


## How to Join a Google Group by Emailing groupsub@vcu.edu

This is a guide to allow users to self-join a Google Group by emailing [groupsub@vcu.edu](mailto:groupsub@vcu.edu). This new option of joining a Google Group fills the gap in functionality for cases where the people joining are clinical, have vcuhealth.org accounts, or are otherwise external. Note that the Group must allow self-joining (see: [Groups Settings Notes](#)).

1. Compose an email in the account you want to join the Group.
  - **To:** VCU GROUPSUB ([groupsub@vcu.edu](mailto:groupsub@vcu.edu))
  - **Subject line:** Subscribe
  - **Body:** (Email address of the Google Group, e.g. [groupname@vcu.edu](mailto:groupname@vcu.edu))
2. Send the email.
3. Within a minute or so, an automatic reply will inform you if the join was successful or failed.
  - If you do not automatically receive a reply, email [drgee@vcu.edu](mailto:drgee@vcu.edu) for assistance.

To  VCU GROUPSUB X

Subscribe

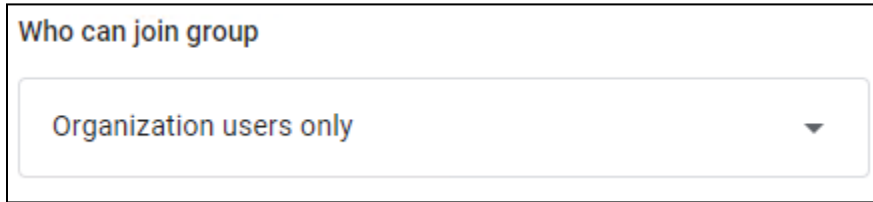
groupname@vcu.edu

[Groups Settings Notes \(For Group Managers\)](#)

[Providing a two-step button \(For Group Managers\)](#)

## Groups Settings Notes (For Group Managers)

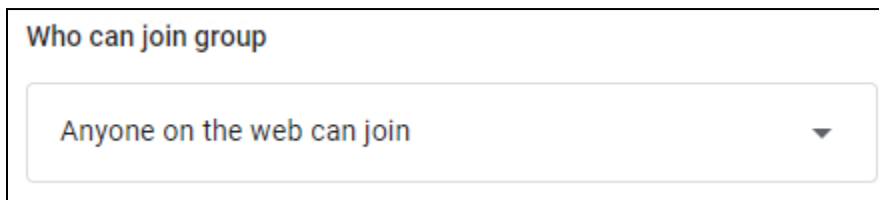
- You will only be able to join the group successfully under these circumstances:
  - Google Group allows anyone in the organization to join (setting “Who can join group” is **Organization users only**) and the sender’s domain is vcu.edu or vcuhealth.org.



A screenshot of a Google Group settings dropdown menu. The title is "Who can join group" in orange. The dropdown is open, showing "Organization users only" as the selected option. A small downward arrow is visible on the right side of the dropdown box.

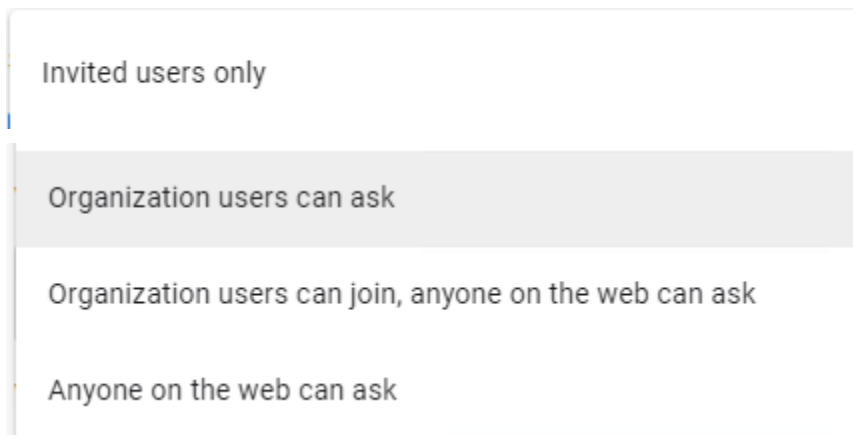
–OR–

- Google Group allows anyone to join (setting “Allow external members” must be **ON** and “Who can join group” is **Anyone on the web can join**)



A screenshot of a Google Group settings dropdown menu. The title is "Who can join group" in orange. The dropdown is open, showing "Anyone on the web can join" as the selected option. A small downward arrow is visible on the right side of the dropdown box.

- This does **not** work with these settings for “Who can join group”: “Invited users only,” “Organization users can ask,” “Organization users can join, anyone on the web can ask,” and “Anyone on the web can ask.”







A screenshot of a Google Group settings dropdown menu. The title is "Who can join group" in orange. The dropdown is open, showing a list of four options: "Invited users only", "Organization users can ask", "Organization users can join, anyone on the web can ask", and "Anyone on the web can ask". The "Organization users can ask" option is highlighted with a grey background.

- If someone tries to join a group when the setting is one of the above, they will get a response indicating the join failed.
- If they are in the domain (vcu.edu or vcuhealth.org) and the setting is **Organization users can ask** or **Invited users only**, they will get a join failed response but they will get a list of up to 8 of the managers they can reach out to if they feel they should be in the group.

## Providing a two-step button (For Group Managers)

Buttons can be created and embedded on a website to reduce the amount of steps that potential group joiners have to take to join. There are two options that can be used together (recommended) or separately:

- A universal button that uses the “mailto:” protocol. Note that this option requires the group joiner to have set their default email client AND have the account set up in that client, which is becoming less common. The link below must be inserted as a hyperlink for some text or an image to work.
  - Templates (replace the bolded text with the group’s email address):
    - If you want to embed in a webpage: `<a href="mailto:groupsub@vcu.edu?subject=Subscribe&body=groupemail@vcu.edu">Link text</a>`
    - If you want to embed somewhere else (like Google Docs): Select text or an image, then paste this as the link:  
`mailto:groupsub@vcu.edu?subject=Subscribe&body=groupemail@vcu.edu`
    - End result looks like: [Join our Group](#)
- Separate buttons for separate common email services (e.g. One for Gmail, one for Outlook, etc.)
  - This option is generally more accessible but may not cover every case. Use combined with the above option or provide the steps for the users to just compose the email themselves. Like the above, you can set hyperlinks for text or you could use the common icons for each email platform:
  - Templates (replace the bolded text with the group’s email address):
    - Gmail:  
[https://mail.google.com/mail/?view=cm&fs=1&to=groupsub@vcu.edu&su=Subscribe&body=\*\*groupemail@vcu.edu\*\*](https://mail.google.com/mail/?view=cm&fs=1&to=groupsub@vcu.edu&su=Subscribe&body=<b>groupemail@vcu.edu</b>)
    - Outlook:  
[https://outlook.live.com/mail/0/deeplink/compose/?to=groupsub@vcu.edu&subject=Subscribe&body=\*\*groupemail@vcu.edu\*\*](https://outlook.live.com/mail/0/deeplink/compose/?to=groupsub@vcu.edu&subject=Subscribe&body=<b>groupemail@vcu.edu</b>)
    - End result looks like:
      - Join our Group: 
- Combined end result:
  - Join our Group:   

## Questions or Issues

For all questions or issues, email [Doctor Gee](#) .