# Local Section Handbook

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## Overview

Optica Local Section Membership is an ideal way to connect with optics professionals, keep up-to-date on technical and business innovations, and take part in philanthropic activities that benefit your community.

This handbook serves to outline the benefits offered and the parameters regarding being active. The Local Section handbook includes a variety of resources to assist Local Section members in organizing and operating day-to-day operations of chapter activities.

**Local Sections Program allows you to:**
- connect with other professionals in optics & photonics in your geographic area,
- enhance your professional development,
- build leadership skills,
- affect change in your local community through outreach efforts,
- contribute to the public's understanding of optics & photonics in your community

**Objectives of each Section**
(1) to promote awareness of optical science and optical engineering among the student and local communities;
(2) to facilitate communication and interaction between students, faculty, administration and industry professionals;
(3) to interact with Optica members and its student and local organizations with a focus on information sharing and networking;
(4) to raise awareness of post-graduation opportunities for students; and
(5) provide professional development and networking opportunities for all members.

## Benefits

- Activity Grants - Support professional development, youth education outreach and various Local Section events. Grants are awarded up to $1,000 per year to further efforts for community engagement, funding for guest speakers, operational costs of Local Section and professional development efforts for section members.
- Excellence Award - Recognizing outstanding sections in the areas of advocacy, youth education and professional development programming. Winners received Excellence Award certificates and $1,000 USD.
- Youth Education Resources. Educational outreach is one of the most important and significant ways Optica supports local communities and inspires tomorrow's young scientists. Optica offers online resources, a variety of classroom materials, *which are primarily free of charge* and events for educators that address the needs of students from elementary school through university studies.
- Traveling Lecturer Program - Local Sections, through request, may receive funding for one guest speaker of their choice on an annual basis.
- Special Program Grant – Limit to one per year. Local sections may apply for Special Program grant, which provides up to $1,500 for youth education/community outreach or professional development events. Depending on the event, there is separate criteria sections must meet.
- Optica Foundation Diversity and Inclusion Grant – Limit to one per year, sections may apply for this highly competitive grant intended to support initiatives that align harmoniously with Optica Global Headquarters mission and vision. Grant is meant to support events that promote inclusivity including gender equity, LGBT awareness (specifically highlighting International women and Girls day in Science February 11th and LGBT Stem Day July 5th). Local Sections can receive up to $2,000 for their event.
- Access to selective Optica Career Lab for Professional Development Opportunities (webinars, on-demand and live trainings, and much more).
- Optica Zoom Account - Intended to support our Local Sections to address inabilities for sections to have in person meetings and to promote networking with hopes of also reducing meeting/operational costs. Zoom accounts are also helpful to connect to students, local universities and other professionals in the specific geographic regions.
- Exclusive Local Section Discounts - Members of Optica Local Sections are granted exclusive discounts to join Optica Membership and discount rate to selective Optica Career Lab programming. Ask us about group membership rates.

## Benefits Eligibility

- Sections must maintain a minimum of eight members.
- Complete and submit Annual Report and Section Update form annually.
- Recruit volunteers and publicize elected position opportunities.
- Hold meetings, at least quarterly, with current members.
- Invite non-members in the optics and photonics community to section meetings.

- Elect 4 section officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Officers must be Optica members.
- Share member mailing list with Optica.
- Host, at minimum, one event/bring awareness related to International Day of Light each year.
- Host via in-person or through social media channels 1 event and/or awareness related to international day of light each year
- Hold a volunteer for Optica event: publicise Optica Local Sections election positions. This is a way to broaden the pipeline of volunteers and diversify pool for local region.

## What Local Sections can expect from Optica Global Headquarters

Optica Local Sections were created under the premise of promoting optics and photonics through a variety of activities, including, but not limited to hosting local meetings focused on technical topics, business networking and teaching young optics enthusiasts about science and the world of optics. Local Sections can expect Optica Global Headquarters to assist with:
- Promotion of Local Section membership
- Updated news and call for proprams related to raising awareness regarding optics and photonics.
- Support with connecting with other professionals in optics and photonics in specific geographic areas.
- Connections with Student Chapters.
- Semi-annual one-on-one check-ins with Local Section officers.

