



Chapter Development Blueprint 2026-2027

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National Student Academy of Audiology

Mission

The Student Academy of Audiology (SAA) is the national student division of the American Academy of Audiology (“the Academy”) that serves as a collective voice for students and advances the rights, interests, and welfare of students pursuing careers in audiology. The national SAA introduces students to lifelong involvement in activities that promote and advance the profession of audiology. This includes providing services, information, education, representation, and advocacy for both the profession and consumers of audiology services. The national SAA has over 1,200 members, consisting of students enrolled in AuD, PhD, post-baccalaureate, undergraduate, or other accredited audiology doctoral programs for a professional degree in audiology.

Vision

To be essential in the lives of audiology students by equipping them with the knowledge to begin a patient-centered career that promotes the profession and advances research in audiology.

History

National SAA was founded in 2009 after NAFDA (National Association of Future Doctors of Audiology) approached the American Academy of Audiology (the Academy) for support. Various professional healthcare organizations have affiliated student institutions, such as the American Medical Association-Medical Student Section (AMA-MSS) as well as the American Psychological Association (APA), the American Dental Association (ADA), the American Nurses Association (ANA), and the American Veterinary Association (AVA).

All have student sections that work together with the parent organization to achieve common goals. In October 2008, Brian Vesely, AuD, Past NAFDA President, and Past Academy President Patrick Feeney, PhD, signed an agreement that merged NAFDA into the Academy's student organization, the national Student Academy of Audiology (SAA). The ultimate goal of the merger was to maintain an independent student voice while maximizing the opportunities that come with joining the Academy.



Starting an SAA Chapter

What is needed to start a local SAA Chapter?

Starting a new SAA chapter requires participation from university students and faculty members, including student members, a local SAA Board of Directors, and a faculty advisor. Also, a new SAA chapter needs to create [Chapter Bylaws](#) following the provided template located on the [Become a SAA Chapter](#) web page. It is recommended to start a chapter email that can be handed down from chapter president to chapter president. Additionally, consider using a cloud-based storage system to keep chapter resources and information organized.

How to become recognized as a SAA Chapter by the national SAA

To become a nationally recognized SAA chapter, submit a chapter application and a copy of the chapter bylaws to saa@audiology.org. After the application is accepted, a welcome email will be sent introducing your chapter to the current national SAA President, President-Elect, and SAA Chapter Relations Committee Chair. The chapter will also receive communication from the SAA Chapter Relations Committee Chair with a welcome letter, a chapter resource packet, and logo style guide.

Chapter Recognition with the National SAA

There are many benefits to being a nationally recognized SAA Chapter. **First and foremost, an SAA chapter must be nationally recognized to use the SAA name and logo.** The SAA name and logo are registered trademarks owned by the American Academy of Audiology. By becoming nationally recognized, a chapter is granted permission to use the SAA name and logo. Each SAA chapter is provided with a customized logo with its chapter name. **Any additional use of the SAA name and logo must be approved by the national SAA and the Academy.**

The SAA has developed personalized logos for local SAA chapter use (see example below). The logo consists of the national SAA logo with the recognized chapter's name included. Requests can be emailed to saa@audiology.org.



Other benefits of national recognition include eligibility for networking opportunities, participation in the annual [Chapter Challenge](#), [national SAA Town Halls](#), and participation in the national [SAA State](#)

[Ambassadors Program](#). Once your chapter is recognized by the national SAA, there are a few processes your chapter should be aware of to maintain national recognition

Annual SAA Chapter Renewals

To maintain national recognition, renewal documents must be submitted annually via email to saa@audiology.org. Chapter leadership will receive an email from the national SAA Chapter Relations Committee alerting them to the submission timeline and processes. Visit the [SAA website](#) for additional details.

- **In odd years (January 2027),** renewal documentation consists of:
 - Chapter Contact Information Form with your current chapter leadership
 - SAA Chapter Agreement signed by the chapter president, advisor, and the Academy or national SAA representative
 - Current list of local SAA members with Academy ID numbers (if applicable)
 - Current chapter bylaws signed by both the chapter president and advisor
- **In even years (January 2028),** renewal documentation consists of:
 - Chapter Contact Information Form with your current chapter leadership
 - Current list of local SAA members with Academy ID numbers

National SAA Town Hall Attendance

In order to maintain national recognition, one or more chapter leaders/representatives must participate in at least ONE Town Hall meeting throughout the year. Each season, four available dates and times are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. This year, the Town Halls will focus on different topics: communication and member engagement, advocacy, and education and externship support. The dates are listed on the [SAA website](#) and chapter leaders will receive an email from the national SAA Chapter Relations Chair to register for these calls. Chapters can also visit the [national SAA Events web page](#) to register for upcoming Town Halls.

SAA Chapter Governance

It is recommended that SAA chapters have a Board of Directors elected by the chapter membership consisting of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Chapters may include other board members in addition to the aforementioned officer positions and are encouraged to include a national SAA representative among their elected officers.

