



**ENTOMOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY OF AMERICA**  
SHARING INSECT SCIENCE GLOBALLY

# **ESA Proposed Bylaws Amendment: Formal & Informal Teaching Section**

**June 18, 2026**

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From: Melissa W. Siebert, Ph.D., BCE, ESA President, on behalf of ESA  
Governing Board  
To: ESA members  
Re: Recommendation for consideration of a Bylaws revision  
Date: June 18, 2026

Dear ESA members,

In 2022, a group of your fellow members organized a proposal to create a new discipline-based Section within ESA to serve members who specialize in teaching, outreach, and science communication, named the “Formal & Informal Teaching Section.”

The Governing Board granted the request on a trial basis, which established the [Formal & Informal Teaching \(FIT\) Section](#) as a “pilot” project, with several specified milestones set forth for the new Section to meet, in a multi-phase process, before it could be considered for full Section status. These milestones focused on establishing a formal volunteer structure, organizing programming for ESA events, developing content for ESA publications, and recruiting members to join the Section and grow the Society.

The FIT pilot Section has been in operation since 2023, and many ESA members have likely observed its activities or participated in them during this time. Throughout, Section organizers have reported regularly to the Governing Board on progress. FIT was approved to move from Phase 1 to Phase 2 in June 2025.

In March of this year, the Governing Board approved a motion from FIT organizers to advance the pilot Section to Phase 3, which places it on the ballot for approval by the full Society membership.

During ESA’s summer election period, ESA members will be asked to vote yes or no on an amendment to ESA Bylaws to add the Formal & Informal Teaching Section as a fifth Section of the Society. Support from two-thirds of voting members is required for approval.

Below, you will find supporting info that details the proposed Bylaws amendment, summarizes the FIT pilot Section progress through its milestones, and additional considerations regarding the addition of a new Section to ESA. You can also learn more at [entsoc.org/membership/sections/fit](https://entsoc.org/membership/sections/fit).

Thank you for taking the time to carefully review and vote on this critical question for your professional society.

Sincerely,

Melissa W. Siebert, Ph.D., BCE  
President, Entomological Society of America

## Proposed Text Amendment in ESA Bylaws

ESA's [current, full Bylaws are available online](#). Excerpted below is Article V, which would be amended to add the Formal & Informal Teaching Section as a full Section within ESA. This requires an edit to just a single line, adding FIT to the list of Sections named in Article V, Section 1.

### **ARTICLE V: SECTIONS**

**Section 1. Organization and Purpose.** The membership shall be organized by subject matter-oriented Sections to advance the purpose of The Society and their own Section agendas. Sections may elect to develop their own policies for governance consistent with the Bylaws of The Society. The purpose of the Sections is to develop and implement the key capabilities for their membership that result in: outreach related to science and public policy, program development, continuing education, and fostering interest in entomology.

The Sections of The Society shall be:

- Systematics, Evolution, and Biodiversity
- Physiology, Biochemistry, and Toxicology
- Medical, Urban, and Veterinary Entomology
- Plant–Insect Ecosystems
- Formal & Informal Teaching

The name of a Section may be modified with a two-thirds majority vote of the Section members voting by ballot and approval of the Governing Board.

**Section 2. Changes in Sections.** A new Section can be added or an existing Section may be dissolved or its discipline boundaries changed, in accordance with amendment procedures for Bylaws, provided the proposed amendment shall have been approved by the Section or Sections that will be affected by the proposed change. The proposal shall be accompanied by written concurrence of all existing Sections affected by the proposed change.

**Section 3. Membership.** A member may affiliate with any number of Sections.

## Summary of FIT Section Progress Pilot Phase

Adapted below is information reported in March 2026 from FIT to the ESA Governing Board detailing its progress toward milestones for advancing to consideration for full Section status.

### Introduction:

The [FIT \(Formal & Informal Teaching\) Pilot Section](#) serves ESA members who are deeply involved in education (K-12 and college), outreach/content creation, science communication, extension, and professional training. To align with the Society's goals to increase and improve the quality of entomological education, promote insect science to the public, support students and ECPs who enter education-focused careers, and retain members who might otherwise leave the society, the leadership of FIT has worked continuously for FIT to become the fifth Section of ESA.

Below we highlight the five milestones for Phase III and how the FIT pilot Section has met these milestones.

**Milestone 1:** The FIT leadership council or others working on their behalf must continue to make presentations at Section and Branch Meetings. This will keep the focus on the pilot Section and ensure that the rest of the ESA membership remains mindful of the pilot program underway.

**Status:** We have a strong FIT presence in all Branches, with FIT symposia organized for SEB, EB, PB, SWB, and NCB meetings in 2026. In 2025, FIT organized and presented a symposium at the International Branch Virtual Symposium and hosted sessions at the North Central Branch, Southeastern Branch, and Southwestern Branch. Additionally, FIT has had an official presence through listening sessions and pilot-section business meetings since the 2023 Annual Meeting.

