



PYM Sprints

Sprints are a tool used in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to respond to leadings or complete projects. They are like very short-term committees, generally lasting less than six months. They require a relatively short time commitment and seek to engage a wider range of people within our community. This document is a compilation of the sprints that are currently active or recently completed. It also includes the template that sprint charges are built on.

Sprint Title

Charge:

In a short paragraph describe the purpose of the sprint and what it is expected to do

Background:

Provide any context or impetus that explains why this sprint came to be and why it is important,

Composition of the Sprint:

Describe how many people should be appointed to the sprint and any specific expectations about skills, roles or demographics (etc) that should be represented within the sprint composition

Accountability:

Name the body that is responsible for the sprint's activity and outcomes. This is the group that receives the sprint's report and that steps in if there is conflict, a lack of clarity or progress, etc.

Responsibilities:

1. List the expectations,
2. Duties and
3. Responsibilities of the sprint
4. With attention to being guided by Spirit and centering equitable access.

Outcomes:

1. List the concrete outcomes or SMART goals assigned to the sprint
2. Include due dates

Next Steps:

1. Describe what the accountability body expects to do with the outcomes
2. This is to provide accountability for the accountability body and to provide context for the work of the sprint.

PROPOSED SPRINT: Map to the Destination of Connecting our Meetings

Charge:

To identify strategies and pathways to help navigate to a place where our meetings are connected based on the vision of PYM Friends.

Background:

Connecting, a strategic direction of PYM, asks us to connect Friends and meetings to one another so that we may experience vibrant, Spirit-led faith community. A specific destination for this direction is to increase the interactions that meetings have with one another. Through Continuing Sessions, council meetings and a fundraising and email campaign on the subject, Friends have already contributed to a vision of what it looks like when we arrive at the destination of interconnected meetings. The next step is to make a map that shows how we will get to that destination.

Composition of the Sprint:

The sprint will include 5-8 members. The membership of the sprint will include at least:

- One person active in their local meeting but not in the yearly meeting community.
- One person active in their quarterly meeting but not in the yearly meeting community.
- One person who is not staff or governance who is a young adult (under 35ish) and one who is in the second third of adulthood (35-60)
- One council member
- One staff member from communications and/or program

Sprint members will be PYM Friends who have familiarity with our meetings and bring a strategic and or creative mindset and carry a sense of curiosity and hopefulness.

Friends who would like to be considered for service as a sprint member may contact Cecilia Filauro, Executive Administrator (cfilauro@pym.org).

All Friends will be invited to contribute to providing feedback on the work of the sprint.

Accountability:

The sprint will be approved by and report to the yearly meeting in session. It's members will be approved by Administrative Council (Admin) and Quaker Life Council (QLC). Between sessions the sprint will be held accountable by Admin and QLC which will ensure that it maintains momentum and the work is completed. In the event the sprint requires assistance, whether the need is perceived by the sprint itself or by others, Admin and QLC are responsible for providing the assistance.

Responsibilities (what the sprint will do):

1. Become familiar with the shared visions of what it will look like when our meetings are well-connected.
2. Become familiar with the structure of PYM's governance and staff and the locations of all of our meetings.
3. Inventory existing ways meetings and Friends connect in PYM.
4. Identify the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and pressures that will help or hinder our reaching the destination.

4. Develop a wide range of ideas about the strategies, activities, resources, etc that could move us from our current location to the destination of connected meetings. The initial list may include impossible ideas!
5. Develop a set of possible pathways.
6. Share possibilities with councils and PYM Friends to receive fresh perspectives and feedback.
7. Develop a first draft proposed map to reach our destination.
8. Consult with any individuals or bodies that would be required to provide any kind of action or resources when enacting the proposal (councils, committees, meetings, staff, for example)
9. Develop a revised map that includes consideration of all feedback.

