



JALT Basics

An introduction to JALT for new officers.



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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.

Submit suggestions, edits, and comments

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

OSC members:

- Bill Pellowe - Director of Public Relations, and OSC Chair
- Mehrasa Alizadeh - Treasurer Liaison
- Emily Choong - Membership Liaison
- Clare Kaneko - Chapter Representative Liaison (2023: JALT President)
- Miguel Mision - Public Relations Liaison
- Grant Osterman - SIG Representative Liaison
- Chelanna White - Program Liaison (2023: Director of Program)
- Lorraine Sakka - Committee Member
- Jon Thomas - Committee Member
- Samantha Kawakami - Proofreader (2023: Director of Records)

JALT Acronyms

Links in this list of JALT Acronyms are internal links to parts of this document.

AGM	("A-G-M")	Annual General Meeting held by SIGs and chapters
AM	("A-M")	Associate Member (now known as " JALT Sponsor "): business or organization member of JALT
BOJ	("B-oh-J")	The Michele Steele Best of JALT Awards
BOD	("B-oh-D")	Board of Directors (eight elected officers)
CRL	("C-R-L")	Chapter Representative Liaison
COC	("C-oh-C")	Code of Conduct ; (COCC is the COC Committee)
DAC	("Dack")	Domestic Affairs Committee
DOI	("D-oh-I")	Digital Object Identifiers , used with publications
EBM	("E-B-M")	Executive Board Meeting
EME	("E-M-E")	Educational Materials Exhibition
FSC	("F-S-C")	Financial Steering Committee; prepares and reviews the budget before presenting to the EBM
IAC	("I-A-C")	International Affairs Committee
JCO	("J-C-oh")	JALT Central Office
JENL	("Jennel")	JALT Executive Newsletter , out 2 weeks before the EBM
JJ	("J-J")	<i>JALT Journal</i> (JALT's semi-annual peer-reviewed publication)
JJ	("J-J")	JALT Junior (part of JALT's annual conference)
MAS	("Mass")	Monthly Accounting Statement
NEC	("N-E-C")	Nominations and Elections Committee
NPO	("N-P-oh")	Nonprofit Organization. JALT is an NPO.
OEC	("Oh-E-C")	Officer's Expense Claim form; use this to submit expenses for reimbursement
OGM	("Oh-G-M")	Ordinary General Meeting
PAC	("Pack")	Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies, of which JALT is a member organization. See https://pac-teach.org
PCP	("P-C-P")	<i>Postconference Publication</i> . All vetted presenters at the annual JALT conference are invited to submit a paper to the <i>PCP</i> .
PCPC	("P-C-P-C")	Pre-Conference Planning Committee
Pubs Board		(pronounced like the plural of "pub"); JALT's Publications Board
SIG	("Sig")	Special Interest Group
SRL	("S-R-L")	SIG Representative Liaison
TLT	("T-L-T")	<i>The Language Teacher</i> (JALT's bimonthly publication)

UALS (“U-A-L-S”) United Associations of Language Studies, of which JALT is a member; see <https://uals.net/>

Basics: What is JALT?

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 name in Japanese is 全国語学教育学会 (*zenkoku gokaku kyouiku gakkai*). “JALT” rhymes with “salt.” In Japanese, the katakana is ジャルト

JALT’s mission statement is:

JALT promotes excellence in language learning, teaching, and research by providing opportunities for those involved in language education to meet, share, and collaborate.

全国語学教育学会は言語教育関係者が交流・共有・協働する機会を提供し、言語学習、教育、及び調査研究の発展に寄与します。

In April 2022, JALT had over 2,000 members. 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.

Also, each chapter and SIG has its [own constitution](#).

One major rule change was an amendment to Standing Rule 1.14 which was passed at the February 2022 EBM. In a nutshell, the rule says that if fees are charged for an event, then JALT members pay less than non-JALT members. The rule was amended to state clearly that all JALT members should be charged the same fee for an event. In the past, JALT allowed three-tier price structures (for example, a SIG conference could have the lowest price for JALT members who belonged to that SIG, a higher price for JALT members who were not in that SIG, and a third, highest price for non-JALT members), but now, if fees are charged, we only allow two-tier price structures (with one lower price for all JALT members, and a higher price for non-JALT members).

JALT website

Each of our chapters, SIGs, and committees 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 / Committee Chair adds 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 (such as a logo), and it’ll appear at the top of the page. Videos about how to do all of this are located in [the Officer Resources area](#). 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; and at the bottom of the “Groups” menu.

