



Urban Sketchers

USk Chapter Application Guide

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Message

Dear Aspiring Group Admin,

Welcome to Urban Sketchers (USk), an organization dedicated to promoting the art of on-location sketching and drawing around the world. We are thrilled that you are interested in starting an official USk Chapter in your city and becoming a part of our global USk community.

As a Group Admin, you will have the opportunity to lead and build a local USk community in your area, connecting with other artists who share your passion for on-location sketching. You will have the support of our organization behind you every step of the way, with resources and guidance to help you succeed as a USk Chapter Admin.

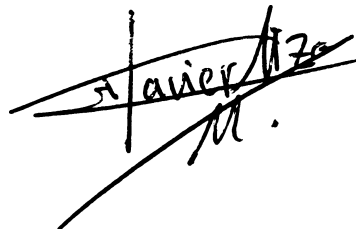
To aid you in your application process, we have put together this document, USk Chapter Application Guide, for your reference and use. It contains the steps you need to take to ensure a smooth application process. We hope you will find this helpful.

Thank you for your interest in joining us, and we look forward to the possibility of working with you as a Chapter Admin.

Sincerely,



Patrick Ng
Vice President (Director of Membership)
Urban Sketchers Org.



Javier Mas Pinturas
Membership Coordinator
Urban Sketchers Org.

What is an Urban Sketchers Chapter?

An Urban Sketchers Chapter is a geographically-based community of individuals who practice on-location sketching in the spirit of the Urban Sketchers Manifesto and has been recognized as such by the Urban Sketchers Executive Board.

The Urban Sketchers' Manifesto

¹Excerpt from *The Art of Urban Sketching*, book written by Gabriel Campanario

1. *We draw on location, indoors or outdoors, capturing what we see from direct observation.*

Urban sketching is a raw and pure form of art that requires drawing from life, rather than from photographs or the imagination. In most cases, urban sketching is practiced on the street. Some sketchers lean up against a tree or the corner of a building or sit on a stair or bench. Others bring along a folding stool. In daylight or at night, whether it's hot or cold, in rain or sunshine, urban sketchers draw what they witness.

2. *Our drawings tell the story of our surroundings, the places we live and where we travel.*

Sketching the urban environment produces more than a hand-drawn representation of a given place. Behind each drawing is a story of what was happening before our eyes: a building being torn down, a business closing its doors, or an encounter with a stranger in the subway. Sketches become first-person accounts of life as it happens.

3. *Our drawings are a record of a time and place.*

In the same way a diarist dates a journal entry, urban sketchers often date their drawing, sometimes going as far as to write down the exact hour and minute at which they were completed. It's a way to prove that we've "been there, drawn that."

A sketch captures a moment, a unique experience that can't be repeated. And because we took the time to create it, instead of snapping a photo in an instant, the sketch has the power to bring back much sharper memories.

4. *We are truthful to the scenes we witness.*

Artists who practice urban sketching interpret the reality before them through their own points of view. Being truthful doesn't mean drawing every window in a building or keeping lines straight. Each artist is free to infuse each sketch with his or her personality, while keeping the essence of what he or she sees. Some sketchers like detailed work, spending hours in front of their subjects; others synthesize the essence of a streetscape in a few simple strokes.

¹ Gabriel Campanario, *The Art of Urban Sketching-Drawing on location around the world*: First Published in 2012 by Quarry Books, an imprint of The Quarto Group.

5. *We use any kind of media and cherish our individual styles.*

Pencils, pens, fountain pens, markers, colored pencils, crayons: the media urban sketchers use are endless, as are the possibilities, when you combine them to draw on any kind of paper, whether bound in sketchbooks or in single sheets. But the media doesn't define the art. All that urban sketching requires is making marks on paper to draw what we see.

6. *We support each other and draw together.*

The internet has helped urban sketchers find each other; as a result, more meet to draw together than ever in the past.

Taking inspiration from pub crawls, in which friends travel from bar to bar, Italian artist Enrico Casarosa started inviting people in San Francisco to meet for a sketchcrawl, a day of communal sketching around the city. World Wide Sketchcrawl days, announced on Casarosa's SketchCrawl website, have been adopted by urban sketchers as drawing holidays. The term is also commonly used to refer to any kind of group sketching outing.

For people too nervous to draw alone or who want to overcome a fear of drawing in public, getting together with like-minded artists provides a supportive network and endless motivation. After a few hours of drawing, passing around the results from the session over a meal or drink is an extra payoff.

7. *We share our drawings online.*

If not for the Internet, the global urban sketching community would remain a disconnected group of artists. Using blogs and image-sharing sites, like-minded artists are calling attention to the benefits of sketching on location, opening a window onto the world, and motivating each other to draw.

8. *We show the world, one drawing at a time.*

The urban sketcher's quest to draw the world is not limited to city landmarks or historic locations. Any scene, no matter how mundane, is worth drawing. A sketch has the ability to elevate the least picturesque location into something worth looking at and reflecting upon.