## Local Section Bylaws*

*sections established prior to January 2021 are grandfathered to previous bylaws.

Article I.
The name of this organization shall be the "[name of institution/region] Local Section of the Optica."

Article II.
The objectives of this Section shall be:
   (6) to promote awareness of Optical science and Optical engineering among the student and local communities;
   (7) to facilitate communication and interaction between students, faculty, administration and industry professionals;
   (8) to interact with Optica members and its student and local organizations with a focus on information sharing and networking;
   (9) to raise awareness of post-graduation opportunities for students; and
   (10) provide professional development and networking opportunities for all members.

Article III.
Membership in this Section shall be open to any person with an interest in Optical science and Optical engineering.

Article IV.
This Section is a local section of Optica. This Section is required to use properly Optica's name, logo, and other trademarks.

Article V.
The Section must have at least eight at all times who represent the diversity of the local community for optics and photonics through participation with academia, industry and government.

Article VI.
The Section shall submit an annual activity report and membership roster to Optica's Membership and Education Development Council every year. The Society may declare the Section inactive if the Section fails to submit the activity report and membership roster for two (2) or more consecutive years.

Article VII.
Optica may revoke the authority of this Section for cause.

Article VIII.
A quorum of thirty percent of the total membership shall be required for business to be transacted or elections held at any meeting.

Article IX.
A. Section Officers
All officers shall be members in good standing of the section and members of Optica.

B. Nominations and Elections
- The elected officers will be President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.
- Nominations for the officers shall be conducted by a committee consisting of three members appointed by the President. The committee's role will be to ensure a full slate of candidates for the officers.
- Nominations will be open for one week after the first regular meeting of the year.
- Elections will be held at the second regular meeting of the year. Voting must continue until a candidate wins by majority of members present. If no majority is obtained, the candidate with the fewest number of votes will be eliminated and voting will continue.
- In case of a vacant office, a special election will be held at the next regular meeting.

C. Term of Office
The term of all officers shall begin at the completion of the election and will last for two years.

D. Removal from Office
- An elected officer can be removed from office for misconduct or failure to perform the duties of his/her office.
- Charges of misconduct or failure to perform duties must be openly made against the officer by a member in a section meeting.
- At a section meeting after the meeting in which charges are made, removal must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the members present.

E. Duties of Officers
- President — To run meetings in an orderly fashion, to make necessary decisions, and to represent and be responsible for the section's activities.
- Vice President — To assist the President and to serve in his/her absence. To assist with the execution of section activities.
- Treasurer — To be responsible for the financial activities of the section including the collection of section dues and the management of incoming funds and payments and maintain a record of the income and expenses of the section.
- Secretary — To take minutes during all section meetings. To maintain communications with Optica including the submission of the section's Annual Report.

Article X.
Section dues shall be set by the section and paid by its individual members. These funds will be managed by the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall provide a section membership roster to Optica annually.

# Robert's Rules of Order

The first edition of the book was published in February, 1876 by U.S. Army Major Henry Martyn Robert. Its procedures were loosely modeled after those used in the United States House of Representatives. Robert wrote Robert's Rules of Order after presiding over a church meeting and discovering that delegates from different areas of the country did not agree about proper procedure.

Robert's Rules of Order provides applicable rules governing key matters of meeting and general procedures, including:

- Establishing a Constitution and Bylaws for your section.
- Structure of the meeting Agenda and debate.
- Motions; including making, seconding, debating, modifying and amending motions.
- Sufficient majority and simple majority and which decisions are appropriate to them.
- Establishment of a quorum.
- Definition of membership.
- Voting rights of presiding officer and voting procedures.

Outline of Basic Parliamentary Procedure

Prepared by Douglas N. Case, Parliamentary Authority: Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, Tenth Edition, 2001.

