

1ST SMALL GROUPS NETWORKING

SUMMARY REPORT, NOVEMBER 29 2017

Making it easier!

• **COMMUNITY GROUPS** •
are the heart of our community!

Civic society, social justice, environmental, neighbourhood associations, professional associations, ethnocultural groups; all contribute to a rich community life.

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SMALL GROUPS PARTICIPATED ON NOVEMBER 1, 2017



Values that drive our action?

Equity and Fairness
Compassion
Community of Voices
Legacy for the Future
...

What has been helpful?

What are the current needs?

Participants at the 1st Meeting



Cross Cultures
 Transition KW
 Waterloo Blue Dot
 New Utopia
 Sociological Research (local)
 Food Analysis
 KW Woodworking & Craft Centre
 Council of Canadians
 Williamsburg Community Association
 Cherry Park Working Group
 Amnesty International Group 9
 Kitchener Public Library
 St John Church
 Trinity United Church
 Gathering Church
 First United Church - Outreach Committee
 Maycourt Club of KW
 United Empire Loyalists

Basic Income WR
 Grupo Guatemala
 Divest Waterloo
 Waterloo County Quilters' Guild
 Victoria Park Neighbourhood Association
 Afghan-Canadian Association
 Community Social Planning Council
 Disabilities and Human Rights Group
 FairVote WR
 Community Social Planning Council
 Peace and Social justice Network
 WR Nonviolence
 KW Linux Users Group
 KW Voice over IP Users Group
 KW Non Profit System Administrators
 Reception House
 Zonta

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VALUES THAT
DRIVE OUR
ACTION:

*"Wanted to add
'hope' as it is a
foundation."*

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The four common values identified by community groups in 2013 (Equity and fairness, Compassion, Community of voices, Legacy for the future) seem to apply regardless of the domain we work in. They are mutually connected and reinforce each other. We cannot have legacy for the future without compassion, equity & fairness without a community of voices, compassion without equity.

What these values mean to you?

There is a need expressed by many participants to connect to individuals and groups who uphold different sets of values. The question remains if the four values are our starting point when we want to motivate others to activism and participation regardless of the ideology they adhere to. How can we can articulate and turn our common values into action? Is talking about the values our starting point?

What do you think?

What has been helpful?

"Most valuable are passionate, dedicated people who believe in and support groups' goals."

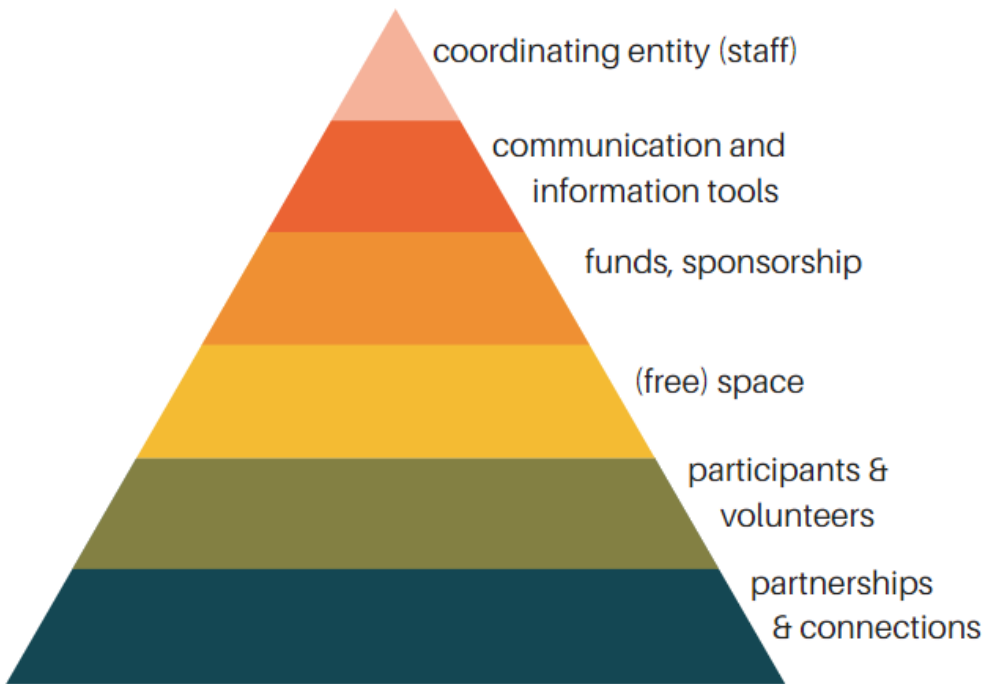


CHART 1 - WHAT HAS BEEN HELPFUL, DISCUSSION GROUP SUMMARY

- People with their passion, leadership and skills are the most valued asset in all the groups.
- Equally important are connections and partnerships that allow for sharing and mutual support.
- Free, low cost, adequate and accessible space for work, meetings and events is a scarce commodity.
- Sponsorship and funding are not the most important thing, though needed to sustain specific activities.
- Supports in use of current Internet technologies is indispensable in marketing and promotions.
- Continuity and consistency ensured by staff is needed .

Small Groups Discussion Summary

Strong community resources & support organizations can anchor groups' action.

