



The Participation and Support of People Who Use AAC  
on ISAAC and ISAAC Chapter Boards and Committees

March 1, 2012



# Welcome from the ISAAC International Office

Thank you for taking time out of your personal and professional life to provide your talent and expertise in service to ISAAC. Through your volunteer service, everyone benefits: ISAAC, **People Who Use AAC** (PWUAAC), professionals who serve PWUAAC, families of PWUAAC, and most of all, you!

Committee work can be very demanding and complex, while at the same time being productive, enjoyable, and rewarding. Your contribution is vital to the work of ISAAC and has a direct impact on the lives of PWUAAC and individuals who support them.

Please familiarize yourself with this document. It contains the following important information:

- Information Needed by PWUAAC Prior to Serving on Boards or Committees
- The Rights and Responsibilities of PWUAAC serving on Boards or Committees
- The Responsibilities of People Serving on Boards or Committees with PWUAAC
- Recommendations for Supporting People Serving on Boards or Committees
- ISAAC Positions and Procedures for Ensuring Participation of PWUAAC on Boards or Committees
- ISAAC Positions and Procedures for Ensuring Participation of PWUAAC on Boards or Committees in ISAAC Chapters
- ISAAC and Chapter Collaboration for Ensuring Participation of PWUAAC on Boards and Committees in ISAAC Chapters

ISAAC looks forward to working with you.

## **Information Needed by PWUAAC Prior to Serving on Boards or Committees**

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Prior to nomination for service on a Board or Committee, the Executive Director or Committee Chair has the responsibility to communicate, clearly and specifically, the following information to the PWUAAC in order for the person to make an informed choice about serving on the Board or Committee.

**Time Commitments:** The time it takes a PWUAAC to complete assignments and duties far exceeds that of other Board or Committee members; however, time commitments expected for the PWUAAC should not exceed those expected of other Board or Committee members. The PWUAAC, as well as all other nominees, needs to be informed prior to nomination of the following time commitments:

- Participating in face-to-face meetings (e.g., 4-6 days/calendar year, excluding travel time).
- Participating in conference calls (e.g., 1 hour/month, plus preparation time).
- Completing assignments and duties (e.g., 3-5 hours/month).
- Responding to telephone calls and email (e.g., 1 – 2 hour/month).
- Conducting AAC activities, such as International AAC Awareness Month (e.g., 1 – 2 days for the events).

**Financial Commitments:** Volunteer positions generally come with many hidden expenses. The PWUAAC, as well as all other nominees, needs to be informed prior to nomination of the following financial responsibilities of ISAAC vs. the nominee for the following:

- Attendance at face-to-face meetings (e.g., funded 100% by ISAAC).
- Costs for conference calls (e.g., funding 100% by ISAAC).
- Costs for technology or materials needed to complete ISAAC assignments or duties, such as computer software, office supplies, postage, etc. (to be determined).

**Assignments and Duties:** The PWUAAC generally assumes the responsibility for assignments and duties that promote participation of PWUAAC in ISAAC. The PWUAAC needs to be informed, in detail, of specific responsibilities with Committee recommendations. For example, a PWUAAC considering a position on

the Executive Board needs to know that he/she will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Management of all activities of the LEAD project.
- Coordination of International AAC Awareness Month activities.
- Efforts to increase membership of PWUAAC in ISAAC.
- The awarding of scholarship funds to PWUAAC for attendance at the biennial conference.
- The acceptance of presentation submissions by PWUAAC to the biennial conference.

The PWUAAC considering an Executive Board position must be advised that these are significant tasks and that any Board member can only tackle these tasks with the help of others, such as AAC professionals from within the ISAAC community who have insight, expertise, or experience in the tasks.

- The PWUAAC should be advised he/she would need to solicit volunteers to help him/her with assignments and duties, identifying at least 1 – 2 people to assist him/her with each of the assigned tasks and duties.
- The Executive Director or Committee Chair should provide the PWUAAC considering serving on the Board or Committee with names of volunteers who can assist the PWUAAC.
- Other Board or Committee members should consider assisting the PWUAAC with assignments and duties.
- No new assignment or duty should be given to the PWUAAC without adequate volunteers and supports already in place to help with that new assignment or duty.

### **The Rights and Responsibilities of People Who Use AAC Currently Serving on Boards or Committees**

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A Board or Committee Member who uses AAC has the **right** to:

- *Have* a support person at all meetings to assist that member, as needed, in reading/reviewing materials, communicating on behalf of the member if so requested by the member, and in any other tasks deemed necessary by the member.
- *Grant* his/her support person access to board or committee materials privy to the member who uses AAC.

- *Receive* all board or committee materials in sufficient time to prepare for meeting and/or complete any assignments or duties.
- *Receive* all board or committee materials in an accessible format.
- *Receive* sufficient time and external supports to complete required assignments and duties.
- *Request* that assignments and duties be assigned to other, more appropriate board or committee members, as agreed upon by the board or committee.

