BELMAS

British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society

RIG CONVENOR HANDBOOK & GUIDANCE

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1. WELCOME TO BELMAS

The British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society (BELMAS) has celebrated over 50 years as an independent voice supporting high-quality educational research and practice through effective leadership and management. Ideas and practice, and the relationship between them, are what interest us. Our members are a mixture of researchers and practitioners in schools, colleges and universities, as well as working academics. The organisation provides a unique perspective on Leadership, Management and Administration which brings together the theoretical and the practical aspects within the field which encourages stimulating debates across the sector via our research interest groups, events, conferences and publications.

BELMAS is part **Charity** with the legal status as a CIO and as a Learned Society it offers its members rich opportunities to engage in debates, research and develop their practice to enhance their work within the field of Leadership, Management and Administration.

Our Mission

Our mission is to be the place where research meets practice in Educational Leadership Management and Administration.

Our Vision

Our vision is to be an innovative, globally recognised and respected Learned Society for the development of Educational Leadership Management and Administration.

Our Values

Integrity: We are transparent, honest and hold ourselves and others to high standards

Scholarship: We are a global learning community that embraces difference of opinion

Social Justice: We are brave and equitable

Inclusion: We recognise many voices and celebrate diversity in all our work

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

In line with our values as a Learned Society the EDI focus of RIGs is important to us, this means that we expect you as RIG Co-Convenors to take seriously.

Our EDI Statement

Our commitment is to secure an environment in which the rights, humanity and dignity of all are respected, and which is free from unlawful discrimination, prejudice, intimidation, and all forms of harassment including bullying.

We do not discriminate on the basis of:

Age	Race
Disability	Religion or belief
Gender identity	Sex
Marriage or civil partnership	Sexual orientation
Pregnancy and maternity	Mental health

We are committed to ensuring that our equality, diversity, and inclusion initiatives and strategy are implemented and monitored at all levels of our learned organisation. We aim to actualise an inclusive and embracing environment in which every person feels respected, valued, heard and empowered to contribute to our collective goals.

BELMAS is committed to:

- ensuring we have effective policies, strategies and processes in place that underlines our expectation of behaviour which promotes equality, encourages diversity and cultural inclusivity

- ensuring that there is no unjustified discrimination in our recruitment, selection, appraisal or other processes in relation to our employees or governance structures treating individuals with whom we work with fairness, dignity and respect

- ensuring that our activities are representative of our community and play a part in removing barriers and redressing imbalances caused by inequality, unjustified discrimination and structural inequalities

- We require all staff and volunteers to ensure their behaviour is consistent with this statement

- We recognise that our work in EDI is continuous, and as such not exhaustive, we are committed to reviewing and improving our practice and welcome feedback from our members

2. WHAT IS A RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP?

A BELMAS Research Interest Group (RIG) is a group of **BELMAS members** engaged in a networking venture to share research, inquiry and knowledge applied to a specific aspect or area of educational leadership, management, administration or policy and is led by a "RIG Convenor".

Benefits from participation include:

- Access to new knowledge, people and potential for developing your own perspectives, critical research and professional activity
- Opportunities to collaborate or correspond with colleagues engaged in similar studies, research or activity
- Opportunities to attend meetings where project ideas and activities can be shared and invited speakers provide new perspectives on the interests of the group
- The size of RIGs may vary, but the number of members should be sufficient to enable a viable programme of activities to be developed. RIGs are essentially self-managed groups and will continue only so long as their members consider them worthwhile

Who are RIGs for?

RIGs are attended by BELMAS members. All BELMAS members can engage with RIG activities, and it is included in their membership fee. Non-members are also welcome to attend and will be charged a small attendance fee. Fees will be determined by RIG convenors and published when RIG events are advertised.

78% of BELMAS Members agree that non-members should pay to attend RIGs for a small fee (32%) or shouldn't be able to attend RIGs at all (46%) – *BELMAS Membership Survey 2023*

3. ROLES, REMITS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONVENORS

RIG Convenors are part of the fabric of BELMAS; they are fundamental in the growth of membership and engaging networks of people as part of the organisation's wider objectives, and as such, it is important that they adhere to BELMAS Policy and Procedure and align to its Mission, Vision and Values.

BELMAS recognises that these are voluntary roles and therefore we don't want to create unnecessary constraints on the role, but we are conscious that clear guidance of responsibilities will enable appropriate support.

