II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Every Scientist Officer is a member of SciPAC. SciPAC is composed of both voting members and non-voting members. Up to 20 officers of the Scientist Category will provide SciPAC leadership as voting members (see Charter). The remainder of Scientist Officers are non-voting members.

The Immediate Past Chair of the Executive Board is a special case as the individual can either be a voting or non-voting member depending on the year they were elected as Vice Chair (see SOP, section II.3.c). Because the Immediate Vice Chair is typically a voting member, their position is described in Voting Members section (see SOP, section II.3.a.5).

### **1. Non-Voting Members**

Non-voting members contribute in various ways to SciPAC. Non-voting members may serve on any SciPAC Subcommittee (SC), including various SC teams. Non-voting members are encouraged to participate in monthly SciPAC meetings. Non-voting members may serve as SciPAC SC Co-Chairs, team leads, and liaisons to other Commissioned Corps organizations if asked to serve in these capacities by the Chairperson.

### **2. Voting Members**

#### **a. Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Chair or Co-chair a SciPAC SC and execute associated SC responsibilities (see SOP, Section II.6) and/or serve on the Executive Board (EB; see SOP, Section II.3).
2. Attend regularly scheduled SciPAC meetings.
3. Provide a written summary of their SC or EB activities to the Executive Secretary each month for inclusion in SciPAC monthly meeting minutes, in addition to an

oral summary during each full meeting of SciPAC.

4. Vote in a timely manner on all votes presented by the SciPAC Chairperson or designee (see SOP, Section III.4).

**b. Selection**

1. The Rules and Membership SC will be responsible for initiating and overseeing the selection of new voting members each operational year (See Rules and Membership SC SOP).
2. Selection of new voting members will follow the criteria considerations outlined in the Charter.

**c. Terms**

1. The official term length for voting members is three years.
2. Scientist Officers may serve a maximum of two terms as voting members for a total of six years of service.
3. An exception to the terms stated above is when the PAC Chair is required to stay on a fourth year or seventh year as Immediate Past Chair. If this occurs, the term of their voting membership will be extended (see SOP, section II.3.c).

**d. Eligibility**

1. Members must be active duty PHS Commissioned Corps Officers at the time they are nominated and appointed to SciPAC.
2. Other eligibility requirements for voting members are outlined in the Charter, Section V.

**3. Executive Board**

The Executive Board is a subset of voting members that oversees SciPAC and is composed of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Executive Secretary, Executive Liaison, and Immediate Past Chairperson. Executive Board members are selected from within SciPAC voting membership. The Vice Chairperson, Executive Secretary, and Executive Liaison are elected annually (see SOP, Section III.9).

The Executive Board provides leadership that ensures timely completion of the responsibilities listed in the SciPAC Charter and recommends to SciPAC strategies and actions that address issues affecting the professional careers of Scientist Officers. In cases where no established policies exist and immediate action is necessary, the Executive Board is authorized to act, but shall immediately notify the membership of its action. The transaction of business by the Executive Board requires a quorum of three members.

**a. Duties and Responsibilities**

All Executive Board members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings of SciPAC and the Executive Board. At the conclusion of each Board member's term, they will brief their incoming counterpart.

**1. Chairperson**

The role of Chairperson is assumed by the Vice Chairperson from the previous operational year. The Chairperson shall carry out the following duties:

- a. Determine the agenda and preside over all meetings of the Executive Board and SciPAC.
- b. Oversee all SciPAC activities, represent SciPAC at various meetings, review and sign all official SciPAC minutes and correspondence, appoint or remove SC chairpersons/co-chairpersons and team leads at their discretion, serve as an ex-officio member of all standing SCs, and perform such functions as otherwise specified in the Charter.
- c. Respond to all requests and concerns of the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), the Chief Professional Officer (CPO), and Scientist Officers. Correspond and meet with the CPO as necessary to attend to matters of SciPAC.
- d. Attend regularly scheduled PAC Chair meetings and report to SciPAC. Chairperson may delegate this duty.
- e. Document SciPAC activities throughout the operational year for inclusion in the annual report.

- f. Nominate deserving voting members for a Special Assignment Award at the conclusion of the operational year, including the compilation and submission of the award package.
- g. Review individual and unit award nomination packages that meet the criteria specified in SciPAC's Honor Awards Policy, provide edits and comments, and endorsements as appropriate, and submit to the CPO.

