



## NATS Affinity Groups

### Definition

An Affinity Group is a voluntary member resource group within NATS that enables members to meet together and build connections based on shared characteristics or interests.

### Types

Examples of affinity groups could include BIPOC teachers, LGBTQ+ teachers, independent teachers, new members, and any other group based on a common set of characteristics and/or interests.

### Goal

Affinity Groups can be formed to give NATS members a “place” to come together and create a safe space to share their experiences and provide NATS leaders valuable feedback on particular issues.

### Value to NATS Members and to NATS

Affinity Groups can provide an opportunity and safe space to:

1. promote increased communication and collaboration
2. facilitate friendships
3. support new members and help them feel more welcome
4. identify IDEA concerns
5. improve retention
6. provide valuable feedback to NATS leaders

### What Makes a Good Affinity Group?

An effective affinity group provides a safe space for all voices to be heard and considers how their interaction and discussions can both benefit one another and the greater NATS community.

### You're On Board and Want to Start an Affinity Group?

1. Complete an Affinity Group Interest Form (below).
2. Develop a list of at least ten (10) interested members willing to participate.
3. Identify targeted members.
4. Name the group.
5. Prepare an introductory message that can be used in an electronic invitation.
6. Schedule your first meeting

### First Meeting

1. Group comes together, gets acquainted, shares experiences
2. Select a Facilitator and a Recording Secretary
3. Set a mission and goals
4. Discuss the name of the group & adjust, if necessary
5. Design the structure (determine specific roles, meeting frequency)

**NATS Affinity Groups and Group Members:**

- Foster an environment that is supportive and respectful - OUTREACH
- Connect with diverse members who share your unique characteristics or interests
- Serve as role models to other members, leaders, and students
- Encourage NATS leaders and NATS committees to function in an inclusive manner and to support diverse programming, events, recruitment, and retention.
- Meet regularly.
- Keep good records of meetings in order to strategize and provide feedback and guidance to NATS leaders.

## Affinity Group Interest Form

Name:

Region Affiliation:

Chapter Affiliation:

Email:

Phone:

What type of Affinity Group are you interested in forming?

Why are you interested in forming a NATS Affinity Group?

What do you hope to gain from forming/joining a NATS Affinity Group?

Would you be interested in facilitating this Affinity Group?

Do you know of other NATS members who would be interested in joining this group (& emails)?

1. .
2. .
3. .
4. .
5. .
6. .
7. .
8. .
9. .
10. .

Anything else you would like to add?