

*Women's
Creative Leadership Network*

Organizing a Local Group



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The Women's Creative Leadership Network is a global group of everyday women who have an extraordinary passion for making the world a better place. Because the network is global, most communication happens through Facebook and an email list.

You might feel inspired to create a local network of women that meets in person to create new connections, develop relationships, build a support system, develop your own leadership knowledge and skills, and promote collaborative approaches to leading. This guide is designed to help you create a local leadership group.

Your group can be formal or informal, structured or open, based on the approach that will be most effective to get people excited about participating in the group. Before launching your group, you can discuss your ideas with other local leaders to see what approach will work best.

This guide includes general tips for organizing a local group as well as tips for planning and facilitating group meetings. You are not obligated to follow all of the advice in this guide; the intent it is for it to help you get started! Your local leadership group can have its own identity and take on a life of its own.

Please note that by organizing a local group you 1) are assuming all risk associated with the group's activity; 2) release The Fruition Coalition from any loss, injury, or damage that is incurred 3) waive the right to sue The Fruition Coalition for any activity associated with the local group; and 4) agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless The Fruition Coalition, its officers, agents, volunteers, and representatives from any claim, cause of action, judgement, damage, or demand that arises because of your or the group's activity. You further agree not to use the Women's Creative Leadership Network or Fruition Coalition name or logo without explicit written permission. To request such permission, contact The Fruition Coalition using the online form located at www.fruitioncoalition.com.

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Tips for Organizing a Local Group

1. Choose a name for your group. You might want to select a name that has local significance or reflects the profession of group members.
2. Establish clear, specific goals for your group. Remind the group of its goals to stay on track.
3. Get the word out to your network. Tell people about the group when you see them and send them emails or notes to let them know about the group.
4. Establish a regular meeting schedule. This makes it easier for people to consistently participate.
5. Choose a facilitator or rotate leadership. Make sure someone is taking responsibility for the growth and development of the group.
6. Build meetings around a meal. Everyone is busy and offering food makes it easier to participate. It is also a great way to relax and connect!
7. Reduce barriers to participation. Think about challenges that might make it difficult for people to participate, such as work, childcare, and transportation, and make a plan to address these challenges by offering services or carefully planning meetings.
8. Share the costs of the group by holding a potluck or having everyone pay for their portion of meeting expenses.
9. Share resources with the group. You may use the resources located in the Women's Creative Leadership Network Facebook group, but are not limited to these.
10. Ask members of the group to share an offering at meetings. Their offering could be an idea, an article, or a story about leadership.

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Tips for Organizing a Meeting

Before the Meeting:

- Select a location that is accessible to members
- Create a flyer for the meeting
- Share information about the meeting at the Women's Creative Leadership Facebook group and through other print and online networks/media
- Personally reach out to members and other contacts to invite them to the meeting
- Let people know what the purpose and goals will be for the meeting
- Choose a meeting facilitator
- Develop conversation starters or other materials that will be needed to facilitate the meeting
- Make a list of supplies that will be needed for the group including refreshments, pens, and paper

During the Meeting:

- Set a positive, collaborative tone for the meeting
- Remind everyone about the goals for the group and the meeting
- Keep the group on track to accomplish its goals
- Make sure everyone feels physically and emotionally comfortable
- Recognize the presence and contributions of each group member
- Provide snacks or a meal to help people feel comfortable and connected
- Redirect negative energy to reflect the values and goals of the group

After the Meeting:

- Post a summary of the meeting and photographs at the Women's Creative Leadership Network Facebook group
- Send a thank you note to everyone who attended
- Remind people about the next meeting date