

## POLICY STATEMENT

### Functional Area: Affinity Groups

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Related Policy:</b>   | <b>None</b>                     |
| <b>Effective Date:</b>   | <b>3/28/2017</b>                |
| <b>Approved by:</b>      | <b>NORDP Board of Directors</b> |
| <b>Responsible Body:</b> | <b>Board of Directors</b>       |

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### I. POLICY STATEMENT

The NORDP Board of Directors, upon request from the membership, may organize groups of members in order to advance NORDP's mission, purpose, goals, and initiatives. These groups may be organized along geographical or thematic lines. All such groups will be considered committees without corporate authority within the meaning of Article VI of the NORDP Bylaws. Affinity groups are responsible to NORDP and must follow the Bylaws and other governing policies of NORDP.

### II. DEFINITIONS

#### A. REGIONAL GROUPS

Regional groups consist of NORDP members whose research development activities are based in a specific geographic area. NORDP has defined the following regions for demographic purposes in registering members. The region names, and the states and countries associated with each region may change over time. Current regions (as defined on the NORDP website) are:

1. Northeast
2. Atlantic
3. Southeast
4. Great Lakes
5. Midwest/Mountain
6. Southwest
7. Pacific

International members are assigned to the region closest to their institutional or organizational address.

Any of these regions may request to form a regional group. Other geographic areas, either larger or smaller than these regions, may request to form a regional group if there is sufficient interest from the membership in the region. Absent a specific determination by the Board that such a request is warranted, no request for a regional group will be considered for a geographic area smaller than a single U.S. state or territory.

#### B. THEMATIC GROUPS

Thematic groups consist of NORDP members with common areas of training or interest within the field of research development, irrespective of geographical location. Thematic groups may include, but are not necessarily limited to, groupings of NORDP members whose professional interests lie in the following areas:

1. Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions
2. Historically Black Colleges and Universities

3. EPSCoR States
4. University Foundation Relations/ Not-for-Profit Organizations
5. Commercial
6. Government

NORDP members may participate in multiple thematic groups.

### **III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A. NORDP**

In addition to services provided to individual NORDP members, the national organization can provide the following oversight and services to its affinity groups, upon request and approval by the Board of Directors:

1. Separate listservs through NORDP MemberClicks email server dedicated to each approved affinity group
2. Posting on the NORDP website of affinity group meetings and activity summaries, in accordance with NORDP's communication policy.
3. Access to NORDP's association management services for registration and payment software for affinity group meetings
4. Access to NORDP association management services for on-line meeting platforms (e.g., WebEx) and group teleconferencing for official affinity group business
5. Meeting space for affinity groups as part of the annual NORDP conference
6. One or more Board member liaison(s) assigned per group for purposes of communication and coordination of activities
7. Access to NORDP's MemberClicks or Qualtrics subscriptions for surveys.

#### **B. Affinity Groups**

Affinity groups must adhere to all NORDP Bylaws and Policies. Each group is also responsible for the following:

1. Creation, maintenance, and updating of the group's policies and procedures. A copy must be transmitted to the NORDP secretary whenever any such document is approved or modified by the group's leadership. Affinity groups may not promulgate their own bylaws independent of the Bylaws approved by the NORDP Board of Directors nor operate independently of NORDP.
2. Providing regular communication between the group's leadership and the Board liaison(s) to the group
3. Preparing an annual budget for review and approval by the Board of Directors.
4. Assistance in recruiting new members to NORDP
5. Encouraging group members to serve on appropriate NORDP committees and/or to run for election to the NORDP Board of Directors
6. Alignment of the group's educational, professional development, and other initiatives with those of NORDP
7. Arranging and conducting an annual meeting or other event of the group in conjunction with the annual NORDP conference
8. If so desired, hosting at its own expense at least one additional meeting or other event during the year at a location most convenient for group members and potential members. The group is responsible for charging an attendance fee sufficient to cover the costs for the site, meals, accommodations, and speaker fees, as well as the cost of using NORDP's registration software and credit card payment processing for the group meeting or event. Non-NORDP members who attend these meetings will be charged an additional fee per meeting or other event; this additional fee will revert to NORDP and may, at the Board's discretion on a case-by-case basis, be reserved for future activities of the group in question.

