

Work & Organizations: IPPA Division Group Charter¹

Context

As a relatively new and growing field, the International Positive Psychology Association has taken great strides in sharing research and practices in positive psychology across the world. In light of the burgeoning demand for research and practice in the work and organizations area, as evidenced at the recent 3rd World Congress of Positive Psychology, 2013, IPPA is poised to create formalized opportunities to share learning with the community of researchers and practitioners. The growing interest has generated a critical mass of IPPA members committed to building the Work and Organizations Division of IPPA - a forum for academics, researchers, practitioners, and organizations to communicate and collaborate on positive psychology research and application in the organizational and institutional context.

Name: Work & Organizations Division of IPPA

Mission

Our mission is to serve as a bridge between research and practice and facilitate collaboration to increase the incorporation of positive psychology in academic research related to organizations and the practice of positive psychology in the organizational context², thereby positively transforming the way the world works.

Purpose

The Division acts as a member-driven international forum for academics, researchers, practitioners, and organizations from around the world to discuss research and applications to transform organizations and the experience of work. This forum allows practitioners and researchers to discuss and collaborate in the development and application of positive psychology principles aimed to improve individual, team and organizational well-being and performance across various contexts and cultures. The overarching purpose of the Division is to empower individuals and organizations across the globe to create and shape environments that enable them to thrive and flourish.

Vision Statement

Within the next three years, the Work and Organizations Division of IPPA will be one of the most important visionary international go-to forums for debate, exchange, collaboration, and best practices on the integration of positive psychology in the world of work.

We will accomplish this by focusing on the following five objectives:

- 1) **Identify** existing or needed **research to address and engage real world organizational issues and opportunities** (e.g., increasing employee engagement because disengagement costs the US economy \$300B³). Critical to this is actively engaging researchers across various disciplines

¹ Charter is a member-created, living document to be reviewed annually and revised if necessary.

² The division defines organizations as those in the for-profit, non-profit, and government sectors.

³ <http://businessjournal.gallup.com/content/247/the-high-cost-of-disengaged-employees.aspx>

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(e.g. business, management, economics, public policy and administration, organizational and social sciences) interested in using a positive lens to study constructs, processes or outcomes (e.g. positive leadership, positive work relationships, flow at work, identity in the workplace) relevant to the organizational context. Equally crucial is gaining the support and cooperation of prominent leaders of organizations and institutions interested in applying positive psychology principles and methods in their contexts.

- 2) **Translate research into practical, evidence-based solutions**
- 3) **Test the impact of positive psychology interventions** on organizations, including the impact on individual, team and organizational goals and metrics.
 - Act as a “learning lab” for sharing resources on how best to implement evidence-based practices from the growing body of positive psychology theory and research.
 - Via collaborative studies and evaluation, help influence the research and application of positive psychology in organizations.
- 4) **Collaborate and communicate to publish results and promote best practices** for positive organizational psychology with an international focus.
- 5) **Represent organizational interests to IPPA.** Positively influence future policy development, initiatives, and development of IPPA.

Like other Divisions within IPPA, this Division’s objectives are aligned under the three strands of IPPA’s overall strategy:

- To promote the science of positive psychology and its research-based applications
- To facilitate collaboration among researchers, teachers, students, and practitioners of positive psychology around the world and across academic disciplines
- To share the findings of positive psychology with the broadest possible audience

Membership

The Division was initially formed by a volunteer-led launch committee⁴. Our desire is to grow a strong membership base with a productive mix of academics, researchers, and practitioners. Moving forward, there will be two levels of division participation with the following responsibilities and benefits:

- Division Membership
 - Open to Members, Associates, and Students of IPPA
 - Must participate in at least one committee or topic group during their membership, thus sharing and building knowledge in a particular practice area
 - Division members are eligible to vote in division elections and contribute to ongoing dialogue about division activities
 - Division members who wish to join committees must commit to participating in at least 50% of committee meetings
- Division Mailing List
 - IPPA Affiliates – along with Members, Associates, and Students who do not wish to participate as division members – can sign up for a mailing list to receive regular

⁴ A volunteer launch committee created this initial draft of the charter that documents a vision, purpose and goals for advancing the research, application and dissemination of positive psychology in the organizational realm.

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updates and access publicly available Division resources

Leadership Positions

Three 2-year elected officer positions will head the responsibilities for the Division, in addition to a non-voting Immediate Past President:

- President
- President-Elect
- Secretary

The descriptions of responsibilities for each officer position are provided in the Appendix A. Elected officers are expected to add additional positions.

