



# CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT

FAQS

**ICON-S**  
INTERNATIONAL  
SOCIETY OF  
PUBLIC  
LAW

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# 1. WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR FORMING A NEW ICON•S CHAPTER?

Depending on their autonomous initiative, a group of public law scholars from a certain country or region can start the process to create their local ICON•S community. The formation of an ICON•S Chapter is a holistic and engaged process of the creation and life of an academic gathering in which any scholars, lawyers and professionals with an interdisciplinary public law profile are welcome to participate.

ICON-S members interested in forming a chapter (chapter initiators) are asked to follow the subsequent steps to create a new ICON•S Chapter:

1. Engage in discussions with the Co-Directors for Chapter Development
2. Potentially take part in the Chapter Mentorship Program.
3. Reference other chapters' governing documents on the ICON•S website as the new chapter proposal is drafted. Chapters' governing documents can be found at <https://www.icon-society.org/chapters/>
4. Draft and share two documents:
  - Rules for the chapter's governance
  - Background on the founding members, including biographies and the academic context in which the chapter is located and will work
5. ICON•S members proposing a chapter are encouraged to think critically about the mission of the chapter and should address how they will follow ICON•S policies, including those of good governance, regular change in governing bodies, gender equality and support for junior scholars
6. Following the drafting of these documents, the chapter initiators should send them to the Co-Directors for Chapter Development at [icons.chapterdevelopment@gmail.com](mailto:icons.chapterdevelopment@gmail.com)
7. The Co-Directors for Chapter Development will provide initial comments on the proposals, and may suggest changes to the chapter initiators, the implementation of which is crucial for the success of the proposal prior to the Vetting Committee's review of the chapter
8. The ICON•S leadership may provide input on a chapter proposal at any stage of the process, as it may be necessary in light of the dynamic nature of chapter formation in the spirit of the ICON•S mission

9. Following the implementation of these initial changes, the Co-Directors for Chapter Development will present their report on the Chapter proposal to the Vetting Committee.

10. The Vetting Committee will review the proposal in light of the Co-Director's report, and may provide additional comments

11. The Co-Directors will present the Vetting Committee's comments to the chapter initiators, who will have an opportunity to provide their perspectives and further changes in light of the Vetting Committee's comments

12. Following the incorporation of comments from the Vetting Committee and/or their responses, the final chapter proposal will be presented to the Executive Committee for final approval

13. Following final approval, the Co-Directors will communicate the decision to the chapter initiators.

ICON•S members are encouraged to write to [icons.chapterdevelopment@gmail.com](mailto:icons.chapterdevelopment@gmail.com) with any initial questions.

## **2. WHAT IS THE CHAPTER MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**

The goal and purpose of the ICON•S Chapter Mentorship Program is to provide a formal link between current chapters and chapters in development. As Co-Directors, we feel that one of the best ways to concretize our support for chapters is to create formal mentorship pairings between chapters formed for a number of years and chapters that are either in the early stages of their development or with scholars who are considering forming a chapter. We hope this will facilitate a sharing of knowledge and experience for the benefit of our ICON•S community around the world and chapter leaders.

Please note that multiple members of Chapters can be mentors or mentees. There is no limit of one mentee or mentor per existing or future Chapter.

If you would like to participate in the ICON•S Chapter Development Program, please email the Co-Directors at [icons.chapterdevelopment@gmail.com](mailto:icons.chapterdevelopment@gmail.com)

### **3. WHAT IS THE TIMELINE TO FORM A CHAPTER?**

The timeline for chapter formation is flexible and depends on the number of chapter proposals, as well as the work of the Co-Directors, the commitments of the Vetting Committee, and the commitments of the ICON•S chapter initiators themselves. All of these factors may affect the rapidity of correspondence. The Co-Directors aim to conclude chapter formation within 12-16 weeks of the initial proposal.

### **4. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE STAGES LED BY THE CO-DIRECTORS, THE VETTING COMMITTEE, AND THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL?**

The Co-Directors of Chapter Development shepherd each chapter proposal through the process. They are constant reference points for chapter initiators, answering questions and providing initial feedback on proposals in light of their experience working with the Vetting Committee and reviewing other chapter proposals. Co-Directors draft a report for each chapter proposal and share it with the Vetting Committee.