## **2. Vice Chairperson**

The Vice Chairperson shall carry out the following duties:

- a. Act in the absence of the Chairperson with all rights and responsibilities attendant to that office.
- b. Chair the Rules and Membership SC, and oversee the review, update, and dissemination of membership and governing document information. This oversight includes the triennial review of the SciPAC Charter, annual review of the SciPAC SOP to ascertain if any revisions should be noted and collected for inclusion in the next revision, and review of SC SOPs as specified in the SC SOP Submission and Approval Matrix.
- c. Conduct a review of all SciPAC activities as outlined in the Charter.

## **3. Executive Secretary**

The Executive Secretary shall carry out the following duties:

- a. Document and maintain accurate minutes of SciPAC meetings including voting and general member attendance.
- b. Monitor the attendance of voting members as described in the SciPAC Charter.
- c. Distribute SciPAC meeting minutes to voting SciPAC members, non-voting members who serve as Subcommittee Co-Chairs or Liaisons, and the CPO for review and comment prior to widespread distribution.
- d. Prepare and distribute meeting agendas, minutes, reports, and meeting preparatory materials to SciPAC members through the SciPAC Listserv

(III.3.) at the direction of the Chairperson.

- e. Reserve a teleconference line or other conferencing method for SciPAC meetings.
- f. Support SciPAC Chairperson in scheduling meetings with SC Chairpersons at beginning and end of each operational year.
- g. Maintain current electronic copies of the CPO and Chairperson signatures for use by SC Chairs when drafting Letters of Appreciation.
- h. Forward official minutes, reports, correspondence, and other important documents to the Website SC to post on the SciPAC website.
- i. Edit and distribute announcements to the SciPAC listserv. (Information on the current SciPAC Communications Policy can be found at: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/resources-and-links.aspx>.)
- j. In the event of deployment or prolonged absence, the Executive Secretary shall perform the duties of the Executive Liaison. If both the Executive Secretary and the Executive Liaison are unavailable due to deployment or prolonged absence, the Chair may designate an officer(s) to serve as acting Executive Secretary and acting Executive Liaison.
- k. Train the incoming Executive Secretary about the position responsibilities.

#### **4. Executive Liaison**

The Executive Liaison shall carry out the following duties:

- a. Serve as the liaison between SciPAC and the Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF).
- b. Serve as the project manager ensuring timely review of SciPAC documents by the Executive Board. Duties include but are not limited to: developing and maintaining a review schedule for each document submitted for Executive Board review, providing reminders before reviews are due, consolidating and resolving differences in comments between Executive Board members, and communicating feedback to SCs. These project

management documents include, but are not limited to, State of the Science (SoS) survey, social media posts, and any other documents as needed. Coordination of subcommittee SOPs is managed by the Rules and Membership SC Chair, and the Executive Liaison should collaborate closely with this SC to include these in an overall picture of all documents presented to the Executive Board, and to assist in coordination as needed.

- c. Communicate regularly with SC Chairs and Co-Chairs, and/or attend SC calls upon invitation by SC Chairs in order to identify documents or issues that need EB feedback throughout the year.
- d. Administer Max.gov, including maintaining directories and controlling access in coordination with SC Chairs and SciPAC Chair, and ensuring that procedures are developed, so the Max.gov transition between outgoing and incoming SciPAC Executive Liaisons is seamless.
- e. Serve as the Executive Board's liaison to the Website SC (see Website SC SOP).
- f. Maintain a roster of non-voting Scientist Liaison Officers, including information on their term of appointment, and coordinate appointment for each position, in accordance with the procedures unique to each role. Work with the Executive Secretary to disseminate the roster to the Executive Board and the Website SC.
- g. Maintain an org chart of SciPAC leadership including the Executive Board, SC Chairs and co-Chairs, and non-voting Scientist Liaison Officers.
- h. Perform the duties of the Executive Secretary in the event of deployment or prolonged absence. If both the Executive Secretary and the Executive Liaison are unavailable due to deployment or prolonged absence, the Chair may designate an officer(s) to serve as acting Executive Secretary and acting Executive Liaison.
- i. Train the incoming Executive Liaison about the position responsibilities

## **5. Immediate Past Chairperson**

The Immediate Past Chairperson shall carry out the following duties:

- a. Attend regularly scheduled meetings of SciPAC and the Executive Board.
- b. Advise the Executive Board on all issues within the EB's scope.
- c. Generate the annual report with the support of the Rules and Membership SC. The annual report outlines SciPAC's activities from the prior operational year. The content of the report shall be prepared from summaries of activities provided by SC Chairpersons. The annual report will be made available to the Scientist Category via the listserv and website once approved by the CPO. Additional information on the annual report can be found in the Rules and Membership SC SOP.

**b. Terms**

The terms for the Executive Board are as follows:

1. The Executive Secretary serves a one-year term.
2. The Executive Liaison serves a one-year term.
3. The Vice Chairperson, Chairperson, and Immediate Past Chairperson positions are held consecutively, for one year each, by one individual.

