

Affinity Group Guide

"To Promote Diversity and Inclusion, not Exclusion."



Office of Human Resources
The Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida 32306

Florida State University Affinity Group Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in creating an Affinity Group at The Florida State University (FSU). The FSU definition of an Affinity Group is a group of employees, with varied status, whose primary purpose is to develop and improve the campus climate. This excludes religious and political affiliations. Additionally, they can help increase morale, provide insights into diverse areas, build bridges to the community and empower members.

Florida State University considers Affinity Groups to be a vital component that connects various members of the FSU workforce with each other and with the institution. Therefore, an inherent element of the mission of an Affinity Group is to promote the welfare of Florida State University and to establish mutually beneficial relationships between FSU, its workforce, members of the Affinity Group, and the communities FSU serves.

These Guidelines are intended to provide general information for employees interested in establishing an Affinity Group and as a resource for any Affinity Group that currently exist. Please note that this is a fluid document and it is subject to change. If additional information is needed or you have subsequent questions, please contact the office of Diversity & Inclusion:

Diversity & Inclusion
Office of Human Resources
6200 University Center A
Tallahassee, FL 32306-0001
(850) 644-6034 – Office
(850) 645-9508 – Fax
<http://hr.fsu.edu/diversity/>

Establishing an Affinity Group

The success of a new Affinity Group primarily depends on a small core of dedicated and interested employees. It takes commitment from these individuals to ensure the group organizes itself in such a way as to guarantee continuity. Listed below are the criteria along with a few helpful suggestions on establishing your new Affinity Group and to assure consistency with Affinity Group program objectives:

1. Complete an Affinity Group Application.
2. Establish a list of at least (5) interested faculty and/or staff members willing to join your Affinity Group.
3. Create a financial plan to support the Affinity Group.
4. Identify your targeted members, understanding that membership must be open to anyone who supports the mission of the group.
5. Prepare a mission statement for your Affinity Group as well as the goals and objectives of the group. (*See Sample Mission Statements, pg. 9 of the Affinity Group Framework document*)
6. The first meeting should be coordinated with and acknowledged by the office of Diversity & Inclusion with final approval from the Assistant Vice President of Human Resources.

Please review the **Affinity Group** framework to obtain more information on what topics need to be discussed and approved during your initial meeting.

Affinity Group Operating Principles

1. Members must be employed by The Florida State University.
2. The formation of the Affinity Group must rely on volunteers and efforts must stem from a grassroots nature and neither FSU nor members of the group may pressure any employee into joining or participating.
3. The formation of the Affinity Group must not profess any religious or political affiliation.
4. Membership and participation in an Affinity Group shall be entirely voluntary.
5. The Affinity Group must be operated exclusively for educational and career-related purposes.
6. The Affinity Group should be organized to assist and support FSU's mission by hosting activities such as:
 - Recruitment events
 - Community relations programs
 - Promoting social and intellectual enrichment
 - Networking opportunities
7. The group should enhance the public image of FSU.
8. Any programs sponsored by the Affinity Group must be financially self-supporting.
9. Membership in an Affinity Group must be open to any and all interested employees.

10. Participation in Affinity Group events must be open to any and all interested employees.
11. Affinity Groups are not intended to and shall not duplicate or replace the activities of the recognized bargaining units at the University.

Affinity Group Meetings Suggestions

- Each Affinity Group must hold regular meetings.
- Decisions made by consensus.
- A quorum is attained when at least two-thirds of the current Affinity Group members are present.
- Notes should be taken at every Affinity Group meeting.
- Note taker should reproduce and distribute the notes in a timely fashion, but no later than 10 days before the group's next meeting.
- Copy of the notes for each Affinity Group meeting should be submitted to the office of Diversity & Inclusion to be kept on permanently on file.
- All artwork, documents, advertisements, citywide emails, flyers, etc. advertising your Affinity Group activities should be submitted to the office of Diversity & Inclusion for approval.
- Attend the Affinity Group training prior to first meeting.

Financial Management

Every Affinity Group is expected to be self-supporting. Any fundraising activities must adhere to FSU's existing policies.

Any funds raised will be placed in a bank account in accordance with FSU's existing policies.

If the group dissolves, Florida State University will not be responsible for any of the Affinity Group's debts not associated with FSU funding.

Dissolving an Affinity Group

Affinity Groups authorized by the Assistant Vice President of Human Resource may be dissolved when:

- The group is specifically formed to undertake one or more short-term project(s) and has completed the task;
- The group chooses to dissolve itself. Such dissolution should be reported to the office of Diversity & Inclusion, with an explanation as to the reason behind the decision;
- The group does not submit its annual report to the office of Diversity & Inclusion;

- The office of Diversity & Inclusion, or the Assistant Vice President of Human Resources, concludes that the group no longer has clear relevance to FSU's mission and vision, or has become insufficiently accountable to FSU for its activities, or presents a legal or ethical liability to Florida State University; and
- Pre-existing groups can be dissolved by the respective Vice President or Division head.

