



American Planning Association

Making Great Communities Happen

Division Governance

Role of the Division Chair

- Participation in APA Leadership
- Division Administration and Performance

Division leadership offers individuals many opportunities for participation in APA leadership, and for the provision of member value through the division. These include:

- Attain a more active level of participation in APA
- Use and further develop leadership skills
- Network with leaders in the field of planning
- Contribute to the advancement of planning in the area(s) represented by the division
- Participate in APA at a national level

These opportunities come with responsibilities to the APA organization as well as the division.

Division Formation and Function

Divisions are directed by the APA Board of Directors to:

- Provide concentrated research and attention for a sector of substantive interest of the Association
- Represent a major component of planning that can maintain long-term interest
- Contribute to the advancement of techniques and the competence of members
- Attract a sufficient number of Association members to provide financial support and voluntary effort in its management.

Eligibility

Only current division members who are also APA members may run for division chair positions, or for positions with automatic succession to the Chair position. Members who have previously served two terms as this division's chair or who hold other elected APA positions are not eligible.

PARTICIPATION IN APA LEADERSHIP

Division Chairs are part of the APA leadership and should participate in as many of the leadership activities as possible and take every opportunity to represent their division's interests. Division Chairs can best serve their divisions by participating in all APA leadership events/meetings. While it's hard to gauge how much one might gain from any one of them, learning about the organization, participating in planning its future, and meeting other leaders is always valuable.

Divisions Council Business Meetings

DC Business meetings are held twice a year in conjunction with the APA National Planning Conference (spring) and the Fall Leadership Meetings. The spring meeting is usually scheduled the day before the official opening day of the conference. Every division must be represented by its chair at each meeting.

APA Leadership Retreats

Typically, these full- or half-day events are scheduled the day before other leadership meetings begin. The agenda usually focuses on a single broad topic such as organizational growth, education, etc. It's valuable to have as many leaders as possible participating in determining APA's future and an excellent way to learn more about APA as an organization (goals, plans, etc.).

Division Chair Orientations

These orientations are designed to acclimate new chairs to APA division leadership, but are open to any interested division chair. Some of topics to be covered are: APA as an organization; function of APA divisions; and division administration, finances, member communications, growth, volunteer involvement, and performance expectations (as stated in the Divisions Performance Criteria). It also provides chairs with an opportunity to meet APA division support staff and learn about all the resources and assistance available. Every new division chair must attend an orientation meeting upon taking office.

Divisions Council Roundtable/Exchange

This event focuses on division-specific issues and is held during the Fall Leadership Meetings. Here, division chairs learn how other divisions address challenges, share information with their members, develop new products or programs, and encourage growth and member involvement. Open discussions like this may even lead to identifying issues or projects on which divisions can collaborate.

DIVISION ADMINISTRATION AND PERFORMANCE

Division Mission and Goals

All activities should reflect and fulfill the division's mission and goals as described in its bylaws.

Annual Reporting

The following reports shall be developed with assistance of the Division Executive Committee and input from members (member surveys).

- Work Plan describing the activities, programs, products, and services to be developed for, or by, members during the coming year, consistent with APA's development plan.
- Annual Report including the division's accomplishments as they relate to the year's Work Plan
- Financial Report and Budget

Division Performance (General expectations appear below. See the *Division Performance Criteria* and *Checklist* for complete criteria.)

- Distribute four member communications annually
- Submit and plan two educational sessions for each National Planning Conference
- Hold at least one Business Meeting annually during the National Planning Conference
- Engage division members in legislative/policy activities and program development
- Respond to requests for input on national policy issues
- Division representation at all Divisions Council meetings/conference calls
- Include Division Executive Committee and other leaders in all decision-making

Division chairs are chosen by division members to represent division interests and are responsible for division performance, proper use of and accounting for division funds and other assets, as well as any other activities specified in the division's bylaws. Although Division chairs bear the responsibility, they are encouraged to involve other division leaders and member volunteers in division activities.