

Starting an Interest Group

Starting an Interest Group is not difficult and the committee is there to help.

Each group needs a named group convenor but the work of running the group should be shared among members if possible.

Anyone wishing to start an interest group should notify the Groups' Coordinator (a committee member who coordinates all the groups). A notice can then be circulated via all the available communication channels e.g. newsletter, website, bulletins and an announcement made at a monthly/general meeting, asking those interested in such an interest group to indicate their interest and agree to meet together at a certain place and time. Members at that meeting will then discuss informally the framework of the group.

The Groups' Coordinator is Masha Stevens (marsha.stevens@xtra.co.nz, 325 3066, 027 338 8403). However, Marsha will be away mid-May until August 2015. Until then contact John Yarrall (jyarrall@xtra.co.nz, 325 7855, 027 407 9036) or Lena Metcalf (landmetcalf@xnet.co.nz, 741 1855, 021 300 074).

Getting started

Interest Groups get off to a better start if group members share the responsibilities of running the group rather than asking one person to take on everything. It can be difficult to find a person willing to take on all the responsibility but if at this first informal meeting, people are asked to volunteer to take on aspects of running the group, no matter how small, the group is more likely to be successful.

At the first meeting, the group members might find the following topics useful to progress things:

- What would we like to do?
- How can we achieve this?
What common knowledge do we have already? What resources can people contribute? How will we organise the group? Who will do what?
- What study/learning methods can we use?
Books, dvds, Power Point presentations, online material, online courses etc.
Volunteer experts who can be invited to demonstrate skills or give occasional talks.
Suggestions for trips/events etc.
- Where and how often shall we meet?

Remember: Delegate where you can and spread the load.

You are the life blood Group of your U3A - without you there wouldn't be one!

So on behalf of the U3A movement – thank you.