Outcomes (what will happen as a result of the sprint carrying out its responsibilities):

1. At least two opportunities for PYM Friends to play with ideas about pathways with the sprint and to ask questions and provide feedback on the sprint's work in progress.
2. Give a status report to Continuing Sessions in November
3. Post an update to the PYM website about the progress of the sprint on an alt-monthly schedule at a minimum.
4. By March Continuing Sessions present a proposed plan ("map") that identifies:
 - a. Specific outcomes of how our meetings will be connected
 - b. Recommended actions for our community that will result in reaching outcomes
 - c. Who would be responsible for the actions
 - d. Who would be consulted about the actions along the way.
 - e. A timeline for the actions.

Next Steps (what will happen after the work of the sprint is complete):

1. The councils will propose next steps based on the reception of the proposed map at Continuing Sessions.
2. The councils will be responsible for taking and reporting on next steps. Possibilities include activating additional sprints, discerning with the wider body, setting up a committee, working with staff, etc.

Sprint on Multilayer Visual Representation of Indigenous Land and PYM Geography

Charge:

The sprint will provide the data to allow the creation of comprehensive visual tools that illustrate the locations of indigenous nations across the geography PYM occupies. The guiding principle will be to execute the task with cultural sensitivity, precision and accessible to all ages and to the visually impaired. Bonus points for interactivity.

Background:

The Sprint on Land Acknowledgement recently presented to QLC a statement that might be used across PYM and referred to the Lenape nation. Since PYM geography could comprise more indigenous nations, it was recommended that a resource be crafted to help PYM Friends know the indigenous peoples who live and have lived on the lands we live on.

Composition of the Sprint:

The sprint will include 4-6 people.

- The members will have a strong cultural sensitivity.
- One member will be an indigenous person.
- One member will be a person of color.
- One member of the PYM communications department. Deputy General Secretary will attend periodically as needed.

Accountability:

This sprint is in the care of the Quaker Life Council. QLC is responsible for ensuring the sprint's activity and outcomes come to fruition and will receive the report. If there is conflict, a lack of clarity or progress, or another disruption to the charge, the QLC Council is responsible for recognizing and rectifying that.

Responsibilities:

THE SPRINT WILL:

1. Conduct regular meetings to stay on track with the timeline.
2. Research and identify reliable sources for crafting a visual representation of the lands who lives on them, such as historical and political cartography. Seek out resources that detail the historical and contemporary presence of tribes, encompassing maps from various periods to capture their evolving territories and distributions.
3. Get acquainted with the location of each PYM Monthly Meeting (see www.pym.org/meetings).

4. Determine the essential information to include of where indigenous peoples and the PYM meetings are and establish the key priorities for display.
5. Ensure equitable participation and inclusion of all voices.

Deliverables: (the dates are a best-case scenario and depend on when the sprint can get up and running)

1. Present a progress report to QLC by June 20, 2024.
 - Describes the process of hearing all voices.
 - List of possible reliable sources.
 - Show familiarity with PYM MM's location.
2. Submit a final draft report by July 20, 2024.
 - List of locations to be incorporated into the project.
 - Key information communicated through the visual representation.
 - Suggested text that will be included in the visual representation.
3. Develop a tool by October 19
 - PYM Staff will develop a first draft of the visual tool using the information and priorities provided by the sprint by mid-September.
 - The Sprint will provide feedback to the PYM communications department to finalize the visual representation by October 19, 2024.
4. Showcase the final project at the Continuing Session in November 2024.

Next Steps: QLC will determine the periodicity of map revisions.

NOTE: This timeline was developed based on the assumption that communications staff will have capacity for this project at this time. In the event that the project is more complicated or the items on the communications department's plate are more numerous than allow for this timeline, staff and sprint members will suggest an alternate timetable to the council.

Updated: 6/6 regarding timelines and meeting frequency, CDT

Sprint to Revise the Governance Handbook

Charge:

Review the Governance Handbook and make recommendations for a revision that updates and streamlines the content, clarifies for readers the roles and responsibilities that have been approved by the body, and makes the handbook accessible to all users.

