

Style Rules: Interest Forum` is capped, forum is not. HELLO is all caps first mention, Hello after that.

National Association for the Education of Young Children
Interest Forum and Interest Forum Facilitator Guidelines

FINAL DRAFT FOR ALL-MEMBER FEEDBACK

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I. The Role of Interest Forums in NAEYC's Membership Strategy

The National Association for the Education of Young Children's Interest Forums consistently rank as one of NAEYC members' favorite benefits—they provide an essential means for networking, making lifelong connections with colleagues, and developing as professionals shared topics of interest. Interest Forums provide vital energy to the NAEYC community, contributing content and expertise, providing top-notch sessions and events at conferences, drawing attention to topics and issues of concern, and serving as a central part of the NAEYC's ambitious membership recruitment and retention strategy. In addition, Interest Forums are essential partners and sounding boards for NAEYC's broader policy and advocacy agenda and for content development and dissemination.

Along with this partnership comes responsibility. Forums are a crucial part of NAEYC's collective voice and are responsible to NAEYC members and to the early childhood education field. Interest Forum facilitators play a leadership role on behalf of NAEYC as well as on behalf of their forums, and they balance their dual roles as they relate to the association and to organizations outside of NAEYC. At the same time, NAEYC has responsibilities to forums and to facilitators and provides resources and support for their growth and professional vitality.

These guidelines describe both the expansive possibilities of the Interest Forums and the sometimes necessary restrictions on forum activity. Many of the responsibilities and restrictions have to do with NAEYC's nonprofit status, which requires forum members and leaders to abide by certain rules in order to preserve and protect the association's tax exempt status.

II. Interest Forums and Forum Activities

NAEYC's Interest Forums provide energy to the association's efforts to achieve its strategic goals and mission and promote high-quality learning for all children. Forums advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood agenda on important and timely topics in the field through their advocacy, along with the

advocacy of NAEYC members and leaders. They are an essential element in NAEYC's ambitious goals to grow and diversify membership and to further increase the value and benefits of NAEYC membership. They lead discussions and act to promote best practices at face-to-face meetings and on HELLO (hereafter, Hello), NAEYC's online community. Through creating communities, networking, and sharing knowledge, Interest Forums support the individuals who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

<p>What are some activities?</p> <p>Annual Meeting Activities (required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Propos sessions on the forum's topic for each annual meetingHost a business meeting so all members who are present can meet face to face to discuss relevant content as well as plan for the next year <p>Year-Round Activties (examples of)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participat in Hello on a regular basisHost online book clubsHost a webinar series
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Interest Forums help articulate emerging issues in the field, propose solutions to challenges, and work with NAEYC staff to encourage implementation of NAEYC policies to advance goals for the field. This means that Interest Forums create strong relationships with their forum's members—relationships that commercial entities and other organizations see as valuable and will seek to capitalize. Forum facilitators are perceived, rightly, as leaders in the field, with opinions that carry weight with other members of NAEYC inside and outside of the forum.

In addition to meeting these core expectations, forums engage in a wide range of activities that express the interests and priorities of their members. These activities may relate to annual meetings, for example, such as paying an honorarium to a special speaker, providing materials to give away, or sponsoring travel expenses to enable a new member to attend NAEYC's Annual Conference. Increasingly, however, forums hold events online and throughout the year in order to offer access to a wider pool of participants. Some forums hold virtual book clubs (using web-conferencing software), while others offer ongoing, crowd-sourced webinar series featuring experts in a forum's topical area.

What is Hello?

Hello is NAEYC's online community. As they join, all members are enrolled in Hello and begin receiving the Daily Digest in their email inbox each morning. The digest summarizes the previous day's discussion threads and is the way most members interact with Hello. As members join Interest Forums, they gain access to that forum's space on Hello. The spaces allow members to see member, contact their facilitators, and post resources on the forum's topic. Over the next year, forum will be gain a separate, forum-only discussion space in which to host specialized discussions and conduct forum business.