**Milestone 2:** The total number of pilot Section members should have grown to 500 individuals. A goal would be that some of these individuals would have come from ESA members previously unidentified with an extant Section or from outside the Society. Full members should represent at least 25% of total membership. No fewer than 75 of the total members should be new to ESA (rejoined included).

**Status:** The FIT Pilot Section has continued to grow. The 2025 year-end membership breakdown is presented below. In addition, 228 members new to the Society or returning after two years have joined FIT. Overall, members include 321 (38%) regular members and 347 (41%) student members.

<b>Member Type</b>	<b># of Members</b>	<b>% of Members</b>
Student Member	347	41%
Student Transition Member	38	5%
Early Professional Member	122	15%
Regular Member	321	38%
Other (Emeritus, Family, Honorary, President's Circle)	12	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Milestone 3:** A full slate of volunteers are standing for pilot Section elections with a goal that at least two people are vying for each open position. The pilot Section president will have recommended a slate to the ESA president of individuals who would represent the pilot Section's interests on every committee for the Society which includes Section representatives, per the current ESA Policy Manual.

**Status:** We currently have a full slate of candidates for standard Section leadership. See candidates for the summer ESA elections listed online: [Candidates for Society Elections](#).

**Milestone 4:** Four student sessions are held at each Annual Meeting (this may include competition and non-competition submissions). Some leeway shall be given to the pilot Section depending upon the quality of the submissions and the maintenance and growth of the programming. At least three days of pilot Section programming is held at the Annual Meeting, which shall include a minimum of four symposia and three 10-minute paper sessions. The pilot Section will organize and host at least one workshop at the Annual Meeting or at a Branch Meeting. A goal would be to also host at least one symposium or workshop at each of the year's Branch meetings.

**Status:** Student competitions for posters and oral presentations were held at the Annual Meeting along with regular sessions, Program Symposia (2), Member Symposia (5) and Workshops (2) exceeding milestones for Phase 3. As previously noted, all domestic Branches have symposia, and students are able to compete in the FIT category.

Here are numbers from the 2025 Annual Meeting:

- 2 FIT 10-minute Paper Sessions (Undergraduate and Graduate)
- 2 FIT 10-minute Poster Sessions (Undergraduate and Graduate)
- 2 Program Symposia listed with FIT
- 6 Section Symposia listed with FIT
- 5 Member Symposia listed with FIT
- 2 FIT 10-minute paper sessions and 2 FIT poster sessions

- 2 workshops organized by FIT members (including leadership)

At the 2026 Annual Meeting, two Program Symposia and six Member Symposia organized by FIT members were chosen along with two sessions of submitted presentations and student competitions.

**Milestone 5:** The marketing outreach will continue and demonstrable efforts will be made to target new potential members outside of ESA. While the marketing efforts started in Phase 1 will continue, this milestone targets members of groups which were not previously part of the outreach.

**Status:** FIT has spent considerable effort contacting potential members outside of the society through volunteer efforts. This has included:

- Direct emailing/phone calls to entomologists at Primarily Undergraduate Institutes and Community Colleges in the United States
- Posting to listservs, Discords, and Facebook pages for the Entomological Collections Network, Invertebrate Zoology Educators, Invertebrates in Education and Conservation Conference
- Utilization of our own social media pages (namely FIT BlueSky)
- Promotion of ESA and FIT to Master Gardener and Master Naturalist groups
- Correspondence with high school teachers in Nebraska and Oklahoma
- Promotion of ESA and FIT with zoo staff

## **Additional Considerations Related to Addition of an ESA Section**

The addition of a Section to ESA’s membership structure will result in the addition of representatives from the Section to several of the Society’s governing groups, as follows:

### **Section Representative on the ESA Governing Board**

ESA Bylaws stipulate that the Governing Board includes “One Representative elected by each Section” among other officers and representatives. This would increase the total size of the Governing Board from 18 to 19 members. See Article 4, Section 1 of the [ESA Bylaws](#).

### **Section Representatives on ESA Committees**

The ESA Policy Manual details various policies and procedures not included in the Bylaws and can be revised by vote of the Governing Board. The Policy Manual specifies that the following ESA Committees shall include a representative from each Section. Therefore, these Committees would also grow by one member. See the [ESA Policy Manual](#).

- Publications Council
- Books Editorial Board
- Committee on Annual Meeting Program
- Committee on Awards and Honors
- Committee on Early Career Professionals
- Committee on Education and Outreach
- Committee on Entomology Games
- Committee on Science Policy
- Committee on Student Affairs
- Entomology for All Committee