Each RIG should have **no fewer than two (2) and no more than four (4) Convenors**, who are asked to**:**

- Uphold the Mission, Vision and Values of BELMAS
- Organise regular RIG activities which may include meetings, events, research, Blog posts, or a #LunchtimeSession.There is a minimum expectation of two activities per year. Consideration will be given to RIGs who are participating in a larger piece of work, such as a book chapter
- Encourage active participation from all members who have joined the RIG
- Encourage non-members to join BELMAS to take part in RIGs
- Annually check that the information on the website is up-to-date and contact the BELMAS Office accordingly
- Attend at least one (1) of two (2) bi-annual organised RIG Convenor meetings with the BELMAS Office team providing apologies for instances when they cannot attend
- Ensure all processes in this handbook are followed and adhered to

4. ROLES, REMITS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RIG COORDINATOR

The role of the RIG Coordinator is intended to fulfil the requirements of the Charity Commission and involves tracking outputs and information, and presenting this to the Board.

The RIG Coordinator is a BELMAS Trustee who acts as the main liaison between the Trustee Board, RIG Convenors and BELMAS Office. The coordinator supports communication, collaboration and good governance across the RIGs, helps ensure their activities align with BELMAS's charitable purposes and strategic priorities, and provides the Trustee Board with appropriate oversight of RIG activity, achievements, risks and support needs. Individual RIGs remain led and managed by their Convenors, with the Trustee Board retaining collective responsibility for governance and decision-making.

The RIG Coordinator will:

- **Act as the Trustee liaison for all RIG Convenors**, providing a clear point of contact between RIGs and the Trustee Board.
- **Maintain regular communication with Convenors**, helping to identify successes, challenges, support needs and opportunities for collaboration across RIGs.
- **Support RIGs to contribute to BELMAS's strategic priorities**, encouraging activities that further BELMAS's charitable purposes and benefit its members and wider educational leadership community.
- **Provide oversight rather than operational management**, recognising that RIGs are self-managed and Convenors are responsible for developing and delivering their own programmes of activity.
- **Champion the RIGs at Trustee Board level**, providing updates on RIG activity, achievements, emerging issues and areas where Board support or decisions may be required.
- **Encourage good governance and consistent practice**, helping Convenors work within BELMAS policies, the RIG Convenor Handbook, agreed budgets and relevant procedures. This handbook already covers matters including Convenor responsibilities, annual reports, funds, events, risk assessments, complaints and the review or closure of RIGs.

- **Encourage collaboration between RIGs**, including joint activities, sharing good practice and opportunities to contribute to the BELMAS Annual Conference and other BELMAS activities.
- **Escalate significant governance, financial, reputational or other risks to the Trustee Board**, rather than attempting to resolve matters outside the authority delegated to the coordinator.
- **Declare and manage any conflicts of interest** arising through the role and ensure appropriate matters are referred to the Board for collective consideration.

5. ANNUAL REPORTS

To ensure that BELMAS can quantify its impact against the spending of charitable funds, it asks each RIG to write a short Annual Report outlining the outcomes and activities of the financial year (January-December). **This report will be due by 31st March** every year and should include an overview of all meetings, events and activities taken place during the previous calendar year and how the outcomes have contributed towards BELMAS' Vision.

RIG reports are imperative to submit by the deadline, as it will result in future funding for the RIG and development opportunities. They also provide evidence of BELMAS meeting its charitable objectives and will form part of the organisation's Annual Impact Report.

Lack of reporting can result in RIG reviews as outlined in point.8 of this handbook.

A template for this resource can be found on the RIG page of the website under "RIG Resources".

6. CONFERENCE & REWARDS

Annual Conference Responsibilities

As RIG leaders within the structures of BELMAS, Convenors are encouraged to engage with BELMAS' flagship event; its Annual Conference. This is not compulsory, however, if you do wish to engage, some of the duties might include:

- Recruiting reviewers to review abstracts/submissions
- Advertising conference
- Attend and chair your RIG meeting
- Be available during lunch breaks to talk to attendees about your RIG
- Encourage membership of BELMAS & the RIG
- Social Media presence during the Conference
- Chairing sessions

Concessions for Conference

Convenors play a vital role in the development of membership growth at BELMAS, and we appreciate the time and effort that is invested into these networks. In recognition of this work, those RIGs engaging in Conference activities will receive a discounted* place for ONE (1) Convenor at the Annual Conference. The Convenors within each RIG can decide who will use this discounted place.