Background:

The handbook was developed in 2015 when the new structure was raised up. As policies have changed the handbook has been updated. The handbook as a whole has not been revised in the last ten years.

Composition of the Sprint:

The sprint will include 3-5 people. The participants will have a strong understanding of nonprofit governance generally and of PYM's structure specifically. One member will be a senior staff member.

Accountability:

This sprint is in the care of Administrative Council (Admin). Admin is responsible for ensuring the sprint's activity and outcomes come to fruition and will receive the sprint's report. In the event there is conflict, a lack of clarity or progress, or another disruption to the charge, Administrative Council is responsible for recognizing and rectifying that.

Responsibilities:

The sprint will

1. Invite comment on what is helpful and opaque in the current handbook from council members and governance advisory committee and any other body it determines will be helpful.
2. Review the handbook carefully and in depth, sharing comments with each other.
3. Determine the structure and order of the contents of the handbook that would make it most useful.
4. Identify where language needs to be addressed to clarify meaning.
5. Recommend changes in policy or that the council take up any policies that need further discernment.

Results:

1. At the June meeting of the councils the sprint will provide the following for comment and discussion among all council members:
 - a. A brief summary of comments from reviewers of the handbook, including the sprint members, council and committee members and anyone else invited to comment
 - b. An annotated draft table of contents. This will demonstrate for council members the recommended structure and order of the contents and why the specific changes are suggested.

2. Based on the outcomes and discussion from item one, a draft of the handbook with redline edits and comments about recommended changes will be completed by the end of July and given to staff to guide a revision. This draft need only include instructions and comments on changes. The exact wording may provided by the sprint if it desires but the sprint may also leave that level of detail to communications staff.
3. Staff will complete the revision, share it to the sprint and receive comments back from the sprint by the third week of August.
4. At the September meeting of the councils the sprint will provide the following for comment and discussion among all council members:
 - a. Revised draft of the handbook
 - b. A report with recommendations regarding policy changes and updates.

Next Steps:

1. Based on the revision and the recommendations, Administrative Council will determine next steps to prepare the document for discussion at Continuing Sessions in November.

Climate Change Playbook for Quaker Schools

Charge:

Develop a “Quaker Schools Edition” of the Climate Change Playbook to be used by schools and the student families as a corollary to the current Playbook for meetings and households.

Background:

A Playbook was developed based on the yearly meeting’s establishment of five areas to take action on climate change. The Playbook provides a context, structure and examples to support groups or households develop their own 5-point plan for addressing climate change. It is practical and accessible as well as scalable depending on where a group or household is on their climate journey.

The structure and approach of the playbook could easily be adapted to serve another population – such as Quaker schools. The head of Lansdowne Friends School, Eric Mayer, has expressed his appreciation for the original version and would love to help make it available for schools.

Quaker schools have mostly expressed a concern for the environment and some have taken significant action. In the same way that the Playbook provides a simple next-steps approach for PYM meetings and households, a School Edition could support schools and their families. A Quaker School Edition would be based on the same model as the current Playbook. Differences would use language, examples and processes that make sense for a school and its families.

Composition of the Sprint:

The sprint will include four to seven people including: a PYM staff member and at least 3 people who play different roles in a Quaker school – such as teacher, head of school, parent, and/or student.

The sprint might include one person who is a PYM Friend who is not actively involved in a Quaker school.

A minimum of half of the sprint members must be a member or actively involved in a Quaker meeting.

At least half of the participants must have a good strong working knowledge of key aspects of climate change and its impact.

At least one person must have an understanding of the interaction of climate change and racism.

Accountability:

This sprint is appointed and charged by Quaker Life Council (QLC) which will ensure that the assignment maintains momentum and is completed. In the event the sprint requires assistance, whether the need is perceived by the sprint itself or by others, QLC is responsible for providing the assistance.

