

Facilitating a Group Discussion on Elimination of the Membership Requirement

Key Elements of Effective Meetings

As you plan for your discussion, aim for the members to feel these three things when the meeting adjourns:

1. **The meeting was consequential.** Make sure you have enough time to discuss the issue, keeping focus on the future and not what was done in the past.
2. **I mattered.** Be aware of who is contributing to the discussion and ensure there is adequate time and space for input from all who want to participate.
3. **I know what happens next.** Talk through the calendar so participants know when and how to vote.

Key dates:

Comment Period: January 11 – February 5, 2021 via this [link](#)

Voting Period: April 7 – May 17, 2021

How to vote:

All eligible voters are encouraged to vote online. A link to voting (as well as many reminders) will be sent via email to all eligible voters beginning on April 7, 2021. All voters without a valid email on file with the national office will be sent a reminder via snail mail. Paper ballots can be requested from connect@aauw.org on or before April 16, 2021. Paper ballots must be postmarked by April 30, 2021.

Your Role as Facilitator

Here's what you should do to make sure the meeting is consequential, efficient, and inclusive:

1. **Be prepared.** Review the framing questions below and talking points prior to the discussion.
2. **Be clear in the agenda and purpose of the meeting.** Consider sending some framing questions (see below) to participants ahead of time so that attendees are prepared.
3. **Engage participants in meaningful ways.** Be aware of who is contributing to conversations and who is not and explore ways to invite the quiet folks to share their thoughts. You may find that changing the format — for example, having small groups discuss into breakout rooms — will allow space for all voices to be heard.

4. **Keep the group on track.** If the discussion veers off course to other topics, remind participants of the purpose of the meeting. If you think the discussion will be contentious, you may want to set [ground rules](#) at the beginning.

Discussion Framing Questions

- What does AAUW mean to you and how has that changed over time?
- How has our community and our world changed over the last 20 years? How can/should AAUW adapt or respond to these changes.
- AAUW's mission is to advance equity. How does keeping the membership requirement help us do this work?
- What work is our branch/state doing to empower *all* women? Does the membership requirement aid or hinder our ability to empower *all* women?
- Show the testimonials and lead a discussion: What do you think of the views presented in the testimonials?
- If you have several participants you know are on opposite sides of the issue and can engage in respectful discussion, ask them to give their opinions in a point-counterpoint format.