The possibilities for Interest Forum involvement are open across many aspects of the association's work. It could mean working with NAEYC Affiliates to create more localized chapters of Interest Forums or perhaps developing topic-focused sessions or other events with Affiliates. Forums can urge their members to serve as proposal reviewers for conferences or to work with staff on blogs or on articles for NAEYC periodicals or books. In addition, there are opportunities for forums to contribute their viewpoints and expertise to position statements and policy work. But these are only a few of the many possibilities; we encourage forum members and facilitators to brainstorm ideas and then engage with Interest Forum staff at NAEYC.

NAEYC's Interest Forums *indicates forum that is currently without leadership

II a. Required Yearly Activities Each Interest Forum is expected to engage in the following activities and tasks over the course of a year:

1. Facilitator Responsibilities

- a. Respond to Hello users who post on topics related to the Interest Forum’s focus. Facilitators may reach out to forum members to craft responses when they become aware of topics of related interest.
 - b. Maintain an up-to-date mission statement consistent with NAEYC’s mission.
 - i. See these examples of Interest Forum mission statements:
 NAEYC.org/health-science-and-technology-interest-forums
 NAEYC.org/play-and-policy-interest-forums
 - c. Select sessions from among those proposed by the forum’s members for annual meeting.
 - d. Schedule a minimum of one virtual, content-oriented meeting per year. Facilitators are encouraged to take advantage of NAEYC software and support (such as webinar and virtual meeting software) to enable these meetings. The meetings may take a range of forms—an asynchronous conversation on Hello, a virtual meeting with an author or a blogger, or another idea—and are usually driven by the forum with minimal support from NAEYC staff.
 - e. Facilitate ongoing networking and information sharing among forum members. The primary workspace for doing so is on Hello. This platform gives Interest Forums a shared online workspace in which to collaborate and houses materials and resources. By 2020, Hello will also house discussions for nearly all forums.
 - f. Have at least 40 active members by 2 years after their formation. If a group at any time after the second year drops below 40 active members, the forum must inform NAEYC headquarters staff. It will have 2 years to revive its membership before the forum becomes defunct.
 - g. Ascertain that all members maintain current memberships.
2. Forum Member Responsibilities
- a. Post on Hello at least six times a year on topics relevant to the Interest Forum.
 - b. Propose sessions for Annual Conference that relate to the Interest Forum’s work.
 - c. As able, actively engage in forum activities and grow into leadership within their forums.

III. Interest Forum Facilitators

Interest Forum facilitators play a key part in NAEYC’s strategy to attract and retain members, acting as volunteer leaders in their capacity. NAEYC and facilitators work hand in hand. While it is important for forum facilitators to focus NAEYC’s attention on forum members’ critical concerns, facilitators are also NAEYC leaders and have rights and responsibilities. NAEYC staff, other leaders such as Board Members or Affiliate leaders, and Interest Forum facilitators always demonstrate the utmost respect for each other’s

work on behalf of the field. The best way to maintain positive relationships between NAEYC, Interest Forums, and facilitators is to ensure everyone provides constructive feedback and suggestions and remembers that all are working on behalf of children and educators.

Interest Forum Roles

Facilitators are the leaders of forums. Most forums have at least two, although groups of facilitators are ideal. Facilitators advocate for their issue areas and organize the work of the forum.

Interest Forum members are NAEYC members who have elected to join a forum. In practice, we generally refer to a forum's members as those who are active; many forums have members who lurk, receiving messages and following social media posts but doing nothing more.

Interest Forum staff consist of those with primary responsibility for the program (at present a director and the community manager) plus other NAEYC staff as needed.

Community engagement manager is a staffer at NAEYC who is tasked with the online community and promote and advance the work of the interest forum facilitators.

III a. Interest Forum Facilitator Roles and Responsibilities

Within NAEYC, Interest Forum facilitators act as the chief advocates for the interests of their forum's members by organizing the online and face-to-face work of their group. Interest Forum facilitators in each forum keep discussions going online, organize the annual business meeting of their forum, and help with content planning and session selection for Annual Conference. In addition to leading the solicitation, organization, and selection of Interest Forum sessions at Annual Conference, facilitators help the Interest Forum articulate and disseminate information about issues and concerns in their area to the broader NAEYC community and NAEYC staff. Facilitators also chair their forums' annual business meetings and act as liaisons between the forum and NAEYC staff.