Responsibilities and Outcomes:

The members of the sprint will:

1. Meet regularly at a date and time that is accessible to all members and will keep notes or minutes.
2. Recommend adaptations needed to the current play book including:
 - a. Identify where the language and graphics of the current Playbook need to be adapted to be relevant and speak directly to school communities with an explanation of what is needed. The sprint does not have to write the language or design the look but does need to provide the parameters.
 - b. Recommend content of the current Playbook that is irrelevant for the new audience and what additional content is required to be supportive of the new audience.
 - c. Recommend an outline of an accountability plan that is relevant for schools.
3. Reach out to Quaker schools with active climate change witnesses to request suggested resources in each of the five action areas. Collate the responses into a single document.
4. Recommend a plan for launching and supporting the School Edition at PYM schools.
5. Provide a report on the information generated by items 2-4 above within two months of launching the sprint.
6. Provide feedback on at least the first draft of the School Edition of the Playbook that is developed based on the Sprint's input.

Next Steps following the Sprint's work:

1. The report from the sprint will be shared for comments and recommendations by the following:
 - a. Climate Stewards.
 - b. QLC
 - c. Friends Council on Education (FCE)
2. If the comments and recommendations from the Stewards, council or FCE warrant it, they will be taken back to the sprint membership for their response.
3. PYM staff will develop a first draft of the School Edition based on the report and comments and recommendations.
4. The sprint and the stewards will be asked for feedback to be incorporated into the next draft.
5. If needed, fundraising will be done to finance the publication of the Playbook
6. The Playbook will be launched with the support of staff and, if deemed useful and/or necessary, a new sprint.

Possible members of the Sprint:

1. Eric Mayer (Westtown Meeting), Head of School at Lansdowne FS, originator of this idea. Eric could serve as clerk
2. Sam Thacker (Germantown Meeting), teacher at Germantown School
3. An active member of FEEN or SEASN (FCE sustainability networks)
4. Recommendations from Eric Mayer

Sprint on Listening and Lobbying

Charge:

This sprint will craft a spirit-centered, well-seasoned draft lobbying policy that is grounded in our faith and practice. The policy will meet the needs of PYM Friends whose ministry is grounded in advocacy, the needs of the PYM community, and our responsibility to maintain PYM's resources and nonprofit status. The draft policy will be arrived at through a two-stage process:

- a) Making space for many PYM Friends to share and listen to diverse experiences of spirit-led activism and advocacy and responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the institution of PYM.
- b) Crafting a draft policy based on the listening.

The draft policy will be brought to the body for consideration and approval.

Composition of the Sprint:

There are two groups carrying out the charge of the sprint:

- a) A **core group** is responsible for ensuring the charge is met. This group will include three members of Administrative Council, the Presiding Clerk, the CFO and the Deputy General Secretary. The General Secretary will join periodically as needed. This group was approved by Administrative Council.
- b) Three to seven additional Friends will join the core group to form a **working group** of the sprint which will craft a draft policy. The three to seven additional Friends will have attended at least one listening session of the sprint and will represent a diversity of experiences amongst them. The additional members will be nominated by the core group and approved by Administrative Council. The working group will be clerked by a member of the core group.

Accountability:

This sprint is in the care of Administrative Council (Admin). Admin is responsible for ensuring the sprint's activity and outcomes come to fruition and will receive the sprint's report. In the event there is conflict, a lack of clarity or progress, or another disruption to the charge, Administrative Council is responsible for recognizing and rectifying that.

Responsibilities:

1. The core group arranges the logistics of worshipful listening sessions, ensuring each one is:
 - a. Spiritually grounded and truly focused on active listening,
 - b. open to all PYM Friends,
 - c. accessible to a wide range of people, regardless of age, geography or digital literacy.
 - d. query-based and structured in a way that opens participants up to sharing and receiving a range of expertise and experience,
 - e. representative of key perspectives,
 - f. able to capture the sense of the worship sharing through notes (minutes).

