

MAFA Member Guilds 2017/18 Survey Summary

MAFA Reps: Here is a summary of responses to the Reps Survey in the past few months. I've also noted proposed action items for MAFA Membership Chair to take and/or that I will review with the Board.

Margaret Briggs, Membership Chair

The survey had 37 individual responses from 26 Guilds (out of 44). About half of respondents were Reps, with the other half predominately Programs and Presidents.

Q4 Please rank the following MAFA resources in terms of importance to your guild.

1. Conference
2. Website listing of guild info and events
3. Grants/Fellowships/Scholarships
4. Online resources – FS listings, projects, sample archives
5. MAFA Social Media venues
6. Hosting guild websites

Membership Chair (MC) Notes/Action:

- **Promote these items to existing guilds**
- **Use these items to attract new guilds**
- **Direct new guilds to the Member Benefits page on the MAFA website**

Q5 What other kinds of support and/or resources would your guild like from MAFA?

Far and away the strongest response was for Program/Workshop info sharing at 100%. Communication with peer guilds, and among Reps had strong responses at 32.4% each. Guild website development and hosting had only 22% response, although there were a couple of comments about the need for help with website development.

Among the Other responses, a few stood out, that may be worth exploring:

- If a "mentor" was available for guiding guilds in the topics listed selection #2 [Communication with peer guilds about guild administration, eg info on non-profit status].
- A directory of workshop presenters belonging to member guilds with good descriptions of the workshops they offer, associated costs and the distance they are willing to travel.
- Instructor contact information so we could schedule programs and workshops without wading through blogs and websites in hopes of making contact.

MC Notes/Action:

- **Incorporate a searchable Program/Workshop database in the new website, or provide a searchable spreadsheet. MC to collect data from guilds and other instructors.**
- **Develop a list of self-identified guild "Mentors" who would be willing to help advise other guilds on admin issues.**
- **Continue to accommodate guild hosting and maintenance of member guild websites.**

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Q6 What is the best way for MAFA to communicate with your guild?

Email direct to Reps was preferred by 57% vs 38% preferring the “Reps News”.

AND

Q7 Do you prefer to hear from us with shorter messages every month, every time we have something to announce, or less frequent (eg every 2 months) messages that contain more info?

I was a little surprised that the highest response at 46% was for us to email when there is something important to announce, followed by once a month at 38%, and every two months at 16%.

Comment: I like the newsletter format idea, monthly. It will give reps an opportunity to post and communicate with each other as well as MAFA operating personnel. **Every 2 months is hard to coincide with monthly meetings so the information isn't out of date.**

Also a request to provide newsletters in a printable format: “Email: **but in a format that can be printed in a regular font size...** This guild does not tolerate long business meetings, so I tend to pass around these communications for folks to read for themselves”

MC Notes/Action on Q6 & Q7:

- **Consider publishing the Reps News monthly, even if with fewer items**
- **Publish Reps News in pdf format as an attachment. Also allows posting to the website.**
- **Continue to send email announcements for Conference, Grant/Fellowship deadlines, and other time sensitive or important items.**

Q8 How would you prefer to communicate with Reps from other MAFA member guilds?

Strong 58% in favor of an Email list, with 53% interested in Basecamp.

As was noted, Facebook is not available to all. Re other venues such as Ravelry: Public groups are difficult, though, for honest communication about potentially sensitive topics, e.g. instructor evaluations.

MC Notes/Action: Compare Groups.io for discussion/email list vs Basecamp. Bringing Reps into Basecamp would help them get acclimated for future MAFA leadership roles. On the other hand, there is a learning curve with BC. Groups.io is easier to learn.

Q9 Would a list of guild programs – past and present – with a guild contact for more info be useful to you?

AND

Q10 Are you interested in sharing info about your guild's programs/workshops/instructors, to provide ideas and resources for guild programs?

Responses were nearly unanimously YES.

MC Notes/Action: When we know what data we need for the database, I will collect info from guilds.

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Q11 Would you be willing to share a profile of your guild for the newsletter and website?

24 Guilds said YES.

MC Notes/Action: I will follow up with those who said yes to get brief profiles we can publish in the newsletter, and/or add to the website later.

Q12 How might we encourage guilds that are not currently MAFA members to join?

My favorite answer: “Kidnap them and take them to a conference”

Other, more practical suggestions:

- Perhaps encourage a visit to the conference, maybe a special event with free attendance for one rep from the guild or one free one day pass.
- Share examples of benefits, e.g. success stories of guilds that have filled out workshops with members of neighboring MAFA guilds, through communications via MAFA Reps.
- Perhaps small gatherings of guilds in close proximity to invite other close nonmember groups

MC Notes/Action:

- **Email non-member guilds to invite them to join.**
- **Develop a flyer, or cheat sheet of MAFA benefits, based on the Member Benefits page on the website.**

Q13 Do you or your guild have any other questions or comments for MAFA?

A few comments of interest:

- The conference should be earlier in the year.
- I have very little knowledge of the work of MAFA beyond its conferences. I look forward to learning more so we can make better use of its resources and help other guilds.

MC Notes/Action:

- **The Conference will be earlier in 2019.**
- **Reps check out the Member Benefits page on the MAFA website, and use that to educate our current members, plus be better ambassadors for possibly getting other guilds to join. Find the page at: www.mafafiber.org/wordpress/home/member-benefits/**

If you are interested in complete survey responses, please email me:

Margaret Briggs, MAFA Membership Chair at membership@mafafiber.org

If you have not already completed the survey, and would still like to, please find the survey here: www.surveymonkey.com/r/SQCMFHW