What does a SAA Board of Directors look like for a local chapter?

The number of leadership positions on a local chapter's board of directors may vary based on the size of the chapter, level of involvement from its members, and the individual's chapter's needs. Typically, most chapters have between five and ten members on their chapter's board of directors. Common leadership positions for local chapters include:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Fundraising
6. Public Outreach

How many leadership positions should a SAA chapter have?

Many chapters include additional leadership positions to assist on other projects or areas of interest for the chapter. If members are willing to be involved in a leadership role, creating additional positions is a great way to include all who are willing to volunteer their time. Additional leadership positions local chapters may consider adding include:

1. Membership chair
2. Advocacy/public relations/education chair
3. Volunteer/humanitarian chair
4. State-level audiology association chair
5. Class representatives (i.e., first-year, second-year, third-year, etc.)
6. Social chair
7. National SAA liaison/representative
8. Event coordinator
9. Diversity, equity, and inclusion chair

Chapter Tax-Exempt Status

SAA chapters should review the financial policies of the university under which they are approved to operate. In most cases, student-run organizations qualify for tax-exempt status through their university.

Chapters interested in obtaining tax-exempt status on their own must make their own individual request to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for a separate review by the IRS of their particular operations. There may also be particular state and local requirements that must be taken into consideration by the applicant and coordinated with the IRS application when seeking tax-exempt status.

The tax-exempt 501(c)(6) status of the Academy/SAA is particular to the Academy/SAA and may not be used as any type of “umbrella” under which chapters conduct tax-exempt activities.

Chapter Contact/Information Form

The [SAA Chapter Contact Information Form](#) gives national SAA contact information for the chapter's main points of contact. It is important to keep contact information as up-to-date as possible in order to communicate local and national information from national SAA to local SAA chapters. Anytime a chapter holds an election or an officer is changed, a new Chapter Contact Information Form with the updated information should be submitted within 30 days.

Funding a SAA Chapter

Should a SAA Chapter charge local membership dues? If so, how much?

In a series of surveys conducted in 2026, chapter leaders were asked how much they charge for local SAA chapter membership dues. Out of the 44 chapters that responded, 31% charged between \$0-\$10, 41% charged between \$11-20, 16% charged between \$21-30, 10% charged between \$31-40, and 2% charged between \$41-50.

How to fund various chapter events

Funding for chapter events usually comes from a variety of sources. Fundraising, membership dues, and donations can be used to fund chapter events. Check out the [national SAA's Program Ideas Bank](#) for inspiration!

Ideas for Member Engagement

Tracking member involvement/participation

To promote member involvement, use a point system to keep track of how many chapter meetings and events members attend and/or which members participate in chapter events. Make a spreadsheet with all the members' names, categories of events, and names of specific events to ensure easy point tracking. Be sure to update the spreadsheet weekly to avoid falling behind or forgetting to track points.

Some examples of points include:

- Have members sign in to each meeting
 - One meeting = one point
- Take attendance at each event

- One event = one point
- Fundraiser participation
 - Contributes to/participates in a fundraiser = One point
- Clothing/food drive
 - Contributes to drive = One point

Once all the points are tallied, consider assigning a ranking to the number of points earned per semester or academic year. For example:

- Gold Membership: 12+ points throughout the academic year or semester
- Silver Membership: 9-11 points throughout the academic year or semester
- Bronze Membership: 6-8 points throughout the academic year or semester
- Active Membership: 5 points throughout the academic year or semester
- Inactive member: < 5 points throughout the academic year or semester

To promote engagement in SAA chapter events, consider using positive reinforcement such as providing prizes to members with the most participation points or recognizing points by class (e.g., first-years, second-years, third-years). Some examples include:

- Have a monthly drawing for a \$5 gift card by putting the names of all members who participated in events (one ticket per event) in a bucket and selecting a winning name. This can encourage members to participate in multiple events.
- The class with the most points receives a pizza party at the end of the year.
- Posting shout-outs or member spotlights on the chapter's social media pages. Chapters can also submit activities to national SAA through the SAA Chapter Spotlight.

Should chapter members be required to be a member of national SAA?

It is strongly encouraged for SAA chapter members to also be members of the national SAA. To promote national membership, consider devoting a meeting to outlining the resources available to national SAA members. Contact the [national SAA office](#) for assistance with information or materials.

Benefits of becoming a national SAA member

There are many [benefits of national SAA membership](#). These benefits include student-to-student networking, access to the [career resources](#), [Resume Review Service](#), and [scholarship opportunities](#). Below is a more comprehensive list of resources available to national SAA members.