**c. Eligibility**

Eligibility criteria for the Executive Board are as follows:

1. Each member of the Executive Board must first be selected as a voting member.
2. The role of Vice Chairperson is considered the Chairperson-elect per SciPAC Charter. Therefore, a voting member's eligibility to serve as Vice Chairperson is dependent on their year and term as a voting member, as follows.
  - a. A voting member is eligible to serve as Vice Chairperson during the first year of their first term. If elected, they will serve as Vice Chairperson, Chairperson, and Immediate Past Chairperson for

years 1–3, respectively, of their first term as a voting member.

- b. A voting member is eligible to serve as Vice Chairperson during the second year of their first term. If elected, the voting member will serve as Vice Chairperson and Chairperson for years 2 & 3, respectively, of their first term as a voting member. If they apply for and are selected for a second continuous term as voting member during their Chair year, they will serve as the Immediate Past Chairperson in the first year of their second term. Otherwise, they will then serve a one-year term as Immediate Past Chairperson as a non-voting, ex-officio member.
- c. A voting member is eligible to serve as Vice Chairperson during the third year of their first term. If elected, the voting member will serve as Vice Chairperson for the third year of their first term as a voting member. If they apply for and are selected for a second continuous term as voting member, they will serve as the Chairperson and Immediate Past Chairperson in years 1–2 of their second term, respectively. Otherwise, their Voting membership will be extended by one year to a total of four years in order to cover their Chair year, and their one-year term as Immediate Past Chairperson shall be served as a non-voting, ex-officio member. This extension of Voting membership must be approved by the CPO and the officer's duty station supervisor, and the officer must provide documentation of this approval to the incoming Chairperson.
- d. A voting member is eligible to serve as Vice Chairperson during the first year of their second term. If elected, they will serve as Vice Chairperson, Chairperson, and Immediate Past Chairperson for years 1–3, respectively, of their second term as a voting member.
- e. A voting member is eligible to serve as Vice Chairperson during the second year of their second term. If elected, the voting member will serve as Vice Chairperson and Chairperson for years 2 & 3,

respectively, of their second term as a voting member. They will then serve a one-year term as Immediate Past Chairperson as a non-voting, ex-officio member.

- f. A voting member is not eligible to serve as Vice Chairperson during the third year of their second term.

#### **4. Chief Professional Officer**

The Chief Professional Officer (CPO) shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of SciPAC and its Executive Board. The CPO is appointed by the Surgeon General and serves a four-year term. The CPO shall carry out the following duties:

1. Represent Scientist Officers' needs and interests to the Office of the Surgeon General and to other Chief Professional Officers (CPOs).
2. Attend SciPAC general meetings to present new information gathered from CPO meetings and other OSG initiatives concerning activities that impact the Scientist Category, and those in which the Category should play a role. Between meetings, the CPO will send time-sensitive or critical information by email.
3. Attend Scientist Category Day where he/she provides opening and closing remarks and presents plaques and recognition to all Category award winners.
4. Call Category award winners and promoted officers to congratulate them on their successes.
5. Communicate with the SciPAC Chairperson regularly on policies affecting SciPAC.
6. Indicate whether or not the CPO concurs with SciPAC reports, minutes, policies, templates that contain their signatures, or other business as requested by SciPAC. The CPO may comment but may not stop or unduly delay such transmittals.
7. At conclusion of his or her term, brief the incoming CPO about expected duties and procedures and transfer any CPO-specific documents.

#### **5. Scientist Liaison Officers**

A Scientist Officer who is an active member of an official Commissioned Corps advisory group or association may be appointed to serve a term as the official SciPAC liaison to the respective advisory group/association in accordance with that organization's governing documents and procedures. Liaisons are not authorized to vote on motions presented to SciPAC unless the officer is also a SciPAC voting member. Positions are not permanent and may be added, disbanded, or not filled as relates to the needs of the Scientist Category and the other advisory group or organization.

Scientist Liaison Officers shall carry out the following duties:

1. Represent the interests of Scientist Officers to the respective advisory group or organizations for which they are the liaison.
2. Attend SciPAC meetings and report relevant information and accomplishments of their respective organizations.
3. Attend meetings of their respective organizations and report relevant information and accomplishments of the Scientist Category.

At present, the following organizations have Scientist Liaison Officers:

**a. Junior Officers Advisory Group (JOAG) Liaison**

The JOAG Liaison is a junior Scientist Officer (O-4 and below) at the time of selection and voting member of JOAG who is selected by JOAG to serve as a liaison to SciPAC. The position is a two-year term and begins every other year on October 1.