The [Officer Resources area](#) 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 resources on that page.

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.

JALT Email Addresses

Each chapter, SIG and committee has its own @jalt.org email address that is the default address used for contacting your group. When a group's President / Committee Chair is replaced, the new one should take over the group's email address. Ping Phil Nguyen on [Basecamp](#) or contact JALT Central Office if help is needed: <https://jalt.org/contact/form>. This email address also gives your group access to Google Drive (for storage), Google Groups (for mailing lists), Google Sites (for websites), etc.

Benefits to Members

JALT members receive a number of benefits. Accessing some of the following pages requires logging in to the JALT website:

- JALT [publications](#) (*The Language Teacher*, six times a year, and *JALT Journal*, twice a year), in hardcopy as well as immediate access online
- A SIG (Special Interest Group) membership is included in every JALT membership. Additional SIGs can be joined for 2,000 yen each.
- Free or discounted admission to Chapter and SIG [events](#).
- Substantial discount on [IATEFL](#) membership (the code updates annually in August or September; look in the [JALT News section](#), or search the JALT site for IATEFL).
- ~~Additional discounts on many Apple products (higher than the standard educational discount).~~ (The Apple On Campus program has ended. The original agreement with Apple stated that Apple could cancel the program at any time, which they did in December, 2023.)
- The opportunity to engage in [reflective dialogue and relational mentoring](#) (JALT Mentoring and Orientation committee).

- The opportunity to receive [assistance developing their manuscripts](#) (JALT Writers' Peer Support Group).
- The opportunity to [apply for grants](#).

Parts of JALT

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

JALT Organizational Flowchart: <https://jalt.org/page/osc-jalt-basics>

JCO

JALT has some full-time employees we refer to collectively as “JCO” (JALT Central Office; say “jay see oh”). For years, JCO was also an actual office that we rented, but starting in 2023, we closed the office and started using a shared office space.

BoD

JALT has an eight-person [Board of Directors](#) (“B-oh-D”) and an Auditor. The BoD [elections](#) are held every two years. All JALT members can vote in these elections.

Publications Board

JALT’s Publications Board (“Pubs Board”) is run by the Publications Chair, who oversees JALT’s three national 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 32 **chapters**, which are geographically regional groups, and 32 Special Interest Groups (“**SIGs**”, rhymes with “figs”), 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 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 (Executive Board Meetings)

JALT holds three Executive Board Meetings (“EBM”, say the letters E-B-M) a year. Two EBMs are full weekends, and one EBM is a short, one-hour meeting during the Annual International Conference.

- February EBM (two days), generally held in the same city as that year’s annual conference.
- June EBM (two days), often held in Ogaki, Nagoya, or some other reasonably accessible, reasonably priced venue. (June 2024 was held online to help JALT recover funds for the development fund, but this is not being considered as a permanent feature of the June EBM.)
- November EBM (one hour meeting), held at JALT’s Annual International Conference.

Who attends the EBM?

- All Chapter and SIG Presidents are expected to attend, or send another officer instead. A [Power of Attorney \(POA\) form](#) must be submitted beforehand by snail mail.
- Other officers (such as committee chairs and members, publication editors, etc.) are sometimes specifically invited to the EBMs.
- The EBM is open to chapter/SIG officers and committee members. If interested in attending either virtually or in person, they should express their interest to their Chapter / SIG President or Committee Chair, and register as an observer by the EBM registration deadline. Observers are non-voting, and they cannot make motions or address the EBM.

Travel and Hotel for EBMs

JALT Central Office will arrange the hotel reservations for in-person attendees of the two weekend EBMs. You’ll be asked during EBM registration if you need a hotel room, and JALT will reserve the room for you. JALT will cover the cost of your Saturday night hotel if you are planning on attending the entire EBM in person (Saturday noon to Sunday late afternoon). If you are arriving Friday night to make travel easier, please ask your chapter or SIG to pay for the extra hotel night (and JALT will make the reservation for you). However, if you are arriving Friday night

because you were invited to attend one of the additional JALT meetings (Pre-Conference Planning Committee or Financial Steering Committee, Friday evening and / or Saturday morning), JALT will cover the hotel cost for both Friday and Saturday nights.

