**Welcome**

Welcome itch SIG members and those interested!

We are pleased to announce that the new itch Special Interest Group (SIG) was officially approved by the IASP as a SIG-in-formation. The announcement of the new SIG and additional information can be found [here](#). The website for the itch SIG can be found [here](#). Also, do not forget to join the Itch SIG [social platform](#).

We want to thank each of you who supported the establishment of the itch SIG for your interest and enthusiasm. As a SIG-in-formation, we now have several tasks to complete as well as announcements of itch-related features and future initiatives.

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**Membership & Support**

First, please join the itch SIG. A prerequisite for membership is that you are a member of IASP in good standing. If you want to become a member of the itch SIG, it costs just an additional $20 per year, payable when you pay your annual IASP dues.

Our SIG needs to establish a steering committee. Sarah Ross and Earl Carstens have spearheaded the application for the itch SIG with IASP, and both are willing to serve on the inaugural steering committee. We suggest that an additional 2-4 SIG members serve on the committee. We would like to establish the committee in a democratic fashion. Please send nominations for the itch SIG steering committee to Sarah or Earl at the following e-mail addresses noted below. We then plan to have an election for the steering committee membership.
We are very happy to report that there is now an itch filter at the Pain Research Forum website, it can be found [here](#). This allows users to find new papers about itch with a click-of-the-button!

To view itch-specific papers of the week, simply select Itch (under view only) and the page will display recent papers on itch or pruritus. This feature provides an extremely valuable resource for researchers to keep up with the latest publications in the field.

A benefit of the new itch SIG is the opportunity to host a SIG-sponsored symposium on itch on the day before the start of the IASP World Congress on Itch. For the coming year, the SIG symposia are scheduled to be held on 4 August 2020 in Amsterdam. The application deadline for the SIG symposium is August 2019. We hope that our forthcoming application is successful, so please keep the date of the symposium in mind if you plan to attend the IASP World Congress on Pain next year.

Most of you are probably already aware of the International Forum for the Study of Itch (IFSI). This organization is dedicated to the investigation of itch mechanisms and treatment of chronic itch. Information about IFSI can be found [here](#).

We hope for a fruitful and synergistic interaction between IFSI and the itch SIG. Importantly, IFSI hosts a biennial World Congress on Itch. The next World Congress will take place in Sydney, Australia November 17-19, 2019. The official website for the itch congress is [here](#).

Many itch SIG members already know about IFSI and plan to attend the upcoming itch congress. Since you are interested in itch, please consider attending this meeting and let your colleagues know about it. The deadline to submit an abstract for the congress is June 30, 2019 and can be found [here](#).
If you wish to learn more about IFSI and/or the biennial World Congress on Itch, please contact Earl Carstens, current IFSI President, directly (eecarstens@ucdavis.edu).