

MINUTES

West Midlands Region Prospective Regional Committee meeting online, 13 June 2023

The meetings will be held quarterly, online, so the next will be in September. The purpose of the Regional Team is to give feedback to the Trustee from u3a members, and to assist with any Regional activities that are proposed. The W Mids. Region does not have many networks, and the Region team can encourage “networking”, so we share best practice and highlight successes.

Discussion:

1. We agreed on the usefulness of networks/clusters in sharing info and resources; Cotswold Link has peer to peer groups for Treasurers, etc. Recruitment and retention of members is a problem for several u3as, as is getting committee members/group leaders.
2. GOOD NEWS: we have a prospective volunteer as Region PR contact.
3. **Region face to face meeting July 19th, Sutton Coldfield**, is open to **all** members – see Region website for details and to book. We need numbers for catering – they get a free lunch! The Trust CEO Sam Mauger will attend so please email me your members’ questions for her in advance. Here, the q was raised, “is the u3a a bottom-up or top-down organization?” The u3a doesn’t seem to position itself as just a service provider to u3as, helping them to excel. Comms remains an issue!
4. June Slater (Balsall Common) mentioned focus groups for u3a. This below was in the May u3a newsletter: I can’t join as I’m on holiday. UPDATE: This is about a u3a initiative currently called “Friends of u3a.” ***Do you want to be a part of a focus group?***
*We're looking for people to take part in an online focus group on **Tuesday 27 June at 2pm** to find a **name for a new u3a initiative**, which has the potential to transform the way in which members and the public engage with the u3a movement. If you would like to make an expression of interest, please email impact@u3a.org.uk*
5. Anthea Whitehead (Bromsgrove) said her MP was running an “Pensioners’ Fair” & invited u3a to participate. Sue Russell (Worcester) MP’s office ran an “Old People’s Fair” which we all felt was an unappealing title. Perhaps we could “catch” people preparing for retirement if we could work with our MP’s Office to make such an event more attractive.

Actions:

What	Who	When
W Mids. Region Meeting: please submit members’ questions to J Jackson	All	ASAP – at least a week before 19 July to give time to prepare good answers. Concerns about communications and various u3a initiatives?
U3a Focus group: Please join if you can!	All	Tuesday 27th June online (see above)
MP’s office may run Over-60s event?	All	Ongoing: encourage the MP’s Office to make sure it’s appealing to over-55s
Recruitment and Publicity Region event	J Jackson	Subject to recruiting a Regional PR person, we can do this in the Autumn or Spring, in Birmingham
Send details of u3a news to J Jackson	All	Ongoing – e.g. for Region newsletter in late Sept

PLEASE let me know of any errors; I was keen to get this out before I go on holiday. THANK YOU!

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