



Best Practices for Chapters

- Encourage active participation in activities run by your chapter and SfN
- Hold a professional development activity at least once a year
- Hold a public outreach and education event at least once a year
- Conduct at least two business meetings every year
- Utilize SfN resources on Neuronline and participate in the Chapters Workshop at the annual meeting
- Engage in public advocacy efforts (in accordance with applicable governmental regulations)

Chapter Financial and Funding Administration

- Email [SfN's Membership Department](#) prior to soliciting funds to determine whether the supporter made an earlier commitment to SfN (this is a must).
- Seek matching funds for support from various foundations and local companies.
- Include all foundations, companies, and noninstitutional contributors that support SfN chapter activities in the Annual Report.
- Soliciting chapter donations:
 - Share with potential donors a list of activities needing sponsorship, such as travel awards, receptions, meetings, poster sessions, Brain Awareness Week activities, etc. Include details on sponsorship pricing.
 - Develop a list of benefits organizations would receive in return for their donation, such as acknowledgment in event marketing materials, name recognition, etc.
 - Prepare a legal contract ([Donation Letter of Agreement Template](#)) binding the institution to the commitment after an institution has agreed to make a donation. Include:
 - Sponsorship amount, including the duration of sponsorship
 - Date sponsorship amount is due
 - Details on sponsorship benefits
 - Permission for chapter to use company logo for any advertisement related to sponsored activity
 - Rights of both the institution and chapter in regard to said activity
 - Liability if activity is cancelled or postponed
 - Options in renewing sponsorship from institution
 - Overall, make the case that donations contribute to the education and development of neuroscience and the community.

Chapter Financials FAQ

Is my chapter required to file an annual return in the United States?

Yes, all U.S. chapters must comply with all federal [nonprofit filing requirements](#). Current federal regulations are as follows:

Status	Form to File	Instructions
Gross receipts normally ≤ \$50,000 Note: Organizations eligible to file the <i>e-Postcard</i> may choose to file a full return	990-N	User Guide for Form 990-N
Gross receipts < \$200,000, and Total assets < \$500,000	990-EZ or 990	Instructions
Gross receipts ≥ \$200,000, or Total assets ≥ \$500,000	990	Instructions
Private foundation - regardless of financial status	990-PF	Instructions

All 990s (EZ, N, or regular 990) must be filed every year by the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of your tax year. Note that you should file your forms directly with the IRS. A copy must be provided to SfN, with a statement verifying that it has been submitted to the IRS.

The chapter is also required to comply with state and local reporting requirements. It is the responsibility of the chapter representative to know the requirements and ensure the chapter is complying with these requirements. While SfN does not request a copy of these records, the chapter representative must verify that these requirements have been met when submitting the annual report.

I lead an international chapter, what are our reporting requirements?

SfN requires international chapters to follow all applicable national/regional/local laws in their country. Furthermore, SfN requests a copy of any tax submissions to be included in the Annual Report.

How can my chapter get a federal EIN?

All U.S. chapters will need to apply for a federal EIN if either the old federal EIN is no longer valid (from disuse) or your chapter has never had one. Chapters outside the U.S. do not require an employer identification number (EIN). Chapter leadership is responsible for applying for a federal EIN from the IRS. Directions can be found on their [website](#). When selecting 'organization type', please select 'Other Non-Profit/Tax Exempt Organizations'. Once your chapter has received your federal EIN, submit it to chapters@sfn.org with a request to be added to SfN's 501c3 as a subordinate to receive non-profit status with your EIN.

Can my chapter file under another institution's federal EIN?

No, chapters may not file under a different institution's federal EIN. The chapter must file under the federal EIN that is a subordinate to SfN. If your chapter has previously filed under a different federal EIN, provide a copy of this tax submission to chapters@sfn.org and request a new federal EIN. Chapters outside the U.S. do not require an employer identification number (EIN).

What financial records are my chapter required to maintain?

The chapter representative is responsible for maintaining, keeping on file, and passing along all records when there is a change in leadership. While some of these records may be available from the SfN chapters department, it is not guaranteed. Chapters are responsible for maintaining these records within their chapter. This includes all applications to become an organization in your state, bylaws, organization returns (all years' Form 990s), the Chapter Agreement with the Society for Neuroscience.

The chapter representative is responsible for submitting their [chapter annual report](#) to SfN once every two calendar years. One requirement is completing the section regarding chapter finances. The chapter is responsible for reporting: all income to the chapter, including grants from SfN fundraising; member dues; in-kind support; all expenses for chapter-sponsored events; and the remaining balance.

What if the chapter has been inactive?

If you are reactivating a chapter, complete the [chapter reactivation form](#) , and request the federal EIN from chapters@sfn.org to restart your chapter's financial records. The chapter representative will be responsible for gathering state and local information and beginning the process complying with all requirements.

Member Recruitment and Engagement

Target Students

- Share job opportunities within the field, scientific findings, and other updates.
- Volunteer to speak to college groups.
- Contact college career centers and student advisers to share new developments in the field and participate in college student job fairs.
- Co-sponsor events on campus or offer internships.

Establish a strong and active governance group

- Encourage members to volunteer for chapter leadership.
- Ensure leadership transitions are smooth.

Foster member contributions

- Ask members for their opinions.
- Use surveys to gather information on preferences and why they joined the chapter.
Use meeting time wisely.
- Keep meetings short and effective.
- Adhere to an agenda to ensure meetings are concise and well-prepared.

Collaborate with others

- Join with other programs to co-sponsor [Brain Awareness Week](#) and other activities.
- Ask successful chapters what works; start a discussion thread on [Neuronline's](#) Chapter Community.
- Look outside the neuroscience community; faculty/students who have a science background outside neuroscience may attend lectures/seminars.