Additional facilitator activities include the following:

- Coordinating communication efforts and acting as a facilitator on Hello by posting resources to the Interest Forum's specific member area and by posting information about Interest Forum activities open to the general NAEYC membership (a topical webinar, for example).
- Striving to post on Hello discussions at least six times a year and occasionally reaching out to Interest Forum members to respond to posts on Hello that relate to the Interest Forum's mission. Ideally, one facilitator in the group works on Hello as her or his main duty, in which case this

digital facilitator's aim is to post at least two to four times a month, keep track of relevant discussions, and solicit input for or answers to questions from forum members and other facilitators.

- Preparing the summary of the forum's annual business meeting, receiving the forum's Annual Conference session proposals, and managing the proposal review process for the forum.
- Being an NAEYC member in good standing.
- Working closely with NAEYC staff on forum member recruitment and forum promotion.
- Ensuring that forum members follow the established guidelines for posting material on forum-identified social media, keeping in mind that preserving membership value is a necessity for NAEYC's health and vitality.
- Ensuring that all communication—whether email, print, or social media—that is produced by the forum embodies NAEYC's core values and strategic direction, including professional excellence.

Facilitators should represent themselves as facilitators of NAEYC Interest Forums only when acting in their capacity as facilitators or when recording their work and service history. This means including such information in their email signature lines only when communicating in their capacity as facilitators. Neither forum members nor facilitators may speak on behalf of NAEYC or present themselves as NAEYC representatives without coordination with NAEYC staff. They may not represent themselves as speaking for NAEYC, nor may they seek funding or sponsorship monies for any purpose without coordination with the NAEYC office. Please see other sections of these guidelines that govern facilitator relationships for more guidance.

III b. Nomination and Selection of Facilitators

To reach the widest audience, forums should do as much of their facilitator selection of online as possible. Calls for candidate nominations should be announced on each forum's site in Hello and emailed to members through Hello. While the facilitatorship can often be determined by general consensus (due to the small number of candidates), when necessary NAEYC staff can help with some form of anonymous voting survey.

The following are additional nomination and selection guidelines:

- When recruiting facilitators, Interest Forums should make every effort to expand the pool of leadership beyond forum members who self-select or are already actively engaged in forum activities at the annual meeting. Active recruitment outside of an Interest Forum's immediate

networks—especially among members signed up for the forum in Hello—is one of the best strategies for achieving diversity among facilitators.

- Forums select facilitators for 3-year terms, with a limit of no more than two consecutive terms, whenever possible. Forums generally attempt to stagger the terms of facilitators to preserve continuity and community memory. New forums may require several years of activity to get to the point of having staggered facilitators. Most forums find that having four to six facilitators is the most successful model, as the leadership team is better able to share the work over the course of a year.
- Forums should conduct inclusive facilitator nomination processes that reflect NAEYC’s deep commitment to equity, so as to ensure a strong, inclusive structure for forum work. (Visit [NAEYC.org/](https://naeyc.org/) to read the NAEYC position statement “Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education”)
- Each candidate must submit a biography/vision statement of 250 words or fewer to be distributed to all members.

III c. Numbers of and Term Limits for Facilitators

- Interest Forums must have a minimum of two facilitators; however, most groups will find that they are better able to provide the expected activities throughout the year with four to six facilitators. Groups may divide the facilitators’ duties in any way they choose.
- Newly designated leaders take over the positions on January 1st of the next year for a 3-year period (for example, if elected in November 2019, the term would run from January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2023).

III d. Annual Meeting Facilitator Activities

- Facilitators conduct an annual planning meeting virtually or at the NAEYC Annual Conference ([see these sample meeting agendas](#)). At the meeting, forum members choose their facilitators for the next year and plan their activities for the year. Forums are encouraged to develop plans to deepen and grow their membership (especially among new and underrepresented groups) through outreach and activities available to all members.
- Many forums find that forum business requires only 10 to 20 minutes of their annual meeting and so choose to include significant content-related activities. This is especially useful as a way of attracting new members. Forums ideally make these meetings as accessible to forum members

as possible—perhaps making a conference line available for participants who cannot attend or, if possible, using virtual meeting software.