1. Rules Governing an Organization
    a. State and Federal Law - governing corporations, tax-exempt organizations, public legislative bodies, etc.
    b. Articles of Incorporation - applicable to corporations
    c. Governing Documents of Parent Organizations - applicable to chapters, affiliates, etc. of larger organizations
    d. Local Constitution and Bylaws - defines the organization's basic structure and fundamental rules. Normally requires a 2/3 vote and prior notice for amendment and are not subject to suspension.
    e. Standing Rules - operating procedures consistent with all of the above. Normally can be amended by majority vote at any business meeting and can be suspended.
    f. Rules of Order - parliamentary authority, superseded by any of the above that conflict.
    g. Precedent and Custom - apply when there are no written rules governing a situation.
2. Purposes of Parliamentary Procedure
    a. Ensure majority rule

b. Protect the rights of the minority, the absentees and individual members

c. Provide order, fairness and decorum

d. Facilitate the transaction of business and expedite meetings

3. Basic Principles of Parliamentary Procedure

a. All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations.

b. A quorum must be present for the group to act - if the bylaws of the organization do not establish a quorum, the general rule is that a majority of the entire membership must be present in order to transact business.

c. Full and free discussion of every motion is a basic right.

d. Only one question at a time may be considered, and only one person may have the floor at any one time.

e. Members have a right to know what the immediately pending question is and to have it restated before a vote is taken.

f. No person can speak until recognized by the chair.

g. Personal remarks are always out of order.

h. A majority decides a question except when basic rights of members are involved.

i. A two-thirds vote is required for any motion that deprives a member of rights in any way (e.g., cutting off debate).

j. Silence gives consent. Those who do not vote allow the decision to be made by those who do vote.

k. The chair should always remain impartial.

4. Typical Order of Business

a. Call to Order

b. Opening Exercises, if applicable

c. Roll Call/Determination of a Quorum

d. Adoption of the Agenda

e. Reading and Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

f. Reports of Officers

g. Reports of Standing Committees

h. Reports of Special (Ad hoc) Committees

i. Special Orders

j. Unfinished Business and General Orders

k. New Business

l. Program, if applicable

m. Announcements

n. "Good of the Order"

o. Adjournment

5. Role of the Presiding Officer

    a. Remain impartial during debate - the presiding officer must relinquish the chair in order to debate the merits of a motion

    b. Vote only to create or break a tie (or 2/3 for matters requiring a 2/3 vote) - exception: the presiding officer may vote on any vote by ballot

    c. Determine that a quorum is present before transacting business

    d. Introduce business in proper order

    e. Recognize speakers

    f. Determine if a motion is in order

    g. Keep discussion germane to the pending motion

    h. Maintain order

    i. Put motions to a vote and announce results

    j. Employ unanimous consent (general consent) when appropriate

6. General Procedure for Handling a Motion

    a. A member normally must obtain the floor by being recognized by the chair.

    b. Member makes a motion.

    c. A motion must normally be seconded by another member before it can be considered.

        i. Before the motion is restated by the chair, any member can rise, without waiting to be recognized, and suggest a modification of the wording to clarify the motion. The maker of the motion can choose to accept or reject the modified wording (does not require a second).

        ii. If the motion is in order, the chair will restate the motion and open debate (if the motion is debatable).

        iii. The maker of a motion has the right to speak first in debate.

        iv. Debate is closed when discussion has ended or a two-thirds vote closes debate ("Previous Question")

    d. The chair restates the motion, and if necessary clarifies the consequences of affirmative and negative votes.

    e. The chair calls for a vote.

    f. The chair announces the result.

    g. Any member may challenge the chair's count by demanding a "Division of the Assembly."

7. General Rules of Debate

    a. No members may speak until recognized by the chair.

b. All discussion must be relevant to the immediately pending question.

c. No member may speak a second time until every member who wishes to speak has had the opportunity to do so.

d. No member can speak more than twice to each motion.

e. No member can speak more than ten minutes.

f. All remarks must be addressed to the chair - no cross debate is permitted.

g. It is not permissible to speak against one's own motion (but one can vote against one's own motion).

h. Debate must address issues not personalities - no one is permitted to make personal attacks or question the motives of other speakers.

i. The presiding officer must relinquish the chair in order to participate in debate and cannot reassume the chair until the pending main question is disposed of.

j. When possible, the chair should let the floor alternate between those speaking in support and those speaking in opposition to the motion.

k. When a large number of people wish to speak to a motion it may be advisable for the chair to make a speakers' list.

l. Members may not disrupt the assembly.

m. Rules of debate can be changed by a two-thirds vote.

