International Union for the Scientific Study of Population ■ IUSSP
Union internationale pour l'étude scientifique de la population ■ UIESP

Guidelines for IUSSP Scientific Panels

(May 2026 Revision)

One of the main functions of the IUSSP is to identify emerging and critical population issues and to encourage high-level scientific research. Member-led Scientific Panels play a key role in the work of the IUSSP. They provide a way for members to contribute to advancing specific research themes and to participate in the activities of the Union. While the Panels are established by the Council, most panel topics arise from proposals put forward by the members. This ensures that the activities of the Union reflect the research priorities of its members.

In selecting proposals, the Council places priority on Panels that address pressing and/or emerging population issues, that seek to develop or make use of innovative approaches, that are interdisciplinary in nature and that actively engage early career population scientists. The Council may accept proposals as they are but may also suggest modifications and/or merge proposals. For all Panel activities, the relevant IUSSP policies regarding Plagiarism, Privacy, the Environment and Anti-Harassment should be strictly taken into account.

Depending on the topic, context and organizational considerations, the working methods of Panels may vary. The purpose of this note is to offer guidance to current Panels and to members wishing to propose a new Panel. Because the nature of Panels can widely differ, a one-size-fits-all approach for a proposal is unsuitable. However, proposals should at least consider the aspects set out below.

1. **Title.** Each Panel should have a clear and informative, but short, title.

2. **Objectives and Justification.** This section should clearly describe the topic and aims of the proposed Panel which should be neither too narrow nor too wide and should be relevant in the field of population studies. It should describe the relevance of the topic for the IUSSP and indicate how the Panel will build on and advance the current knowledge in the field, and how that knowledge may feed into current scientific and public policy debates. Proposals should also take into consideration how the topic builds on, complements or differs from current and recent past IUSSP Panels. A list of past and current panels is available on the IUSSP website. A short paragraph summarizing the aims of the Panel will serve as terms of reference and will be posted on the Panel's webpage on the IUSSP website.

3. **Panel Chair.** Each Panel is headed by a chair (exceptionally co-chairs) who will be approved by the Council. The Chair should be a member of the Union. Proposals should include the name, affiliation and email of a potential chair. Members nominating other people to be chair should ensure their agreement to taking on this role.

4. **Council Liaison.** For each Panel, the IUSSP Council assigns one of its members as Council Liaison to serve as the link between the Panel and the Council. The Council Liaison can also provide help in scientific matters where appropriate and assures that the activities are consistent with the scientific programme initially approved by the Council. The Council Liaison's degree of involvement in the Panel may vary but it is necessary to copy her/him on all important emails.

5. **Steering Committee.** Each Panel will have a small Steering Committee of five to six members. Appropriate attention should be given to discipline, geographic and gender balance. The list of Steering Committee members must be approved by the Council. If not current members of the Union, Steering Committee members should be encouraged to join the Union. At least one member of the Steering Committee should be an early or mid-career colleague. In addition to the Steering Committee, Panels are encouraged to engage a broader group of members in their work, for example through maintaining a mailing list or a blog or similar approaches.

6. **Activities.** Each Panel should have a programme of activities. Activities can be virtual or in-person when possible.

   Virtual activities. All Panels should plan to organize at least one virtual event during their mandate in the IUSSP Webinar Series, which is open to the full IUSSP membership (and beyond), such as a webinar, a round table or a debate. Panels are also encouraged to organize other meetings virtually such as research or training workshops.

   Panels can regularly inform their members of publications, activities, data sources, research opportunities and the like, through a mailing list and/or other channels they see fit.

   In-person activities. If a Panel has funds to organize an in-person seminar or event, they should ask a host institution to serve as co-sponsor to handle local arrangements. When possible, in-person events should take place in low- and middle-income countries to maximize the participation of local scholars and, where relevant, local policy makers and stakeholders to ensure that the results of IUSSP activities have an impact in countries and regions where the issues considered are of greatest concern. Similarly, Panels are encouraged to organize their meetings at universities or research centres and/or in conjunction with a regional conference. Participation of local researchers and early career colleagues is encouraged. A training workshop can precede the seminar; a junior demographer can help with the organization of the meeting and the preparation of the summary report.

7. **Funding.** Each Panel is responsible for its own funding. Panels are advised to inform the IUSSP before potential donors are approached, to avoid duplicate proposals by other Panels and competition for fundraising by the IUSSP among its major donors. If a Panel is able to secure funds for an activity, the IUSSP can receive and administer the funds on behalf of the Panel. As the costs of virtual events are significantly lower than in-person events, funding needs will generally be small.

8. **Dissemination.** Each Panel will have a dedicated page on the IUSSP website to inform members about their activities and disseminate outcomes. The Panel's activities are also disseminated through IUSSP Bulletin and Panels are encouraged to also disseminate their results in N-IUSSP, in an IUSSP Policy & Research Paper or an edited volume in the IUSSP International Studies in Population book series published by Springer/Nature. Panels may also consider proposing a special issue or submitting individual articles to a journal, in which case editors or authors should make sure to include an acknowledgement of the IUSSP Panel.

9. **Reporting.** Panels are responsible for reporting on each of their activities to the IUSSP. A short report should be sent to the Secretariat by the principal organizer of the activity, no later than six weeks after each activity. This summary report, along with any photos taken during the activity, may be used for an article in the IUSSP Bulletin.

10. **General Assembly.** The Panel Chair shall make a written report on the Panel's activities for the IUSSP General Assembly (Article 12.4 of the IUSSP Constitution).

11. **Mandate.** To allow for innovation, Panel mandates are limited in time. Mandates will be mutually agreed upon. Usually, Panels are established for a period of two to four years maximum. Upon request and subject to the decision of the Council, an extension of the Panel's mandate to complete planned activities can be granted. Panels may also request a renewal of their mandate, with a new programme of activities and preferably with changes in the composition of its Chair and/or Steering Committee.

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