

*Federated Women's  
Institutes of Ontario*  
*rural ontario  
sharing education*



# Branching Out

**New Application Procedure – Step 1  
when starting your own  
Women's Institute Branch**



## Welcome to the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario!

We are very excited that you have taken the first step to starting your own Women's Institute Branch!

The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) is a not-for-profit charitable organization with affiliates around the world working with and for women in rural and small town Ontario. Through our network of Branches, we offer educational programming and community support, advocate for social, environmental and economic change, and work towards the personal growth of all women.

The Women's Institute (WI) challenges those who seek self-improvement and personal enrichment. Members belong to a network that connects Branches to Districts to Areas, as well as the provincial (FWIO), national (FWIC) and international (ACWW) levels of the organization.

As a WI Member, you have a chance to do more for yourself and your community! From advocating on a broad spectrum of issues to discovering your own hidden talents and skills, you will be improving the quality of life and making your home, country and world a better place to live.

### Starting a New Branch

Since 1897, the WI Branch has been the building block from which this organization has grown. The purpose of a Branch is to focus on making the community a better place to live by promoting the mission of FWIO. There are a few steps involved in starting a new Branch.

#### 1) Connect

Making connections with prospective Members is the first step in getting your new Branch started. Perhaps you already know of a few interested people but, if not, talk to some of the women you know or introduce yourself and share your idea about starting a Branch.

#### 2) Host an informal meeting

This is your opportunity to gather with community leaders, educators, neighbours, friends or anyone who may be interested in joining the Branch. Potential Members can learn more about FWIO, the organizational structure, duties of Branch officers, fees and other relevant information. Representatives of FWIO may be available to attend this meeting if you so choose.

#### 3) Submit an application to the FWIO Provincial Office

We will be here to assist you with the development of your Branch. You will find the New Branch Application Form on **page 4** of this guide. At this point, you should start to consider whether or not your Branch will have executive positions. An overview of the executive positions has been included in this package on **page 8**.

#### 4) Host a Charter Meeting

At this meeting you may elect a slate of officers to take on the executive positions. There are several positions from which your Branch Members may choose. Branches traditionally form an executive, however, they may choose instead to select only a Treasurer and one Contact Person to whom the Provincial Office may correspond with on behalf of the Branch. A Provincial Officer will be assigned to assist your new Branch throughout the election procedure if necessary.

## 5) Keep Track of Finances

The first thing you should do is set up your Branch bank account. Some banks offer special account rates for non-profit organizations. You may need the FWIO Charitable Registration Number for this. If so, simply contact the FWIO Provincial Office and we can provide it for you.

## 6) Launch your Branch

You may want to officially announce your Branch into your community by hosting a celebratory launch.

## ***Branching out into your community***

Early in the process of forming your Branch, you will be put in contact with a WI representative – likely someone from your District. This person will be able to provide guidance and support to your Branch as you move forward.

The FWIO also provides ongoing service and support to Branches, including:

- education and training materials,
- promotional tools to help you advertise your Branch,
- supplies and merchandise,
- reliable, supportive staff and Provincial Officers,
- annual conferences, meetings and events,
- tri-annual *Home & Country ROSE Garden* newsletter,
- FWIO website (including a Member Services Section and a user-friendly Branch Login Section, which allows you to promote your Branch to other WI Members and the public).

For additional support, please do not hesitate to contact the FWIO Provincial Office. Staff will be pleased to help you in any way that they can or put you in contact with the appropriate person.

