

Once Upon a Time in Hollywood: Local I-O Groups in Tinseltown

Anna Erickson & Denis Ochieng, Local I-O Group Relations Committee

They say the stars shine brighter in Hollywood. We can't confirm that, but we do know there are some stars in Los Angeles who are helping our field shine. The local I-O scene is expanding thanks to the hard work of **Brad Schneider**, Naz Tadjbakhsh, Clare Caldera, Ella Shahjahanian, and the local groups they lead in Southern California. These LA-based local groups are providing support for professional growth, networking, and learning.

Los Angeles Society for Industrial & Organizational Psychology (LASIOP)

Brand new to the LA area, the (LASIOP) was founded just a few months ago with aspirations to be Southern California's premier professional association for industrial psychologists, consulting psychologists, and HR leaders.

LASIOP was founded by Brad Schneider (president), **Lizzette Lima** (vice president), and **Jason Read** (secretary) in early 2021. According to Schneider:

A key driver for forming the group was to bring together leaders and professionals from diverse backgrounds. After moving to LA and seeing that there was really no active I-O group in the area—despite being the second largest city in the country—I felt there was a tremendous opportunity to add to the field by connecting I-Os and HR leaders in an engaging format. Having been a member of several highly successful local I-O groups, such as MPPAW and PTC/MW, I wanted to create a group that capitalized on the strengths of those organizations, in an effort to create something that would last and add value for many years to come.

LASIOP provides online seminars on strategic and timely topics, geared toward offering actionable recommendations that you can leverage today. The organization offers a forum for I-O, consulting, and HR leaders and professionals to discuss topics of importance and receive guidance on their most pressing needs with a vision to provide a means for networking among leaders and professionals, as well as providing one of the leading job boards in the industry. They are currently a predominantly online community that welcomes members from all over the world. “We strongly believe that the most valuable and innovative ideas and solutions stem from a diverse community,” said Schneider. “Everyone is welcome to join LASIOP, and membership is free.”

The group is off to a great start. Their first event on June 15 featured Christina Norris-Watts, global head of Competency & Assessment, Johnson & Johnson, sharing her insights on the future of employee selection. Turnout for the event was strong with nearly 400 people attending the online seminar. If you're interested, you can access a recorded version of the session online [here](#).

To learn more about LASIOP visit their website: www.LASIOP.org. There you will find a calendar of events, a job board, and information about joining LASIOP.

Personnel Testing Council of Southern California (PTC-SC)

For those working in the public sector, the PTC-SC may be the group for you. Founded in 1953, this organization is one of the oldest local I-O groups in the country. PTC-SC began as an informal gathering of professionals meeting to exchange ideas about employment testing and has since grown and flourished with the adoption of bylaws in 1974 and the addition of its first annual conference in 1978. Today the organization has around 100 members and hosts monthly meetings focused on information sharing, discussion of industry trends, and building community. Like many organizations, they have shifted from in-person to virtual meetings in response to the COVID pandemic. Last year, PTC-SC partnered with their sister organization to the north, the Personnel Testing Council of Northern California, to host the annual 3-day conference. Like other events, this year's conference will be held virtually and will take place during the first week in November.

If you're interested in learning more about PTC-SC, you'll find information about the organization, its history, bylaws, and upcoming events on their website: <http://ptc-sc.org>. The cost to join the group is just \$40 per year, and meetings are free for members. For this year, the cost to attend the online conference is just \$150 and includes an annual membership for 2022. You don't need to be an I-O psychologist to join; anyone interested in learning more about employment testing is welcome.

Southern California I-O Psychology Network (SCIOPN)

Founded in 2017 by Dr. Naz Tadjbakhsh, this local group (originally called The People Experience Project) has transformed from an in-person meeting format to an online networking group. The group's mission is to bring I-O psychology practitioners and researchers together to build meaningful connections and community in the Los Angeles and Orange County area. According to the group's description, it “consists of like-minded professionals who share an interest in promoting the science and practice of psychology to the world of work and organizations in order to enhance the ways people experience work.” SCIOPN operates like a community of practice, serving those in the I-O space by discussing members' experiences, practical applications, and best practices. Members are encouraged to ask for and provide advice, insight, and guidance related to a variety of topics from program design to vendor identification. The group is also a great resource for I-O psychologists seeking employment in Southern California.

If you're interested in learning more, you can request to join the group on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13518882/>

About SIOP's Local I-O Group Relations Committee

SIOP's Local I-O Group Relations Committee was established in 2013 to support local groups committed to the science and practice of I-O psychology in the workplace. Although SIOP does not establish local chapter structures, communities of I-O psychologists have emerged to form "grass-roots" organizations. There are dozens of local groups that have formed across the US and around the world. Some are formal and highly structured; others are informal and more casual. All share a common purpose in connecting I-O professionals to share ideas, research, and practice, while networking and learning from each other. The committee offers support for those starting local groups through its [toolkit](#) and maintains [a list of local groups](#) on the SIOP website. If you are interested in starting a local group or if you have a local I-O group that is not listed, please reach out to the committee's chair, Anna Erickson, via email: anna.erickson.phd@gmail.com.

The Local I-O Group Relations Committee would like to extend a big "thank you" to Brad Schneider, Naz Tadjbakhsh, Clare Caldera, and Ella Shahjahanian for their help in writing this article.

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