



## Affinity Group Guidelines

### What you need to know to get involved!

#### Why is WINGS launching affinity groups?

As part of WINGS' objective to build on the assets and expertise from the network, and provide space for collaboration, WINGS is launching Affinity Groups. In our recent Network Survey, interest for this space was requested by WINGS members. Based on conversations from WINGSForum 2017 and the general commitment we see from our members. Creating a space for members to engage will make the network more inclusive, interconnected, and committed to building and strengthening philanthropy. It's a way to raise the voice of the sector by collectively articulating thoughts and actions on key issues for the field of philanthropy infrastructure.

#### What is an affinity group? Why should you be part of one?

An affinity group is a group linked by a common interest or purpose. Join to connect and collaborate with your peers globally, develop yourself individually, and build capacity for your organization.

WINGS' affinity groups offer our members an opportunity to connect based on shared interest with others in key issues and programs, job responsibilities, research goals, geographic region, or interests by offering online space, and in some cases physical space, to share learnings and experiences, discuss issues, create partnerships, build community and enhance collective knowledge. Most affinity groups will offer opportunities for interaction in several different ways, including in-person meetings, conference calls, webinars, and e-mail listservs. Affinity Groups are allowed to make statements on a topic, but these statements only represent the group, and not WINGS.

#### Who can join?

Affinity groups are for WINGS members only. Affinity groups may work on projects that may benefit to a broader audience: host a webinar open to the larger network, organize a meeting, as per WINGS and the group's discretion.

### What are the benefits of joining an affinity group?

There are many benefits to participating in a WINGS affinity group.

#### ❖ **Visibility**

- Visibility under and within the WINGS network
- Special space at WINGSForum for an in-person meeting

#### ❖ **Knowledge and practice**

- To exchange and share knowledge, including best practices
- To articulate existing work across different organizations and regions
- Learn from experts in the field

#### ❖ **Leadership and Influence**

- Influence your peers, WINGS network agenda, and more broadly the philanthropy field globally
- Build a collective voice for an issue-area
- Opportunity to lead and produce collective material – such as a presentation, meeting, call to action, position papers- that can be disseminated at a major event and through other relevant communications channels
- Build leadership skills and develop professionally
- Provide input for future WINGS programming

#### ❖ **Connections and articulation**

- Network with global, like-minded individuals and organizations
- To meet and make connections with peers
- Find inspiration
- To build new collaborations

### What type of affinity groups exist?

There are 2 types of affinity groups.

- **WINGS-Led Affinity Group** is facilitated and led by the WINGS Office with WINGS Members involvement.
- **Member-Led Affinity Group** is driven, facilitated, and led by WINGS Members with support from the WINGS Office.

### What is the time frame of the affinity groups?

WINGS-Led and Member-Led Affinity Groups will be reassessed yearly to ensure that they are relevant, have active participants and materials to share. In special cases, people can set up a short-term “Project-based” affinity group.

#### *Member-Led Affinity Group*

This type of affinity group is proposed, led, and facilitated by WINGS members, but, logistical and technological support is provided by the WINGS office. Guests may participate in these groups with WINGS’ and the Chairs’ approval.



WINGS will provide all technical and logistical support for this affinity group, including managing listservs, hosting, and providing support meetings on Webex. Members are expected to be engaged and active with the issues, help plan meeting agendas, and keep the group going.

Group will be assessed for relevance/participation rate yearly.

WINGS Office support includes:

- Maintenance of listserv
- Logistics for online meetings and webinars (provide technical assistance)
- Dissemination of materials produced by the group through WINGS channels
- Announce/promote affinity group meetings and programs through WINGS communications
- Promote and facilitate participation in affinity groups.
- If members fundraise for this affinity group, or if additional funding is granted, WINGS can manage finances and financial report for affinity group.