***Please note that the allocation of RIG places for the Annual Conference will continue to be reviewed by the Board in line with strategic direction and the financial sustainability of BELMAS.**

This is in recognition of the work associated with the reviewing process, chairing and support for the conference and any other work involved in preparing for and running the RIG meeting at the event. Full details of concession will be sent to Convenors from the BELMAS Office.

Discounted Membership

All RIG Convenors will be given a discounted membership rate of 50% off. An individual discount code will be sent out from the BELMAS Office. If you have not received this, please contact us immediately on info@belmas.org.uk.

7. RECRUITMENT, SELECTION & TERM OF CONVENORS

BELMAS is committed to providing fair and equal opportunities for all its members. To support this, RIGs must follow an open and transparent process when recruiting new Convenors, ensuring that all eligible members have an opportunity to express an interest.

When a RIG requires a new Convenor, you must notify the BELMAS Office. The Office can email BELMAS members, post a News item, place a notice in the newsletter, and promote through socials, for expressions of interest. We recommend asking for 300-500 words for an expression of interest to be emailed to the BELMAS office for collation. Individuals are invited to join an online session with the current Convenors to discuss the RIG and the role of the Convenor (based on the contents of this Handbook). Once individuals know what is required to be a Convenor, they then have the option to continue with the process or remove themselves from standing. The current Convenors will discuss and decide who will be appointed as the new Convenor.

8. REMOVAL OF A CONVENOR

BELMAS recognises that RIG Convenor positions are voluntary roles. However, RIGs are an important membership benefit, and the level of activity within a RIG can influence a member's decision to renew their BELMAS membership. It is therefore important that there are clear processes for circumstances in which the People, Equality, Risk and Governance (PERG) Committee may ask a Convenor to step down from their role.

Usually, a Convenor will be given the opportunity to discuss any mitigations or issues with the relevant member of the BELMAS team and develop a plan to move forward with before such actions take place.

A Convenor will normally be asked to resign from their role under any of the following circumstances:

- Non-attendance at two (2) of the RIG Convenor Meetings **without apologies being sent**
- Ceasing to be a member of BELMAS
- Failure to provide the annual RIG report as outlined in the "Annual Report" section of this handbook
- Failure to provide an appropriate annual spending plan for the RIG within the timetable outlined in point 10. of this Handbook
- Failure to use the RIG's allocated funding appropriately, including using funds in ways that do not further BELMAS's charitable objectives or comply with BELMAS policies and principles of good financial governance
- Disregard for BELMAS policies including the Code of Conduct and the processes outlined in this handbook
- No RIG activity or output over the course of 12 months

41% of BELMAS Members believe that Convenors should be removed from their role after no activity for six (6) months, 24% for twelve (12) months and 18% for three (3) months
– BELMAS Membership Survey 2023

9. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FROM BELMAS

BELMAS provides RIGs with a dedicated team who are in post to support volunteers operationally. They provide the following services to support the BELMAS RIGs: branding, marketing, advertising and event management. The BELMAS team will be RIG Convenors first point of contact at BELMAS should they have an issue.

The BELMAS team will support RIGs specifically by:

- Organising the bi-annual Convenor meetings
- Logging attendees to BELMAS events for reporting purposes
- Reviewing the success of RIGs in collaboration with the RIG Convenor through the Annual Reports, budget summaries, and providing detailed analysis to the Trustee Board / RIG coordinator
- Supporting the conversion of non-members who attended RIG meetings into membership for the wider growth of BELMAS
- Delivering all administration of BELMAS RIGs
- Responding to all RIG Convenor enquiries as appropriate
- Directing new members interested in RIGs to Convenors as appropriate

10. ANNUAL FUNDS, BUDGETS & ACCOUNTS

Annual RIG Funds

Each active RIG will receive funds annually for the day-to-day running of the group. These funds will be determined in the wider BELMAS annual budget setting process by the Finance Committee, approved by the Trustee Board in December of each year. Convenors will be notified of these funds ahead of the financial year which begins in January. In the event of a RIG ceasing to exist, all funds held within their account shall be returned to the BELMAS central budget.

Each RIG is required to plan its anticipated expenditure for the year ahead by completing an annual budget spending plan. This information is used by the Finance Committee to determine the overall RIG budgets for the following financial year and must be submitted by **31st October each year**.

