



Now, More Than Ever – growing the Women in the Mechanical Industry (WiMI) network at the local MCAA Affiliate level will serve to meet WiMI’s mission for more women who are employed by MCAA Affiliate member contractors.

The WiMI initiative was created to enable women in the mechanical industry to further enrich their careers through networking, educational, mentoring and career development opportunities.

MCAA encourages women to start local WiMI committees. So, how do you get started?

- ☐ You’ve already taken the first step by expressing interest in furthering your industry commitment through creating a network with other women who are also employees of MCAA member companies.
- ☐ The next step is to identify an initial group of about 5-10 women who are interested in participating in a local WiMI group. You will want to identify about 5 in the group who would like to serve on the local WiMI committee.
- ☐ You will need to schedule a meeting with your local MCAA Affiliate Executive to express your interest. We strongly recommend that you schedule this meeting with a contractor representative who is active in your local MCAA Affiliate to serve as your champion.



Talking points with your contractor champion and the MCAA Affiliate Executive might include:

- Your commitment that this new committee will do the bulk of the work for promoting and sustaining the committee
- The goal of this meeting is to ask that this local WiMI committee be acknowledged under the umbrella of the local MCAA Affiliate.
- The committee will be open to all women who are employees of the local MCAA Affiliate member contractors.
- Communicate WiMI’s mission statement and your commitment to meeting this mission at the local level.

- Discuss that any financial support expectation will be minimal. Offer some ideas about how often you would like to meet, meeting topics that would help meet WiMI's mission and potential use of MCAA Affiliate space for meetings.
- If the committee is approved, ask that the committee members be invited to a Regular Business Meeting in order to recognize the group and let those in attendance know who to contact for information on being added to a contact list for notification of future events.
- As with other committees, the local MCAA Affiliate Executive will likely identify a staff liaison to work with your committee. Remember that while this is your committee, you are not autonomous but are under the MCAA/MCAA Affiliate umbrella and will work under their established framework.

□ Once you have received support from your local MCAA Affiliate, please contact MCAA WiMI to let them know about your new committee! (e-mail wimi@mcaa.org). MCAA WiMI will send you WiMI pins for your committee and active event participants, and request your acknowledgement that:

- The WiMI logo may be used for WiMI related mailings, e-mail signatures, and clothing or other items
- Social media posts will be respectful, relevant to the industry, and in support of growth of women on the MCAA/MCAA Affiliate community
- Appropriate hashtags include #WiMI #MCAA #MCAof(local) #womeninconstruction



Ideas for committee meetings:

- Establish governance
 - Chair/vice chair – length of terms (your local MCAA Affiliate may have guidelines)
 - Major assignments (communications, membership, meetings/events)
- Plan meetings/events
- Develop/review social media posts for consistency with WiMI's mission



Ideas for non-committee meetings/events:

- Depending on their position in their company, it may be difficult for some women to meet during normal working hours
 - Consider an initial on-line networking meeting and have an agenda ready
 - Topics of interest

- Good times to meet
- Contact info for other women who might be interested
- Interest in serving on the committee or attending events
- The first in-person event might be a social icebreaker
- Hard topic/soft topic approach for meetings/events
 - An equipment vendor presentation and a “life hack” share
 - Presentation on MCAA/MCAA Affiliate education programs and time management
- Local women-centric or construction industry service project
- A book club/podcast/audiobook format to review industry/career related topics
- Annually, you might have an event where you include female tradeswomen
- Tap your community college or Chamber of Commerce for speakers about business topics such as leadership, diversity/equality/inclusivity, team building, etc.
- Host a “Bring a Friend” event where you invite a friend from outside the industry and introduce them to the mechanical industry career opportunities.

- ☐ Share your success by sending news and picture of activities, member accomplishments, etc. to wimi@mcaa.org

FAQ's

Does our champion need to be one of our employers?

It would be best that your champion is someone who knows you well, but you can look outside your company. The MCAA Membership Directory & Buyer's Guide (available for download) may be a good resource.

We've met with the local MCAA Affiliate Executive, and they were not receptive to the idea of starting a local WiMI committee.

We hope that this does not happen. However, if you get a sense of this in your meeting, you can ask to be recognized as a WiMI group under the MCAA/MCAA Affiliate umbrella without being an official local MCAA Affiliate committee. If they are still not receptive, please reach out to the MCAA WiMI committee through wimi@mcaa.org and we can discuss next steps.

Can women who work for manufacturers be a part of the committee or attend events?

The local Executive will be able to answer this for you. It will probably depend on whether or not manufacturers are affiliate members of your local MCAA Affiliate.

Can we ask manufacturers to host our meetings/events?

The local Executive will be able to answer this for you. Some local associations do not want manufacturers to have access to members if that access hasn't been granted to all manufacturers.

Is there a requirement for WiMI members to pay dues?

WiMI members, on a national level, do not pay separate dues. Involvement with WiMI is a benefit of membership with MCAA, but attendance at any national event may require a registration fee. The same may be true for participation on the local level.

Should we charge a fee for attending WiMI events?

The local Executive will be able to answer this for you depending on how meetings/events expenses are covered for other local committees, but the local MCAA Affiliate would typically cover these expenses.

However, it would be a reasonable expectation that when you are first putting together your group (prior to meeting with and being approved by the local Executive) you would be responsible for expenses, for example, if you meet for coffee/lunch/drinks.

Can students come to events?

Confirm with your local Executive, but students from the local MCAA student chapters are often welcome at MCAA Affiliate events.