FSU Affinity Group Application

As part of our formal Affinity Group Application process, Florida State University requires that you provide the following information relative to your desired Affinity Group. Please keep in mind that you cannot establish a group that has religious or political affiliations.

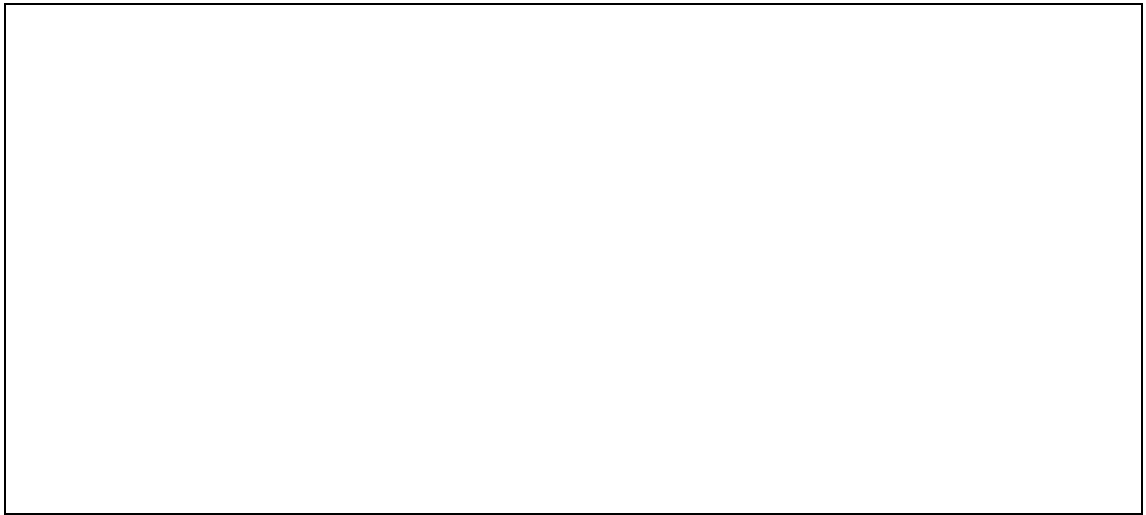
1. Desired name of your group:

2. Who are your targeted members:

3. Name and current FSU job title of at least five (5) employees willing to join this group:

4. Mission statement for your group:

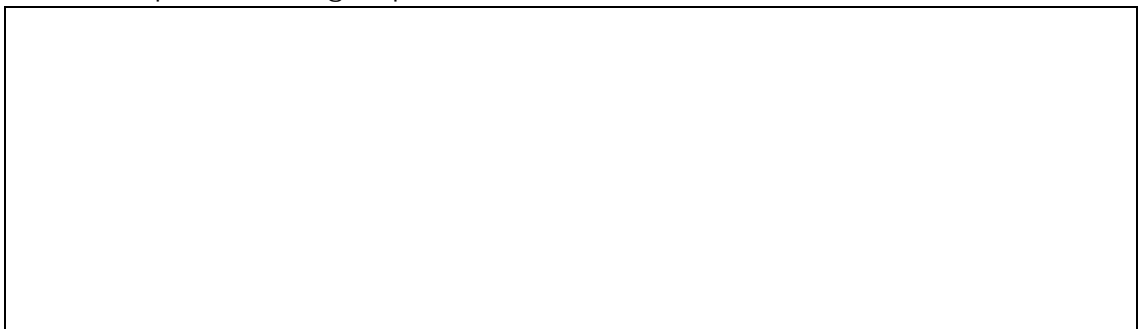
5. Goals of the group:



6. Objectives of the group:



7. Financial plan for the group:



8. How will this group benefit the FSU campus as a whole:



Send questions or requests for more information regarding your Affinity Group application to the office of Diversity & Inclusion at (850) 644-6034.

Completed applications may be submitted via e-mail, fax or in person to:

ATTN: Diversity & Inclusion
Office of Human Resources
6200 University Center A
Tallahassee, FL 32306-0001
(850) 644-6034 – Office
(850) 645-9508 – Fax
hr-diversity@fsu.edu - Email

Following the successful submission of the application, including the requested information above, the coordinator(s) will be contacted by the Office of Diversity & Inclusion to discuss next steps.

I understand that membership and participation are voluntary and the group must be open to everyone.

Print Name _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____