BELMAS expects RIGs to spend their annual budget each year and plan their activities to remain within their allocated budget for the year with any unspent funds reabsorbed into the central BELMAS budget at the end of each financial year. However, BELMAS recognises that RIGs may occasionally plan to hold a larger event(s) at certain times, rather than delivering smaller events across the calendar year, or may face exceptional circumstances impacting on spending.

As the BELMAS financial year runs from 1 January to 31 December and RIGs are funded for this period each year, for events that may fall outside the current financial year or if other exceptional circumstances apply, RIG convenors may apply to BELMAS to request the carry forward of a specified budget amount to support future planning. Under guidance from the auditors, this requires BELMAS to create a 'designated fund' in the next financial year and requires specific Board level scrutiny with processes and evidence to satisfy audit requirements. If RIG convenors wish to apply for this, they should note the Designated Fund paragraph below.

Designated Fund

If RIGs are considering planning an event(s) that falls outside the current financial year or have experienced exceptional circumstances that has impacted on RIG spending, RIG convenors may apply to BELMAS to request the carry forward of a specific amount of funds into the next financial year, which is referred to as a '**Designated Fund'.** In charity terms, 'Designated Funds' are funds that are made available by the Trustees to support a specific goal within the wider objectives of the organisation. In this case, funds in the designated accounts for each RIG **MUST** be used solely for the purposes of that RIG. RIGs may roll over funds for **one additional year** on an application basis, provided there is a clear case proposal, defined scope and timeline, or extenuating circumstances. RIGs are still expected to actively engage with members and BELMAS encourages all RIGs to actively engage in a range of activities as part of their broader responsibilities, including Blogs, online meetings and networks, podcasts, and #LunchtimeSessions.

What can RIG funds be used for?

Funds can be used for anything that allows for the RIG to be effectively aligning to the wider BELMAS Mission and Vision. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Travel and Expenses for RIG Convenors for meetings/events including at Annual Conference
- Travel or subsidised travel for members to attend a RIG meeting, event or activity
- Keynote speaker costs, travel and expenses
- Venue hire
- Reasonable expenses on refreshments for attendees of a RIG meeting, event or activity
- Funding expenses for smaller research projects relating to the RIG
- 24-hour events that include evening meals and accommodation

All expenses, including the cost of travel and subsistence **MUST** meet the requirements set out in the BELMAS Expense Policy which can be found on the BELMAS website. Failure to adhere to the Policy will result in the removal of a Convenor.

Accessing Your Funds

All expenditure should be noted in the Event Submission form outlined in point. 12 below. Once an event has been approved, Convenors can request reimbursement of expenditure by using an Expense Claim Form, which can be found on the Policy Page of the BELMAS website.

All Expense Claim forms should be sent to info@belmas.org.uk for approval, within one (1) month from the date of the event. Processing should take no longer than two (2) weeks.

If you want to find out how much your RIG currently holds in its funds, please contact a member of the BELMAS team who will be able to check this for you.

Funds from Non-Member Attendance

BELMAS RIGs are a member benefit as part of the annual subscription fee, and as such all non-members are required to pay to enjoy this benefit.

The minimum fee for non-member attendance to a RIG event is set by BELMAS at £5, however, RIGs can set this amount to any fee they feel reasonable depending on the nature of the event. As part of BELMAS' continued commitment to support RIGs, in most cases, after any relevant central costs are taken into account, income from non-member attendance shall be put back into the RIG(s) holding that specific event.

11. ADDITIONAL FUNDS & GRANTS

BELMAS acknowledges that some RIGs operate differently to others, and additional funds are sometimes required for the type of events and activities they offer. Therefore, BELMAS will consider providing additional funds and grants for specific RIG events and projects as central funds allow.

These grants are **ONLY** available to RIGs who have demonstrated their impact in the previous year following a completed Annual Report.

The total amount of these grants shall be determined in the wider BELMAS annual budget setting process by the Finance Committee, approved by the Trustee Board, while the process for application of the RIG Grants is part of the remit of the Awards, Bursaries & Grants Committee (ABG).

BELMAS expects RIGs who have been awarded with a Grant to outline the outcomes of the Grants and what difference it has made within their Annual Report.