- Facilitators provide NAEYC with a brief summary of the annual business meeting and a basic outline of the forum’s plan for the year within 30 days of hosting the meeting. These documents should be uploaded to the [facilitator’s workspace](#) on Hello so they can be stored centrally.

III e. The Facilitator’s Role in Respecting a Diverse Membership

NAEYC’s membership is diverse; members hold a wide range of views about early childhood practice and represent a variety of races, classes, cultures, genders, sexes, abilities, languages, religions, and other identities. Facilitators should be mindful of NAEYC membership’s diversity and promote respectful disagreement within their forums. They should be careful not to allow themselves or anyone in the forum to get caught up in online or face-to-face discussions that become disrespectful. Out of an abundance of caution, NAEYC also requests that facilitators ensure that neither they nor any of their Interest Forum members engage in speech that might be construed as libelous or slanderous.

IV. The Role of Interest Forums Inside and Outside of NAEYC

Interest Forums create strong relationships among their members, relationships that commercial entities and other organizations regard as valuable. Forum facilitators are perceived, rightly, as leaders in the early childhood field, with opinions that carry weight with other members. In both cases, complex issues can emerge that require forum leaders to be aware of various pitfalls associated with the preservation of NAEYC’s nonprofit status, their forum’s legal existence under NAEYC’s umbrella, and the association’s commitment to being an inclusive organization that seeks to recognize and support diversity across a variety of dimensions: race, class, culture, gender, sex, ability, language, religion, and other identities. In general, if there is any hint of a possible conflict of interest or other problem, it is always best to work with Interest Forum staff to get NAEYC’s general counsel involved. All of the guidelines governing forum members and facilitators and their relationships with groups outside of NAEYC apply only when the people involved are acting in their roles as Interest Forum members or facilitators.

IV a. Interest Forums and Commercial Interests

Through their wide networks of early childhood advocates and their programming at NAEYC's Annual Conference, Interest Forums provide opportunities for event sponsorship and other forms of targeted advertising by various outside organizations. Because Interest Forums are under the purview of NAEYC, they may not collaborate or enter into alliances with outside organizations—including sponsors, supporters for activities, and advertisers—without NAEYC staff involvement. If forum members have an idea for an activity that they believe may be of interest to a sponsor or if a sponsor reaches out to members, the members should contact the Interest Forum staff (hello@naeyc.org), who will facilitate communication with NAEYC's corporate sponsorship team. Such outreach occurs ideally several months before the intended event.

Likewise, forum facilitators may not undertake a commercial relationship of any kind—program funding, material donations, advertising, endorsement, or sponsorship—on behalf of the forum without coordinating with NAEYC's Interest Forum staff and corporate sponsorship program staff, as described previously.

Interest Forum activities are included in the NAEYC portfolio of sponsorship opportunities presented to prospective sponsors. Many sponsors have supported a range of Interest Forum activities in the past, and forum facilitators will be notified if sponsors have questions about or are confirmed to sponsor their forums' activities. **[In addition to their products' exposure to a targeted audience?]** The benefits for the sponsor may involve welcoming remarks, signage, or guest access, depending on the contribution level.

IV b. Interest Forums and Other Nonprofits

Some Interest Forum members and facilitators are involved with specialized nonprofit groups other than NAEYC. For instance, many educators in the science forum are also active in the National Science Teachers Association. Such relationships are productive and synergistic, and NAEYC encourages them. These guidelines do not in any way aim to curtail other involvement in the field. However, it is necessary to define and clarify the relationships between forums and non-NAEYC groups.