8. Motions in Ascending Order of Precedence

9. Only one main motion may be on the floor at a time, but more than one secondary motion may be on the floor. When any of the motions on the following list is the immediately pending motion (i.e., the last motion made), any motion listed below it on the list can be made at that time and any motion above it on the list cannot be made at that time. Pending motions must be disposed of in descending order of precedence.

10. Main Motion - introduces business to the assembly for its consideration. A main motion can only be made when no other motion is pending. A main motion yields to privileged, subsidiary and incidental motions.

11. Subsidiary Motions - change or affect how the main motion is handled (voted on before the main motion)

a. Postpone Indefinitely - made when the assembly does not want to take a position on the main question. Its adoption kills the main motion for the duration of the session and avoids a direct vote on the question. It is useful in disposing of a poor motion that cannot be either adopted or expressly rejected without possibly undesirable consequences. Unlike other subsidiary motions, debate on the motion to postpone indefinitely can go into the merits of the main motion.

b.  Amend - changes the wording of the main motion before it is voted upon. An amendment must be germane to the main motion. Its acceptance does not adopt the motion thereby amended; that motion remains pending in its modified form. Rejection of an amendment leaves the pending motion worded as it was before the amendment was offered. An amendment can: delete words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs; strike out words, phrases or sentences and insert new ones; add words, phases, sentences or paragraphs; or substitute entire paragraph(s) or the entire text of the motion and insert another.

    i.  When an entire motion is substituted for another, the chair must first call for a vote on the Motion to Substitute to determine the advisability of substituting a new motion. If the Motion to Substitute passes, the chair then throws the Substitute Motion open to debate. The Substitute Motion in turn must be voted upon, and is subject to amendment. Note: There is no provision in Robert's Rules for a "Friendly Amendment." The only way a motion can be modified without a vote, after it has been stated by the Chair, is with the unanimous consent of the members present.

c.  Secondary Amendment - An amendment can be offered to an amendment (amendment of the second order). Amendments of the third order are not permitted.

d.  Refer (Commit) - sends a pending motion to a standing committee, or to an ad hoc (special) committee to be appointed or elected, for consideration. The motion to refer may include instructions to investigate, recommend, or take action, and may specify the composition of the committee.

e.  Postpone Definitely (Postpone to a Certain Time) - delays action until a certain time specified in the motion (not beyond the next regular business meeting).

f.  Limit or Extend Debate - is used (1) to reduce or increase the number or length of speeches permitted or (2) to require that debate be closed at a specified time. It requires a two-thirds vote.

g.  Previous Question ("Call for the Question") - immediately closes debate if passed. Requires a second and a two-thirds vote.

h.  Lay on the Table - enables the assembly to lay the pending question aside temporarily when something else of immediate urgency has arisen. It is not debatable. A motion to lay on the table is out of order if the evident intent is to avoid further consideration of the motion. Frequently when one indicates a desire "to table" a motion, the correct motion is either to Postpone Indefinitely or Postpone Definitely.