Reimbursements at EBMs

Hotel and transportation

- If you are representing your chapter or SIG, or have been specifically invited, JALT will cover the transportation and one night hotel (that JALT reserves, see [above](#)) to the two-day EBMs. However, additional attendees must either cover their own expenses, or have their chapter or SIG cover these expenses. At the EBM, you can fill out an OEC (Officer Expense Claim form).
- Without a receipt, you may claim up to 3,000 yen (one-way) for local public transportation, and you can claim up to the total amount (with a receipt) for those who traveled from farther away. The claiming officer should fill out an OEC at the EBM to request payment. In the case of local public transportation and no receipt, the officer should provide an explanation of the route taken (point of origin, destination and transportation company name) and the fare.
- Travel receipts should be addressed to “NPO JALT” from whatever transportation company was used. If the receipt has no name on it, write “NPO JALT” on it yourself.
- If coming by air, please reserve in advance to get the most inexpensive flights available.
- Car transportation is reimbursed at ¥15 per kilometer. When using a toll road or fee paying highway, a receipt is needed. If the ETC card is used, enter the ETC lane as usual, however, when exiting the toll road, use the non-ETC exit and present your ETC card to the attendant. The card will be charged the usual ETC rate (with discount if applicable) and a receipt will be given. Use this receipt to claim the highway fee. If a round trip is taken, a one-way receipt can be used for the claim and the fare can be doubled for the round trip expense.

Meals

- If breakfast is included with the JALT-supplied hotel, then it is covered.

- Only 2,000 yen for the Saturday dinner is covered by JALT National.
- All other meals are NOT covered by JALT National. Make a claim for other meals from your chapter or SIG. Lunch reimbursement is up to 1,500 yen, excluding alcohol (cf Standing Rule 6.4, section 3).

JENL

For each EBM, JALT publishes the JALT Executive Newsletter (“JENL”, rhymes with “kennel”), 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, and can be found in [Officer Resources](#) on JALT.org.

Also, a copy of the JENL will be made available to all signed-in JALT members on the [News section](#) of the JALT website. Only signed-in JALT members will be able to see the JENL news story on the website.

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

Motions

Any voting member of the EBM can create a motion to be included in the JENL. If you are not a voting member, you must get a voting member to co-write the motion with you. The deadline is usually one month before the EBM, and is sent to the JALT Director of Records. There’s a specific format; [see the motion template for details](#).

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. Also, consult with the Director of Records ahead of the deadline for advice.

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

Conference EBM Subsidy of 3,000 yen

Officers are allowed to claim a 3,000 yen subsidy for attending the conference EBM and a JALT business meeting (see Standing Rule 4.3), only if the JALT officer is **not** getting any financial support for attending the conference. JALT Business Meetings must be scheduled at the Conference and typically include Treasurers' Meeting, Membership Chairs Meeting, PanSIG Planning Meeting, Program Chairs Meeting, or Publicity Chairs Meeting. SIG General Meetings are NOT included.

Also note that Chapters or SIGs can decide if they will cover the transportation costs and one night accommodation of their President, or one officer with Power of Attorney who will represent the Chapter or SIG. Conference fees can **not** be covered. If the Chapter or SIG is paying these costs, then the officer may not apply for the 3,000 yen subsidy.

OGM (Ordinary General Meeting)

The OGM is held during the June [EBM](#). All JALT members are asked to vote by absentee ballot online. JALT needs at least one quarter of JALT members to vote in order to have a valid OGM. The link to the ballot is sent by email from JALT Central Office. The OGM ballot may include amendments to the JALT Constitution or other motions, and each year, we're voting on:

- Approval of the JALT business, financial, and audit reports;
- Approval of the JALT business plan and budget;
- Approval of the results of any previous election. (This means that you are satisfied that the election process was done in accordance with our rules, so you accept the results. This is not a second round of voting for candidates.)

Only these meetings are recognized by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Legal Affairs Bureau (which has granted JALT NPO status) as the required meetings that must be held.

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.

JALT's [Technology Advisory and Support Committee](#) ("TASC", sounds like "task") is currently working on creating Basecamp tutorial videos. You'll find them in [the Officer Resources area](#).

Chapter / SIG Annual General Meetings (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 may be held for officer positions in accordance with the group’s constitution. Please be sure to consult your chapter's or SIG's constitution for details about the officer duties, the AGM, officer elections, and more.

So, please 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 Chapter / SIG Presidents 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, and that 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 Development Fund (for when your chapter or SIG requires additional funds)

If you need additional money to support your programs, turn to the [JALT Development Fund](#). The fund’s purpose is to support JALT SIGs and chapters which are in need of resources to develop services and membership.