In general, the operative principle in relationships between Interest Forums and nonprofits other than NAEYC is that Interest Forums are not legal entities outside of NAEYC. Also, forum facilitators do not act

as official NAEYC spokespeople except when they act in coordination with NAEYC headquarters and the NAEYC Governing Board. They therefore do not possess legal authority to receive or endorse grant projects, or to sign on to grants or other projects as Interest Forum representatives or on behalf of their Interest Forums without coordinating with NAEYC staff. NAEYC maintains a rigorous vetting protocol for all grant applications and support statements, and any Interest Forum that is asked to participate in a grant must submit the grant proposal through that process. This guidance concerns only Interest Forums' participation in outside grants. It does not in any way preclude an individual member or facilitator from participating, as an individual, in another organization's grant.

In the case of forum facilitators who are also officers or members of other organizations, this kind of productive relationship is encouraged. However, both NAEYC and the other organizations need to keep clear distinctions between the two positions and organizations. Forum members' roles as Interest Forum facilitators are to promote networking, idea generation, and NAEYC positions, products, and membership.

IV c. Interest Forums, HELLO, and Social Media

Interest Forums maintain a presence on NAEYC's community platform, Hello (hello.naeyc.org), and on a variety of external social media platforms, all of which are key in reaching a wide and diverse audience. Interest Forum members are expected to post on Hello as a way to engage in conversations and in forums' topics of interest. Maintaining and posting on additional social media accounts is an optional choice many Interest Forums have made to reach a wider NAEYC and early childhood audience. Using social media is a great way to reach new audiences and engage new members with an Interest Forum's message.

[Temporary language until 10/1/2019: Some forums have existing listservs, however Interest Forums must move all of their members over to the Hello platform by October 1, 2019. We encourage facilitators to promote conversations on Hello by urging members to post content on Hello. We also encourage facilitators to recruit nonmembers on their lists to join NAEYC and become full-fledged Hello contributors as a way of having access to the group after October 1, 2019.]

[language for after 10/1/2019: The primary communication device for Interest Forums is the Hello platform (hello.naeyc.org). Using Hello is the only way to ensure that the forum program remains a members-only benefit of NAEYC. Our goal is for forums to build robust conversations in Hello's common spaces that support individual forums having their own topical discussion spaces. Consistent with

NAEYC's commitment to hosting inclusive discussions, forums may not use external listservs for forum communications; all conversations on topics of interest are centered in the Hello space.]

For posting material on Hello or on other social media platforms, NAEYC has established broad guidelines consistent with [its mission and values](#). Forums follow these guidelines while keeping in mind that preserving membership value is a necessity for the organization's health and vitality. Facilitators must also be mindful of all applicable copyright laws as they undertake all of their online and face-to-face activities. For more information, see the [Hello Code of Conduct](#) and the [NAEYC Terms of Use](#).

General Guidelines for Social Media

The content and style of posts on social media should do the following:

[CS, outline style below]

1. Focus on early childhood education and NAEYC.
 - a. Promote thinking about relevant topics to the Interest Forum at an introductory level. One way to do this is to link to articles related to the Interest Forum topic.
 - b. Connect Facebook, Twitter, and other outside social media posts with more in-depth discussions taking place in Hello's workspace.
 - c. Follow these general percentages when posting on forum accounts:
 - i. Promote topics of interest on Hello and Interest Forum activities (approximately 30 percent).
 - ii. Promote content of general interest to the forum (approximately 40 percent). (Please note that nearly all content of interest to a forum should also be cross-posted in Hello.)
 - iii. Promote NAEYC content and activities (approximately 30 percent).
2. Be professional.
 - a. Focus on forum activities, early childhood education issues, and NAEYC activities.
 - b. Be friendly and fun, but not frivolous.
3. Respect diversity.
 - a. Support engaged and informed advocacy. While posting on public-facing social media, it is critical to be mindful and respectful of the important diversity that exists within and beyond NAEYC's membership related to race, class, culture, gender, sex, ability, language, religion, and other identities. Interest Forums are encouraged to model and demonstrate the kind of respectful and reflective discourse that represents NAEYC's values and beliefs.