- g. held within a two-week period at varying times to accommodate people's scheduling needs,
 - h. arrange for an elder to be present.
2. As necessary, the core group will arrange for alternative means for gathering Friends' experiences to allow for broad participation in a timely manner.
3. The core group will identify participants for the working group. The roster of the working group will be in alignment with the composition described above. The core group will ask for approval of the working group membership from Admin Council.
4. The working group will meet several times, as needed, to process the Listening Sessions and to craft a draft policy.
5. The core group will ensure that the Administrative Council members and the PYM body are kept informed.
6. Administrative Council will bring a recommended policy to the body for discernment and decision.
7. The Administrative Council will ensure this work is inclusive and celebrated.

Outcomes:

1. The core group will hold at least three zoom-based listening sessions by May 15.
2. The core group will develop a written report that shares the sense of the listening sessions which will be shared with Administrative Council on May 18.
3. The working group will be approved by Administrative Council on or before May 18.
4. The working group will provide a recommended policy that takes into account the sense of the listening sessions and needs of PYM Friends whose ministry is grounded in advocacy, the needs of the PYM community, and our responsibility to maintain PYM's resources and nonprofit status by June 13.
5. Administrative Council will consider the draft policy and determine whether further seasoning is needed on June 15.
6. Administrative Council will report to the body at Sessions.
7. Administrative Council will bring the draft policy to the body for discernment and decision when it's ready.

Following Steps:

1. Administrative Council will determine in June what next steps are needed to meet the charge.
2. God willing and the creek don't rise, a policy will be approved by November Continuing Sessions.
3. Administrative Council will work with other councils and the body regarding issues of authority and responsibility. Their work will include the experience of the Advocacy Policy and the authority and responsibilities of the councils and the body which were approved by the body in July 2014.

Sprint: Land Acknowledgement

Charge:

Recommend a practice to guide PYM in the use of land acknowledgements.

Background:

Yearly Meeting Sessions regularly include an acknowledgement that the land we gather on is the ancestral land of the native people who were here for millennia before our ancestors arrived from other continents. Generally the acknowledgement is made during opening worship. For a period of time a single person crafted and shared the statement at each Sessions. That was followed by asking a different person to be responsible for the acknowledgement each time. In every case the individual providing the statement independently wrote and shared the statement in their own words.

Quaker Life Council would like to establish a practice that is consistent, meaningful, manageable and is known by all Friends to be the way we acknowledge the land we meet on.

Composition of the Sprint:

The sprint will include 3-4 people. They will be people who are active in yearly meeting activities and sessions and who have engaged in land acknowledgement practices and/or have a deep understanding of the issues related to stating a land acknowledgement.

Accountability:

This sprint is appointed and charged by Quaker Life Council (QLC) which will ensure that the assignment maintains momentum and is completed. In the event the sprint requires assistance, whether the need is perceived by the sprint itself or by others, QLC is responsible for providing the assistance.

Responsibilities and Outcomes:

1. Meet regularly at a date and time that is accessible to all members and will keep notes or minutes.
2. Research the land acknowledgement practices of at least three similar organizations
3. Talk with staff and committee members who have had a responsibility for identifying and supporting those who have made the acknowledgements at our Sessions and with the Presiding and Rising Clerks to learn their perspectives, learnings and needs.
4. Provide a document with their recommendations for PYM practices that includes:
 - a. The purpose of making a statement.
 - b. The content of the statement.
 - i. Is there a standard statement that is always used?
 - ii. Is it different every time? If so, is there particular content to always or never include in the statement?
 - iii. Is there a standard statement that also includes an opportunity for the individual to provide their own content?
 - c. When a statement is needed. We expect the statement would be used at the beginning of every sessions. Is that the recommendation? Are there other times that it will also be expected to be used?