9. Providing explicit opportunities for newer, less-experienced members for professional growth and leadership positions in NORDP through participation and presentations in the group's meetings and other activities.
10. Providing NORDP with written reports, suitable for posting to the NORDP website and social media platforms, of all group meetings or activities.
11. Reimbursing the national organization for the costs of using NORDP's MemberClicks or Qualtrics subscriptions for surveys or other group purposes.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES**

##### **A. Board Recognition**

A NORDP member representing at least fifteen (15) individuals with some affinity in common shall present a written request for recognition of the group to the Board of Directors. This request must include, at a minimum, the following information:

1. Representative name and contact information for the proposed affinity group
2. Proposed affinity group name
3. The focus of the affinity (e.g., geographical, professional, organizational). Note that requests for a geographic group representing an area smaller than a single U.S. state or territory will normally not be considered unless the group presents a strong argument for why a smaller geographic focus is likely to advance one or more of NORDP's strategic goals or priorities.
4. Draft policies, including statement of purpose
5. Assurance that the affinity group will adhere to NORDP Bylaws and Policies
6. Signature of the affinity group's representative and a list of names and contact information for at least 15 individuals supporting the application

The Board will respond within sixty (60) days of any such request with its decision and any potential conditions to be met before recognition is granted.

##### **B. Dissolution**

1. Upon written request signed by at least two-thirds of the members of an affinity group after due notice was given consistent with the provisions of Article XII, Section B of the NORDP Bylaws, the NORDP Board of Directors shall consider a resolution to dissolve the affinity group presenting the request. Members of the affinity group, whether in favor of or opposed to the dissolution, shall have the right to present relevant information to the Board in advance of its consideration of such a resolution of dissolution, and may, at the Board's discretion, be heard at the meeting when the Board considers the resolution.
2. Once dissolved, any remaining assets (including, but not necessarily limited to, survey results or other intellectual property) of such a group shall revert to the national organization, and members shall no longer have any right to present or comport themselves in any way as a NORDP affiliate, though members of the dissolved affinity group who are also members of the national organization will continue to enjoy the usual and customary privileges of membership in NORDP.
3. No new petitions for the formation of an affinity group similar in size, theme, or purpose to a dissolved affinity group will be considered by the Board of Directors until at least one full calendar year has passed since the date of the Board's resolution dissolving the original affinity group.

### C. Suspension

1. If any affinity group is found (1) to have acted in any way inconsistent with this policy, with other applicable NORDP policies and procedures, or with the NORDP Bylaws, or (2) to have failed, for a continuous period of one fiscal year, to meet the responsibilities described above in Section III.B, it shall immediately be given notice by the Board of Directors that a resolution suspending the group's authority to operate as a NORDP affinity group will be considered by the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting, or at a special meeting called for this or for any other legitimate purpose, subject to the notice provisions of Article V, Section D of the NORDP Bylaws. Members of the affinity group so notified shall have the right to present relevant information to the Board in advance of its consideration of such a resolution, and may, at the Board's discretion, be heard at the meeting when the Board considers the resolution. An affinity group may not be suspended for more than one calendar year from the date the Board approves the resolution of suspension, but the term of the suspension is otherwise left to the discretion of the Board.
2. Once suspended, all assets (including, but not necessarily limited to, survey results or other intellectual property) of such an affinity group shall revert to the national organization to be held in trust, and members shall no longer have any right to present or comport themselves in any way as a NORDP affiliate, though members of the suspended affinity group who are also members of the national organization will continue to enjoy the usual and customary privileges of membership in NORDP, subject to the disciplinary provisions of Article III, Section F of the NORDP Bylaws.
3. Once the suspension period determined by the Board has passed, an affinity group may request reinstatement as a NORDP affiliate from the Board of directors, upon presentation of credible evidence that the issues which led to the suspension have been satisfactorily resolved and a written request signed by at least one-third of the members (or at least fifteen (15) persons, whichever is greater) of the affinity group. At the Board's discretion, members of such an affinity group may be heard at the meeting when the Board considers the request for reinstatement. If the NORDP Board of Directors agrees to reinstate the suspended affinity group, the national organization shall return to the affinity group the assets held in trust for it by the national organization during the period of suspension, and the reinstated affinity group may again enjoy the privileges and benefits described herein.
4. However, if (1) no request for reinstatement of a suspended affinity group is received by the Board of Directors within six (6) calendar months after the end of the suspension period, or (2) after due consideration the Board finds that the evidence presented that the issues which led to the original suspension have been satisfactorily resolved is either insufficient or insufficiently credible, or (3) the Board finds, after due consideration, any other reason not to reinstate a suspended affinity group, the said affinity group shall then be dissolved by the Board of Directors in accordance with the procedure described above in Section IV.B.

*Approved by the Board of Directors at its regular meeting March 28, 2017.*