# Sample Chapter Bylaws

These sample bylaws are a distillation of what many Sigma Xi chapters have found workable. They may not suit your chapter's needs precisely. For instance, in addition to the executive and membership committees, your chapter may wish to establish other committees, such as a committee on government relations; the sample bylaws makes that optional. Or you may want to make the chair of the membership committee a member ex officio of the chapter's executive committee. You may wish to further refine the duties of the chapter's officers.

Material in brackets is for your guidance; do not include it in the text of your bylaws.

In all matters, the chapter must act in harmony with the principles and procedures of Sigma Xi and its constitution. Sigma Xi’s [constitution](https://www.sigmaxi.org/about/organization/constitution)[[1]](#footnote-1) and [bylaws](https://www.sigmaxi.org/about/organization/bylaws) specifically addresses the requirements of chapters; refer to them as you draft your bylaws.

Finally, for chapters in formation, adopting bylaws presents a good opportunity for teamwork and for putting real thought into the direction your chapter will take. Make the process as inclusive as you can without getting bogged down in micro-managing or excessive editing. And don't forget to provide a copy to the national office.

## Article I: Name

The name of this organization is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_chapter of Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Honor Society (or the Society).

## Article II: Purposes

The purposes of this chapter are to:

1. Support the policies and goals of the Society as set forth in Article 1 of the Sigma Xi constitution, and in all matters act in harmony with the principles and procedures of the national Society and its constitution;
2. Encourage original investigation in science, pure and applied. The fields of activity of the Society and chapter are the pure and applied natural sciences. In general, these include the physical sciences, the life and agricultural sciences, the earth sciences, the medical sciences, mathematics and engineering. The activities of the Society and chapter shall be those appropriate to the objective of the Society and particularly those set forth in the Society Bylaws;
3. Protect and advance the professional status and interests of all chapter members;
4. Facilitate the dissemination of information on scientific research principles and practices;
5. Inform the scientific community about Sigma Xi’s standards and policy statements; and
6. Develop necessary and proper chapter programs for the accomplishment of the aforementioned purposes.

In furtherance of the purposes described above, but not in limitation thereof, the chapter shall have power to conduct studies, to disseminate statistics and other information, to engage in appropriate fundraising activities, to conduct promotional activities, including advertising and publicity in or by any suitable manner of media, to hold such property as is necessary to accomplish its purposes, and to employ individuals to further its purposes under Article II. This chapter is organized and operated for the above stated purposes, and for other nonprofit purposes. No part of its assets, income, or profits shall be distributable to, or inure to the benefit of, any individual, except in consideration of services rendered.

## Article III: Members

Eligibility for membership in this chapter shall extend to all active and inactive members who are national members of Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Honor Society (or the Society), and will not exclude associate or student members. All chapter members may vote in chapter matters.

## Article IV: Officers and Organization

The officers of the Society shall be a President, a President-elect, an Immediate Past President, a Treasurer and an Executive Director. Terms of office shall commence on 1 July of the year next following election, and shall continue for a period of one year for the President, President-elect and Immediate Past President, and for a period of four years for the Treasurer, or until their successors have been elected and qualified. **Succession**: Upon the expiration of the term of the President, the President-elect shall become the President, the President shall become the Immediate Past President and the Immediate Past President shall become the most recently retired President. **Vacancies:** Vacancies in the Office of President, President-elect, Immediate Past President or Treasurer shall be filled in a manner prescribed in the Bylaws.

**President:** The president should reside over chapter activities, take responsibility for appointing delegates to the Annual Meeting and respond on behalf of the chapter to non-routine requests, inquiries, or opportunities from Sigma Xi Administrative Offices or the Board of Directors.

[Chapter presidents are encouraged to arrange an informal exchange of information with other chapters in your region. The Annual Meeting and especially the Regional Assemblies, provide one such occasion for such contact. However, chapter presidents should arrange similar contacts and informal exchanges of information on a regular basis. For example, one or more officers from neighboring groups may be invited to installations, initiation banquets, or visits by Sigma Xi lecturers. In planning the annual program of activities it may be desirable for program chairpersons from neighboring groups to share past experience and coordinate future activities (e.g. in sharing the expense of a Sigma Xi lecturer who can visit each group in turn on a single visit). Periodically, chapters get into short-term or long-term difficulties, which could be eased by help from neighboring groups. Such help may begin very simply by an informal meeting of officers over a meal. One problem in maintaining and establishing such contacts is, of course, the frequent changes of chapter officers. However, Sigma Xi Administrative Offices can provide contact information for chapters on the [Chapter Listing](https://www.sigmaxi.org/chapters#locatechapter) page. Alternately you may contact [chapters@sigmaxi.org](mailto:chapters@sigmaxi.org) for additional information.]