**b. Psychologist Professional Advisory Group (PsyPAG) Liaison**

PsyPAG is composed of officers from SciPAC and the Health Services PAC. The PsyPAG Liaison is an active member of PsyPAG selected by PsyPAG to serve as a liaison to SciPAC. The PsyPAG liaison may be either a Scientist Officer or a Health Services Officer. The position is a one-year term and begins each year on January 1.

**c. Commissioned Officers Association (COA) Liaison**

The COA Liaison is an elected member of the National COA Board of Directors serving as the Scientist representative. The role of the COA Liaison is to brief SciPAC on current educational and advocacy issues being addressed by the Commissioned Officers Association that are specifically related to the Corps. The term of the liaison is three years and begins each year on July 1.

**d. Commissioned Corps Women’s Issues Advisory Board (CCWIAB) Liaison**

The CCWIAB Liaison is a Scientist Officer who is appointed by the SciPAC CPO in consultation with the SciPAC Chairperson to represent important issues related to Scientist women officers. The term of the liaison is 3 years and begins on January 1 each year.

**e. Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Advisory Group (SOAGDAG) Liaison**

The SOAGDAG Liaison is a Scientist Officer who is selected by SOAGDAG to serve as a liaison to SciPAC. The term of the liaison is one year and begins in January 1 of each year.

**f. Prevention through Active Community Engagement (PACE) Liaison**

The PACE Liaison is a Scientist Officer who is appointed by SciPAC to serve as a liaison to the PACE program. The term of the liaison is 3 years and begins on January 1 each year.

**6. Standing Subcommittees**

The current standing SCs include:

Awards Subcommittee

Career Development Subcommittee

Category Day Subcommittee

Mentoring Subcommittee

Policy Subcommittee

Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee

Readiness Subcommittee

Rules and Membership Subcommittee

Science Subcommittee

Visibility Subcommittee

Website Subcommittee

**a. Awards Subcommittee**

Shall coordinate the annual SciPAC award process, assist officers with the PHS awards process, and monitor other awards associated with SciPAC activities. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to:

1. Manage all aspects of the annual SciPAC award nominations for the following awards:
  - a. Derek Dunn Senior Scientist of the Year Award
  - b. Shalon Irving Memorial Junior Scientist of the Year Award
  - c. Responder of the Year Award
  - d. Mentor of the Year Award
  - e. Retiring Scientist Officer Certificate of Honor
  - f. Retiring Distinguished Scientist Service Award
  - g. Any other awards where a SciPAC nominee must be selected
2. Ensure voting members are submitted for the USPHS Special Assignment Award at the end of their term.
3. Work with other SCs to recommend SciPAC-related activities (individual or unit) worthy of being nominated for awards and then monitor those awards being submitted.

**b. Career Development Subcommittee**

Shall advise SciPAC on issues affecting Commissioned Corps Scientists' career progression, assignments, evaluations, and promotions of Scientist Officers.

Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to:

1. Provide Scientist Officers with guidance in preparing in advance of being eligible for promotion and in preparing promotion materials.
2. Coordinate a promotion document (e.g., CV and OS) reviewing services to individual Scientist Officers who are up for promotion.
3. Provide data-driven insight into factors that may relate to success or non-success of promotion-eligible Scientist Officers.
4. Identify and distribute position announcements to aid current officers in securing new billets.
5. Maintain, review, and update the Scientist Officer Handbook.
6. Provide various professional training related to the career development of Scientist Officers.
7. Provide information and resources related to promotion, career and position advancement, and training.

**c. Category Day Subcommittee**

Shall plan and organize the Scientist Category Day for the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium on behalf of SciPAC. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to the following:

1. Identify topics, sessions, and speakers, and prepare a final agenda for the Scientist Category Day with input from SciPAC Chairperson and SciPAC CPO.
2. Appoint a representative to serve on the Symposium's overall Category Day planning committee.
3. Ensure materials and information requested from Symposium Category Planners are provided in a timely manner.
4. Moderate or identify a moderator for all sessions during Category Day.
5. Organize a social activity for Scientist Officers following Category Day.

**d. Mentoring Subcommittee**

Shall provide mentoring services to Scientist Officers. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to the following:

1. Recruit senior, experienced officers to serve as mentors and advisors to officers in need of career guidance. Mentors will be paired with mentees based on: career path, field of expertise, agency, rank, and availability. Track all mentoring relationships and remind officers of expiring mentoring agreements.
2. Develop and maintain guidance materials to facilitate the Mentor-Mentee relationship and help mentors provide one-on-one career guidance.
3. Provide mentorship activities during the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
4. Maintain and update the Mentoring Guidebook on an annual basis.
5. Identify and provide targeted mentors as requested by the CPO.

