



# JALT Basics

An introduction to JALT for new officers.



This version: March 28, 2022

## **JALT Basics: Table of Contents**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Basics</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>JALT rules</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>JALT website</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Parts of JALT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>EBMs</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>JALT Email Addresses</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chapter / SIG Websites</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Basecamp</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chapter / SIG AGMs</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>JALT Code of Conduct</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>PanSIG Conference</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Annual JALT International Conference</b>	<b>10</b>

## Introduction

In early 2022, the Officer Support Committee (OSC) was established to help orient new officers and support current officers in JALT's SIGs, chapters, and committees. JALT officers were by tradition trained by the officers that they replaced, but this method proved to be unreliable and inconsistent, as new officers reported feeling lost, unsure of their responsibilities, and unaware of the resources available to them. This document is one of the steps we're taking to improve the experiences of new officers.

Any suggestions for improvements to this document should be made as [comments on the Google Doc "live" version](#) of this document.

### **Contributors:**

Bill Pellowe - Director of Public Relations, and OSC Chair

Mehrasa Alizadeh - SIG Treasurer Liaison

Emily Choong - Membership Liaison

Clare Kaneko - Chapter Representative Liaison

Miguel Mision - Public Relations Liaison

Grant Osterman - SIG Representative Liaison

Michael Phillips - Chapter Treasurer Liaison

Chelanna White - Program Liaison

Lorraine Sakka - Committee Member

Jon Thomas - Committee Member

Samantha Kawakami - Proofreader

## Basics

JALT is the Japan Association for Language Teaching. We started in 1975, and became an NPO in 1999. (See [A Brief History of JALT](#).) Our Japanese name is 全国語学教育学会 (*zenkoku goukaku kyouiku gakkai*).

“JALT” rhymes with “salt.” In Japanese, the katakana is ジャルト

JALT members pay a membership fee. Chapters and SIGs are not allowed to pay membership fees for their officers. Members enjoy a number of [benefits](#).

JALT officers communicate through an app called Basecamp (see “Basecamp” below). If somehow no one in your chapter or SIG can help you get on Basecamp, write to JALT Central Office via our contact form: <https://jalt.org/contact/form>

## JALT rules

JALT runs on a set of rules found in our constitution, bylaws, and standing rules.

- Our constitution and bylaws have a link from the main JALT website, <https://jalt.org/main/constitution>
- The most up to date compilation of the Standing Rules is in Officer Resources, <https://jalt.org/officer-resources/standing-rules>
- A very long list of [JALT policies](#) is available

## JALT website

Each chapter, SIG, and committee have their own “home” page on the JALT site. (Access via the [list of chapters and SIGs](#) or [the list of committees](#)). This page is your group’s command center, where:

- The President / Coordinator / Committee Chair adds new officers and deletes ex-officers;
- The Membership Chair accesses the membership list;
- The Program or Publicity Chair adds events and event reports;
- The Publications Chair adds links to your publications, and publishes news stories about new issues;

This page is also your first face to show people what your chapter or SIG is about. From this page, visitors can access your website, social media, Facebook, etc. You can add one image, and it’ll appear at the top of the page. Videos about how to do all of this are located in [the Officer Resources page](#). To access that page, you must first be listed as an officer or committee member on your group’s page, and also logged in to the JALT site. You will see the link at the top of your “My account” page as soon as you log in; you can also find it at the bottom of the “Groups” menu.

The [Officer Resources page](#) contains a manual and links specific to each chapter and SIG position. Some are more up to date than others. If you notice errors, please contact the relevant liaison or director. It is highly recommended that officers read their manuals and familiarize themselves with the other resources on that page.

## Parts of JALT

Contact: <https://jalt.org/contact/form>

JALT has a physical office in Tokyo with some full-time employees. This is called “JCO” (JALT Central Office).

JALT has a seven-person Board of Directors (“BoD”). The BoD elections are held every two years. All JALT members can vote in these elections.

JALT’s Publications Board (“Pubs Board”) is run by the Publications Chair, who oversees JALT’s three publications: *JALT Journal* (“JJ”, twice a year), *The Language Teacher* (“TLT”, six times a year), and the *Postconference Publication* (“PCP”, once a year). They have their own website at <https://jalt-publications.org>.

JALT has Chapters, which are geographically regional groups, and Special Interest Groups (“SIGs”), which are national groups based on a specific research area or teaching context. JALT members may belong to only one chapter, but they may join multiple SIGs. While the default is to join the nearest chapter, you may elect to join any chapter you want to join. One SIG membership is included in the membership fee. A [complete list of chapters and SIGs is on jalt.org](#).

JALT also has several committees, each working on some specific aspect of our organization. You can find a complete list of these committees here: <https://jalt.org/all/committees>

## EBMs

JALT holds three Executive Board Meetings (“EBMs”) a year. All chapter presidents and SIG coordinators are expected to attend, or send another officer instead (a “Power of Attorney” form must be submitted beforehand). Other officers (such as committee chairs and members, publication editors, etc.) are sometimes specifically invited to the EBMs. Two EBMs are full weekends, and one EBM is a short, one-hour meeting during the annual JALT conference. If you are representing your chapter or SIG, or have been specifically invited, JALT will cover the transportation and one night hotel to the two-day EBMs.

