Iota Sigma Pi

National Honor Society for

Women in Chemistry

Starting a New Chapter

**Operations Guide**

March 18, 2025

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Introduction

The Iota Sigma Pi Operations Guide for starting a new chapter is meant to complement the Rules and Regulations and the Constitution and Bylaws. Descriptions of the responsibilities of the petitioning group required for the smooth startup and installation of a new chapter are included. The specific steps that must be taken to produce a complete petition packet may be found within this document. The petition document template is included at the end of this file.

Chapters include members recruited from within as well as beyond the university/college environment. Members may be from universities/colleges, industry, government, secondary schools, and other professions.

This document should be used as a guide. Close attention should be paid to the submission of required documents to ensure a complete packet has been submitted to the National Vice President. An incomplete petition packet will delay the process.

This process may take some time from the time the petitioner(s) requests information about starting a new chapter to final approval and installation of the chapter. The petitioner collects all necessary documents to forward to the National Vice President, who will review for completeness of the petition packet. When the National Vice President deems that the petition packet is complete, copies are shared with the National Council for review and approval.

The acting chapter liaison is strongly encouraged to communicate with the National Council via the National Vice President for assistance.

## **Part A – Minimum Requirements: Brief Summary**

1. A minimum of six women and/or non-binary scientists (i.e., students, faculty, business professionals from industry and government or any mix thereof, two of which are not students), who are members or who qualify for membership may petition for a charter. Qualifications for membership and application forms may be found on the website: https://www.iotasigmapi.org/membership.
2. An acting chapter liaison to be in charge of arrangements for obtaining the charter should be named. This is normally the slated president. She/they will communicate with the National Council through the National Vice President and will handle all correspondence for the chartering process. If the liaison is a student, she/they must provide the name of a permanent faculty or staff member who will serve as the Faculty Liaison for the chapter. This will ensure stability of the chapter.
3. Petitioners must provide **one original and one electronic copy (as a .pdf)** of the final petition with proper signatures to the Vice President. Copies should include the signed petition (with signatures of all charter members, which may exceed the minimum number required to petition as noted in #1 above, and the proposed name of the chapter), and supporting paperwork.
4. The petition should include general information on the region from which the members will come (colleges, universities, research institutes, government entities, and chemical industries). The petition should include at least one paragraph describing the element chosen to represent the chapter and a reason why it was chosen. This will be included in the Society’s History. If the chapter is to be headquartered at a specific academic or industrial institution, a proposed descriptive plan for **how** the charter members will reach out to other institutions and chemists in the area to recruit for members must be included.
5. Letters of recommendation for the establishment of the chapter from Department Chairs and Deans of local area universities and colleges and Industrial Department Leaders and/or Managers from industry and/or government are strongly recommended to be included with the petition.
6. The Vice President will review the petition and, if complete, share copies with each member of the National Council for approval.
7. Chapter Officers (descriptions detailed in the Rules and Regulations) must be selected prior to the installation and initiation ceremony. The visiting National Council member will install the officers at this ceremony.
8. **CONTACT the National Vice President** for details before submitting any material.

The National Vice President must receive the above information and documentation of the **final complete** petition AT LEAST three months prior to when you plan to have your official installation ceremony. National Council must have time to review and vote on your petition, membership applications must be processed and certificates made and sent out, and plans made for a member of the National Council to attend your initiation and installation ceremony.

Part B – Petitioning Group

Requirement and Responsibilities

1. Contact the National Vice President for details before submitting any material.

2. A minimum of at least six women and/or non-binary scientists (including the six officers), who may be students, faculty, business professionals, two of which are not students, must sign the petition.

3. An acting chapter liaison to be in charge of arrangements for obtaining the charter should be named. She/they will communicate with the National Council through the National Vice President and will handle all correspondences for the chartering process. If the liaison is a student, she/they must provide the name of a permanent faculty or staff member who will serve as the Faculty Liaison for the chapter.  This will ensure stability of the chapter.

4. Petitioners must send **one original and one electronic copy (as a .pdf)** of the final petition (with all the proper signatures) to the Vice President. See petition form at the end of this file.

**Petition Packet: Template included at the end of this file**

1. The petitioning group shall select a name from names of chemical elements or binary compounds not in active or inactive use. (If reactivating a chapter, the inactive chemical element name may be used.)

a. The name shall be part of the petitioning document.

(1) Go to the Iota Sigma Pi website for the list of current chapter names.