**President-Elect**: In the absence of the president of the chapter, the president-elect assumes the responsibilities of president. Therefore, it is essential that these two officers maintain close communication on the operations of the chapter in order to provide for smooth operation of the group in the president's absence.

In addition, the president-elect will also serve as the program chair for the chapter, and in this capacity will initiate and carry out the chapter's activities for the year.

In undertaking this responsibility, the president-elect will be familiar with the activities that have been sponsored by the chapter in the past. The president-elect will explore new activities for the chapter that may be of interest to the group's membership.

[Unfortunately, in far too many chapters, the president-elect, as program chair, merely repeats the programs of the previous year. In doing so, however, these individuals may miss opportunities that are available to their chapter for interaction and program activities with other groups (e.g., local schools, museums, college administrators) who may be interested in cooperating with the collective body of research scientists that is represented by a chapter.]

**Secretary**: The secretary of a chapter is responsible for maintaining the regular flow of information to and from other officers, the membership and Sigma Xi Administrative Offices. Sigma Xi's Administrative Offices invites chapter secretaries to call for assistance if they have any questions that relate to the performance of their duties. Often a quick telephone call to Sigma Xi Administrative Offices, 800-243-6534, or e-mail [chapters@sigmaxi.org](mailto:chapters@sigmaxi.org), can save considerable time for a chapter secretary. Also, it is important to remember that many forms can be accessed through this site in the [Officer Resource Center](https://www.sigmaxi.org/chapters/officer-resource-center) section.

The following are some of the matters involving communications between Sigma Xi Administrative Offices and chapter secretaries:

**Annual Reports**  
Chapter secretary will submit the Annual Report. The submission period will start on **July 1 each year**. The report, covering the Society's year from July 1 to June 30, should be received at Sigma Xi's Administrative Offices by August 15. If Sigma Xi's Administrative Offices do not receive an Annual Report by early September, the chapter's September Local Support payment will be withheld and mailed in January with the January local support money. If an Annual Report is received after March 1, a written explanation will be requested from the chapter to justify the retroactive payment of Local Support.

**Delegates to the Annual Meeting**

Chapter secretary informs Sigma Xi's Administrative Offices of the chapter's designated (voting) delegate to the Annual Meeting. Representation at an Annual Meeting at least once in the last three years is one of the requirements of each chapter in order to receive Local Support payments. Local Support will be withheld, if a chapter is not so represented.

**Initiations and Promotions**  
Chapter Secretary is responsible for sending to headquarters the membership certificate order forms, fees, and nomination forms for all individuals who will be initiated or promoted. These items should be accompanied by a check for the total amount of fees required.

The election of at least one new member during the past two years is required of academic groups to receive Local Support payments. Local Support will be withheld from groups failing to do so.

[Non-academic groups, such as those associated with government laboratories must show evidence, usually on their Annual Report, of activities sponsored by the group that encourage students to seek careers in science, mathematics or engineering, in lieu of such elections.]

**Treasurer**: The treasurer is responsible for all matters involving the transfer of funds between the chapter and headquarters.

**Treasurer Report:**

Each year, the treasurer will submit the Treasurer Report to Sigma Xi’s administrative office. An online form for the report will be available during the submission period.

**Local Dues**  
Chapter treasurer must notify Sigma Xi Administrative Offices if the chapter wishes to have collect local dues collected on its behalf.

**Local Support Payments**  
The treasurer receives Local Support payments from Sigma Xi Administrative Offices. These payments are mailed to the designated treasurer.

[If a treasurer is not designated, then the checks are mailed to the president of the chapter. Alternately the chapter may use the direct deposit option. The chapter bank name, address, routing number and account number can be forwarded to [finance@sigmaxi.org](mailto:finance@sigmaxi.org) to take advantage of the direct deposit option.]

## Article V: Dues

## The chapter may establish chapter dues. The treasurer must notify Sigma Xi Administrative Offices if the chapter wishes to have collect local dues collected on its behalf. An e-mail is sent to chapter officers in November asking them to let Sigma Xi Headquarters know by December regarding local dues for the next fiscal year.

## Any chapter dues will be established by a secret ballot vote conducted among voting chapter members. The vote may be conducted either by mail ballot or, after reasonable notice, at a regular or special membership meeting. Chapter members must pay current Sigma Xi dues, any mandatory conference dues, and chapter dues.

