

How to meet others in my SIG

Whether you've just joined a Probus Western Ottawa Special Interest Group (PWO SIG), or haven't had much success meeting others in a group in which you are already a member, the following may give you some ideas. If you have other ideas, please share with the sig-groups-coordinator@probuswesternottawa.ca.

To initiate a meeting, email [sig-\[group\]-members@probuswesternottawa.ca](mailto:sig-[group]-members@probuswesternottawa.ca) where [group] should be replaced with your SIG name. This will direct your email to all members of your group.

Meeting Types

1. Casual

During our monthly coffee time (9:45 -10:30 am) look for badge names that appear on your group's members list and strike up a conversation about your common interest.

2. Virtual

Meeting in-person is great but a virtual meeting may fit everyone's schedule better and be simpler to arrange. It's particularly useful for initial planning to discuss what kinds of activities the group would like to see. It also accommodates those members that may not like to drive in winter weather or darkness. A person with experience hosting on an app like Zoom or Google Teams is needed. This person is not necessarily the Prime Contact.

3. In-person

- a. You can suggest locations in the KBC sanctuary or gym at 9:30 am or immediately following the next regular meeting. (The foyer is likely to be too noisy.) Be specific about location (e.g. beside the band area or rear doors in the sanctuary). Remind everyone to wear their badge if they have one or to acquire a stick-on at the welcome centre.
- b. For smaller groups (2-8), email everyone and suggest meeting at your home (no charge) or a coffee shop (\$). If the latter, be prepared to order food and/or drink out of courtesy to the owner. Four at a table is optimum for conversation; six is probably the limit.
- c. For groups (9-up), consider renting a room at a library or in a church. Cost should be in the \$25-\$30 range. Restaurant rentals are not recommended due to noise levels, unless you can get a private room.

Rentals may be had at KBC but must be arranged with the approval of the management committee, which has a small budget to pay for such rental. Email sig-groups-coordinator@probuswesternottawa.ca explaining your requirements (i.e, group name, number expected to attend & number of rentals requested).

- d. For larger groups in warmer weather, suggest a meeting in a park for a picnic, or just a get together. Everyone brings their own chair, food and drink. Be as specific as possible about the meeting location.

4. Outings

If you are planning an outing for yourself, you can invite others to join you at your specific time and place, say at a theatre 30 minutes before the performance (everyone coming buys their own ticket) or at a trail head for a walk or hike. If you need a reply from interested parties, specify this and say why. In other cases, you could tell people no reply is necessary – just show up if interested. It's unusual for people's schedules to align so there may not be a huge turnout even with large groups. However, a low turnout may even be desirable as you can get to know people better in small groups.

Not recommended: Any outing that requires the collection of money is best avoided. For example, tour leaders may require a guaranteed minimum number and a lump sum payment. If you want to pursue this please speak with me.

Ray Jones

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