Participant Responsibilities include:

- Active engagement with this issue and responsibility for follow-up on interests and ideas
- Participation in Webex meetings and activities for the affinity group
- Help research topics, speakers, etc.
- Help identify new affinity group members
- Contribute to day-to-day activities of the group: taking notes, etc.
- Fundraising for affinity group (if resources or in-person meeting required)

Co-Chairs Responsibilities include:

- Lead with group, establishing objectives and milestones of the group on a yearly base
- Co-facilitate affinity group meetings
- Serve as main liaison/contact/coordinators for the group with WINGS staff
- Develop meeting agendas
- Rotate responsibility for chairing affinity group meetings
- Represent affinity group to the larger network
- Help with recruitment and retention of participants
- Ensures that tasks are assigned among participants to ensure achievement of objectives



### **WINGS-Led Affinity Group**

This type of affinity group is closely connected to a WINGS program or strategic area.

WINGS provides planning, technical, and logistical support for this affinity group.

WINGS Office support includes:

- Coordination of affinity-group related activities
- Maintenance of listserv/contact list
- Provide meeting platform and logistics
- Webinar planning
- Meeting agenda curation
- Proactive engagement of affinity group-researching topics, speakers, etc.
- Attendance at meeting and take meeting notes
- Planning of in-person meetings where funding permits
- Announce/promote affinity group meetings and programs through WINGS communications
- Promote and facilitate participation in affinity groups.
- Possible fundraising for affinity group
- Manage finances and financial report for affinity group, when funding is available

Participant Responsibilities include:

- Active engagement with this issue
- Participation in Webex meetings and activities of the affinity group
- Take some responsibility for follow-up on interests, ideas and group activities
- Help research topics, speakers, etc.
- Help identify new affinity group members

Co-Chairs Responsibilities include:

- Assist WINGS and the group to create an annual set of goals and description of proposed activities
- Co-facilitate affinity group meetings
- Assist writing and validate agenda with WINGS
- Help co-facilitate affinity group meetings on rotating basis
- Represent affinity group to the larger network
- Help with recruitment and retention of participants

### **Project-Based Affinity Group Option**

Project-Based Affinity Groups have a clear and time limited goal/objective. They may turn into a more permanent group if there is interest to sustain it on the longer run. This can be in either category and is appropriate for when WINGS Members have a short-term project. Responsibilities are dependent according to group-type (WINGS-Led or Members-Led).



Examples of appropriate times to utilize this short-term option:

- There is a conference coming up, and WINGS Members would like to coordinate on an issue, or maybe make a joint-statement<sup>1</sup> beforehand.
- There is an event happening where WINGS Members will present a project, and need to organize beforehand.
- WINGS Members would like to coordinate on research or a publication

#### How to start an affinity group?

- It is simple: at least five WINGS members must be engaged and ready to create and participate in affinity group
- WINGS will review list and confirm creation of affinity groups by the end of October. In order to ensure quality of follow-up, WINGS will launch no more than 5 affinity groups for a pilot phase. Selection will be done based on interest from members for each proposed group.

After confirmation of creation, organize a founding online meeting to set up the objectives and priorities. By 3 months after launching, affinity group is expected to have elected 2 co-chairs (for a renewable 1 year term) and set up a stated objective that is agreed upon by the group.

If you are interested in a WINGS-Led Affinity group, email the office what groups are active and get involved.

#### What if I don't have enough people to make my group?

Register your interest with WINGS and we will contact you when enough people register to start your group!

#### We want to meet in person- is this possible?

WINGS suggests to meet before or after major conferences and events to maximize travel and monetary efficiency. WINGS can also help advise on fundraising efforts related to affinity group in-person meetings. Every 3 years, WINGS will offer space at WINGSForum.

#### Motivational questions for joining or forming:

- Where am I looking to increase my organization's capacity?
- What expertise, experience, or interests do I have that I can share with others?
- Would organizing targeted meetings help me and my colleagues develop a project before a conference?
- Do I want to get a group together to articulate a stance on an issue on behalf of a group?
- What do I want to learn? Where are there gaps in knowledge?
- Am I as connected to my region or topic of interest as I want to be? To other organizations?

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<sup>1</sup> Join-Statements or opinions represent the group, and not WINGS as a whole



### **Procedures for Disbanding**

Affinity groups are initiated and driven by member interest. If participant numbers begin to dwindle (less than five regular members), Co-Chairs should contact the WINGS staff to determine the sustainability of the group and whether it should be disbanded.

**For more information on WINGS affinity groups, please contact Sarah Brown-Campello, Network Coordinator, [scampello@wingsweb.org](mailto:scampello@wingsweb.org).**