[End outline]

IV d. Interest Forums and Policy and Advocacy

NAEYC encourages Interest Forums to raise questions, seek relevant research findings, share state and local solutions to early education challenges, engage in policy conversations, and support advocacy efforts with their members in response to the pressing issues facing children, families, and educators.

- When there is an opportunity to inform or provide comments to help shape particular legislation or regulation at the federal, state, or local levels, in which the issue at hand aligns with the focus of an Interest Forum, the forum is encouraged to reach out to Interest Forum staff to express interest in engagement and/or partnership. The national office may also reach out to the Interest Forum to seek its particular expertise.
- When NAEYC has taken an official/public stance on an issue, legislation, or a regulation, Interest Forums are encouraged to help share and promote NAEYC's perspectives and priorities through HELLO, social media, and in-person activities.
- Regarding electoral advocacy, Interest Forums must remember that NAEYC is a 501c(3) organization that is legally barred from endorsing political candidates or parties in the course of an election. This includes everyone running for office, from a local city council members to the president of the United States. In the context of Hello and social media, it means that while nonpartisan electoral advocacy focused on early childhood education issues is encouraged, posts must at all times avoid language that explicitly or implicitly supports, endorses, or opposes one candidate or party over another. NAEYC encourages those with questions to explore the association's electoral advocacy resources at [NAEYC.org/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/build-your-advocacy-skills-and-knowledge](https://naeyc.org/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/build-your-advocacy-skills-and-knowledge).

IV e. Political Activity and NAEYC Volunteer Leaders

As outlined in the previous section, forums must not appear to take sides in elections in social media posts. NAEYC's status as a tax-exempt organization prohibits NAEYC leaders (including Interest Forum facilitators)—full time or volunteer—from participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office (national, state, or local). Participation in political campaigns by or in the name of NAEYC can jeopardize NAEYC's tax-exempt status.

This policy does not in any way restrict facilitators' or forum members' free expression on political matters in their private capacity as individuals. Forum facilitators and members are encouraged to participate in political campaigns when not doing forum-related work, to exercise their rights to make political contributions using their own funds, to volunteer for political campaign activities on their own time, and to vote. However, NAEYC urges its members to be careful that their personal political activities not be perceived as being conducted in their capacity as NAEYC members or attributable to NAEYC.

The ideas discussed and materials produced by Interest Forums do not necessarily reflect all of NAEYC's official positions, and Interest Forum participants and facilitators do not speak on behalf of NAEYC unless in coordination with headquarters staff. NAEYC encourages individuals to reach out to and check in with Interest Forum program staff whenever they have questions about appropriateness, compliance, or implications of their actions.

V. NAEYC's Responsibilities to Interest Forums

NAEYC provides a network of support, including NAEYC staff members devoted to forums; funds for forum activities; involvement in planning and choosing sessions at Annual Conference; marketing on the NAEYC website; and other marketing and membership collateral, as appropriate. The staff members collaborate with forum facilitators in the management of Interest Forum programs, considering ideas from all sides in the context of NAEYC's strategic direction and budgetary considerations.

One of the most important ways that NAEYC collaborates with Interest Forums is by allocating time for NAEYC staff to act as liaisons with facilitators and forums. A function of the Interest Forum staff is to work with and support Interest Forums in achieving the highest level of member involvement in order to build robust NAEYC membership value.

NAEYC Interest Forums are leaders in the dissemination of new and emerging early childhood topics. As such, Interest Forum staff are a critical link between Interest Forums and NAEYC, and the Interest Forum staff facilitates submission of content from forums to NAEYC blogs and other publications. This includes reaching out to Interest Forums when NAEYC is looking for content contributors and pitching Interest Forum content through various NAEYC vehicles, including social media, the NAEYC home page, other marketing channels, as well as through media requests from groups external to NAEYC.