Copy and paste the USk Manifesto below. It should be displayed on all your social media pages.

On Facebook - it should be on the About Section

On Instagram - it should be posted as a Story and added as a Highlight for easy reference

On Blog and other social media accounts - it should be pinned

The Urban Sketchers' Manifesto

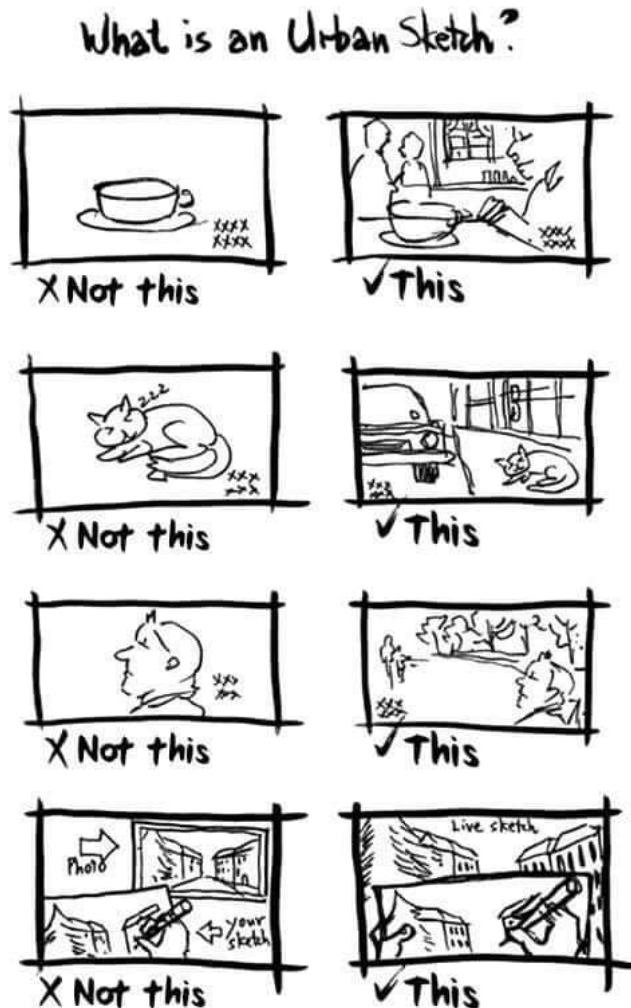
1. We draw on location, indoors or out, capturing what we see from direct observation.
2. Our drawings tell the story of our surroundings, the places we live and where we travel.
3. Our drawings are a record of a time and place.
4. We are truthful to the scenes we witness.
5. We use any kind of media and cherish our individual styles.
6. We support each other and draw together.
7. We share our drawings online.
8. We show the world, one drawing at a time.

What are the benefits of becoming a recognized Official Chapter (OC)?

- OCs are covered by USk's international insurance policy**
- ONLY OCs can brand their activities with an Official Chapter name and logo**
- Use of the USk logo is not permitted to unofficial groups
- OC events are eligible to be promoted on urbansketchers.org and through USk Social Media
- OCs are listed on the [Chapters map](#) at urbansketchers.org
- A network of peers is available for Chapter Administrators via the Regional Admins Google Groups
- OCs are given preference for hosting events, e.g., workshops and symposiums
- OCs can be featured on [Drawing Attention](#), the quarterly e-zine by Urban Sketchers

**Will be provided once approved as an USk Official Chapter

What is an urban sketch?



Is a drawing's degree of completion, its sense of being "finished," important in urban sketching?

If you're referring to your sketches looking like completed paintings to be hung up in some gallery, then no. Urban sketching is a record of time and space, an event, something happening at a given moment, somewhere in our world. For some that can be a quick sketch of a scene, with a short caption of what's going on and for others it's a piece that can take a long period of time.

An urban sketch can take as long as it takes. It may be a quick capture of a moment or a completed piece of artwork - but as long as the sketch was created on location to share with the world a moment of time and place, it is an urban sketch.

In terms of record purposes, is it absolutely essential to write down the date, location, and other such information on the drawing itself?

According to the USk manifesto, the only essential condition is that the sketch be done on location from direct observation. One doesn't have to put in all the above details ON THE DRAWING per se, though it will certainly help to give a sense of who, what, when, where, why (context) to the piece of work, which is what urban sketching is about. But those details can also be shared in the post when one shares their works online, not necessarily inside the sketch itself.

What are the differences between urban sketches and other art forms such as landscapes and watercolor paintings?

The difference between urban sketches and "landscape painting" or "watercolor painting" is that there is no one technique or one subject of focus.

Urban sketching is the act of recording what one sees from direct observation on location using any medium and style to tell the story of what the person witnessed. Sometimes those are urban or rural spaces, it can be a recording of events that unfold such as protests or recording the story of a community using a technique called reportage. The subject matter and technique of Urban Sketching is open to each person.