12. ORGANISING AN EVENT

Organising an event sounds daunting, but the BELMAS Office team is here to support you. As you start to think about your next event, meeting or activity, we always recommend you have a conversation with a member of the team for advice and guidance, should you need it. Please check the BELMAS Calendar at the bottom of the events page on the website and schedule your event on a date that does not clash with other BELMAS events; we want to give members the opportunity to attend as many BELMAS events as possible. It is also worth noting that the BELMAS office is open on Monday to Thursday, for staff to fully support your event, please do not schedule events on Fridays where possible.

Event Submission Form

If you are clear about what you would like to do, you can complete the online RIG Event Submission Form, which can be found on the RIG page of the BELMAS Website under "RIG Resources".

No event will be advertised, or funds released without completion and approval of this form. No commitment to spend should be made until the approval of the event has been formally acknowledged.

All Event Submission Forms **MUST** be completed at least six weeks prior to delivery of the event. Approval of the event will take no longer than two weeks, although we aim to approve these as quickly as possible.

If you are concerned, worried or want additional support with the form, a member of the BELMAS Office team will happily walk you through the form on Zoom or Teams. Please just contact us and we'll be happy to help.

Completing the Form: Information Required

In the section titled "Basic Event Details" we ask Convenors to tell us the details of the event. In this section, we require as much detail as possible to ensure that the event is accurately advertised.

Some of things you may want to include in this box are:

- A description of the event and any potential outcomes
- Topics covered by any speakers or discussions
- A timeline of the activities within the event
- Who this event might be useful to
- Any other information that you would want to see on the BELMAS website as a participant

Completing the Form: Budgeting

When budgeting, it is important to break down the costs into each individual expenditure. BELMAS recognises that this may not be entirely accurate and will sometimes depend on the number participants, but it is important to have an idea of the overall cost of the event based on the projected number of attendees.

An example of how to break down these costs is below:

Subsidised travel for BELMAS members (£20pp approx. 10 people) - £200
Refreshments (£10pp approx. 10 people) - £100
Keynote Travel Expenses - £100
Convenors Travel Expenses - £10

Total: £500

The example above provides clarity on the expenditure used to approve the event against the budgets held by the RIG (and any other funding from Grants and/or external income from partnerships or sponsorships).
When organising your event, it is important to have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) focus. When looking at dates to hold your event, please be mindful of awareness days and religious festivals, which may exclude some people from attending. Additionally, the time set for your agenda or programme should allow for those with childcare arrangements.

13. TIMELINE FOR ORGANISING AN EVENT

Events are usually organised six (6) weeks in advance to ensure that they are well organised, planned and advertised for members. **However, special consideration will be given to those events that are responsive to hot topics and Policy.**

If you require an event to be organised sooner than the six (6) week turnaround, please speak to a member of the BELMAS team.

Date/Schedule	Activity	Who?
6 weeks before the event	Completion of the Event Submission form with all relevant sections completed in full.	RIG Convenor
4 weeks before the event	Following approval, the event is uploaded to the BELMAS website as an event and advertised through its communications channels. Tickets are made available through the event where attendees can sign up immediately. If online, a Zoom/MS Teams is created for the time and date requested. If in-person, the venue contact will be contacted for confirmation. An initial email shall be sent to all BELMAS members.	BELMAS Office
3 weeks before the event	A further personalised email is sent out to BELMAS members who have specifically signed up to that relevant RIG.	BELMAS Office
2 weeks before the event	RIG Convenors are given an update on the number of sign-ups. The Event is advertised again through BELMAS' communications channels. If in-person, BELMAS will collect the arrival instructions directly from the venue.	BELMAS Office
1 week before the event	A final reminder email is sent before registration closes. For in-person events, registration shall close one week before the event to provide details to the external venue/partner.	BELMAS Office

	For in-person events, arrival instructions shall be circulated as soon as registration closes.	
2 days before the event	If the event is online, registration closes two days before delivery at midnight (UK time).	BELMAS Office
1 day before the event	If the event is online, joining instructions are sent to participants alongside any documents or presentations. A list attendees names are sent to the RIG Convenors. Email addresses are included for attendees who have given permission to share their information.	BELMAS Office
On the day	If online, a member of the BELMAS team will open the meeting 10 minutes before the start time and will admit Convenors to the session. If the meeting is being recorded, a member of the BELMAS Office team will remind attendees before starting the recording. The BELMAS team member will then switch off their camera and microphone but remain on the meeting for the duration should a Convenor need any support and to admit any late arrivals. If an in-person event, a member of the BELMAS team will try to attend if requested to do so in advance by the Convenors.	BELMAS Office
After the event	BELMAS will send a feedback form to all participants and Convenors. Any recordings shall be uploaded to the BELMAS website and made available to the wider public. This will be shared through the usual communication channels.	BELMAS Office

14. HOW TO BOOK VENUES, REFRESHMENTS & KEYNOTES

Once an event form is approved, a Convenor is then able to confirm any bookings.