The Vetting Committee is composed of senior ICON•S members who review the chapter proposal based on the documents provided by the individual ICON•S members and the Co-Directors' report. The Vetting Committee will provide holistic comments and suggestions to the members proposing the chapter. The Vetting Committee will recommend the chapter for approval or the Committee will suggest further changes.

The Executive Committee of ICON•S, a formal part of the ICON•S Governance structure, formally approves the chapter following the Co-Directors' review and the Vetting Committee's approval. The Executive Committee may provide additional comments as part of their approval for the chapter founders' review.

## **5. WHAT DOCUMENTS SHOULD WE SEND AS PART OF OUR PROPOSAL?**

ICON•S members proposing a chapter are asked to send:

- The relevant context of the academic community (e.g. law schools/universities in your country) in order to help the review process related to the principle of diversity.
- Chapter Rules and Governance
- Biographies of your founding members
- Any other supplemental information, including a separate mission statement and/or reasons for the genesis of the chapter; biographies of additional members; etc.

## **6. HOW MANY FOUNDING MEMBERS SHOULD THE CHAPTER HAVE? IN CASE PROFESSORS ARE INCLUDED IN THE FOUNDING MEMBERS GROUPS, HOW MANY SHOULD BE SENIOR, LAWYERS, RESEARCHERS ETC.?**

Any ICON•S member may start a chapter, but all chapter proposals should keep ICON•S' commitments to diversity and gender equity in mind. While there is no set number of founding members or senior and junior scholars as founding members, chapters should exhibit inclusivity and equity. Chapters are also encouraged to keep the unique needs of their regional territory in mind. In some regions or countries, equity might be more easily achieved, in others chapters might consider a longer term commitment to fostering gender equity, support of junior scholars, and other important aspects of the ICON•S mission.

## **7. CAN CHAPTERS BE AFFILIATED TO UNIVERSITIES (OR SHOULD THEY BE)?**

Chapters are meant to be independent and to not risk institutional capture. Following the ICON•S mission of diversity and inclusion, chapters should not be expressly affiliated with one institution, although they may certainly collaborate with institutions as needed.

## **8. WHEN IS A REGIONAL CHAPTER MORE APPROPRIATE THAN A NATIONAL CHAPTER? IS THERE A PREFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO?**

Decisions to form a regional or a national chapter are unique to local contexts. ICON•S members proposing a chapter should think critically about the size of a region, its population and academic diversity, and whether a regional or a national chapter would best represent and actuate aspects of the ICON•S mission. ICON•S members proposing a chapter are encouraged to discuss their choice of a regional or a national chapter with the Co-Directors for Chapter Development and in consultation with the ICON•S leadership.

It is important to stress that Regional Chapters are not mutually exclusive to national chapters. If national chapters exist already, and a regional chapter is to be approved, national chapters should be part of the process of creating the regional chapter, and their leaders should be among the founding members of the regional chapter. If regional chapters exist, and a national chapter is to be approved the following process applies:

- Potential national chapter leaders should be members of the regional chapter, and they should approach the leaders of the regional chapters to seek ways of collaboration.
- Regional chapters will be informed about the process of forming the national chapter, and they will be able to comment on national proposals in a purely consultative capacity. However, the final decision will always remain in the Executive Committee.

## **9. DO FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE CHAPTERS NEED TO BE ICON•S MEMBERS?**

Yes, founding members of chapters should be ICON•S members. At the very least, co-chairs of a proposed chapter should be ICON-S members.

## **10. HOW MANY COMMENTS SHOULD WE EXPECT TO RECEIVE?**

Comments may be given at any stage of the chapter review process. Chapter initiators should be open to comments and to the suggestion to involve other members of the legal academy from their region in the chapter formation process.

