



# Specialty Club Program

## – Frequently Asked Questions –

### 1 What is the Specialty Club Program?

The Specialty Club Program is a new club development resource that focuses on organizing clubs around a special description or characteristic that binds its members together. For example, members who are connected by a similar service cause, culture, life stage, partnership, sport or hobby, or any number of unique qualities a club or its members want to highlight.

### 2 Why is this program important?

By encouraging new and diverse club models, specialty clubs will help expand Lions' membership base, enabling the organization to meet the evolving needs of volunteers and service initiatives.

### 3 When did this program begin?

Specialty clubs (formerly known as special interest clubs) have been recognized by LCI for many years. The Specialty Clubs Program changed from a 3-year pilot to a new membership development program on July 1, 2020 and adds new club development support for Lions who apply for and are approved to fill the role of Specialty Clubs Program Coordinator.

### 4 What are the requirements for chartering a Specialty Club?

Specialty clubs and club branches are chartered in the same way as traditionally organized, community-based clubs. New club approvals and policy-based organizational requirements must be met. During the application process, a club choosing to identify a specialty category will have the option to do so.

### 5 How can my district and/or club help with building a specialty club?

Identify and network with groups that already meet in your community. Inform them of the unique opportunity that comes from belonging to a specialized Lions club – providing service engagement through specific shared interests, backgrounds, experience, etc. As you identify member and service opportunities, encourage the development of specialty clubs to respond to local or global needs.

### 6 Are specialty clubs located in every constitutional area?

Yes, each constitutional area is organizing specialty clubs through various regionalized approaches. In fact, many specialty clubs already exist from years past, but were simply not identified in LCI's records.

### 7 What is the role of specialty club coordinators?

Specialty club coordinators are Lions who are passionate about

organizing and chartering new specialty clubs. The position of specialty club coordinator was created to help inspire new club development and support the new club growth goals set annually by districts, multiple districts and Lions' global leaders. Specialty club coordinators may work within or outside of their constitutional area (with approval) to develop clubs.

### 8 How can I become a specialty club coordinator?

Interested Lions\* choose a Specialty Clubs Program Coordinator application option which identifies how they plan to organize new specialty clubs and its related expense reimbursement option. Membership Development staff will review applications and follow up with the applicant.

**Lions applying for the role of Specialty Clubs Program Coordinator will choose from two options:**

- Organize 2 new specialty clubs with at least 40 charter members – US \$1000 expense reimbursement
- OR,
- 3+ new specialty clubs and 100+ new specialty club members – US \$2000 expense reimbursement (inside constitutional area)

\*Lions actively serving as district governor cannot serve simultaneously as a specialty club coordinator.

\*\*Refer to Specialty Clubs Program Application and Development Plan forms for details on eligibility and expense reimbursement requirements.



**9 Do specialty club coordinators need to work with the existing District Governor/GAT structure to develop new clubs?**

Yes. Specialty Clubs Program Coordinators should work closely with district leaders and the GAT structure to ensure the success of the new club and the satisfaction of new members.

**10 What type of specialty clubs are being developed?**

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Cause-Specific:
  - o Diabetes
  - o Vision
  - o Hunger
  - o Environment
  - o Childhood Cancer
  - o Other
- Cultural
- Life-Stage/Experience such as:
  - o Academic focus
  - o Profession
  - o Retiree
  - o Other
- Partnerships with other organizations such as Lions Champions Clubs (Special Olympics)
- Sports or Hobbies

**11 How do I enter, change or remove the specialty description for my club?**

- A club specialty can be selected when completing and submitting a new club application
- Club officers may enter, change or remove a club specialty through MyLCI
- Club officers may request a new club specialty or update their existing club specialty by sending an email to [specialtyclubs@lionsclubs.org](mailto:specialtyclubs@lionsclubs.org)

**12 What does it cost to apply for a charter to become a self-standing Lions club?**

Currently, to charter a new club, Lions Clubs International charter fees are US\$35 per member, with a minimum of 20 charter members. This means that club charter fees are approximately US\$700 for a new club with 20 members. However, there are situations such as student, Leo-Lion and Lioness which offer discounts or waivers. Please refer to Board Policy for details on these opportunities.

**13 Are specialty club activities covered under LCI's liability insurance?**

Yes, as a benefit to our Lions conducting service activities, LCI provides liability coverage as with any non-specialized Lions club.

**14 Can we start off with a Specialty Club Branch and then convert later on to a self-standing Lions club?**

Yes. The three things to consider are: where the branch will be located, the unique characteristics of the members and/or what the special service focus of the branch will be. However, it is totally acceptable for a branch to never convert to a self-standing club. In addition, there is value in a traditional club having a specialty club branch in order to allow more people in their community to get involved in Lions.

**15 What does it cost to form a Club Branch?**

The entrance fee for each new branch member is US\$35. There is no fee for members of a parent club who wish to transfer into the club branch of the parent club where they are a member.

**16 What are the annual dues of Lions Clubs International?**

The dues support our many programs, services to clubs, legal and trademark services, public relations and a global website/social media platforms, liability insurance for clubs and the LION magazine. Local dues are established by the club and the Lions District that they are part of for administrative needs, local publications and operations.

**17 How would you describe Lions Clubs International today?**

We are a diverse organization of over 1.4 million, bringing people together in the spirit of volunteerism from all walks of life. We provide opportunities to serve for many age groups, for women and men. LCI sees specialty clubs as one way to better fulfill the passions and goals of existing Lions and attract prospective members from a diverse spectrum of experiences, backgrounds, and personal and professional goals.



[www.lionsclubs.org/specialtyclubs](http://www.lionsclubs.org/specialtyclubs)

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