12. Privileged Motions - do not relate to the pending business but have to deal with urgent matters which, without debate, must be considered immediately.
    a. Call for the Orders of the Day - requires the assembly to conform to the agenda or to take up a general or special order that is due to come up at the time ("time certain"), unless two-thirds of those voting wish to do otherwise. A member can interrupt a speaker to call for the orders of the day.
    b. Raise a Question of Privilege - permits a request or main motion relating to the rights and privileges of the assembly or any of its members. Examples include requests relating to members' ability to hear a speaker or a request to go into "executive session" (closed session). A member may interrupt a speaker to raise a question of privilege.
    c. Recess - used to request an intermission which does not close the meeting.
    d. Adjourn - used to close the meeting immediately. Not debatable.
    e. Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn - sets the time, and sometimes the place, for another meeting ("adjourned meeting") before the next regular business meeting to continue business of the session.
13. Incidental Motions (Questions of procedure that arise out of other motions and must be considered before the other motion)
    a. Point of Order - used when a member believes that the rules of the assembly are being violated, thereby calling on the chair for a ruling and enforcement of the rules. A member can interrupt a speaker to raise a point of order.
    b. Appeal - used to challenge the chair's ruling on a question of parliamentary procedure. A member can interrupt a speaker to appeal from the decision of the chair.
    c. Suspend the Rules - used to make a parliamentary rule or special rule of an organization temporarily inoperative. The motion cannot be applied to the constitution and bylaws unless those documents include specific provisions for suspension. Normally requires a two-thirds vote.
    d. Withdraw - permits the maker of a motion to remove it from deliberation after the motion has been stated by the chair. If there is not unanimous consent, the motion is debated and voted upon.
    e. Point of Information - requests to the chair, or through the chair to another officer or member, to provide information relevant to the business at hand. A point of information must be in the form of a question. A request for information regarding parliamentary procedure or the organization's rules bearing on the business at hand is referred to as a Parliamentary Inquiry.

f. Objection to the Consideration of a Question - suppresses business that is irrelevant or inappropriate and undesirable to be discussed. The objection must be made immediately (acceptable to interrupt a speaker). Does not require a second, is not debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote opposed to consideration in order to pass.

g. Division of a Question - divides a motion containing two or more provisions that can stand alone so that each provision can be considered and voted upon separately. Not debatable.

h. Division of the Assembly - used to demand a rising vote to verify the vote count. The motion can be made without obtaining the floor, does not require a second, is not debatable, and does not require a vote.

14. Main Motions That Bring a Question Back Before the Assembly

a. Take from the Table - resumes consideration of a motion laid on the table earlier in the same session or in the previous session. Not debatable.

b. Reconsider - reopens a motion to debate that has already been voted upon in the same session. The motion to reconsider can only be made by a member who voted on the prevailing side. It suspends action on the motion to which it is applied until it has been decided. It cannot be postponed beyond the next regular business session.

c. Rescind (Annul or Repeal) or Amend Something Previously Adopted - repeals or amends a motion for which it is too late to reconsider. Normally requires a two-thirds vote of those present or a majority vote or the entire membership; however, if previous notice has been given then only a majority vote of those present is required. A motion to rescind cannot be applied to action that cannot be reversed.

15. Voting

a. Majority vote - defined as more than half of the votes cast by those present and voting (i.e., excluding abstentions) unless the organization's rules specify otherwise (e.g., majority of those present, or majority of the entire membership)

b. Two-thirds vote - defined as at least two-thirds of those present and voting, unless otherwise specified by the organization's rules. Examples of motions that require a two-thirds vote: to close, limit, or extend debate; to suspend the rules; to amend the constitution and bylaws; to close nominations; to remove an officer or expel a member; or to object to the consideration of a motion.

c. Voting by the Chair - except when there is a ballot vote, the chair only votes when his/her vote would affect the result.

d. Methods of Voting

i. Voice vote - method normally used

ii. Show of hands or rising vote - used to verify an inconclusive voice vote or on motions requiring a two-thirds vote

iii. Ballot - normally used for election of officers and when ordered by a majority vote

iv. Roll call vote - used when it is desired to have a record of how each member voted. Can be ordered by a majority vote unless the organization's bylaws specify otherwise.

e. Proxy voting is prohibited unless specifically provided for in the charter or bylaws.

Recommended Books
- Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, Tenth Edition, 2000
- Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, In Brief, 2004
- The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules, Nancy Sylvester, 2004
- Robert's Rules for Dummies, C. Alan Jennings, 2004

Recommended Web Sites
- www.robertsrules.com
- parliamentarians.org
- www.rulesonline.com
- www.parlipro.org

# BASIC GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Meetings can be unfocused, boring and are sometimes called unnecessarily. This does not mean meetings are inherently valueless, but indicate they are often poorly planned. A meeting is not an end in itself, but a vehicle to help you reach a goal. Meetings help a group determine courses of action. If the facilitator starts with a careful plan and finishes with a thorough follow-up, the meeting will run smoothly.