- d. The presenter of the statement. Will we expect the person to have a particular experience or racial identity? Will the presenter be the same each time or will there always be a different person? Are there any other requirements of the statement-sharer?
 - e. Identifying a presenter. Who is responsible for ensuring there is a presenter?
 - f. Other relevant recommendations
5. A parallel question for the sprint to consider and report on is about our expected impact or relevance of the land acknowledgement. QLC is concerned that we not simply make a statement as a way to feel like we have done something. The sprint is *not* charged with identifying a plan for the yearly meeting to actively address issues related to our relationship with or responsibility to indigenous people. However the statement should have more meaning than simply checking a box to say we've acknowledged the history and relationship with the land we're on. How can those be reconciled? The sprint may simply have a set of queries or thoughts which will be welcome. It's a big question.

Next Steps:

1. The Council will receive the recommendations from the sprint and determine a practice for the yearly meeting's land acknowledgements.
2. If needed the council will ask the sprint members to join them at their meeting or may ask them follow up questions.
3. If the council's discussion leads them in a different direction than the some of the recommendations they may ask the sprint members for feedback on the direction.
4. The council will share their decision with the wider body of PYM.

Possible members of the Sprint:

1. Boone Murphy – Clerk of the First Contact Reconciliation Collaborative
2. Sean Connolly – Executive Director of Arch Street Meeting House which has a standard statement which has been approved by local indigenous people.
3. 1-2 others

Sessions Survey Sprint

Charge:

This is the first phase of a longer-term effort to create a strategic plan for PYM Sessions. The sprint will have three primary tasks:

1. Support survey design. Make suggestions and edits. Approve final survey.
2. Develop a timeline and strategy for survey distribution.
3. Collect feedback and create a report to be shared with (QLC and SCC?)

Background:

Annual and Continuing Sessions are an essential part of Yearly Meeting functioning and our collective spiritual life. In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Annual Sessions moved to an online format. In the years since, we have been experimenting with ways to creatively adapt to the evolving needs of Friends. We have done many things that have been well-received and appreciated, like a hybrid format. Yet, we recognize that over the next 10 years there will be new needs and new challenges. In order to increase participation and/or reach Friends who are active in their local meetings but not in the Yearly Meeting, we will need to better understand why those Friends are not currently attending Sessions.

Composition of the Sprint:

This sprint should include 3-5 members, including staff and volunteers. Volunteers should be Friends who can receive critical feedback with wisdom and balance, helping to find the kernels of Truth that will help us to grow. Professional backgrounds in research, marketing, strategic planning, or related fields would be ideal, but not necessary.

Tara Rubinstein (Sessions and Events Coordinator) and Melinda Wenner Bradley (Director of Program and Religious Life) will participate on the sprint as staff members and will create the first draft of the survey.

Accountability:

Clerks group/Admin Council will be responsible for the Sessions Survey Sprint activity and outcomes. They will receive the final report and make recommendations for next steps.

Responsibilities:

1. Participate in Zoom meetings for the duration of the sprint (Summer/Fall 2024)
2. Support survey design (review, make suggestions, approve)
3. Receive and process survey responses
4. Create report including survey feedback.

Deliverables:

1. Develop a survey
2. Survey completed by 6/30/2024
3. Survey distribution plan in collaboration with PYM communications department by 6/30

4. Survey rollout: July – November 2024
5. Data collection and report finalized by December 2024

Next Steps:

1. Clerks Group/Admin Council will receive report as the first step in a strategic planning project for Sessions.
2. A Sessions Strategic Plan Sprint will be nominated to further explore the survey data. Sessions Survey Sprint members may be part of the next phase, but are not required to be.
3. The Sessions Strategic Plan Sprint should be a larger and more diverse body that represents our Yearly Meeting demographics.
4. It may be the case that an additional sprint that is dedicated to Sessions budget and finance would be a distinct process of its own. A discussion about this as a possibility is welcome.