- February EBM (two days), generally held in the same city as that year’s annual conference.
- June EBM (two days), often held in Ogaki or some other reasonably accessible, reasonably priced venue.
- November EBM (one hour meeting), held at JALT’s Annual International Conference.

For each EBM, JALT publishes the JALT Executive Newsletter (“JENL”), which contains the agenda of the EBM, including reports from directors and committees, and motions to be voted on. The JENL comes out two weeks before the EBM.

Note: Chapters and SIGs are not expected to create reports for the JENL. Chapters and SIGs have various reports to do during the year, but they don’t create JENL reports.

Any voting member of the EBM can create a motion to be included in the JENL. The deadline is usually one month before the EBM, and is sent to the JALT Director of Records. There’s a specific format. Basic advice: If you want to change something, find the JALT Standing Rule or Bylaw that states the current rule, and phrase your motion as an amendment to the existing rule.

Everyone attending the next EBM should become a member of the EBM Team on Basecamp (see the “Basecamp” section of this document).

## JALT Email Addresses

JALT has many @jalt.org email addresses. Each chapter, SIG and committee has its own mail address that is the default address used for contacting your group. When a group's president / coordinator / chair is replaced, the new person should take over the group's email address. Contact JALT Central Office if help is needed:

<https://jalt.org/contact/form> .

## Chapter / SIG Websites

JALT has a web server. If your chapter or SIG wishes to have JALT host its website, the cost is 5,000 yen per year. The web server manager can assist you with setting up a site for your chapter or SIG. Contact JALT Central Office:

<https://jalt.org/contact/form> . Additionally, the web server manager can provide mailing lists (Google Groups) and mail accounts (Gmail) as required, too.

## Basecamp

JALT's internal communications run on a system called Basecamp. Basecamp consists of "Teams" that you can join. All JALT officers should belong to the [JALT HQ team](#). Those attending an upcoming EBM should join the EBM team. Your chapter, SIG and committee can / should all have their own team on Basecamp.

You should only have one account on Basecamp, even if you belong to many teams.

TASC (Tech Assistance Committee) is currently working on Basecamp tutorial videos. When finished, you'll find them in the Officer Resource Center.



## Chapter / SIG AGMs

Each chapter and SIG is expected to hold an Annual General Meeting (“AGM”) near the end of the calendar year. For chapters, these AGMs often happen as part of a monthly event; for SIGs, these AGMs are often held at the Annual JALT International Conference. At AGMs,, the chapters and SIGs have their officers give a report of the year’s activities and state of affairs. Also at the AGM, elections are held for officer positions in accordance with the group’s constitution.

It is thus imperative to communicate with officers well in advance of the AGM to confirm their desire to stay on, leave or offer up their position. The membership of the group should also be informed that an election is coming. Everyone in the group needs to be informed about the nomination process and voting process. Moreover, it would be beneficial for presidents / coordinators to familiarize themselves with the duties of each officer in cases where an officer position becomes open without anyone to fill it.

Although the flow and format of the AGM is up to each Chapter and SIG, please ensure that officer reports are accurate, a call to members for elections is made well in advance (for potential new nominations, as well as for voting, contents, and invitation to join).

## JALT Code of Conduct

JALT seeks to provide a safe, hospitable, and productive environment for all JALT members, staff, volunteers, and event attendees, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability, physical appearance, gender, or sexual orientation. [The JALT Code of Conduct](#) explains the procedure to report harassment.

## PanSIG Conference

PanSIG is an annual conference usually held in May (though 2022 will be held in July), and organized by many of the Special Interest Groups (SIGs) of JALT. It is meant to be a smaller, more intimate conference than the annual international JALT conference (which is held each fall), and is a place where SIG members can network with each other. The PanSIG website is <https://pansig.org>.

PanSIG has a committee that runs the call for papers, vetting and scheduling of the PanSIG conference, as well as the post-conference publication (*PanSIG Journal*). All participating SIGs are expected to have several members actively involved in the conference planning and implementation. After the conference, participating SIGs will receive a share of the PanSIG revenue.

Also, all participating SIGs can have a forum. The SIG must submit its intention to have a forum during the conference call for presentations, but may send the details about the forum later.

Whether the local JALT chapter is involved with this conference or not is up to the local chapter and the PanSIG committee to decide among themselves.

## Annual JALT International Conference

The conference is organized by the Pre-Conference Planning Committee (“PCPC”), with the JALT Director of Program at the head. All chapters and SIGs are expected to help promote the conference call for presentation proposals, as well as the conference itself, through announcements on their website, social media, and newsletter.

Chapters may nominate a “First time presenter” as an unvetted presentation. There is a link to the details on this page of the officers resource area:

<https://jalt.org/officer-resources/international-conference-documents>

Chapters and SIGs may nominate a presenter (or author of an article) from the previous calendar year as their “Michele Steele Best of JALT” winner. The awards ceremony is held the Saturday evening of the conference. After the awards ceremony, the social aspect of the evening starts, with drinks and food. Details about the award are here: <https://jalt.org/main/best-jalt-guidelines>

SIGs may have a forum as well as their AGM (Annual General Meeting) at the conference (see the “AGM” section of this document).

Many of the core officer positions have meetings at the conference, too:

- Chapter Presidents
- SIG Coordinators
- Treasurers
- Publicity Chairs
- Membership Chairs
- Program Chairs

Due to the pandemic, many of these officer meetings were held online in 2020 and 2021. It’s possible that these meetings may shift online in the future.