A Board or Committee Member who uses AAC has the **responsibility** to:

- *Provide* information, if needed and desired, about physical or sensory conditions of the member who uses AAC that influence his/her opportunity to participate in Board or Committee activities or perform Board or Committee duties or assignments.
- *Inform* all Board or Committee members (or guests attending a meeting), regarding the member's communication abilities, including, but not limited to specific ways the member who uses AAC communicates, the speed/pace of communication, and communication partner strategies that facilitate efficient communication.
- *Inform* all Board or Committee members regarding external supports needed to complete assignments and duties, including, but not limited to, professional support, technical support, and logistical support.
- *Participate* in face-to-face and conference call meetings of the Board or Committee.
- *Request* assistance and supports at, during, and after the meeting, as needed.
- *Acknowledge* communications concerning Board or Committee work by the requested deadline.
- *Arrive* at face-to-face and/or join conference call meetings on time.
- *Be prepared* for meetings.
- *Complete* all assignments in accordance with agreed upon timelines.
- *Maintain* a professional demeanour.
- *Advocate* on behalf of ISAAC.

## The Responsibilities of People Currently Serving on Boards or Committees with PWUAAC

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All Board and Committee Members have the responsibility to:

- *Provide* sufficient time for the member who uses AAC to communicate before, during, and after a Committee or Board meeting.
- *Inquire* during face-to-face meetings or conference calls whether the member who uses AAC has anything to add before moving on to another topic.
- *Assist* the member who uses AAC, as requested, to manage physical materials during a Committee or Board meeting, including, but not limited to turning the pages of an agenda, report, or proposal being used during a meeting.
- *Provide* an accessible copy of notes or minutes, in a timely manner, to the member who uses AAC of any Committee or Board meetings.
- *Provide*, if requested, an accessible copy of any material presenting verbally, including, but not limited to personal notes, presentations, speeches, or reports.
- *Welcome* multiple methods for communication at face-to-face and conference call meetings, including, but not limited to speech, augmented devices, writing, and online chat boxes, text messages, etc.

The Executive Director of the Board and/or Chair of the Committee has the responsibility to:

- *Provide*, at least 1 – 2 months in advance, an agenda for any face-to-face Board or Committee meeting to allow the PWUAAC (and any guests who use AAC) to prepare activity and project reports and/or comments for the meeting.
- *Provide*, at least 1 – 2 weeks in advance, an agenda for any Board or Committee conference call meeting to allow the PWUAAC to prepare notes, update reports, and/or comments for the meeting.
- *Inform* the PWUAAC of any specialized technology that is needed to participate in Board or Committee activities, including, but not limited to,

computer software programs (e.g., Skype, **GoTo**Meeting, Web-X, Excel, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Screen Reader).

- *Schedule* all face-to-face meetings in accessible venues.
- *Confirm* the availability of accessible transportation at face-to-face meeting sites.

## **ISAAC Positions and Procedures for Ensuring Participation of PWUAAC on Boards and Committees**

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1. The ISAAC Executive Board will work with the ISAAC Council to ensure that the ISAAC bylaws include language that guarantees participation by PWUAAC.
2. ISAAC should have a minimum of one member who uses AAC on the Executive Board.
3. ISAAC should have a minimum of one member who uses AAC on the ISAAC Council.
4. All ISAAC committees, sub-committees, and short or long-term project teams should have a minimum of one member who uses AAC.
5. ISAAC shall provide at least one leadership workshop for PWUAAC at each biennial conference.
6. ISAAC shall provide leadership support, including mentoring opportunities, to PWUAAC who are new Board and/or Committee members.

## **ISAAC Positions and Procedures for Ensuring On-Going Participation of PWUAAC on Boards and Committees in ISAAC Chapters**

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1. Each ISAAC Chapter should have bylaws that include language that guarantees participation by PWUAAC.
2. Each ISAAC Chapter should have a goal of a minimum of one member who uses AAC on their Executive Board.
3. Each Chapter of ISAAC should have a goal of a minimum of one person who uses AAC on their Board of Directors.

4. All ISAAC Chapter committees, sub-committees, and short or long-term project teams should have a goal of a minimum of one member who uses AAC.
5. Chapters, which have conferences, are encouraged to provide leadership opportunities for PWUAAC at their Chapter conference.
6. Chapters should provide leadership support, including mentoring opportunities, to PWUAAC who are new Board and/or Committee members.

### **ISAAC and Chapter Collaboration for Ensuring On-Going Participation of PWUAAC on Boards and Committees in ISAAC Chapters**

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1. To support Chapter collaboration and/or mentoring of PWUAAC to serve on Boards and Committees, ISAAC will:
  - a. Develop a database (with contact information) for all PWUAAC who have in the past and are currently members of ISAAC's Board and Committees.
  - b. Develop a database (with contact information) for all PWUAAC who have in the past and are currently members of Chapters' Boards and Committees.
2. Work with chapters to ensure that each Chapter's bylaws include language requiring such participation by PWUAAC.
3. To promote participation of PWUAAC in the Presidential Role in ISAAC Chapters, ISAAC will:
  - a. Review all Chapters' histories to determine the number of PWUAAC holding Presidential positions.
  - b. Work with Chapters to establish timelines to have a PWUAAC as Chapter President.