**e. Policy Subcommittee**

Shall support SciPAC and the CPO in the review of selected and/or updated policies, procedures, and guidelines established by the OSG, as well as any policies that are sent to SciPAC for review. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to the following:

1. Review proposed or enacted SciPAC policies, procedures, and guidelines.
2. Provide feedback and recommendations on the implementation of proposed or enacted policies, procedures, and guidelines to the SciPAC Chairperson and CPO.
3. Educate SciPAC members on enacted policies, procedures, and guidelines through summary reports or briefings.

**f. Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee**

Shall advise SciPAC on organizational issues related to Scientist Officer recruitment and retention. The SC will strive to enhance efforts to recruit and retain highly qualified Scientist Officers. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to the following:

1. Create, review, and revise materials for SciPAC related to recruitment and retention
2. Provide guidance for recruitment of Scientist Officers through all available mechanisms including the Epidemic Intelligence Service and Laboratory Leadership Service
3. Support new call to active duty officers by attending Officer Basic Course and offering early career support through junior officer mentoring, seminars, and new CAD only lunches
4. Administer surveys and interviews to retiring and/or decommissioning officers
5. Provide recruitment information on the SciPAC website.

**g. Readiness Subcommittee**

Shall optimize the preparedness of Scientist Officers to serve during public health emergencies. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to the following:

1. Identify emergency response training opportunities and deployment processes.
2. Assist and promote the effective use of Scientist Officers in response to emergencies affecting public health.
3. Assist Scientist Officers in maintaining basic readiness.

**h. Rules and Membership Subcommittee**

Shall be responsible for (1) overseeing the revisions to the SciPAC governance documents, (2) facilitating the process for appointing new SciPAC voting members, and (3) evaluating and making recommendations on those issues that do not fall under the scope of other standing SCs. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to:

1. Update the SciPAC Charter triennially.
2. Update the SciPAC SOP annually.
3. Oversee SciPAC voting member selection process and ensure that the process

adheres to the guidance in the SciPAC Charter (Section V) and in Section III.7 of the SciPAC SOP.

4. Convene a Voting Member Selection Team, composed of SC members who are senior Scientist Officers (O-5 and above) and currently serve or have served in the past as SciPAC voting members, to review and rank all nominations received for SciPAC Voting Member selection. For additional information see the Rules and Membership SC SOP.
5. Coordinate Executive Board review of SC SOPs in accordance with SC SOP Submission and Approval Matrix (see **USPHS Scientist Governing Documents page on max.gov for most recent version of matrix**).
6. Support the SciPAC Chair (who will transition to the Immediate Past Chair during the Team's timeline of activities) in the production of SciPAC's Annual Report from the SciPAC operational year.

**i. Science Subcommittee**

Shall elevate science and the stature of science in the USPHS. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to the following:

1. Demonstrate how Scientist Officers directly contribute to the priorities of the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) by, for instance, annually administering and analyzing results from the State of the Scientist survey.
2. Compile and maintain an active list of Scientist Officers' scholarly works.
3. Coordinate a teleconference seminar series focused on practical science skills.
4. Coordinate the Scientist Officer Journal Club focused on priority areas of the OSG.
5. Facilitating support and acting as a force multiplier for Surgeon General priorities including for example, various fact sheets, white papers, communities of practice.

**j. Visibility Subcommittee**

Shall recommend actions and activities that promote public recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of PHS scientists. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to the following:

1. Develop the Scientist Category poster for the annual USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium.
2. Encourage public relations, publishing, and public speaking in events that promote Scientist Officers.
3. Attend special events in uniform or SciPAC apparel to increase visibility of the Scientist Category.
4. Participate in professional outreach and science-related activities, like science fair judging at local venues.
5. Inform Scientist Officers about relevant events, activities, and opportunities through the Scientist Category listserv.
6. Produce the SciPAC Newsletter.
7. Host local social events for the Scientist Category.
8. Research and report on past policies, practices, traditions, and other activities of SciPAC.

**k. Website Subcommittee**

Shall maintain the USPHS Commissioned Corps Scientist Category public-facing website. The Website SC will be responsible for ensuring associated material is free of Personal Identifiable Information (PII) per the HHS Information System Security and Privacy Policy and current guidance from the PHS IT Chartered Advisory Committee. Responsibilities of this SC include but are not limited to:

1. Ensure that a useful format and structure to the website content is established and maintained.
2. Work in conjunction with Executive Liaison and each of the SC website liaisons in the development and updating of website content.
3. Maintain a secured shared website for the Executive Board and each SC that is accessible by members designated by the Chair of each SC in order to maintain archived documents, including but not limited to official minutes, reports, SOPs, the Charter, OSG-related policy documents/responses, and other

documents relevant to SciPAC. Currently, SciPAC uses max.gov as its secured shared website.