**As you move forward, remember to let your community know what your WI is all about. Here are some suggestions for “Branching Out” into your community:**

- invite your community to attend the launch of your Branch,
- provide your community with information on the WI and what the objectives of your Branch will be, and
- inform the media of the opening of your Branch

**To provide you with the information that you need, enclosed you will find:**

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New Member Form .....	Page 5-7
Executive Position Descriptions .....	Page 8
About FWIO .....	Page 9-11

# New Branch Application Form

**Please complete this form and return to the FWIO Provincial Office:**

552 Ridge Road, Stoney Creek, ON L8J 2Y6

**To avoid duplication, please choose two (2) options for the name for your Branch:**

Branch Name

Choice # 1

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Branch Name

Choice # 2

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**Please provide a Contact Person for your Branch:**

Name

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Address

---

City

---

Province

---

Postal

Code

---

Phone

---

Email

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**Please share some information about your Branch with us:**

(E.g. Why did you decide to start a new Branch? Do you have a background with WI? What are some of the objectives of your Branch?)

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**WI offers something for everyone, please help us to meet your objectives by sharing some of the interests of your Branch with us:**

(please check all that apply)

Advocacy

Community  
Preservation

International  
Issues

Education

Social

Leadership

Fundraising

Community  
Development

Other

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# New Member Form

Please complete this form and return with payment to the FWIO Provincial Office:

552 Ridge Road, Stoney Creek, ON L8J 2Y6

**Annual Membership is from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>**

**A pro-rated schedule of fees is shown below. Pro-rated fees are only available for new FWIO Members.**

***\*Additional fees for District and Area may apply.***

<u>Between these dates</u>	<u>Membership Fee*</u>
April 1 <sup>st</sup> – June 30 <sup>th</sup>	\$50.00
July 1 <sup>st</sup> – September 30 <sup>th</sup>	\$37.50
October 1 <sup>st</sup> – December 31 <sup>st</sup>	\$25.00
January 1 <sup>st</sup> to March 31 <sup>st</sup>	\$12.50

## New Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date Joined \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## New Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date Joined \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## New Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date Joined \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**New Member**

Name	_____	Date Joined	_____
Address	_____		
City	_____	Province	_____
		Postal Code	_____
Phone	_____	Email	_____

**New Member**

Name	_____	Date Joined	_____
Address	_____		
City	_____	Province	_____
		Postal Code	_____
Phone	_____	Email	_____

**New Member**

Name	_____	Date Joined	_____
Address	_____		
City	_____	Province	_____
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Phone	_____	Email	_____

**New Member**

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Address	_____		
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Phone	_____	Email	_____

**New Member**

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**New Member**

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Address	_____		
City	_____	Province	_____
		Postal Code	_____
Phone	_____	Email	_____

**New Member**

Name	_____	Date Joined	_____
Address	_____		
City	_____	Province	_____
		Postal Code	_____
Phone	_____	Email	_____

# ***Executive Positions***

All WI Members focus on making the community a better place to live by promoting the mission and objectives of the FWIO. Traditionally, Branch responsibilities have been shared by establishing executive positions. While most Branches still choose to be organized this way, it is not mandatory. For Branches who wish to share responsibilities, they have the option to identify a Contact Person that the Provincial Office will correspond with. According to the FWIO Handbook, a Treasurer must also be elected.

## **President**

Leader of the Branch. Some of the President's duties may include: chair meetings, be an ex-officio member of committees and general supervision of activities.

## **Vice President**

Supports the duties of the President. Some of the duties may include: presiding in the absence of the President and other duties as required or as established by the Branch.

## **Secretary or Contact Person (Required)**

Secretary: Main source of communication for Branches. Some of the duties may include: minute recorder, attending to correspondence and communication tasks. Contact Person: When there is no Secretary, the Contact Person maintains communication with the Provincial Office.

## **Treasurer (Required)**

Manages the finances of the Branch. Responsible for collecting fees, managing Branch accounts and updating the books.

## **Advocacy Coordinator**

Spokesperson for the Branch. Some of the duties may include: preparing resolutions, acting on local issues and concerns, and working with the Provincial Advocacy Coordinator.

## **Membership Coordinator**

Membership recruiter. Some of the duties may include: recruiting new Members and acting as a mentor for new Members.

## **Public Relations**

Promotes the Branch to the media and the community. Some duties may include: supplying information on Branch projects and activities to the media, and promoting the objectives of the WI.

