

Guidelines for UUSS program groups



Want to start a new group at UUSS?

Curious about how to expand the focus of your existing group?

Wondering if your idea would interest others?

Our program groups range from purely social, to theological, to groups working to heal the world. They provide a way for new and existing members, friends, and newcomers to engage with others in the congregation.



Forming a group

The Program Council has the responsibility to oversee and nurture the program groups. The Program Council is here to help you to start a new group. We would like to hear your ideas. Drop us an email at programcouncil@uuss.org for assistance or information.



We recommend that you start by finding others who share your interest in your proposed activities and hold a few meetings or events. Once you know there is interest, you need to identify the group leader, who must be a member of UUSS and will serve as the primary contact person. At this point, the leader fills out the [UUSS New Program Group Application](#). When this is completed, a Program Council member will meet with the leader to finalize the process of becoming an official UUSS group.

Ongoing expectations

To ensure that every group is active, inclusive, and communicating effectively with its members, there are several expectations.



- 1. Respond to emails in a timely manner.** Every group will be given an “@uuss.org” email address that will forward all emails to the group’s designated contact person. This email address will be used in printed and online materials as well as given to new members interested in your group or any volunteer opportunities. If new members get a timely response, they are more likely to engage with you and with the congregation. Program Council will also use this email address to keep in touch with the group leader.

- 2. Be open to new members joining your group.** All groups are expected to be open to new members on a regular basis. Groups may limit the time for new members to join in order to avoid disruption. For example, a book club may only allow a new member to join at the start of a new book. However, new members should be admitted at reasonable intervals.



Some groups may choose to limit participation to certain age groups or gender identification, such as a Gen Y Group or a Women's Group. We encourage groups to be as inclusive as possible and to communicate clearly who is eligible to participate.

Please inform the Program Council if and why your group limits who may join and when they may join.

- 3. Meet on a regular basis.** Groups are only functional and useful if they meet on a regular basis. Meetings may be as formal or informal as suits the group and should occur quarterly at a minimum. Meetings, activities, get-togethers, etc., are all valid ways to meet.



- 4. Keep the Program Council apprised of changes in leadership and status.** The Program Council supports program groups and needs to have accurate and updated information, such as changes in leadership and contact person, or status of the group. Please contact us at programcouncil@uuss.org.



- 5. Does your group need to take a hiatus or disband?** This is the nature of groups and is completely acceptable. In either case, please [contact the Program Council](#) so we may update our records. If your group is going on hiatus please let us know when you plan to resume meetings. In both cases, your "@uuss.org" email address will be reassigned so that anyone trying to contact the group will get a response. If the group is ending, its information will be removed from the website and other church communication resources.