FAQ:

- Can a chapter or SIG apply two years in a row? YES, love your energy.
- Does our chapter or SIG balance have to be zero? NO, just low.
- Can we use the funds for external speakers to come to our remote chapter? YES, it’s a great reason.
- Is the process bureaucratic and tedious? NO, it’s fairly straightforward and you can always ask for help.

- How is the Development Fund financed? The Development Fund is primarily made up of monies from former chapters and SIGs that have folded. JALT National is responsible for maintaining a healthy balance and contributes to the fund when needed.

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.

The JALT Code of Conduct is in force at every JALT event and associated social event, including meetings and social activities, so please ensure that the attendees are aware of this.

JALT Sponsors (FKA Associate Members)

JALT Sponsors (formerly known as “Associate Members”) are corporate / commercial members of JALT. They provide financial support to JALT through membership fees, advertising fees, and participation fees to join JALT conferences and have display booths. A [complete list of JALT Sponsors is available on the JALT website](#).

Chapter Events

When JALT Sponsors co-sponsor JALT chapter events, the usual arrangement is:

- The event is free for JALT members and non-members.
- The JALT Sponsor provides the speaker, and covers all of the speaker’s fees (honorarium, transportation, accommodation, and meals).
- The chapter usually pays the venue fee, unless the JALT Sponsor would rather change the usual venue.
- The JALT Sponsor may display educational materials, and the talk may include commercial messages.
- The chapter publicizes the event as a regular monthly event.

Larger Events (conferences, special SIG events, etc.)

If your SIG or chapter is planning a larger event and you would like to include several JALT Sponsors, the first step is to “draft a letter of invitation and send that letter to the Business Manager and JALT Sponsor Liaison.” See the JALT [Guidelines for Chapters and Special Interest Groups \(SIGs\) Working with JALT Sponsors](#) for the complete process.

PanSIG Conference

PanSIG is an annual conference usually held in May (though PanSIG 2022 was held in July), and organized by many of the Special Interest Groups (“SIGs”, rhymes with “figs”) 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. The forum is unvetted, so the deadline is often after the deadline for vetted proposals.

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.

Note on style:

- The conference is *PanSIG year*, with a space before the year (e.g., PanSIG 2022).
- The publication is *year PanSIG Journal* (e.g., 2022 PanSIG Journal)

Annual JALT International Conference

The conference is organized by the Pre-Conference Planning Committee (“PCPC”), with the JALT Director of Conference 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 their website, social media, and newsletter.

First-time presenter award

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>

Michele Steele Best of JALT winners

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 guidelines are here: <https://jalt.org/main/best-jalt-guidelines>

SIG AGMs

SIGs may have a forum as well as their Annual General Meeting at the conference (see “[AGM](#)” in document). These should be submitted as unvetted presentations.

Officer Meetings

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

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

(Officers who attend these meetings may be eligible for a [3,000 yen subsidy](#).) 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.

EME

A central feature of the annual conference is the Educational Materials Exhibit (“EME”, spell it out “E-M-E”), with booths displaying textbooks and other materials. Nearly all exhibitors are what we call JALT Associate Members (“AMs”). A [complete list of AMs is available on the JALT website](#).

Publications: DOI (Digital Object Identifiers)

JALT SIGs and some chapters publish regular publications. You can see [a full list of publications](#) on the JALT site. (If your publication isn’t listed, you can add it through your own group’s page on the JALT site. See “[JALT Website](#)” above.) If you are a SIG Publications Chair, please speak with your SIG President about how many publications your SIG is expected to do each year.

Your publication can have a DOI, supplied by JALT. JALT Publications (*JALT Journal*, *The Language Teacher*, and *the PostConference Publication*) joined Crossref in 2020, so that we can assign DOIs and register metadata for academic materials, making them more visible in online searches. This should raise the profile of JALT’s publications and hopefully lead to more citations, encouraging authors to submit articles. JALT Publications has extended this service to SIG and chapter publications. However, please realize that DOIs are a long-term commitment and a serious responsibility. The first step is to [read the JALT Publications DOI guidelines](#), and the next step is to [contact the JALT Publications Board Chair](#) to start the process.

Publications: ISSNs

An International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) is “an 8-digit code used to identify newspapers, journals, magazines and periodicals of all kinds and on all media—print and electronic” ([source](#)). To obtain an ISS for your SIG or chapter publication, first [contact JCO](#) for the relevant information. Use the name of JALT in hiragana, and JCO’s address for the physical address. The ISSN application portal is <https://www.issn.org>.