

Guidelines for Working Groups

Purpose and Function of Working Groups:

FIRT/IFTR regards WGs as major drivers of research and networking within the Federation (and a significant membership benefit) and is keen to encourage and support them. In return, WGs recognise that they exist under the aegis of IFTR and are expected to operate transparently, and to co-operate fully with conference organisers and the federation's administration. Moreover, for purely practical reasons there is a limit to the provision (space, time) that conference organisers can provide for WGs. The guidelines below are motivated by a desire to facilitate the formation and effective functioning of the WGs. The Federation organizes its WGs into five categories for conceptual clarity on the website: Drama in/and Performance, Methodologies, Performing Practices, Stage Forms, Theatre and Cultural Studies.

The Federation aims to have a maximum of 24 working groups at any one time.

I. Setting Up a New Group:

- A. **Initial Steps:** Any group comprised of five or more FIRT/IFTR members may request permission for an initial meeting by applying in writing to the Executive Committee and designating a convener. The group will be scheduled to meet at the next official conference of the Federation and will be allowed to issue a call for papers and members.
- B. **Formal Recognition:** If the group decides, following the initial session, that it wants to apply for formal status as an official WG, it should submit a formal application to the Executive Committee consisting of the following:
 - Names of ten or more members representing three or more countries
 - A mission statement (that will be placed on the website) and a work plan for the first four years which will include plans to meet at upcoming conferences, and group outputs during this time which may include publications, conferences beyond the official FIRT conferences, web-based dissemination, exhibitions, etc.
 - The names of no more than two designated Conveners who will take responsibility for the group, one of whom must be designated as the lead convener for the upcoming conference. Conveners are elected and serve for four years. They may be re-elected.
- C. **Approval:** The Executive Committee will vote on the application, assign new groups to one of the WG governing categories, and notify the Group's convener(s) of the decision in writing.
- D. **Election of conveners:** Conveners must be elected by the members of their group and may serve for up to four years. They may be re-elected.
- E. **Periodic Review:** After four years, the Group will be reviewed by the Executive Committee, according to a rotation fixed by the Ex Com and the Organization Administrator. Groups will be asked for a written report on their activities and outputs during the previous period, and if they wish to continue, for a revised mission statement (if appropriate) and a new four-year plan.

II. Holding Official Meetings of WGs

- A. Usually working groups will meet at least once a year – preferably in conjunction with the yearly FIRT/IFTR conference. Since the groups will be involved in on-going development of their particular topic it is understood that they do not need to adhere to the yearly conference theme.
- B. Working Group sessions at annual conferences are a fully legitimate participation in the conference, equal to giving a paper in the general sessions. The Federation recognizes this by publishing names and abstracts of WG members in the official conference program. (See III.B below for Conveners' role in supporting this policy.)
- C. Groups may elect to hold additional meetings in connection with other conferences or at other times and places that suits their membership. These should be advertised through the official FIRT website and calls for papers posted (contact the Organization Administrator).

- D. Three or four groups will be invited each year to present a panel of papers showcasing the groups' research to the main conference. In this case, groups are encouraged to address the conference theme whenever possible. Groups may also ask to present such a panel in years when their work is particularly suited to such presentation. The Conference Organizers shall have final decision-making power over which and how many of these special panels can be accommodated.
- E. Time Limitations: The maximum time that can be set aside by conference organizers for WG meetings is ten hours. To be entitled to ten hours of meeting time at an annual meeting, WGs must have ten people participating in the group's sessions. Less than ten people will be allocated five hours of meeting time. (Convenors may ask for assistance from the conference organizers in securing additional meeting time outside the official conference program.)
- F. Following the annual conference, WGs are asked to prepare a short report on their official meetings (one page) to be placed on the website (beginning in 2006).
- G. Membership: Only duly registered members of FIRT can belong to a WG, and members MAY NOT offer papers in more than one group at any annual conference.

III. Communications between WGs and the Organization

- A. The Convenors of the WGs are responsible for maintaining ongoing communication on behalf of their group with three levels of FIRT administration. The Vice-President for Working Groups is the central oversight officer designated to manage the working group structure and cooperate directly with the WGs' leadership.
- B. It is the responsibility of each Working Group to keep its website information up to date; groups not responding to requests to do so may be put under review, with all their information removed from the IFTR website. The Organization Administrator will be the WGs' contact for web-based information posting and correction, and will notify and work with the convenors of Groups scheduled for review (see I.C above). The Conference Organizers will require the Convenors to provide information about the WGs intentions to meet, names of WG members attending, and will expect assistance in obtaining the appropriate abstracts and ensuring proper registrations take place.
- C. Convenors are expected to work closely with conference organizers to ensure that speakers/titles/abstracts are submitted on time and to provide members with any documentation concerning their participation and membership in the WGs that may be required by their home institutions either in connection with conferences or with academic reviews.

IV. Dissolution of WGs

- A. Any group may self-dissolve by notifying the Executive Committee in writing of their decision to do so.
- B. Any group that does not meet for two consecutive years at an IFTR annual conference will be considered defunct.
- C. Any group that does not submit their four-year renewal report within six months of the official request shall be considered defunct, and removed from the website.
- D. The Executive Committee may find the Report unsatisfactory for stated reasons and disband the group.
- E. The Executive Committee may also disband groups for cause in between review periods, after consultation with the WGs leadership.

V. Executive Committee Authority

The Executive Committee is the final authority over the operation and functioning of the Working Groups.