

## Get to Know Your LASA: LASA Sections

LASA Sections promote common research interests of members of the association in specific areas of study or countries and regions in the world, within the framework of the larger organization. Sections provide a space for networking all year round and have dues requirements to join. Since sections are part of LASA, membership in sections requires affiliation in the Association as well. LASA members can join as many sections as they choose by paying the appropriate dues. For 2018, LASA has 38 active sections which propose panels, organize sessions, and elect representatives.

Some sections' themes overlap with program tracks for the LASA annual Congress. However, program tracks, unlike sections, are LASA's organized themes specifically for conference proposals. Members who submit papers or panels select a track theme for the proposal at the time of submission. Each track has a chair or co-chairs responsible for reviewing proposals for the conference. The program of the LASA Congress is the responsibility of the program chairs and program committee, in consultation with the LASA president and the Secretariat. Where a section theme coincides with a Congress track, the program chair may consult with the section chair(s) to suggest one of its members as a possible track chair.

Sections have wide autonomy to elect their representatives, and many of the sections select their sponsored panels and award prizes, make policy statements approved by their membership, and organize workshops, among other decisions. However, since sections are not legal entities but constituent parts of LASA, their announcements in social media, publications, and policy statements have to follow LASA policies. Sections must hold elections and organize a business meeting at the LASA Congress.

In order to create a new section, at least 75 committed members must sign a statement of at least 500 words establishing the scope and purpose of the section and the types of activities envisioned. This formal petition will be referred to the Executive Council (EC) of LASA for approval or any other action. The EC has discretion to approve, reject, or recommend changes to the proposal at this stage.

Sections require a minimum of 50 paying members to be added to the LASA website and have rights to at least one sponsored panel at the LASA Congress. The majority of members of a section may determine their own dues structure, although the minimum dues is \$12, of which \$5 is retained by LASA Secretariat to cover costs of supplies and staff time to maintain their websites and organize electronic elections. The remainder of dues is deposited by the Secretariat in an account in the name of the section, and unspent funds continue to accrue from year to year. These funds may be used to offer travel grants, organize a reception, or subsidize the costs of registration for members.

Each year on May 1, prior to the annual Congress, the Secretariat counts the numbers of dues-paying members of each section to determine the number of sessions allocated to each of them for the following Congress. The number of sponsored sessions a section may have is contingent on the number of its members:

| NUMBER OF MEMBERS | NUMBER OF SPONSORED SESSIONS |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 50-75             | 1                            |
| 76-125            | 2                            |
| 126-200           | 3                            |
| 201-499           | 4                            |
| 500+              | 5                            |

For the LASA Congress, only section panels submitted by the deadline will be considered for the program. Unlike proposals submitted for the general Congress, proposals for section sessions are decided by the section chair(s) and must be submitted by them.

For more information please review the Section Manual <https://lasa.international.pitt.edu/eng/sections/files/SectionsManual-rev2.pdf>. Remember, the deadline to submit section panels is September, 6, 2018. //

For the 2019 LASA Congress three additional spaces will be reserved for intersectional panels and will be selected by the program chairs. These panels must (a) have a topic related to the Congress's general theme; (b) have at least two LASA section members participating; and (c) each LASA section can only participate in one intersectional panel per Congress.

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