

GUIDELINES FOR THE FOUNDING OF A NEW CLUB WITHIN A UNION

TIMETABLE

- 1. Informing the club
If any Soroptimist
within a Union who
has decided to
found a new club
must first inform
her own club.** Should a member of a SI Union see a possibility for a new club within the Union – even if it is in the same town or area as her Club – she must first inform her **Club President**.
- 2. Informing the
Union** The club president should then pass on this information **in writing** to the **Union President** and the **Union Extension Chairman**.
- 3. Confirmation by the
Union** Together, the Union President and the Extension Committee Chairman will then approve the plans to found a new club.
- 4. Formation of a core
group** As soon as the above procedures have been successfully completed, the initiating member may approach women who she considers suitable for membership and provide them with the necessary information about the aims and statutes of SI. She may not, however, recruit women who are already members of her own or neighbouring clubs. From now on she will normally act as the general co-ordinator – that is, the Godmother - of the new group. But she could be the Charter President too, if she is already a Soroptimist coming from another Club in another city.
- 5. Co-ordinating
further activities** The Union Extension Chairman or her representative will now take over various tasks to aid the formation of the future club. She will act as co-ordinator, organiser and contact person for the new members, for the Godmother and for any other members involved in the foundation process.
- 6. Contact between
the Union and the
Godmother** The Extension Committee should outline the role of the Godmother and explain how she can contribute to the process of founding the new club. (Proposal to prepare a Founder's File in the native language).
- 7. Contact with the
core group** The Godmother should keep in close contact with the core group and act as a contact person between the group and the Union. She may try further support by finding a godmother club; this may be her own club or another one nearby.

- 8. Choosing a provisional club committee** As soon as ten or twelve potential members have been recruited, the Godmother should supervise the selection of a provisional board, which should consist of a President, one or two Vice-President(s), Secretary and Treasurer. From now on the core group may be referred to as 'Soroptimist International of xxxx in foundation'. The provisional committee may now decide on the group's internal and external activities. They should now receive all important information from the Union
- 9. Choice of a club name** The provisional club (that includes **all** potential members, in particular the Board) decides on the Club's name. This name must include the name of the town or the region in which the club has been founded. The Union Extension Committee should then be informed of this name.
- 10. Future members** From now on, members of the provisional board carry the main responsibility for the selection of further potential members, in consultation with the rest of the group. Women considered for membership must be:
- employed (paid or volunteers)
 - recently retired or recently unemployed, having previously worked in a paid or voluntary position.
 - about to start on a career
 - at least 21 years old
- 11. Statutes and standing orders** The Union Extension Chairman should now send essential information to all potential club members. In practice, a member of the Extension Committee should visit the group to discuss these topics personally. (see next point)
- 12. Inviting the Union President and the Union Extension Chairman** At the latest at this point – usually earlier – an invitation should be sent to the Union President and to the Union Extension Chairman. These two inform the core group about the basic principles of Soroptimism, explain the Constitution and answer questions about club activities and the organisation of the charter ceremony. Naturally there should be more than one such visit: in particular, the Godmother, the Union Extension Chairman or her representative should pay regular visits to the group in this phase.
- 13. Finding at least 22 provisional club members** In order to submit an application to charter a new club, a minimum of 18 provisional members is required. It is strongly recommended, however, not to take this step before the group consists of at least 22 members from different age groups and professions.

14. Planning the charter date and venue

As soon as this group has finally decided that they wish to found a new club, planning for the charter may begin. Here the priorities are 1) to fix a preferred date 2) to include two alternative dates 3) to decide on the venue(s) for the charter ceremony itself and the official celebrations and 4) to ensure that these locations are free on all three of the dates concerned. Chartering dates have to be on a weekend.

15. Completing and signing the *Application for Admission Form*.

Before a Soroptimist club can be chartered, a form must be completed and sent to the Federation. This [form must reach the Federation at least four months before the suggested charter dates](#), and must include a list of all provisional members in alphabetical order, with the following information:

- Name
- Address
- Date of birth
- Profession
- Present occupation
- Telephone and fax number, e-mail address where applicable.

(Before the Application Form is submitted to the Federation, much time can be saved if it is first sent to the Union Extension Chairman, who will check that the information has been correctly phrased and that all the requirements have been met.)

16. The Union President and the Union Extension Chairman sign the Application Form.

All information in the Application Form must be in one of the two official languages of the Federation (English or French). **Five copies** in all should be submitted; each should contain the signatures of all members and on the front page the signature of the Charter President, the Union President and the Extension Chairman (signed when possible in the presence of the Godmother, the Union President and/or the Extension Committee Chairman (or her representative).

17. The Extension Chairman submits the Application Form to the Federation

The Union Extension Chairman will then send the copies of the Application Form to the Federation with an accompanying letter requesting the Federation's approval.

18. Information is passed on to the Union and the Union website

Not until the Federation has approved the application can further information and details of the charter ceremony be communicated to the Union's news service and web site. From now on there should be as much information as possible about the charter available to all those who are

interested.

19. Alterations to the Application Form

This form may be altered up to two weeks before the charter ceremony takes place if further new members have been recruited or other members have defaulted. The former shall be listed as founder members.

20. Waiting for the Federation's approval of the new club and charter date

The Union President and the Union Extension Chairman should follow the approval process within the Federation and inform the club of the result at the first possible opportunity. Written confirmation from the Federation will take approximately three to four weeks but may be earlier. As soon as the name of the member who is to present the Charter has been made known to the club, the president-to-be of the new club should contact her, fix her time and date of arrival and provide her with all other necessary information. Her travel expenses are paid by the Federation: all other expenses (hotel, meals, charter fee, etc.) must be covered by the club (or the Union).

21. Planning the charter

While the club is waiting for the approval of the Federation, the first plans for the charter celebration can be drawn up. The standard programme might be as follows:

- Friday evening: informal get-together
- Saturday morning: sight-seeing programme, while in parallel:
- Constitutive Assembly (only Founding Members)
- Saturday evening: charter ceremony with formal presentation of the Charter
- Charter dinner with guests and speeches.
- Sunday morning: informal ending of festivities, alternatively sight-seeing.

Some minor alterations to the programme are of course possible.

22. Approval of the charter and the date by the Federation

As soon as the charter and the charter date have been officially confirmed by the Federation, the plans for the Charter Ceremony can be finalised (location, guests of honour, invited speakers, estimate of costs (including charter project, sponsors, etc.) The final charter date should be communicated to the Union's news services and to the web site.

23. Printing and sending the charter invitations to clubs at home and abroad.

The invitation must include:

- the aims of Soroptimist International
- time, date and location of chartering event and a detailed list of events, further details of organisation
- name of the office holder who will present the Charter
- contact person for registration (e-mail address)
- charter fee
- hotel information
- last date for registration
- travel instructions
- list of founder members including professions
- registration card
- hotel reservation card

The invitation must reach clubs of the Union and those in neighbouring countries at least two months before the date of chartering so it is in the interest of the future club to apply for its chartering well before the prescribed four months.