### **III. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

#### **1. Operational Year**

SciPAC operational year shall be from September 1 through August 31. Newly elected liaison officers, newly appointed voting members, and Executive Board members will begin their terms on September 1 of the operational year.

#### **2. Meetings**

##### **a. SciPAC Meetings**

SciPAC meetings will be held monthly and are open to all members of the Scientist Category. Voting members are required to attend. The SciPAC Chairperson will determine meeting dates for the operational year at the first full SciPAC meeting. In the absence of both the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson at any meeting of the Executive Board or SciPAC, the Chairperson shall request another Executive Board member to conduct the business of SciPAC for that meeting.

##### **b. Agenda**

The Executive Secretary drafts the agenda and sends it to the Chairperson for approval to distribute it to SciPAC membership with any appropriate background material prior to the meeting. Agenda items shall include reports from the CPO, the Executive Board, SC chairpersons, and liaison reports, and include any new business.

Guest speakers: A guest speaker, by definition, is an individual who is not normally on the SciPAC meeting agenda or who gives a presentation after the meeting. If desired, a guest speaker shall be invited by the Chairperson or authorized designee. The invitation shall be extended by email. Members of SciPAC who wish to invite a guest speaker shall notify the Chairperson in advance of the date of the presentation on a SciPAC meeting. When deemed appropriate by the Chairperson, the member host of the speaker shall ensure that a Letter of Appreciation, signed by the Chairperson, is sent to the speaker in a timely manner following his/her

presentation.

**c. Executive Board Meetings**

The SciPAC Chairperson will determine Executive Board meeting dates and frequency for the operational year. Additional meetings of the Executive Board shall be called as needed at the Chairperson's discretion or upon recommendation of any member of the Executive Board.

**d. Special Meetings**

The Chairperson may also call special meetings of the voting members and/or non-voting members of SciPAC, as needed.

**e. Subcommittee Meetings**

SCs may have meetings with frequencies and meeting agendas determined by each SC chair. The SC chairs may delegate this authority for SC team-level meetings to Team Leads.

**3. Records and Reporting**

**a. Minutes**

Draft minutes of each full SciPAC meeting will be prepared by the Executive Secretary and circulated electronically to SC Chairs/Co-chairs and Scientist Liaisons within two weeks of the meeting date. Drafts of meeting minutes may be distributed to quickly disseminate important information as needed. Any revisions to the minutes shall be communicated to the Executive Secretary within one week of circulation of the draft minutes. The final version of the official meeting minutes will be prepared within 30 days following the meeting and, following approval of the Chairperson, shall be circulated electronically via SciPAC listserv to all members of the Scientist Category. A copy of the official minutes shall also be made available on the Scientist Category website and be housed in the archives (see Charter).

1. Once meeting minutes are submitted to the Website SC, they should not be revised for the sole purpose of updating attendance. If an Officer requests a change to finalized minutes in order to reflect attendance, this can be done in the Executive

Secretary's attendance records without amending the meeting minutes.

2. Minutes for the SciPAC meeting shall contain, at a minimum, the following:
  - a. Names, ranks, and roles for all voting members, SC Chairs, Co-chairs, and liaisons.
  - b. A list of all attendees and officers reporting an excused absence.
  - c. A brief record of all major points discussed.
  - d. The date, time, and call-in information for the subsequent meeting.

**b. Attendance**

The Executive Secretary shall record attendance and unexcused absences for each general SciPAC meeting. The Executive Secretary shall accept any request for an absence to be recorded as "excused" so long as it is submitted before the meeting minutes are finalized.

**c. Website**

SciPAC will maintain a public-facing website, which is managed by the Website SC. The website will be used to archive documents, including but not limited to: official minutes, reports, SOPs, the Charter, OSG-related policy documents/responses, voting member terms, and other documents relevant to SciPAC. Meeting minutes posted to the website shall be devoid of PII and Section 508-compliant.

**d. File-Sharing Site**

SciPAC will maintain a secure, online file-sharing site; currently, this is accomplished using max.gov. The max.gov file-sharing site will be used to archive documents, including but not limited to: official minutes, reports, SOPs, the Charter, OSG-related policy documents/responses, the voting member terms, and other documents relevant to SciPAC. Many of the documents stored on max.gov will not be made public or published to the SciPAC website but are stored as historical records. The Chairperson will have access to all sections of the site, while Executive Board and each SC will have access to its own files.