Election Process

With the support of the IPPA Leadership, the launch committee invites nominees from the IPPA Membership base. Members must opt to join the Work & Organizations Division as a Division member prior to submitting their nomination. We believe this will ensure not only an engaged election process, but will build a strong membership base with which to begin our Division's work. Candidates will be asked to indicate whether they work primarily in scholarship or practice, and they must submit a one-paragraph biography and statement of purpose⁵ by the identified deadline in order to be considered. These submissions will be shared with all Division members for a period of time before voting, wherein members may submit questions via a general forum for candidates to respond. Once the Division's officers have been elected, these leaders will have the opportunity to finalize this charter and put it to a vote by members to ratify or provide any final commentary.

Meetings

Thus far, the launch committee has held two (monthly) meetings to discuss and outline the group's proposed mission and goals. Moving forward, we propose that meetings are convened as follows:

- Monthly meetings to share and discuss progress made towards the Division's vision, coordinated and sanctioned by elected officers
- Quarterly report to IPPA Leadership and Board of Directors by the President (see Appendix A for details)
- A meeting of the Division to be held at the bi-annual IPPA conference
- Committee-specific meetings may be held outside of the general Division meetings

Communication

Our primary means of communication between members has been via direct email. A group list-serve or Division-specific webpage are future potential possibilities.

Resources and Support Available:

⁵ The "statement of purpose" is to communicate to Division members a nominee's motivation and intended approach for pursuing a particular role. The short length necessarily restricts the number of specific details to include. However, IPPA encourages nominees to include whatever specifics they reasonably can in the space allotted about initiatives or areas of interest to pursue, or the nominee's proposed process for identifying and designing new programs.

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The main area of support IPPA will provide the Division is with access to membership and the Board. Depending on available resources and as appropriate, IPPA Leadership will help to promote the opportunities and activities of the Division to members and contact lists, encouraging greater participation. IPPA will also help make appropriate introductions to relevant researchers and scholars on the Board or within its network. Where possible, IPPA will share access to existing communication systems. IPPA will also work with the Division to determine the best way to house information online, whether on the IPPA website or via a new cross-linked website.

Other support TBD

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Appendix A Work and Organization Division Officer Positions

The IPPA Work & Organizations Division will be led by four primary officers: President, President-Elect, Immediate Past-President, and Secretary. The President will serve a two-year term and then serve as Immediate Past-President for another two years. The President-Elect will serve a two-year term, then transition into the President role for another two-year term, and then assume the Immediate Past-President role for an additional two years. The Secretary will serve a two-year term.

The roles and responsibilities are as follows:

Division President

The Division President is the highest-ranking elected officer, who presides over and supports all activities of the Division. Some of the key responsibilities include:

- Consulting with Division members and IPPA leadership to identify and develop programs that advance the mission of the division and association
- Serving as the primary spokesperson for the Division
- Reporting to the IPPA Leadership and the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis about Division activities, main accomplishments, membership levels and financials and any challenges or future plans that would benefit from IPPA support
- Ensuring that Division members' interests are represented in IPPA Board meetings and discussions through collaboration with IPPA Leadership

Division President-Elect

The Division President-Elect is the second-ranking elected officer in each division and assumes the highest-elected position at the next election. Some of the key responsibilities include:

- Supporting the Division President in fulfilling the goals and objectives of the Division by providing continuity to established programs and by formulating future programs.
- Assuming the responsibility of the Division President in his or her absence
- Accepting responsibilities delegated by the Division President, such as overseeing special projects and being a committee member/project team liaison.

Division Secretary

The Division Secretary serves as the chief administrative officer for the Division. Some of the key responsibilities include:

- Assuring the maintenance of records and compliance with Division and Association policies and procedures
- Oversight of communications, including recording minutes of division meetings, initiating correspondence both within the division and between the division and IPPA, liaising with committees, and sharing knowledge internally
- Serving on the Division Executive Committee

Immediate Past-President

The Immediate Past-President serves in a non-voting, advisory role to the President and President-Elect on an as-needed basis. Responsibilities include:

- Utilizing and sharing experience gained as a previous President to provide advice and leadership

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regarding past practices.

Once elected, officers can develop additional roles, such as a Membership, Communication or Event Chairs. Officers can decide whether these positions are elected by Division members or appointed by Division leadership from a pool of applicants.

Given IPPA's dual emphasis on the advancement of scholarship and practice, we would like the leadership structure to inherently reflect both of those interests. Therefore, the Division President and President-Elect should come from alternate professional domains (i.e., if the President works primarily in scholarship, the President-Elect works primarily in practice, and vice versa). This leadership structure would model and hopefully enable collaboration and cooperation between those who conduct and apply research, thus furthering IPPA's mission.