

## Suggestions for starting a special interest or affinity group

What's your passion? Gardens in the spring? Live music? Art museums? Would you like to meet others with similar interests? Would you participate in or start such a group? Several are already underway (books and film), and you can learn in The Quill how to contact them. If you'd like to launch a group, perhaps with a friend, here are some ideas about how to proceed.

1. Decide what type of group you want to sponsor and prepare a brief description suitable for promoting in The Quill and elsewhere. *example: Garden Walks w/wo Camera. Our goal is to savor the outdoors and view the changing seasons through walks, guided or not, in some of the area's notable public gardens: Tower Hill, Garden in the Woods, Arnold Arboretum, Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Photography enthusiasts are welcome to join and share their skills as we talk and enjoy a picnic al fresco or restaurant lunch.* If want some help defining or wordsmithing your idea, Dana Kaplan (617-926-5918, dsuzannek@gmail.com) will be happy to help.
2. Provide your contact information (name, address, telephone and e-mail) and brief description to acting coordinator Joe Bongiardina (joebongiardina@gmail.com) and The Quill editor, Phyllis Cohen (safta@comcast.net).
3. Think about the details such as timing of events (frequency, day or evening, weekdays or weekends, etc.), logistics, approximate size you think will work, and come up with a few proposed activities for the first two months or so.
4. Your idea/proposal will be promoted in The Quill. Once you get responses to the publicity, set up one or two information and organizing meeting so those interested can meet each other and plan the first outings. Until the end of May, while LLAIC is in session, you could use the Schmooze Rooms or open classrooms at either Temple Beth Elohim or Temple Shir Tikva for meetings on days when regular classes are held. We'll help you get space once you sign up.
5. Topics like the name of the group, focus, costs, planning, and communicating are up to group members. Regarding costs, we recommend NOT paying in advance or trying for large group discounts, to keep things informal and spontaneous.
6. Most groups will want to plan one or more activities a month. A key step will be deciding how to keep in touch with each other. There are several possibilities: An "E-board," a Yahoo special interest group, good old email or a phone chain. More information about how to utilize the first two will be forthcoming in The Quill.
7. The groups are intended to promote LLAIC by welcoming drop-ins as well as "regular" members. Outings are an excellent way to introduce friends and neighbors to our organization, so do spread the word.