

## Making space – how associations keep themselves young

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### How to get new and young people into association work

There are a few effective ways of attracting young people into this line of work. First and foremost, an association needs to actually target people who may be interested and motivate them to get involved. If an association is trying to attract a younger team, it's a good idea to make future executive committee members aware that signing up to an executive committee can help them to develop new skills that they can also apply to their professional life, such as team work, learning structured learning processes, planning, organisation, running meetings and so on.

- The association should be proud of its achievements. That's an incentive for others to get involved, too.
- A fresh appearance (logo, homepage) is more likely to get younger people's attention than an outmoded presence.
- Networking, networking, networking: Always consider who might know someone who could make a good addition to the association. This is how a good network opens up to a wide range of different people. Then you can determine who could ask who to get involved, and check after a certain time how things are going.
- Having a mentoring system in place is a good idea when it comes to helping new executive committee members to settle in, with seasoned executive committee members introducing newbies to committee work.
- The processes and dealings of association executive committees need to be well documented. This will help new people in the association to get their bearings and settle in. Providing an overview of skills, tasks and more is important.
- It's also important to ensure that meetings are held in an engaging and efficient way; for example, by making sure that they are well facilitated, that times are complied with and that there is space for humour. Make sure that you don't cause professional or personal stress for executive committee members by scheduling meetings that last until midnight.
- Invitations to meetings should also be formulated carefully and show the items to be discussed and decided upon, etc.
- Association executive committees must strike a balance between accepting and delegating responsibility. Knowing where to take a step back is sometimes key.
- Executive committee members with many years of experience should ask themselves how adept they are at making space for younger colleagues on the committee with their own views and ways of working. It's important to distance yourself from your own practices to make space for new people and possibly also new formats and ways of doing things.