
How to Form a New Probus Club

When organizing a new Probus club, the following process should be followed:

- A. Approach a functioning Probus club to act as your sponsor.
- B. Create a Steering Committee.
- C. Develop a list of potential members.
- D. Advertise the proposed club.
- E. Identify a suitable meeting venue for General Meetings
- F. Organize and conduct an Informational (Interest) Meeting.
- G. Schedule and conduct a Foundation Meeting.
- H. Apply for Accreditation (Charter) from PROBUS Canada.

A. Sponsoring

PROBUS Canada operates on the principle that individual Probus clubs are independent organizations which are encouraged to operate in the manner proposed by each club's membership. However, there are several procedures which PROBUS Canada suggests should be dealt with in a standard manner. For this reason, it is required that a proposed club be sponsored by an existing Probus club or a Rotary Club.

It is advisable for the sponsoring club to participate actively in the formation of a proposed club. In general terms, the sponsoring club will need to appoint one of its members as mentor. This individual is known as the Convener. If other club members are interested in helping with this process, a small mentoring team could be formed with the Convener leading that team and acting as the contact between the sponsoring club and the proposed club. There are two basic scenarios which will dictate the character of the mentoring function.

- a. If the motivation to form the new club is coming from within an existing club, or, from non-Probians who are not knowledgeable about Probus, the chartering process would be started by the Convener. However, it would be gradually handed over to a Steering Committee made up of persons who have indicated an interest in joining the proposed club. These individuals will most probably comprise the majority of the new club's first Management Committee.
- b. If the motivation to form the new club is coming from a person or persons outside of the sponsoring club, but who are knowledgeable about Probus, the Convener should be able to adopt more of an arm's length- approach to the mentoring task.

B. Steering Committee

The Convener, with the assistance of no less than three potential members, will facilitate the formation of a Steering Committee. The members of the Steering Committee should select one person from their number to be the Committee Chairperson.

The role of the Steering Committee is to organize and carry out the tasks necessary to get a proposed club through the process of becoming accredited by PROBUS Canada. This involves:

- a. preparing for an Informational (Interest) Meeting for all persons considering possible membership in the proposed new club,
- b. drafting a contact list of potential members,
- c. organizing some publicity for the proposed club and the Informational Meeting,
- d. preparing for and conducting the proposed club's Foundation Meeting. and
- e. ensuring that the necessary documentation supporting/requesting chartered status is forwarded to PROBUS Canada upon the installation of the Charter Management committee. See Article III - Management in *the Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs*.

C. Potential Members

The Steering Committee, with the assistance of the Convener, should compile a list of retired and semi retired people who are potential members. This responsibility can be shared with the Sponsoring club, whose members should be asked to participate by providing names, addresses and telephone numbers of potential members. However, club members (unless they are thoroughly conversant with Probus) should be asked to not approach and discuss Probus with the people whose names they have submitted. Club members need not personally know the people they nominate.

D. Advertising The Proposed Club

It is strongly recommended that the Steering Committee delegate the chair of the Steering Committee and the Convener to arrange interviews with local media to bring Probus to the attention of the community at large.

E. Find A Suitable Meeting Venue For General Meetings

One of the earliest decisions a club needs to make is where the regular meetings will take place. Below are some of the considerations need to be addressed:



Consideration	Yes	No
Is the venue available for all proposed meeting day/times?		
Is the venue's location central to as many potential members as possible?		
Is parking available?		
Is public transit available if appropriate?		
Is there sufficient space for meeting attendees, including social time?		
Is the venue's cost manageable within reasonable membership fees?		
Is the venue accessible - all one level, ramp(s) if needed, washrooms, etc.?		
Are the venue's acoustics appropriate for members with impaired hearing?		
Is AV equipment available? (Many clubs end up purchasing their own.)		
Will members be required to set up and take down the room?		
Is a kitchen available?		
Can the club provide its own refreshments?		
If the venue provides refreshments, is the cost reasonable?		

When it comes to interest groups, the range of options expands, depending on the size of the interest group and what they want to do.

For example, hiking groups do not need a meeting room. Crafts groups and book clubs do. If the interest group is small, it can often be accommodated in someone's home. Larger meeting rooms are often available for a nominal amount (or even free) from community centres and churches. This issue is much more ad hoc, and arranged by the individual groups as needed.

F. Informational (Interest) Meeting

This meeting is intended to help measure the degree of community interest in the formation of a club. The main focus would be to give general information on Probus, to answer questions, and if there is enough interest, to announce a date/ time/ place for a Foundation Meeting.

If the meeting identifies potential members of the proposed club's management committee, consider expanding the size of the Steering Committee.

G. Foundation Meeting

The Steering Committee is responsible for organizing the Foundation Meeting. This meeting should be convened within approximately four weeks of the Informational Meeting. The following points should be borne in mind when preparing the agenda for this meeting:

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- a. Upon arrival, potential members are required to sign in on the Attendance Record,
 - b. Before the meeting opens, the potential members should be given, in a complete kit:
 - an agenda for the meeting
 - a Standard Probus Club Constitution and Recommended Bylaws
 - an application for membership
 - a Probus informational brochure
 - NOTE: Potential members should be asked to read these Probus documents before the meeting begins so that they may ask any questions arising from them.
 - c. Ideally, the meeting should be chaired by the President or Convener and the address on Probus should be delivered by the Probus District Director.

To be designated as Charter or Foundation Members, potential members must pay their membership fees at or before the first general meeting of the club. Charter members do not require a sponsor.

H. Apply For Accreditation

Immediately after the Foundation Meeting, documentation must be submitted to the General Manager to apply for Accreditation (the Charter).

The General Manager will provide the forms to be completed, along with instructions.

Sponsoring Club to submit:

- a. Application for Accreditation

New or Amalgamated Club to submit:

- a. Signed Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs
- b. Signed Bylaws
- c. Club Directory Information Form
- d. Membership and Liability Insurance Form
- e. Membership fees and accreditation fee

I. Inaugural Meeting

- a. The first general meeting of the newly formed club
- a. Presentation of the Charter