With the aim of allowing forums as much autonomy and self-activation as possible, NAEYC provides the following collaborative support:

- Establishing and maintaining regular communication vehicles for facilitators, including online community discussion and resource space (through a tool such as Hello), conference calls, and webinars.
- Providing an online space for discussion and collaboration among forum members, in line with best practice guidelines for online communities.
- Facilitating information sharing—in person, when possible, or virtually—between NAEYC and Interest Forum leaders throughout the year.
- Providing technical support to facilitators through phone calls and online meetings and trainings.
- Facilitating one digital meeting/conference call a year for each forum's membership.
- Posting forum information on [Interest Forums' NAEYC.org web pages](#), as needed, throughout the year.
- Facilitating the review process for proposals for sessions presented by Interest Forums at Annual Conference.
- Providing space and assisting with scheduling for in-person Interest Forum business meetings at Annual Conference.
- Providing funds to support Interest Forum activities throughout the year. See this list of suggested uses of funds.
- Keeping forums up to date on conference deadlines, *Young Children* cluster topics so members know about publication opportunities and deadlines, and other opportunities.
- Conducting a yearly facilitators meeting at Annual Conference.

VI. Budgets

Each year, NAEYC makes available money for forum activities. The purpose of these funds is to increase and broaden membership in forums, with recruiting efforts taking place either at Annual Conference or throughout the year. Interest Forums are encouraged to use these funds to undertake activities that will draw in new members, help new folks attend Annual Conference, and generally assist in the membership outreach role of NAEYC Interest Forums.

Forum activities money is distributed through an application process once a year; selections are made by a group made up of NAEYC forum-related staff. This process occurs in late January or early February to ensure that any activities slated for forums' annual meetings have time to be included in the Annual Conference program. The following are some examples of appropriate ways Interest Forums may spend these funds. To avoid confusion, forums should not commit to spending funds until they have explicit approval through the Interest Forum staff. Please contact the Interest Forum staff at hello@naeyc.org to begin the approval process.

- **Invited speaker honoraria/travel**—Funds may be used for a speaker in an event held in conjunction with a local Affiliate. Original receipts are required in the case of travel reimbursement.
- **Travel awards**—Forums may use funds to support travel expenses for first-time Annual Conference attendees only; the limit is two per Annual Conference from accepted attendance proposals. Attendees receiving other NAEYC-sponsored travel awards are not eligible. Original receipts are required in the case of travel reimbursement.
- **Audiovisual equipment rental**—Funds may be used for audiovisual equipment beyond the standard setup at a session or event; costs such as internet for a presenter, wireless microphone, or sound setup will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- **Food and beverage**—Financial support will be given for a breakfast, lunch, or reception proposal at Annual Conference or Professional Learning Institute, especially for a special speaker or a new or revitalized forum. NAEYC must coordinate this with appropriate food vendors for the venue at Annual Conference; outside food and beverage are not permitted, per NAEYC contracts with convention centers and hotels.
- **Special recognition plaques**—Funds can be used for plaques for outgoing facilitators or other individuals who have made a significant impact on the forum—generally not to exceed one plaque per year.
- **Mailing costs**—Costs, including postage and photocopying of flyers, brochures, and similar materials, will be reimbursed on presentation of a request for reimbursement made to hello@naeyc.org. There are a limited funds for each forum for this purpose. NOTE: As an alternative to mailings, NAEYC's Hello online communities are a free, efficient method for

meeting many communication needs and are available to all forum members.

VII. Interest Forum Nonparticipation and Disbandment

NAEYC values a vibrant Interest Forum program that reflects both the association's long-standing values and commitments and its contemporary areas of interest. NAEYC and forum leaders share a commitment to maximizing the reach and health of each forum. For forums for which leaders and interest cannot be found, procedures are in place to ensure their wide and healthy participation in the forum program as well as to manage their disbandment.

- For those forums that do not participate in the Interest Forum program for a period of 18 months (including not having business meetings, proposing sessions, and/or participating in Hello), NAEYC reserves the right to recruit additional facilitators to the forum's team who can increase capacity in all areas, including on Hello.
- In the case of moribund or inactive forums, NAEYC attempts to revive them through appeals to current members of the forum and among general NAEYC membership. In cases where no interest can be garnered, NAEYC reserves the right to disband those forums until interest is shown again among the membership.