The BELMAS Office asks for the email address and telephone number of keynotes, venues and other relevant contacts on the Event Submission Form so that we can provide additional support where required. Where helpful, the Office team can liaise directly with suppliers or individuals who require payment, particularly to support busy Convenors.

Should a Convenor be in a position to book any venues, refreshments or keynotes, they should inform their contact that all invoices should be addressed to BELMAS on info@belmas.org.uk, and clearly state:

- The service/products provided
- The date of the event
- The total amount (with a breakdown of VAT where applicable)

When selecting a venue, Convenors should consider its accessibility, including whether appropriate audio-visual equipment and a hearing loop system are available.

Venues should also be able to cater for a range of dietary and religious requirements, including vegan, vegetarian, kosher, halal and gluten-free options. Where possible, Convenors are also encouraged to provide access to a quiet room and/or prayer room for delegates who may require one.

Convenors should also consider accessibility when preparing and delivering presentations and other event materials. This includes the use of fonts, colours, visuals and audio, ensuring that content is as accessible and inclusive as possible for all delegates, including those who are neurodivergent.

15. SIGNING UP FOR AN EVENT

All tickets (free or otherwise) are processed through the BELMAS website on the individual event page once it has been approved. This can be found either:

1. Through a direct link provided through the BELMAS communication channels
2. On the "Events Page" tab on the menu at the top of the homepage
3. On the homepage at the bottom under "Events"

Depending on the event, members will be required to login to the Member Area of the website for the ticket to appear as "free". If they are not logged in, or not a BELMAS member, this may show a small fee.

We advise that everyone registers for an event, even the RIG convenors and any speakers so the BELMAS office has a true reflection of attendance and can provide the relevant information and joining links to all.

16. JOINT EVENTS WITH EXTERNAL PARTNERS

Alongside joint RIG events, BELMAS actively encourages its RIGs to work with external partners, organisations and individuals, as we believe this is a fundamental part of showcasing the organisation to a wider network and audience in the field of Educational Leadership, Management and Administration. Opportunities for joint events may include partnerships with:

- RIGs/SIGs from other Learned Societies
- Other organisations with shared interests of the RIG and/or BELMAS
- Universities with Education Departments and Programmes
- Recipient(s) of a BELMAS or other organisation/institution's Research Bursary
- Publishers

If you are working with an external partner on an event and they are contributing (via knowledge exchange and/or funding) then non-members **MAY NOT** have to pay to attend.

Examples Include

1. "Grant Dissemination Events" where a BELMAS Grant has been awarded and the research is disseminated at a RIG event.
2. "Joint University Events" where a RIG is supported by either free space, or a monetary contribution so that students who may be non-members can also attend.

Each event is dealt with on a case-by-case basis, and for the avoidance of doubt it is always best to speak to a member of the BELMAS team before completing your event form.

When working with external partners, it is important to consider the values and ethos of the organisation you will be working with, that they are fully aligned with BELMAS.

17. EVENT RISK ASSESSMENTS

The health and safety of BELMAS members is important to us, and as an organisation we hold liability for anything that goes wrong at an event under our name. However, we appreciate that it is not sustainable for volunteers to continually complete Risk Assessments for each event that they do in addition to the other tasks required by Convenors.

Therefore, BELMAS will provide standard template Risk Assessments on the **RIG Resource section** of the BELMAS website and will ask Convenors to check the risks and notify a member of the BELMAS team if there are any additional risks to be aware of. Additional risks can be added into the Event Submission Form for consideration.

18. REVIEWING & CLOSURE OF RIGS

While BELMAS will want to protect our RIGs, they **MUST** offer something to the membership, and from time to time, BELMAS may find itself in an unfortunate position where RIGs will be disbanded.

RIGs will normally only ever be disbanded if there are no active Convenors, no activity to report on for Charity Commission requirements (point 5) and BELMAS fails to recruit new interest after one call to the membership.

