

## First Steps for New Group Organizers

Congratulations, you created a writers group! You now have an opportunity to share the many rewards and challenges of writing, offer support and encouragement, and work towards accomplishing goals with other writers. Below are next steps and considerations to help you get started.

### I created a group, what should I do next?

1. Use your recommendation engine (“Find New Members” tab) to look for writers who match your preferences. You can Browse Writer Profiles to widen your search. Send an invitation to those you’d like to work with in your new group.
2. Be sure to regularly check and respond in a timely manner to pending “Requests to Join” your group. Everyone deserves a response, even if it’s a friendly explanation to waitlist or reject their request.
3. Once you have members, create a post to introduce yourself and set a date for your first meeting.
4. If you’re happy with the number of members you have, you can close your group to new members by resetting the “max group size” in your profile. You can also keep the group open if you want to continue inviting new members in.
5. Be sure to keep communication active and open to your members. You can use announcements and events to set meeting dates, create posts to message your members, and share your work or lesson plans with writing projects. Members will receive an e-mail notification for any new activity in the group.
6. Join the [Group Organizers group](#) to seek advice, get tips, and join meetings with fellow organizers.

### How do I decide who to accept into my group?

1. Before you hit the “accept” button from a request to join your group, you may want to find out more about the writer. You can click on the writer’s name and read more about them in their profile. You can also click “message” to communicate with them and ask them about their writing goals and experience as well as their expectations for a writers group.
2. If you’re planning to share work for critique in your group, it might make sense to ask for some writing samples to get a sense of their style and experience. Your writing style or even genre of writing doesn’t necessarily need to be an exact match, but by getting to know a prospective group member’s writing you can get a sense of what you can expect from that writer and whether they’re a good fit for your group.
3. It might be best to start small with just a couple members and see how things flow before making the group larger. Of course, it all depends on what kind of group you want to organize.

### **What should I do at the first meeting of my group?**

1. Break the ice by introducing yourself and clearly explaining your expectations for the group. What do you hope to accomplish with this community? It's perfectly natural for everyone to be a little shy and/or nervous, so be sure to let everyone know that this is a safe and creative space for all members of the group.
2. Ask everyone else to introduce themselves and their writing goals.
3. Set expectations for your meetings moving forward and the ways you will communicate in between meetings.
4. Make sure everyone agrees and can meet these expectations.
5. Clearly communicate the schedule for meetings and/or due dates for shared work. Set a date and time for your next meeting.

*Need more advice for first steps and best practices for organizing and participating in a writers group? Visit our [Resources for Writers Groups](#). And remember, any time you need help you can reach out to [groups@pw.org](mailto:groups@pw.org). The P&W staff are here to answer your questions and offer guidance.*