## Article VI: Committees

### A. Executive Committee

The executive committee shall consist of the elected officers of the chapter, the immediate past president, and two members elected at large. The majority of the executive committee shall constitute a quorum for conduct of business of the committee. The executive committee shall assume responsibility for the chapter's continuing effective presence at the institution, keeping all positions on the executive committee filled as vacancies occur. The executive committee shall:

1. Meet regularly

2. Respond to chapter members seeking assistance

3. Conduct the business of the chapter between meetings

4. Regularly recruit members and encourage maintenance of membership

5. Make necessary appointments to complete an unexpired term of any officer

6. Set the agenda with appropriate notice for chapter meetings and

7. Consult regularly with the Society on matters of mutual interest

### B. Membership Committee

The membership committee shall regularly recruit new members and encourage the maintenance of membership. Working with the treasurer and other applicable chapter officers, the committee shall promote the establishment of a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ plan and other appropriate plans to encourage membership recruitment and maintenance.

### C. Other Committees

The chapter may create additional standing and ad hoc committees as necessary to promote the welfare of the chapter. The chair and members of these committees shall be appointed by the executive committee. Some such committees may be, but are not limited to:

* Status of women and minorities
* Professional ethics
* Sigma Xi relationships with colleges and universities
* Elections, dues, and chapter organization
* Sigma Xi relationships with local, state, and federal governments
* Chapter participation in college and university activities
* Economic status of the profession

## Article VII: Meetings

The chapter shall hold regular meetings at least \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ per year.

Special meetings of the chapter may be called by the president or a majority of the executive committee. Written notice of such meetings shall be provided to each member by the secretary of the chapter at least \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ days in advance of the meeting date. The president shall call special meetings of the chapter within \_\_\_\_\_\_ days of being so directed by the executive committee or by a petition signed by \_\_\_\_\_ percent of the members.

The quorum required for the transaction of business at all meetings of the chapter shall consist of \_\_\_\_\_\_ percent of the members.

## Article VIII: Dissolution

A chapter cannot cease to exist by voluntarily surrendering its charter; action by the Board of Directors and others is required. Upon revocation of the chapter, its assets shall be distributed to the Society, a charitable organization.

## Article IX: Inactive/Dormant Chapter status

If a chapter dissolves or is out of good standing for 5 years, any and all funds, which were the direct result of local dues and chapter support must be returned to the Society as outlined below:

1. If a chapter dissolves or is out of good standing for 5 years, the chapter must make notification to Chapter Services thereof and return a check, made payable to “Sigma Xi,” in the amount of chapter funds to the Society and if chapter funds are held in the society’ main account for the chapter. All returned funds shall be transferred to the chapter revitalization fund by the society treasurer.

2. If a chapter dissolves or is out of good standing for 5 years and its chapter funds are maintained by and comingled with an educational or commercial entity, which also provided chapter financial support, a fair division of funds will be mutually agreed upon by the chapter, the educational or commercial entity and the Society.

3. If a chapter dissolves or is out of good standing for 5 years and reactivates within the next 5 years, the Society will return to the chapter the original funds returned by the chapter, in an amount not to exceed $5,000.

4. If a chapter dissolves or is out of good standing for 5 years and remains dormant for the next 5 years or more, then reactivates, the chapter will have forfeited its returned chapter funds. At the time of reactivation, the Society will, however, work with the chapter to provide support to spur reactivation.

## Article X: Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by majority vote of the members, provided that a notice setting forth the proposed amendment or amendments an explanation thereof and known objections thereto shall have been sent to each member at least \_\_\_\_\_\_ days prior to the vote. Any member of the chapter may initiate an amendment.

## Article XI: Organization of the Society: Chapters

The units of the Society are chapters. The chapters participate in the governance of the Society in the manner and to the extent set forth in Sigma Xi’s [constitution](https://www.sigmaxi.org/about/organization/constitution) and [bylaws](https://www.sigmaxi.org/about/organization/bylaws), which in turn govern the acts, duties, responsibilities and privileges of the chapters. Chapters may adopt the above such bylaws as are appropriate for their governance, provided such bylaws do not conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Society. Procedures governing the establishment and conduct of chapters and for the affiliation of active members therewith are set forth in the [bylaws](http://www.sigmaxi.org/about/organization/bylaw.shtml).

Enacted this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_in the year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. Depending on your version of MS Office, you might not be able to directly open the link. In which case, please right click the hyperlink, copy the link and past in your browser. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)