

Organizing Focus Groups

1. To recruit, place notices in library, information on the website and possibly in local newspapers.
2. Host groups at times that are convenient for the population segment you are inviting. Seniors like mornings; teens want to come after school; young professionals in the evenings, etc.
3. Have a meeting room available that will seat approximately 12 people in an oval **or** another configuration conducive to discussion.
4. If a representative of the library is facilitating the discussion, it is important that the person remain neutral. Don't defend the library if someone says something negative. Don't answer questions. The goal is to have the participants share their ideas and viewpoints.
5. Explore the possibility of offering a library-related gift for each participant.
6. Provide a greeter for each focus group who will guide participants to the room where the discussion is being held.
7. Make a telephone call the day before the group is scheduled to meet to confirm that individuals who agreed to participate are still planning to attend.
8. Send a thank you letter to all participants following the focus group.

The Ivy Group will:

- 1) Provide a letter that will be sent to participants
- 2) Provide sign-up sheet for library staff to record information about individuals who have agreed to attend;
- 3) Provide suggested signage for publicizing the groups
- 4) Provide translations in 5 languages of written materials
- 5) Provide branch managers with information regarding the composition of the groups
- 6) Develop the discussion guides
- 7) Provide tent cards for participants to put their names
- 8) Provide interpreters for groups of non-English language speakers
- 9) Facilitate the groups
- 10) Tape record and transcribe the sessions
- 11) Provide an executive summary of the results

NOTE: A tape recorder and easel will be needed for each session. It is also helpful if the person who is the greeter sits in on the sessions to operate the tape recorder and respond to any problems that may develop.