[Backmatter SH]**Appendix A. Forming Interest Forums**

NAEYC has established procedures for forming and recognizing Interest Forums. Any group of NAEYC members who share a common interest related to early childhood education that is of importance to the field may apply to be recognized as an Interest Forum. Interested parties are invited to review the criteria for recognition that follow:

- Discuss the formation of the new forum with the NAEYC Interest Forum staff. NAEYC staff can help identify the need for the forum, conceptualize its purpose, and craft an appropriate application using this basic outline [[link to form](#)].

- Submit to NAEYC a statement of purpose that describes how the proposed forum's goals are (a) consistent with [NAEYC's strategic direction](#) and (b) distinct from the goals of already recognized forums.
- Identify a minimum of 50 current NAEYC members who wish to participate
- Require that all members of the Interest Forum also be members of NAEYC.
- Comply with the requirements outlined in the Interest Forum guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of Interest Forums, and plan to take advantage of the support structures (facilitator trainings, etc.) that NAEYC provides.
- Provide the names and contact information for those individuals who have been chosen as facilitators for the proposed forum each year. Please see information on facilitator roles.
- Submit a short statement to the NAEYC Governing Board that describes how the forum is furthering NAEYC's goals of improving professional practice and working conditions in early childhood education; helping NAEYC build public support and improving public policies toward a system of high-quality early childhood education; and becoming a more high-performing, inclusive, organization.

Please note that Interest Forums are constituent parts of NAEYC. They are not separate organizations. As such, they may engage with groups outside of NAEYC only with the approval of NAEYC and the involvement of NAEYC headquarters staff.

[Backmatter SH] **Appendix B. Interest Forum Application Process**

Applications for recognition of new Interest Forums will be considered on a rolling basis. Decisions are made by NAEYC staff and the facilitator's advisory group in consultation with NAEYC's CEO. Please use this [form](#) to apply.

Assessment measures for applications include but are not limited to the following:

- Potential of the proposed forum for helping NAEYC achieve its goal of being a high-performing, inclusive organization.
- Potential of the proposed forum for furthering [NAEYC's strategic mission and goals](#).
- Importance and relevance of the proposed forum to members' needs and the needs of the profession.

[Backmatter SH]**Appendix C. Proposal Process for Annual Conference Interest Forum Sessions**

In addition to the special process for Interest Forum proposals described in this appendix, the process for submitting regular session proposals, as published in the general call for proposals for Annual Conference, needs to be followed. The following process describes the role of Interest Forum facilitators in the selection of Interest Forum sessions to be presented at Annual Conference. Facilitators seek to increase equity in the distribution among forums of slots reserved for Interest Forum sessions and to simplify the process for staff.

- Each Interest Forum’s facilitator handles the selection of sessions for the forum to present at NAEYC’s Annual Conference. Facilitators are responsible for establishing an internal process for determining which sessions will be eligible (see the details that follow).
- Each forum will have up to two sessions accepted through this process but may submit three proposals.
- Facilitators direct the primary presenters of the selected two or three proposals to submit the proposals via the Annual Conference SurveyMonkey link.
- Selected presenters use the Interest Forum version of the online proposal form, which is managed by the Interest Forum staff.
- **Additional sessions related to a forum’s topic are submitted through the regular NAEYC proposal process found at NAEYC Proposals.** Please note the following:
 - These additional session proposals go through a blind peer-review process and may or may not be accepted.
 - The proposals will be viewed/managed as regular session proposals (not as Interest Forum session proposals).
- In addition, Interest Forum sessions that are not content based (receptions, events, special kinds of sessions) will be considered through a separate process for which a small budget to support such events is used. This happens in late spring and is outlined in section VI. “Budgets.”
- Sessions will be vetted by a team of three parties and relevant NAEYC internal staff. When making their decisions, the team will consider a number of factors, including quality, diversity of content and format, equity of access to slots across forums, and other factors.
- Decisions are delivered according to the conference timeline.
- Accepted Interest Forum sessions will be entered into the Precis system by the Interest Forum staff and flagged as Interest Forum sessions in the regular program, per the usual practice. This means that all changes to a session will need to be routed through the Interest Forum staff.