The BELMAS Office team will write a proposal to the Trustee Board to disband the RIG, which will need to be approved. **The decision of the Board shall be final.**

If a RIG is disbanded, all funds associated with that RIG shall be reabsorbed into the central BELMAS budget at the end of the financial year.

19. STARTING A NEW RIG

Members who have an idea for a new Research Interest Group (RIG), or who are interested in becoming a RIG Convenor, should follow the process outlined below.

Becoming a RIG Convenor

- The BELMAS newsletter will periodically include either:
  - an announcement of a proposed new RIG, or
  - a call for expressions of interest for RIG Convenors
- Members who express interest will be invited to attend an online meeting outlining:
  - the purpose and role of RIGs, and
  - the responsibilities of a RIG Convenor

  These meetings are recorded and shared with those unable to attend live.
- Following the meeting, interested members will receive a copy of the **RIG Handbook** and will be asked to submit:
  - a 300-500 **word statement** outlining their suitability to act as a RIG Convenor or Co-Convenor, and
  - how they would contribute to the work of the RIG.
- Existing RIG Convenors will review submissions and agree appointments.

Proposing a New RIG

Members wishing to establish a new RIG must complete THIS FORM, which will be submitted to the BELMAS Office. Proposals must include:

- The proposed name of the RIG
- The proposed RIG Convenors (no fewer than two (2) and no more than four (4) Convenors), in line with Section 3 of this Handbook), including relevant work links
- The focus of the RIG

- The aims of the RIG
- How the RIG will support the BELMAS mission of *"research meeting practice in the field of educational leadership, management and administration"*
- How the proposed Convenors' skills and experience will enable them to fulfil the RIG's aims
- How the proposed RIG differs from existing BELMAS RIGs
- How the RIG will incorporate an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) focus

The BELMAS Office team will present the completed proposal to the Trustee Board at its next meeting for consideration. **The decision of the Board is final.**

20. SOCIAL MEDIA

RIGs are entitled to hold official BELMAS Social Media accounts for the purpose of advertising events and disseminating information. All social media accounts are subject to the conditions laid out in **By-law E: Code of Conduct for Members Engaging with or Undertaking Activities on Behalf of the Society**, which can be found on the BELMAS website. If you would like to set up a BlueSky or LinkedIn page for your RIG, please email info@belmas.org.uk to request a step-by-step guide.

21. WEBSITE

So that all the RIG pages have the same level of content and all look uniform, please follow the new layout for the RIG pages, by using the example of the Leadership, Preparation and Development (LPD) RIG page.

Here are a few tips to follow when preparing your content:

RIG Graphic: We have created a selection of bespoke RIG graphics to use to promote your RIG. We will use this on your RIG page and when your RIG events are mentioned in the newsletter. Please ask Nik to share your graphic with you.

Who we are and what we do: Please provide some information of the remit of this RIG (200-word count, or let us know if you are happy with the information currently on the website).

Themes: Please include a list of the topics and subject matters covered within your RIG.

Benefits from participation: Either include the copy from the website, or please include up to five key benefits.

RIG Convenors: Please include the following details for each Convenor: Name, Title and Location. Include a photo (portrait).

Short video or quote: We would like your RIG page to be exciting and engaging. A brief quote about the importance and impact of the RIG, or a short 2-minute video would be most welcome from at least one RIG Convenor. Please send this either by email or contact the BELMAS office for sending larger files.

Outputs: Please provide a list of the different tools and resources delivered by your RIG
- Podcasts
- Blog posts
- Recent meetings
- Seminars
- Articles

Join Us: We will include a link for people to join the RIG.

Updates to the website
Once your RIG webpage is active, you can update the content by sending your updates to info@belmas.org.uk or by completing this online form. Your updates should take no longer than 15 working days to be completed.

22. COMPLAINTS & CONTACT DETAILS

If you have a complaint about a member of BELMAS, you can do so using the process outlined in **By-law F: Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure for Members of BELMAS.**

If you have a complaint about RIGs in general or a member of the BELMAS Office team, you can do so using the process outlined in **By-law I: Procedure for Complaints Against BELMAS.**

The By-Laws can be found on the BELMAS website.

If you have any questions about the contents of this Handbook or require any additional support in your role as a RIG Convenor, please contact the **Membership and Events Coordinator, Cynthia Akinsanya**, on: cynthia@belmas.org.uk.

All other information can be found on the **BELMAS website**: www.belmas.org.uk.