

## Startup Suggestions

### **How to get involved - Startup Suggestions for Forming a Local Organization**

Here are some general suggestions for starting or restarting a local organization, whether statewide or local.

- Hold a general meeting in which you incorporate some kind of viola activity, whether a play in, a guest recital, a recital of local members, or anything else. Plan well in advance to give possible members enough time to schedule, and to prepare if they are going to perform.
- Have a contingency for anyone who cannot make the meeting but would like to join.
- Try to get a college or university, or an orchestra to co-sponsor the event you are planning in conjunction with the meeting. This organization should also be able to provide some kind of meeting and performance space without charge.
- Have a short agenda so everyone can be informed, without being made to sit through a lengthy business meeting. (Those can come later ;-)
- Prior to the meeting determine a dues structure, regular and student members, or other categories. The fewer categories the better – keep things simple! Keep the dues nominal.
- Have a slate of people prepared to run the organization, and take a vote of at the meeting, offering a chance for nominations from the floor. It's advisable to have at least a president and secretary/treasurer.
- Plan well in advance for each meeting.
- If you are restarting a defunct organization there may be some old records that will help
- Make it fun and interesting, and the attendees will come back for more.

### **A few additional financial considerations:**

- Incorporate the organization as a Domestic Non-Profit in your state.
- Depending on the laws in your state you should be able to get a business account at a bank. Don't keep organizational funds in a personal account.
- Local organizations should seek tax advice from professionals in their location for all rules and regulations that apply to them. See also: <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Types-of-Tax-Exempt-Organizations> for more information.

The American Viola Society is an organization for all violists. Our new local viola group emphasis represents an easy way for violists of all stripes to connect at the local grassroots level. Not just for university professors and their students, we want to encourage amateurs, educators at all levels, fiddler violists, jazz violists, and professionals alike to join together in celebrating all things viola!