(2) Choose either the Latin or English name (if applicable) for the element or binary compound.

b. The petition should include at least one paragraph describing the element chosen to represent the chapter and a reason(s) why it was chosen. This will be included in the Society’s History.

2. The petition should include general information on the region from which the members will come (colleges, universities, research institutes, government entities, and chemical industries). The region should be a defined geographic area.

3. The petition must include a clear descriptive plan of how the group will be recruiting members for the chapter.

4. Letters of recommendation for the establishment of the chapter from Department Chairs and Deans of local area universities and colleges and Industrial Department Leaders and/or Managers may be included with the petition.

5. Petitioners must provide **one original and one electronic copy (as a .pdf)** of the final petition with the proper signatures to the National Vice President. Copies should include the signed petition (with signatures of all charter members and proposed name of the chapter) and supporting documents.

6. The National Vice President must receive the above information and documentation AT LEAST three months prior to when the official installation ceremony is planned. The National Council must have time to review and vote on the petition, membership applications must be processed and certificates made and sent out, and plans made for a member of the National Council to attend the initiation and installation ceremony.

 Part C – Post Approval of Petition and Chapter Installation

1. Chapter officers (descriptions detailed in the Rules and Regulations) must be selected prior to the installation and initiation ceremony.

4. The expenses of the installing officer shall be paid by the National Treasury. Expenses would include travel, overnight stay if required, and meals. Attempts will be made to minimize expenses in all categories. Prior approval by the National Treasurer is strongly encouraged. The mileage reimbursement rate will be the current one approved by the National Treasurer.

5. Expenses other than those for the installing officer are the responsibility of the petitioners.

**Part D – Instructions for Preparations for Installation**

**Recommended preparations by new chapter**

1. Notification of installation of new chapter

a. Invite university president, provost, deans, dept chairs, officers from local honor societies and several newspapers/media.

(1) Provide great visibility

(2) Handwritten invitations on high quality paper & hand delivered would make a good impression

b. If available as a press release for newspapers (school and local) and for general audiences after chapter president makes address (see below), would be (1) easy for someone to quote correctly and possibly include an article in a paper or campus brochure; (2) Also be a good souvenir for charter members.

2. Keep ceremonies formal to stress their importance and emphasize the honor function of the society:

a. Have flowers and candles (represent ΙΣΠ colors: white, gold, dark green)

b. Have refreshments

c. After chapter president is installed, she should give an official address stating goals and plans for the chapter

d. Charter members sign the back of the charter (provided by the National Council). If not thick enough, sign paper stating they are charter members and tuck sheet in frame behind the charter for posterity.

*Following the initiation ceremony, the Chapter President handles closing remarks.*

PETITION FOR NEW CHAPTER

We, the undersigned, wish to start a new chapter of IOTA SIGMA PI. The new chapter will invite qualified students and professional women and/or non-binary chemists to join. We have included supporting paperwork as stated in the guidelines: (1) General information on the region from which the members will come, (2) Description of the element chosen and why it was chosen, (3) Proposed plan to reach out to other institutions and chemists in the area if the chapter is headquartered at a specific academic or industrial institution, (4) Letters of recommendation from Department Chairs and Deans of local area university or colleges and Industrial Department Leaders and/or Managers.

Signed 

 Acting Chapter Liaison Date

Signed 

 Sponsor, if Acting Chapter Date

 Liaison is a Student

# Current Iota Sigma Pi Members

Name (Print) Name (Signature) Date

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

# Prospective Professional Members

Name (Print) Name (Signature) Date Affiliation

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

# Prospective Student Members

Name (Print) Name (Signature) Date Affiliation

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

 

If necessary, continue on a separate sheet.

 Provide general information on the region from which the members will come (colleges, universities, research institutes and chemical industries). The region should be a defined geographic area.

 Select a name from names of chemical elements or binary compounds not in active or inactive use to represent the chapter. Go to the Iota Sigma Pi website for the list of current chapter names. Decide between either the Latin vs. English name (if applicable) for the element or binary compound. Include a description of the element chosen and why it was chosen. This will be included in the Society’s History.

 Propose a clear descriptive plan of how the group will reach out to other institutions and chemists in the area if the chapter is headquartered at a specific academic or industrial institution. Provide at least three specific activities.

a. If the petition originates from an academic location, the plan should include procedures in place to recruit members from outside the academic area.

b. If the petition originates from a nonacademic location, the plan should include procedures to recruit potential members from academics.

 Letters of recommendation from Department Chairs and Deans of local area universities or colleges and Industrial Department Leaders and/or Managers (attach to this document) are recommended to be included.