

Final Report: May 2016
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Over the past four years, I have attempted to define in writing the role of Interest Groups within our AAUW branch: their responsibilities to the board and the membership and those of the board toward them. Interest Group activity has been thought of as a reward to our members for the work they do as well as a means of bonding and establishing friendships.

They are the chief means of recruitment and retention for our branch.

Interest Groups must not be looked on as an untapped work force. They are made up of branch officers, those already working in other capacities, the very old and infirm, working mothers, and those who will belong to our branch only because of their particular group. Group leaders often do not see the same people at their meetings from month to month. When given a task, it often falls to the leaders to do the job.

It is for this reason that any requests for Interest Group Leaders must go through the Interest Group Coordinator.

On their part, it is vital that Interest Groups see themselves as part of the whole, not as separate entities. Leaders must ensure that their members are well aware of branch activities and actively encourage participation.

Outside their primary duty to care for and run their groups well, at which our leaders excel, is the obligation to present their groups at Open House each year. They or a representative must be present with a display to entice and welcome potential members. The Interest Group Coordinator works with Membership for display space and sign-up requirements.

Throughout the year, IG leaders must keep the newsletter editor informed of their schedules.

Highly encouraged, though not obligated, Interest Group Leaders work with their groups for our annual fundraiser. Members of some groups work together on specific projects, others work individually, but all their contributions are highly valued. Attendance is encouraged at the highest level.

The Interest Group Coordinator is a liaison between the board and the groups. She takes care of and protects Interest Group Leaders, reports happenings to the board, passes on requests and ideas from the board, keeps everyone informed, and maintains a happy balance.

I did all this. 😊
Cathy