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*Access to expertise and facilitators e.g. community support groups...
Community info/ resource centre - a hub*

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Besides dedicated leaders and members, **connections and partnerships** have a prominent place in making the work of small groups successful and efficient. 'Strength in numbers' does not only make the work light, it ensures legitimacy, conveys an authoritative voice and builds credibility. Potentially, it ensures broader buy-in and visibility in order to bring in more allies and more diverse voices around a common issue. This is particularly important for the small groups who are not part of the mainstream and do not have easy access to media.

Adaptability is another theme that came up for a number of groups. As the broader social and economic context changes, so do community needs and drives. Individuals and groups who were able to tap into diverse experiences and evolve report being more successful.

What do we need now?

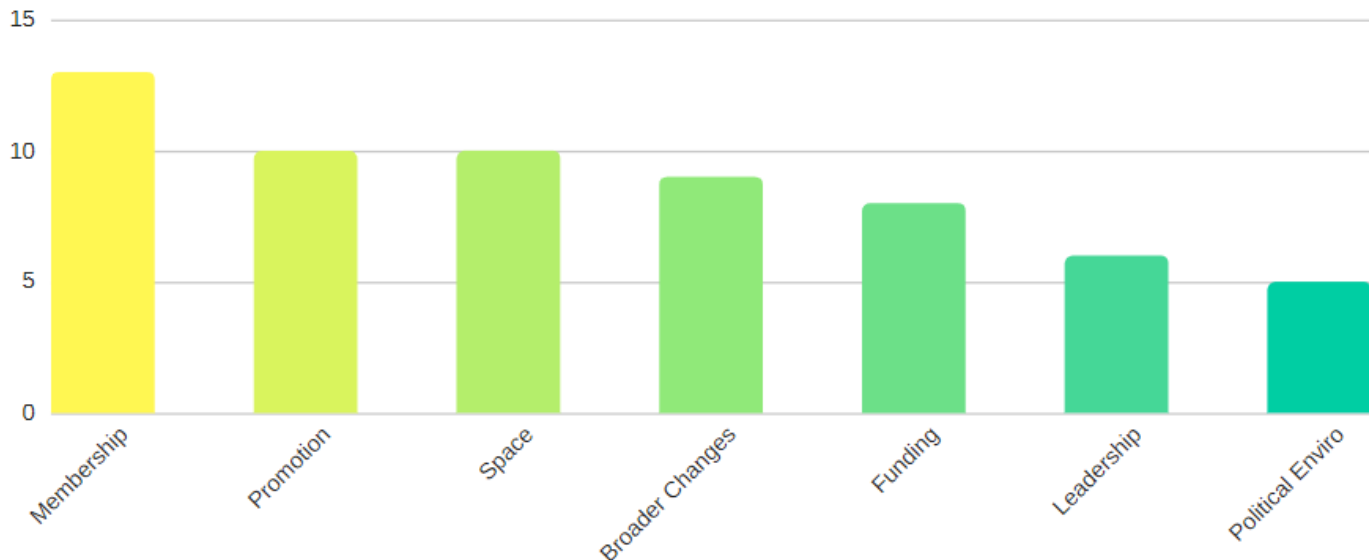
"Where do you get the information you don't know exists or you don't know you need to know?"

In addition to the key issues identified in a survey distributed during the meeting, we heard that sharing a wealth of information about groups and their activities, knowing what resources and supports are available and having promotion channels to be more visible are some of the immediate needs.

Some of the more specific needs: fundraising together, sharing space and administrative costs, promotion and education, exchange of strategies and skills, use of new media for marketing and reaching out, interpretation and translation, training and self-care, collaboration on joint projects. The 'hub' concept was recorded in a number of table discussions.

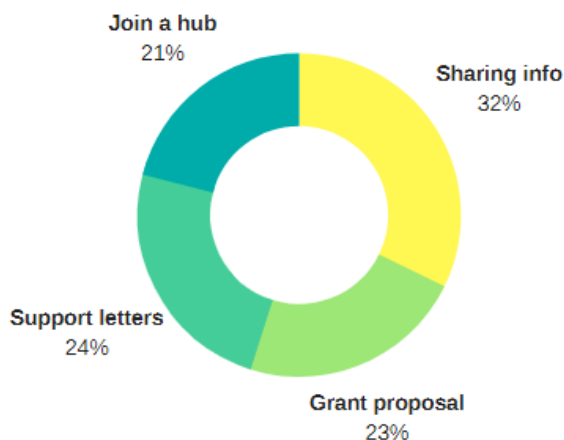
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Promotion and education go hand in hand, and reaching the right audience in an appropriate manner is crucial.
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CHART 2 - KEY ISSUES FOR YOUR GROUP, SURVEY RESULTS



How can we work together?

CHART 3 - COMMITMENT TO ACTION, SURVEY RESULTS



During the table discussions, most participants agreed that a central website for sharing information about groups, events and initiatives would be useful. Many groups would be interested in collaborating on a funding project proposal. Let's re-connect in 2018!

Trudy Beaulne has left us too soon, we will carry on her legacy together.

**Join us for our future networking meetings
 519-579-3800 or sdcw@waterlooregion.org.**