The following are some tips to help you make your meetings successful, productive and fun:

1) Purpose of Meeting
   a) Give members a chance to discuss and evaluate goals and objectives and develop courses of action.
   b) Keep members updated on current events.
   c) Provide opportunities for the group to communicate and promote group cohesion.
   d) Allow the organization to pull resources together for decision-making and plan implementation.
   e) Ensure members are aware of their importance to the group. Ask for opinions and ideas.
   f) Solve problems.

Meeting Preparation

Before you call a meeting, you must ask yourself whether you have to call it at all. Sometimes a group-wide e-mail or a few simple conversations can accomplish the same thing more easily. If you decide you need to have a meeting, then you must plan carefully. This is your most important step as a meeting leader.

**Physical Setting** - Remember to reserve a room, arrange for any special equipment and have a plan for putting the room back in order after the meeting is finished.

**Agenda** - Defines the purpose of the meeting. The agenda should not be overly ambitious, but should address all items necessary for the meeting. Agendas may include; Approval of Agenda with any additions or retractions, Correction and Approval of Minutes; Announcements; Treasurer's Report; Committee Reports; Unfinished Business; New Business; Special Issues/Concerns; Adjournment

**Distribution** - Distribute the agenda and any other pertinent other information (e.g., articles or relevant policies) to members prior to the meeting (perhaps by e-mail) so they can review and be prepared to discuss items. Also, make sure members know where and when the meeting is to take place.

<u>During the Meeting</u>

Attitude

- Greet members and make them feel welcome.
- Get people excited about the meeting! Show your enthusiasm. Make it fun and enjoyable.
- As a leader, be a role model. Listen, show interest, appreciation and confidence in members. Respect people's feelings and acknowledge constructive contributions. Head off private conversations that are irrelevant to the topic at hand.
- Be professional and courteous. Allow everyone the chance to contribute.

Atmosphere

- When possible, have light refreshments. This helps people relax and breaks the ice.
- Encourage group discussion and feedback on all discussion topics. You will have better decisions and highly motivated members that help shape the organization and the activities if they have participated in the process.
- Keep conversations focused. As gently and tactfully as possible, end discussions when they are unproductive or becoming detrimental.
- Recognize, recognize, recognize - Congratulate members who have done something great in the organization, on campus or elsewhere. Celebrate significant holidays, birthdays, organizational accomplishments, etc. Be creative and have fun with recognizing your members.

Agenda

- Appoint someone to keep minutes of the meeting for future reference.
- Start on time and end on time. Be mindful of other people's time.
- Review the agenda, and then stick to it.

Accomplishments

- Get done what you need to get done. The average person's attention span is 23 minutes, so it's a challenge.
- Work for consensus.
- Summarize agreements reached and end the meeting on a positive note by asking members to express things they thought were good or successful.

Adjourn

- Conduct and collect a meeting assessment/evaluation (if you have one).
- Set a date, time and place for the next meeting.
- Collect any sign-in or sign-up sheets.

- Close the meeting with a strong positive statement. Thank the group and acknowledge their efforts.

After the Meeting
- Write up and distribute minutes within the next few days.
- Discuss any problems from the meeting or the assessments/evaluations with other officers. Work on solutions and implement them at future meetings.
- Follow-up on delegated tasks and ensure members understand and fulfill their responsibilities. Give recognition and appreciation to excellent and timely progress.
- Put unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting.

# Event and Meeting Planning

Below are some steps to think through for the planning of and preparing for a successful event. The first step is to determine why you are putting on the event. Some questions that may help you clarify what you are doing and why include:

- What do you want to achieve by having this program?
- What are your organizational goals and how will this event help you meet them?
- What do you, as the planners, want to get out of this experience?
- Is there a current need or an interest in this program area?
- Are other similar programs being offered?
- Has a similar event been held in the past?
- What was the response?
- Are your members enthusiastic about organizing this event?
- Is organizing this program worth your members' time?
- Is there enough time to thoroughly organize, publicize and promote the program so that it will be successful?