## **ROSE Coordinator**

Promotes education to the Branch and community. Some of the duties may include: developing educational programs and activities for the community and promoting and organizing ROSE Sessions.

## **Tweedsmuir Coordinator**

Compiles and coordinates Tweedsmuir History Books. Some of the duties may include: supervising and editing material and planning and exhibiting the Tweedsmuir Books.





## **ABOUT US**

For more than a century, Women's Institute (WI) Members have actively worked together for family, home, community and country. The objective of the first Women's Institute Branch, formed in 1897, was to improve women's skills in the art of homemaking and childcare.

The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) was organized in 1919 giving Members a stronger voice by working together as a united group. Through high-quality education and support programs and services, FWIO's original focus expanded to include personal growth opportunities, government lobbying and health and community wellness initiatives. Today, FWIO has over 3,500 Members and 300 Branches across the province.

## **SERVICES OF FWIO**

- Access to displays, brochures, promotional items, program material, leadership workshops and other resources;
- Access to a variety of scholarships;
- Liability insurance coverage at WI events for the attending general public;
- Hospitality Homes List where Members can stay for \$15 a night, including breakfast;
- Members receive 3 issues per year of FWIO's provincial newsletter, the *Home & Country ROSE Garden* – 16 pages full of ideas and news about WI projects, activities and Members;
- Access to additional news and resources on the FWIO website available in the Members Login section;
- The opportunity for Branches to set up their own web page;
- The option to participate in District, Area and provincial level activities, conventions, workshops and conferences;
- A voice at the United Nations through representatives at various agencies, such as the Food and Agricultural Organization and the World Health Organization.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The Branch is the basic building block from which the organization has grown from its inception in 1897. Members belong to a network that connects Branches to Districts and Areas, as well as to the provincial (FWIO), national (FWIC – Federated Women's Institutes of Canada), and international (ACWW – Associated Country Women of the World) levels of the organization.



## ROSE PROGRAM

ROSE (rural ontario sharing education) is what Women's Institutes have been doing for over a century – building stronger families and vibrant communities. Since 1999, the ROSE Program has given recognition and support to Women's Institute Branches who have long helped to provide valuable information to their communities.

The ROSE Program is driven by WI Members who often work with local organizations and businesses to increase awareness, educate, provide support and promote community action.

As an integral part of communities across Ontario, WI Branches have great insight as to the priorities, interests and needs of their families, friends and neighbours. Through this insight, WI Branches select interesting and relevant topics as the basis for their ROSE Sessions. From information sessions with guest speakers, hands-on demonstrations or day-long seminars or workshops, the look and feel of ROSE Sessions vary depending on the organizing WI Branch.

### ***What is a ROSE Session?***

A ROSE Session is any WI event that contains an educational component and which the community is invited to participate.

## TWEEDSMUIR HISTORIES

Throughout the years, curators (at the Branch, District, Area and Provincial levels) and their communities have compiled history books, following the guidelines of the Tweedsmuir Manual. Tweedsmuir Histories include:

- Institute history and autobiographies of Members
- Historical growth and development of local community
- Farm histories, war records, pioneers and natives
- Human interest stories and lifestyles
- Photographs and documents portraying items of interests
- Permanent records of buildings, schools, industries, churches, etc.

## CONTACTING THE FWIO PROVINCIAL OFFICE

The FWIO Provincial Office is located at the Erland Lee (Museum) Home – the birthplace of the Women's Institute movement! Visit us at **552 Ridge Road, Stoney Creek, Ontario L8J 2Y6.**

**Office Hours:** Monday – Friday, 10am – 4pm

**Museum Tours:** Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 12pm – 4pm

**Phone:** 905-662-2691

**Fax:** 905-930-8631

**Email:** [fwio@fwio.on.ca](mailto:fwio@fwio.on.ca)

**Website:** [www.fwio.on.ca](http://www.fwio.on.ca)



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