Guidelines for Chapter Governance

SfN recommends these actions to govern your chapter:

- Hold at least one meeting per year.
- Reappoint or elect a chapter representative by a majority vote of the membership yearly.
- Chapter representatives should serve terms no longer than three consecutive years. At the end of the three-year term, members must elect a new chapter representative by a majority vote.
- Adopt an organizational structure that includes a president or chairperson, secretary, and treasurer.
- Elect officers by a majority of votes. Bylaws should define election procedures.
- Appoint/elect a council or committee to help with special programs and activities.
- In times of leadership transition, ensure outgoing and incoming officers work together to exchange important information, including any existing files and establishing a “training period” for the new officers.

Chapter FAQ

Does SfN have my chapter's roster for membership?

Each chapter is responsible for maintaining the roster of participating members. SfN may have a copy of your chapter's roster if provided within your chapter's annual report. These rosters typically do not have contact information for each individual.

Can SfN provide me with contact information for members in my chapter's region?

SfN cannot provide contact information for its members. If you would like to send an eblast to notify SfN members in your area about an upcoming activity or your chapter in general, please email chapters@sfn.org and provide all of the ZIP codes you are interested in capturing and the message to be included. In this message, chapter representatives are welcome to request contact information from SfN members interested in receiving communication from their local chapter.

Does SfN have copies of my chapter bylaws?

Chapters are responsible for maintaining a copy of their bylaws as well as ensuring that their bylaws are passed on to the succeeding chapter representative. SfN may have a copy of your chapter bylaws if they were submitted to chapters@sfn.org.

Can my chapter use the SfN logo and where can I find it?

An active chapter may use the SfN logo for any chapter-related activities, such as a Brain Awareness Activity.

Email chapters@sfn.org for approved logo files.

Technology Services Offered by SfN

E-newsletter:



SfN sends a quarterly chapters e-newsletter to all chapter representatives.

Email chapters@sfn.org to have your chapter news published in this resource.

Chapter eBlasts

Chapters are able to request SfN to distribute information regarding chapter news and events to local SfN members via e-mail. E-mail Blasts traditionally include annual chapter meeting details, chapter lectures, and chapter outreach activities. Please note that all requests must be submitted by an official chapter representative or chapter officer with chapter representative approval.

Requests should include the text for the body of the e-mail message, a subject line for the message, a contact person for the information in the e-mail, any relevant attachments (e.g. a PDF), and the zip codes or range of zip codes in which the members who are to receive the message reside. Please note the text and attachments are subject to approval. Chapter eBlast requests must be sent to chapters@sfn.org.

SfN Chapter eBlast Guidelines

To ensure fairness to all subscribers, SfN has established guidelines and operations for all eBlast submission requests. Please confirm that your correspondence meets our standards below before submitting your request.

Contact chapters@sfn.org if you have general questions about our policies.

Submission Formatting

- Submit text in an **attached Word document**.
- Provide a suggested **subject line** for your email blast.
- Provide a **reply-to email address** affiliated with your institution or organization. Mass emails dispatched from Gmail, Yahoo, and other domains often filter as spam. As a result, all subsequent correspondence sent by SfN may be filtered as junk mail.
- Provide a **sender name**, usually is the name of your Chapter.
- Images can be inserted into the body of text, though we may edit this copy for clarity, length, and structure. Please attach the image files to your email request. Do not append them to the attached Word document.
- You will receive one preview of the email to review.
- We **cannot** transmit any attachments in our email blasts, such as PDF files.
- We **can** include hyperlinks to your event page, program, or website. Include them in the Word document.
- If possible, please provide a branded header measuring 600 pixels long and 100 pixels high. This will be positioned at the top of the email blast. See the example below. Note, an SfN header will not be used.



- Identify your specific SfN geographic region and/or target audience. Include the **postal codes** for the areas you would like to reach.

Submission timing

- Provide a **five-day date range** within which you would like your email sent. You **may** also select a particular send date within this time frame. While we strive to fulfill all requests, please understand that SfN may adjust your communication date if it conflicts with our internal email calendar. We will notify you with necessary changes as soon as possible.
- Please send email requests at least **five business days** prior to the earliest desired send date.
- **Blackout dates:** SfN **cannot** send member messages **four weeks preceding** or **one week following** our annual meeting.
- SfN will not send more than one chapter message within a two-week period and may need to adjust the timing if multiple requests are received. We will accommodate Chapters on a first come, first served basis.

Chapter Quick Links

Chapters Main Page: <https://www.sfn.org/Membership/Chapters>

Chapters Directory: <https://www.sfn.org/Membership/Chapters/Chapter-Directory>

Chapter Resources: <https://www.sfn.org/Membership/Chapters/Resources-for-Chapters>

Start A Chapter: <https://www.sfn.org/Membership/Chapters/Start-or-Reactivate-a-Chapter>

Next Generation Award: <https://www.sfn.org/Outreach/Awards/Next-Generation-Award>

NeurOnLine:
<https://www.sfn.org/Initiatives/Neuronline>

Chapters Website Map

Resources for Chapters: <https://www.sfn.org/Membership/Chapters/Resources-for-Chapters>

- Best Practices for Chapters
- Chapter Financial and Funding Administration
- Chapter Representative Responsibilities
- Chapter Management Workshop Presentation
- Guidelines for Chapter Governance
- Member Communications
- Member Recruitment and Engagement
- Contact

Chapter Directory: <https://www.sfn.org/Membership/Chapters/Chapter-Directory>

Submit Annual Report: <https://www.sfn.org/Membership/Chapters/Submit-Annual-Report>

Start or Reactivate A Chapter:
<https://www.sfn.org/Membership/Chapters/Start-or-Reactivate-a-Chapter>

- Start a Chapter
- Reactivate a Chapter
- Contact