Once you have satisfactorily answered these questions, planning the program is really quite easy if you follow these five simple steps:

1. Identify Needs
2. Develop Program Goals and Objectives
3. Organize Program Plans
4. Implement Plans
5. Evaluate the Event

Some General Tips on Program Planning

- Begin planning early. Planning programs a semester in advance will help you reserve space and navigate the event approval process quickly.
- In the ideal program, everything runs so smoothly that the participants may see little evidence of pre-planning or behind the scenes work.
- Don't compromise on details or settle for second best.
- Don't assume anything or allow situations to continue that make you uncertain or nervous. Meet all problems head-on, sensitively and firmly.
- People support what they help create-so involve as many people as meaningfully as possible in the planning process.
- Usually something goes wrong-but if you're properly prepared and avoid panicking, almost any problem can be solved.

# Basic Event Planning and Meeting Checklist

BEFORE THE MEETING

__ Reserve meeting room

__ Arrange room to accommodate group and ensure that the space is accessible

__ Prepare and send out a meeting agenda

__ Contact committee members for reports

__ Prepare handouts/print copies of agendas and previous minutes

__ Prepare necessary visual aids

__ Reserve audio/visual equipment

__ Pick up snacks (if desired)

__ Invite guests/Confirm attendance


AT THE MEETING

__ Greet all members by name

__ Sign-in Sheet

__ Start the meeting on time

__ Introduce guests/new members

__ Conduct meeting

__ Stick to the agenda

__ Who will greet latecomers?

__ Keep order

__ Hand out materials

__ Announce time/place of next meeting

__ Other announcements

__ Track assignments


WHEN YOU ARE THE ATTENDEE AT A MEETING

__ Confirm location and time the day before the meeting

__ Review the agenda and prepare any questions or concerns

__ Be on time and prepared

__ Stay focused on the discussion

IF YOU HAVE A SPEAKER

__ Be sure to give the speaker directions and parking information
__ Select a well-qualified speaker
__ Brief speaker ahead of time as to the audience, subject, time limit
__ Speaker should provide a biographical outline ahead of time for their introduction


AFTER THE MEETING

__ Clean up
__ Collect unused material
__ Return equipment
__ Follow up on committee assignments


Not all Section events have to be formal or technical in nature. In fact, it's wise to have events of varying formats, sizes, scopes, and times of day to accommodate for a wide range of schedules, technical and professional interests, and job obligations. Sections are encouraged to hold a range of events throughout the year. Some examples may include:

- Formal technical meetings with a lecturer
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meetings with a speaker
- Presentation by a local engineering company, university department, or government laboratory
- Tutorial sessions
- Social events (pizza parties, picnics, barbecues, etc.)
- Campus events (activity fairs, career fairs, etc.)
- Young professionals networking events involving the local community and industry
- Professional development events covering non-technical topics (entrepreneurship, mentoring, resume writing, etc.)
- Industry-focused networking or professional events (job fairs, information sessions, startup collaboration, etc.)
- Events centered around generating awareness of women in engineering or encouraging women to pursue STEM fields of study
- Networking events (happy hours, brainstorming sessions, icebreakers, etc.)
- Competitions, hack-a-thons, etc.
- Membership drives
- Promote industry-based events and organize events at the premises of interested industries.
- Balance academic and industry topics, even at the same meeting.
- Stay connected to the local community, recruit hometown speakers, especially from industry and particularly those who have presented at major conferences.

If you'd be interested in an event, it is likely someone else may be too! Be creative and take advantage of Optica resources as well as your local community and leaders. A speaker could be anyone from a local industry leader, to a student with a recently-published work, to a co-worker, to a Traveling Lecturer. Optica staff are happy to help and offer suggestions regarding event planning.