## **11. WHAT ARE SOME THINGS I SHOULD EXPECT AS PART OF THE CHAPTER APPROVAL PROCESS?**

ICON•S members should expect to have their proposals closely read. As you might expect from administrative and constitutional law scholars, the Vetting Committee may pay particular questions to the “Who decides?” question, examining rules for elections and organization within the chapter proposal. In light of ICON•S’ mission of diversity and gender equality, ICON•S members proposing a chapter should also expect to be strongly encouraged to reflect such commitments in their proposals. At times, ICON•S members may also be encouraged to include particular groups of scholars or individual scholars of public law as part of their chapter formation process.

## **12. WHAT IS A “PUBLIC CALL” FOR A CHAPTER?**

A “Public Call” for a chapter will regularly be implemented, especially where the ICON•S leadership feels a chapter needs a wider group of founding members or founding community. In these cases, the ICON•S leadership may announce the founding of a chapter and solicit a notice and comment period to encourage other scholars in the represented region or area to join.

## **13. WHAT HAPPENS IF DURING THE CHAPTER CREATION PROCESS PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE CHAPTER INITIATOR GROUP SIGNAL THEIR INTEREST IN MAKING THE SAME CHAPTER?**

In case of parallel interests for creating a Chapter, our first and foremost guiding principle is to foster mutual respect and collaboration among those who intend to make a Chapter. Therefore, the Co-Directors of Chapter Development together with other members of the governing body of the ICON•S will support the collaboration of those involved in the process and encourage all parties to find the most suitable way for their partnership. Other fundamental principles, such as inclusivity and plurality, as well as a democratic government design apply too.



## **14. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE CHAPTER IS APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL?**

After the Chapter is approved, the Co-Directors of Chapter Development will create logos for the chapter's use. In addition, the Co-Directors of Chapter Development will prepare a page on the ICON•S website for the chapter. ICON•S members who are founding a chapter should consider which activities, scholarship and members they would most like to highlight on their chapter page, in addition to pertinent parts of the governing documents of the chapter.

## **15. WHAT ARE THE CONTINUING OBLIGATIONS OF EXISTING CHAPTERS?**

Chapters are required to file annual reports with the Co-Directors of Chapter Development. In addition, individual chapters may need to update the Co-Directors on amendments to their governing documents or other practices. Chapters should have consistent annual activities and opportunities for gathering scholars in their chapters together.

## **16. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ICON•S CHAPTERS? IS THERE A MINIMUM REQUIREMENT OF EVENTS THEY NEED TO ORGANIZE?**

There is no minimum number of events, but chapters are encouraged to be active and to define activity based on academic standards in their region or nation and ICON-S standards. An annual conference and one or two smaller events may be as appropriate as a series of webinars throughout an entire year. The date of annual events should not coincide with the annual conference of ICON•S.

## **17. DOES ICON•S PROVIDE CHAPTERS WITH ANY FINANCIAL HELP?**

Chapters may apply for up to US\$2,000 for their initial launch event, based on an indicative budget and justification of the need for relevant expenditures. Thereafter, the expectation is that chapters should be self-sustaining. However, in cases of need, chapters may apply for modest additional funding (up to US\$1,500) for subsequent events. These applications will also be assessed by the Co-Presidents, Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, and consulted with the Treasurer, based on:

- The indicative budget and justification for the expense;
- the importance of the proposed event to the mission of ICON-S globally and its contribution to the growth of the Society, as well as to the activities and objectives of the chapter; and
- previous levels of funding the chapter has received.

See <https://www.icon-society.org/chapters/> for more information.

## **18. DOES ICON•S PROVIDE ANY FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE MEMBERSHIP FEES OR IS THERE ANY EXCEPTION FROM THE OBLIGATION TO PAY THE MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BODIES OF A CHAPTER?**

The general rule is that all members of the governing body of an ICON•S Chapter shall be members of the Society and therefore pay the membership fee. However, ICON•S recently introduced new forms of memberships besides the regular membership to the Society. The Discount Membership applies to scholars from non-OECD countries. The First-Time Membership is for new members of the Society and is valid for one year and gives the same rights as a regular membership. Finally, the Society considers requests for free waivers on a case by case basis as well. For more information, see <https://www.icon-society.org/faqs/> under the Membership section.



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