**e. SciPAC Listserv**

The SciPAC Listserv will be administered by the SciPAC Executive Secretary, who will distribute SciPAC meeting information and other pertinent SciPAC information. SC Chairs may contact the Executive Secretary to request that he or she post a message to the listserv which would benefit Scientist Officers, and which originated from that SC. Other communications that would benefit Scientist Officers will be sent via listserv at the discretion of the Chairperson or CPO. Scientist Officers should sign up for the SciPAC listserv: [USPHS-Scientist@list.nih.gov](mailto:USPHS-Scientist@list.nih.gov). Instructions can be found at <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/listserv.aspx>.

**f. SciPAC Letterhead**

The SciPAC has an official letterhead template (**Attachment A**), which is intended for use by members of the Executive Board, Voting Members, CPO, and SC co-chairs and liaisons in conducting official SciPAC business. While not required, SciPAC letterhead is encouraged for the following reasonable and authorized uses:

1. Letters of Appreciation: Thank-you letters sent for activities related to SciPAC or a SC.
2. SciPAC (or SC) meeting agendas and meeting minutes.
3. Announcements that need to be formatted as an email attachment.
4. Any official SciPAC-related reports, guidance, or policy statements.
5. Any SciPAC-related correspondence with Chair approval.

The letterhead is prohibited for the following uses:

1. Communications concerning content unrelated to SciPAC.
2. Messages sent on behalf of a person who is not in a SciPAC leadership position.
3. Messages otherwise prohibited by the SciPAC Communications Policy, which is managed by the Visibility SC and Executive Board.

**g. Letters of Appreciation**

Letters of Appreciation will be generated annually by each SC using the Letter of Appreciation template (**Attachment B**). Each SC is responsible for documenting the

achievements of deserving officers within their SC and including those accomplishments in the letter. SC Chairpersons are responsible for obtaining PAC Chair and CPO signatures from the Executive Secretary and including them when finalizing SC-specific Letters of Appreciation. Usage of the CPO and PAC Chair's signatures must be approved for each document that uses their signature. For example, if an identical (other than recipient name) letter of appreciation is going to 10 officers, the CPO and Chairperson should approve that document once, and the approval will extend to all 10 letters. Letters of Appreciation should be written using Times New Roman. SC Chairpersons will save and aim to send a protected PDF version of the Letter to each respective deserving SC member by August 31.

#### **4. Voting**

Where voting is required or appropriate, action will be determined by simple majority of the voting members present or by submitting an electronic vote.

For a vote to be accepted on any given matter, a quorum must participate in the vote. A quorum consists of 50 percent of the voting membership. An alternate attending in lieu of the member shall be counted in determining the quorum requirement.

The Chairperson will determine when a vote of the full voting membership is necessary, but such situations might include:

- a. Election of Executive Board members (see SOP, Section III.9);
- b. Approval of the SciPAC charter (triennial);
- c. Approval of the SciPAC SOP (annual);
- d. Establishment of a new SC;
- e. Establishment of a new position;
- f. Establishment of a new award; and
- g. Changes to or disbanding of a current position.

When voting occurs and results in a tie, the Chairperson's vote breaks the tie. In circumstances where an immediate decision is needed by the Chairperson and obtaining votes from voting members is not feasible, the Chairperson is authorized to make

decisions on behalf of the SciPAC voting membership. In such instances, the Chairperson will immediately notify all SciPAC voting members, the Executive Board, and the CPO of the situation and subsequent actions taken.

## **5. Subcommittees**

SciPAC has several standing SCs as described in this SOP (Section II.6) and outlined in the Charter.

### **a. Establishing New Subcommittees**

Ad hoc SCs may be added as determined by the CPO and/or Chairperson. Per the Chairperson's discretion, the establishment of a new standing SC may be sent to the voting membership for approval. When SciPAC elects to establish standing or ad hoc SCs, membership may include both voting and nonvoting Scientist Officers, provided that the SC Chairperson is a voting member.

### **b. SC SOP Submission and Approval Process**

Each SC has its own SOP that is updated annually by that SC and reviewed by the Executive Board via the Rules and Membership SC according to the schedule outlined in the SC SOP Submission and Approval Matrix (**See USPHS Scientist Governing Documents page on max.gov for most recent version of matrix**).

1. Each SC is responsible for submitting their SOP to the Rules and Membership SC SOP Review Team based on the Submission and Approval Matrix or in response to a request from the Rules and Membership SC. The Rules and Membership SC will provide specific instructions to each SC on how to submit their SOP.