## Publicizing Your Events

- Social Media: Create social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) for your Section to share news and events with your members and beyond. Here is a great primer on social media.
- Work with Optica staff to include event information on the Optica local sections website, newsletter, and social media.
- Flyers: Post and distribute paper flyers, where allowed, around your local neighborhood, campus, or place of employment. Make sure to include event details and contact information.
- Place an ad in a local newspaper.
- Get your events covered in a local newspaper, blogs, and social media forums.
- Additionally, if your event has already occurred, Optica is happy to share content and photographs from Local Section activities. If you would like assistance in promoting your event through Optica channels, contact the Membership Program Specialist, Drew Thomas, at dthomas@Optica.org

## Successful Leadership Transition

Benefits
1. Provides for transfer of significant organizational knowledge.
2. Minimizes the confusion of leadership changeover.
3. Gives outgoing leaders a sense of closure.
4. Utilizes the valuable contributions of experienced leaders.
5. Helps incoming leadership absorb the special expertise of the outgoing leadership.
6. Increases the knowledge and confidence of the new leadership.
7. Minimizes the loss of momentum and accomplishment for the group.

Checklist of Suggested Tasks for Outgoing Officers
- Create and update a Transition Binder, either in hard copy or digitally, throughout the entire year.
- Organize your office, materials, thoughts, etc.
- Finish all correspondence that you can.
- Prepare an end-of-the-year report incorporating the organization's goals, activities, and accomplishments.

- Using the invaluable hindsight that you now have, identify the areas of responsibility, people, details, phone numbers, etc. that you wish someone had told you when you took office.
- Review the Section's by-laws, written material, and goals and outline any areas needing attention or revision.
- Incorporate a formal transition into your bylaws to ensure the continuity and effective functioning of the organization.
- When new officers have been elected, orient them together as a group with all of the outgoing officers. Include the organization's advisor in this process as well. Try going on a retreat together. This process provides the new leaders with an opportunity to understand each other's roles and to start building their leadership team. Outgoing officers should openly share what they believe went well and what they would change if they had it to do over again.
- Make introductions to key resources and people.
- Do not "drop off the edge of the earth" - be available for consultation.

Checklist of Suggested Tasks for Incoming Officers
- Read Transition Binder and previous executive reports. Become familiar with the general history of the organization and its recent activities. Remember you need to know all of the little details as well as the big picture.
- Determine training and guidance you will need from the outgoing officers. This may not always be obvious, (e.g., it may be necessary for an incoming President to meet with the outgoing Treasurer).
- Make a list of the above information (general history, recent activities, goals, procedures, etc.) you might need to know to be successful.
- Try to generate more than one resource for each item that you want to learn about.
- Make appointments with key people.

## How to start a New Optica Local Section

Step 1

Recruit at least eight Optica Members who represent the diverse optics and photonics community in your city/area/region. Potential members may join online or email localsections@Optica.org to request to join as a group with a single transaction.

Optica staff can reach out to local community to identify Optica Members in your area on your behalf to set up an initial meeting and/or gauge interest in starting a section.

Step 2: Elect Officers.

The local Section must have a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary who are current Optica Members.

- Commitment from Officers is two years
- Officer Terms start 1st January through 31st December

Your section may also establish additional officer roles, such as Outreach Officer, and elect members to these positions.

Step 3

Submit the Optica Local Section Application.

When completing the application, it is important that the section demonstrates planned activities and a consideration of professional diversity for its membership.

Ensure the boxes stating that you accept the 'Statement of Intent' and the 'By-Laws' are checked.

Email your application to localsections@Optica.org .

If you have questions about this process or difficulty completing the application form, please e-mail localsections@Optica.org .

Step 4

How to Submit Application and Timeframe to Submit / Review Period

Submit application to localsections@Optica.org .

Once the application is submitted, the Chief Membership Engagement Officer will review and either approve or deny the application.

- If denied, feedback will be given and the local Section will have the opportunity to make any adjustments and reapply
- If approved, local Section officers will receive an email with information on how to start organizing their local Section, and receive additional materials.

Review of new local Section applications occurs quarterly. Review and confirmation may take up to four weeks. Please utilize the below chart to understand when you will hear about the status of your application.

- Applications received 1 January through 31 March will be notified no later than 1 May
- Applications received 1 April through 30 June will be notified no later than 1 August
- Applications received 1 July through 30 September will be notified no later than 1 May
- Applications received 1 October through 31 December will be notified no later than 1 February

Status updates can be requested by emailing localsections@Optica.org