10.19

Initiatives Under Development

Submitted to the Board of Directors by
Lori Foster, IAAP President and Pedro Neves, IAAP President-Elect

June 16, 2026

Initiatives Under Development

Lori Foster and Pedro Neves

Divisions play a central role in the life of IAAP, creating opportunities for members to connect around shared interests, exchange expertise, develop collaborations, and advance applied psychology in diverse contexts around the world.

Ongoing conversations with divisions have generated a number of ideas for strengthening engagement, collaboration, and activity across the Association throughout the congress cycle. Several of these initiatives are now being developed and pilot tested. They are summarized below.

SPARK

SPARK (Supporting Psychology Application, Research, and Knowledge) is a divisional funding program that enables divisions to support research-oriented and practice-oriented projects in applied psychology. Participating divisions receive $1,000 USD to support projects of their choosing and are responsible for reviewing proposals and selecting projects aligned with divisional priorities and IAAP's strategic goals.

By placing funding decisions in the hands of divisions, SPARK is intended to encourage innovation, strengthen member engagement, foster leadership opportunities, and create new pathways for members to contribute to applied psychology.

Pilot implementation discussions are currently underway with Division 1 (Work and Organizational Psychology) and Division 17 (Professional Practice). Experience gained during

the pilot phase will help inform future refinements, and additional divisions are welcome to participate at any time.

Additional information: click here

Small Group Meetings

Small Group Meetings are intended to provide a flexible and accessible way for psychologists to connect, collaborate, and exchange ideas between congresses. Rather than requiring the scale and complexity of a large conference, these gatherings are envisioned as smaller, focused events organized around a shared topic, professional interest, regional concern, or emerging area of work. Organizers may request up to $1,500 USD to support the event.

Meetings may take many forms, including workshops, thematic discussions, networking events, or other collaborative activities. They are envisioned as activities connected to one or more divisions that bring together members and colleagues from different countries, regions, and professional backgrounds around a common interest.

The goal is to increase opportunities for face-to-face interactions and to make it easier for psychologists to engage with one another, develop new collaborations, strengthen existing networks, and bring IAAP activities closer to members in different parts of the world. Small Group Meetings are intended to complement, rather than replace, larger congresses and conferences by creating additional opportunities for connection and participation throughout the congress cycle.

Members with ideas for Small Group Meetings are encouraged to work with the division most closely aligned with the proposed topic or area of interest to explore opportunities for sponsorship and support.

Regional Ambassadors

The Regional Ambassadors initiative is intended to strengthen connections between IAAP divisions and psychological communities in different parts of the world. By creating opportunities for members to serve as regional ambassadors, the initiative aims to broaden participation, support engagement in underrepresented regions, bring diverse perspectives into divisional activities, and strengthen communication between IAAP and regional psychological communities.

Regional Ambassadors are envisioned as connectors and catalysts, helping to identify opportunities, support engagement, and strengthen linkages between IAAP and regional psychological communities. Possible activities may include:

- Proposing and helping organize regionally relevant Small Group Meetings in collaboration with relevant divisions.
- Developing or supporting applications for the SPARK funding program
- Identifying emerging themes or needs within their region that may be relevant to IAAP.
- Encouraging participation in IAAP congresses, webinars, the Early Career Marathon, elections, and other initiatives.
- Supporting outreach to local or regional psychological associations.
- Providing brief updates on activities and regional developments to help inform IAAP's ongoing work.

The initiative was inspired in part by the successful use of regional ambassadors within Division 15 (Students and Early Career Psychologists) and is currently being introduced on a pilot basis with Division 5 (Education and School Psychology) and Division 8 (Health Psychology). This initial phase will provide an opportunity to learn what works well, identify areas for improvement, and refine the model over time. Additional divisions are welcome to participate at any time.

Division Funding Model

To support these and other division activities, IAAP has also developed a revised Division Funding Model designed to provide greater clarity regarding available resources, funding priorities, accountability expectations, and procedures for accessing support.

The goal is to make divisional funding more accessible, predictable, and useful while maintaining appropriate accountability. The framework is intended to help divisions pursue new ideas, strengthen member engagement, and support the important work they do throughout the congress cycle.

Additional information: click here

Although these initiatives are at different stages of development, they share a common goal: creating additional opportunities for engagement, collaboration, and participation across IAAP throughout the congress cycle. Feedback from divisions and Board members will continue to play an important role as these initiatives evolve.