## **6. Selection of Voting Members**

In accordance with section VI of the SciPAC Charter, a call for new voting members of SciPAC will be made annually (**See Rules and Membership SOP**), typically in April. Self-nominations will be solicited from all eligible Scientist Officers by electronic means (**See Rules and Membership SOP**). To be eligible for appointment, potential SciPAC voting members must be active duty Commissioned Corps officers and meet all eligibility

requirements for appointment to the Scientist Category. In addition, all potential Scientist voting members must meet basic readiness standards at the time they are nominated and appointed to SciPAC. The Vice Chairperson will coordinate the collection, review, and selection of nominations through the Voting Member Selection Team of the R&M SC. The SciPAC Chairperson will forward the list of Scientist Officers selected in this process to the CPO for consideration. For each annual voting member selection process, the R&M Voting Member Selection Team will identify two alternates from among the pool of nominees as “First Alternate” and “Second Alternate”; these alternates will respectively be the next two officers ranked by the Team after all vacant voting member slots are filled. These alternates will be notified of their “alternate” status. Any voting member vacancy that occurs following the annual selection process can be filled in order from these ranked alternates, as needed. An alternate chosen to fill a voting member spot will serve for the remainder of that operational year, and two additional years, consistent with a maximum 3-year voting member term (effective immediately). At the time that this occurs, an updated voting membership package will be submitted to the OSG via the CPO, removing the exiting voting member and adding the alternate in that slot, and the appointment letter signed by the SG will include that effective date. Alternates who become voting members are eligible to receive the Special Assignment Award (SAA) following his or her term as a voting member, regardless of term length.

The CPO will forward the selection packages to the OSG for approval before July 1.

## **7. Resignation of Voting Members**

Once appointed, voting members are expected to fulfill their 3-year commitment. Resignation from SciPAC voting membership is expected to be infrequent.

While SciPAC relies on the expertise and valuable contributions from its senior officer voting members, such voting members may reconsider their availability and suitability in continuing to serve as voting members, particularly after reaching O-6. SciPAC voting members can prudently resign their voting member status. To do so, the officer first notifies the SciPAC Chairperson of their intention to resign and will provide an effective date of resignation. The Executive Board will vote to determine whether the departing officer is eligible for an SAA or letter of appreciation from SciPAC. It is up to the

Chairperson's discretion as to whether the departing officer is eligible for the Special Assignment Award.

## **8. Election of Executive Board**

Once all voting members have been selected and approved by the OSG for the upcoming operational year, officers will be elected into open Executive Board positions (including Vice Chairperson, Executive Secretary, and Executive Liaison) annually by the incoming voting members (i.e., newly selected members and those voting members in the first and second years of their term). An officer may be re-elected and serve as Executive Secretary or Executive Liaison in multiple years. An officer may be elected to Vice Chairperson only once. The outgoing Chairperson will solicit nominations and self-nominations from current SciPAC voting members, including those newly appointed. Candidates' position statements for each Executive Board position will be circulated electronically to all incoming voting members of SciPAC. Ballots are to be returned to the outgoing Chairperson and tallied. Results of elections are to be reported in the minutes of the next full SciPAC meeting but should also be communicated by the outgoing Chairperson electronically or by other means prior to the start of the new operational year.

## **IV. REFERENCES**

Scientist Professional Advisory Committee Charter

Office of the Surgeon General's Professional Advisory Committee Model Charter

## **V. ATTACHMENTS**

**A. SciPAC Letterhead Template**

**B. Letter of Appreciation Template**



Commissioned Corps of the US Public Health Service  
**Scientist Professional Advisory Committee**

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*{Subcommittee name or sub-title here}*



**ATTACHMENT A: SciPAC Letterhead Template**

[Month, Day, Year]

Dear [Rank and Officer's Name]:

Your text goes here...

Sincerely,

[Rank] Name  
[Position]

[Rank] Name  
[Position]

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Commissioned Corps of the US Public Health Service  
**Scientist Professional Advisory Committee**



{Subcommittee name or sub-title here}

**ATTACHMENT B: SciPAC Letter of Appreciation Format**

[Month, Day, Year]

Dear [Rank and Officer's Name]:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your [*valued advice, counsel, and service, etc.*] as a member of the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) [SUBCOMMITTEE NAME] subcommittee for Fiscal Year [2018].

Among the committee's accomplishments, your contribution was instrumental toward:

- [List of specific bullets of accomplishments for the said SC Member]

Thank you very much for supporting our Category-specific initiatives.

Sincerely,

[Insert CPO  
Signature     ]  
FIRST LAST, DEGREES  
RANK, USPHS  
Chief Scientist Officer

[Insert SciPAC Chair  
Signature     ]  
FIRST LAST, DEGREES  
RANK, USPHS  
Chair, SciPAC