I. Membership

- [New Professional Pathway Program](#). Save on professional membership dues with the American Academy of Audiology as a new professional for the first three years after graduation
- Monthly payment plans through [EZ Pay](#)

II. Student-to-Student Networking

- [AAA Annual Convention](#)
- [National SAA Town Halls](#)
- [Volunteering with the national SAA](#)

III. Resources

- The [Academy](#) and [SAA](#) websites
- Career and externship resources such as [HEARCareers](#), [Compensation and Benefits Survey](#), and [Resume Review Service](#)
- Discounted rates on [AAA Annual Convention registration](#) and [online learning and certificate programs](#)

IV. Information

- *SAAy Anything* bi-monthly e-newsletter
- [Audiology Today](#)
- *Audiology Weekly* e-newsletter
- [Journal of the American Academy of Audiology](#)

V. Education and Research

- Scholarship opportunities funded by the [AAA Foundation](#)
- [Survey Distribution Requests](#) to national SAA and Academy members

SAA Chapter Communication

What communication outlets are appropriate?

Digital communications are a large part of our culture and are a convenient communication method. Examples of digital communications outlets include Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, chapter email, and chapter newsletters. Any outlet is appropriate as long as the messages are professional and a chapter representative monitors the communication outlet.

If your chapter does not already have a social media page, consider creating one; social media can help keep members informed regarding meetings, local events, national news, etc. When creating a Facebook or Twitter account for your SAA chapter, it is recommended to use your SAA chapter's email address and a generic password that can be shared with board members/representatives. Be sure to also check your university's policies regarding digital communications.

Ideas for information to post on your digital communications accounts:

- New member introductions
- Photos of chapter events or audiology-related events at your university
- Reminders for upcoming events
- Common misconceptions about audiology
- Audiology-related questions and answers
 - “What can cause hearing loss?”
 - “How loud is too loud?”
 - “How do hearing aids work?”
- Fill-in-the-blank questions
 - “The three smallest bones in the human body are the ____, ____, and ____.”
- Show how your board members became interested in audiology
- Attention-grabbing statistics about audiology, hearing health, or hearing loss
- Something interesting you learned in class that week

Be sure to follow and share posts from the national SAA’s [Instagram](#) in addition to the Academy’s [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) page! It is a great way to keep your local chapter informed of upcoming events, current news, fun audiology facts, legislative initiatives, and education. We will also follow you to be a part of your chapter's success. Tag us in your posts so we can stay connected and share the great things your SAA chapter is doing.

How often should chapter-related communication occur?

Email your chapter’s membership one to two times per month and include information regarding meeting times/locations, topics for meetings, and events/news.

Post on social media one to two times per week. Consider posting on the same day each week with a catchphrase (e.g., Happy Friday!). You can repost from the national SAA or Academy social media pages, or create your own post.

When/ how often should we hold chapter meetings?

Holding SAA meetings one to two times per month allows all pertinent information to be shared. If there is a month that your chapter does not hold an in-person meeting, an email update can be sent to chapter members. The email should include updates, upcoming events, calls for action, and any other information that may be necessary.

Chapter Events

What types of events do SAA Chapters participate in or host?

- I. SAA Chapter meetings (can include guest speakers)
- II. SAA Chapters can participate in local and national SAA events. For additional ideas, check out the [national SAA website](#).
- III. Social events
 - Local SAA:
 - Picnic with Faculty/staff
 - Dog park days
 - Virtual socials with other programs/SAA chapters
 - “Netflix Party” extension movie nights
 - Audiology-themed scavenger hunt
 - Yoga class
 - Attend a local sports event together
 - Organize a city walking tour
 - Go for a hike
 - National SAA:
 - Interact with AuD students from across the country at the AAA annual conference
 - Follow national SAA’s [Instagram](#) accounts for other opportunities to virtually meet and mix with other chapters throughout the year
- IV. Fundraising
 - Local SAA:
 - Take-out percentage nights
 - Selling t-shirts/jackets
 - Bake sales
- V. Public Outreach
 - Local SAA:
 - Get involved in community outreach
 - Deaf action centers involvement
 - Supporting international audiology (hearing aid/ hearing aid battery drives)
 - Special Olympics Healthy Hearing (SOHH)
 - Cerumen management clinics
 - Community hearing screenings
 - Food drives
 - Winter clothing drives
 - Walks for hearing

- National SAA:
 - [Power of the Constituent \(POTC\)](#)
 - [SAA Humanitarian Month/World Hearing Day](#)
 - [Ask Me About Audiology Campaign \(AMAA\)](#)
 - [National Audiology Awareness Month \(NAAM\)](#)

VI. Education events

- Local SAA:
 - Letter writing campaign
 - Advocacy presentations
- National SAA:
 - National [SAA Events](#), such as the national SAA Virtual Education Series
 - [SAA Conference](#)

VII. General resources:

- [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)
- [Including Undergrads in Your SAA Chapter](#)
- [SAA Blog](#)

Final Thoughts

Thank you again for your interest in starting a local SAA chapter! We hope this blueprint provides a general framework to guide your process. If you have more specific questions, comments, or feedback, feel free to reach out to the current [national SAA Chapter Relations Committee Chair](#).