

ISAAC FACILITATED COMMUNICATION (FC) COMMITTEE

Information on New Submissions to be Considered

The ISAAC Executive Board (EB) and the Facilitated Communication (FC) Committee have received a considerable amount of feedback to our February 2013 communication to the membership on the FC initiative. The EB would like to take this opportunity of thanking our members for their insightful and constructive input into this process. Given the number of questions received, the EB is taking the opportunity of providing this additional information to our membership in the form of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document.

Q: What documents about Facilitated Communication (FC) will be considered in the review that informs the development of the draft ISAAC Position Statement on FC?

A: The FC Committee will consider the following types of submitted documents:

- published peer reviewed reports on FC
- unpublished reports on FC
- written anecdotal reports on FC
- qualitative reports on FC
- any other written evidence on FC

Q: Can these documents be submitted in any language?

A: ISAAC International would like to be able to accept documents for consideration in any language. Given that our organization's official working language is English, this is also the language that the FC Committee is conducting their review. Unfortunately, ISAAC International does not possess the financial resources or volunteer capacity that would allow for translation of documents from other languages into English, which is why we are requiring submissions to be in English.

Q: Will videos be included in the review that informs the draft ISAAC Position Statement on FC?

A: Video evidence is not included in the review. There are two primary reasons for this decision, namely:

- Professional video recording and editing capabilities today are widespread, easy to use, and within the financial reach of even the most modest budget. This means that video recordings could very easily be edited or recorded in such a way as to promote one conclusion over the other in this review, without the FC Committee's knowledge.
- Video recordings show only what is in the camera's field of vision. It is possible that important evidence that should be included in the review would be missed, if it took place "off camera". Not having the ability to be present at the time that the video recordings were made means that the FC Committee would not have access to any of this type of additional information if relevant, which could lead to a potential "skewing" of results.

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Q: Have the goals of the FC review changed since the original announcement?

A: No, the original goals of this review have remain unchanged. The Executive Board of ISAAC International initiated this process to provide our membership with a scientifically-based review and assessment of the current literature and data related to FC, in response to continuing inquiries about FC as a communication strategy.

Q: What is the time-frame of the review?

A: The review will include consideration of relevant documents that are dated up to April 15th, 2013 (the deadline for submissions is April 30th, 2013)

Q: Why is there a time-frame on dating and submission of documents to be included in the review??

A: The FC Committee needs to have a starting point, in order to consider all of the evidence submitted in light of any prior submissions, so as to arrive at a full consideration of the evidence. Please provide a date of the document (e.g., March, 2011) and an author and any affiliation of the author, pertaining to the document. If the date or author are unknown, please indicate this by noting 'no date' or 'author not identified', as appropriate.

Q: What if I have new documents to submit after April 15th, 2013?

A: Any documents that are relevant, but that are only available after April 15th, 2013 may be submitted to ISAAC. These documents will not be included in the current review, but will be maintained for any additional reviews subsequent to the work of the Committee.

Q: What is the closing date for submissions of documents?

A: The deadline for submitting materials that are to be included in the review (dated up to April 15th, 2013) is April 30th, 2013.

Q: Why have these dates been selected?

A: These dates have been selected so that the FC Committee can provide the ISAAC EB with its completed draft document by the extended target date of October 18th, 2013.

Q: I have previously submitted documents – does ISAAC still have them? Do I need to submit them again?

A: If you have already submitted documents, these are being kept for the purposes of the review and will be included for consideration. There is no need to submit them again.

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Q: After the Committee completes its review, what are the next steps?

A: Once the Committee completes its work, they will present a draft Position Statement to the Executive Board (extended target date of October 18th, 2013 as noted earlier). At this point, ISAAC will also release the names of the Committee members. At that point, the work of the Committee will be completed.

It will then be up to the ISAAC Executive Board to review the work of the Committee, make any additional comments it deems appropriate, and then release the document to the ISAAC membership. There will then be ample opportunity for the members of ISAAC to provide its input and feedback into the released document. All submitted feedback will be carefully reviewed, considered and evaluated, prior to the ISAAC Executive Board presenting a finalized draft document to the ISAAC Council for consideration.

This means that if people are currently working on gathering evidence about the use of FC, there is no time imperative for the work to be completed for the release of the initial draft document. Indeed, the nature of evidence is that it is continually being created, and should continually inform any full consideration of the issues arising in any field of AAC, not just FC.

Q: Who do I get in touch with if I have additional questions or comments?

A: You can always get in touch with our Executive Director, Franklin Smith, by email at franklin@isaac-online.org.