****** Copy and paste the "What is an Urban Sketch" graphic, created by Alvin Wong, on all of your social media pages. You can 'pin' it to the Featured section on FB and post it as a highlighted story on your Instagram together with the Manifesto.***

Criteria for creating an Urban Sketchers Chapter

1. A Chapter must have at least three (3) local Administrators who are not related nor residing in the same house. Administrators plan sketching events, share work online and communicate with USk and other regional Chapters.
2. Admins must agree to follow the Manifesto and must be displayed on all your social media platforms.
3. The group must be from a specific geographical location such as a city or if rural, a region.
4. The group must use a free online platform where Admins can organize and announce events and where members can post their sketches.
5. You and your members should be sketching and posting on social media for a minimum of six (6) months. Facebook is the platform widely used by the Urban Sketchers preferably a PUBLIC Group Page.

With the new Facebook group Admin Assistant, you can create the necessary filters for the safety of your group. See link below.

<https://www.facebook.com/community/whats-new/Admin-assist/>

The Educated Applicant

The [Manifesto](#) must be followed and applicants need to familiarize themselves with [our website](#). In order to be successful, Chapter Admins must understand and review this Chapter Application Guide.

We suggest you visit and follow our Global Urban Sketchers through the following accounts on Social Media:

<https://www.facebook.com/urbansketchers/>

<https://www.instagram.com/urbansketchers/>

<https://www.youtube.com/@URBANSKETCHERSOFFICIAL>

Also subscribe to Drawing Attention the quarterly e-Zine of Urban Sketchers

<https://urbansketchers.org/our-global-sketchbook/drawing-attention/>

Exclusively Urban Sketching

USk Chapters are communities that gather to sketch **on-location** and post their sketches online. Traditional artists use the term plein-aire for sketching outdoors. As urban sketchers, we use the term on-location.

Art or photos of non-USk events should not be posted on Facebook group pages and other social media platforms.

Inclusive Communities

An USk Chapter is not a private club. It is an open, free, community group that provides opportunities for members of the public regardless of age, race, gender or skill level to practice on-location sketching. Members do not need to apply to join. USk Chapter Admins are welcoming of any new members and will be welcoming of visitors, out-of-town guests, and non-sketching family or friends who decide to tag along.

Visiting Sketchers

USk Chapters should also be open to accept membership from out-of-town or even foreign members who, for various reasons, apply for membership. In some cases these out-of-town sketchers may not have a local Chapter to join, may not for political reasons be allowed to form a Chapter in their area, or may wish to make contact with other Chapters in order to arrange joint sketching events or to do a sketch swap and so on.

Distance Between Chapters

USk Chapters should be at least an hour's drive apart so that they are not competing with each other. If Chapters are too close together it is difficult to form a strong community and may result in one Chapter being preferred over the other based on who has the best events or the most popular Admins.

Membership

A USk Chapter must include at least three Administrators. However, organizing events for just three (3) people is very different from organizing events for 20 or more. To ensure the longevity of the Chapter, it is advised that the 3 Administrators organize a sketching group before committing to and applying to become an official USk Chapter.

Membership is Free for urban sketchers. As long as there is an interest in sketching or learning how to draw, you can include anyone in your group.

Unless the venue requires a personal entrance fee, members cannot be charged any participation fees for meetups.

We only accept members who are real people, not pages, organizations, clubs, or legal entities. In most cases, these accounts will spam or promote their own pages on your group's page.

Virtual Chapters

USk Chapters were founded on the idea of people meeting in person to sketch and share sketches online. Virtual groups that do not meet in person to sketch are not meeting the basic criteria for a USk Chapter.

National Chapters

While there are a few examples of national Chapters that were established at the beginning (legacy Chapters), new USk Chapters must be focused on a city or region that is reasonably accessible.

Exceptions might be Monaco, Liechtenstein and other countries that are small enough to navigate in an hour.

Naming Chapters

Chapters should be named for the main city or area in which they mostly sketch. The name order for most Chapters is “Urban Sketchers City Name”. Naming a Chapter after the main city in which members sketch is not intended to limit where that Chapter sketches. It is only intended to identify where a Chapter mostly sketches.

Recommended online platforms

A USk platform must be free of use to all members and allow the Admins to announce events and everyone to post their sketches. Preferred social media platforms are:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Blog
- Flickr

However, only Facebook Groups allow postings by members whereas Instagram and a Blog will have to be uploaded by the Admins. Letting members post and comment on sketches makes a group page more interactive.

The Manifesto and contact email address must also be visible. It is advisable to create an email address for your group to avoid using the admins’ personal email addresses.

The admins must monitor this email address regularly. Messages on this group email can be forwarded to all admins. See this link on [how to automatically forward gmail messages to another account](#). And another guide on [how to forward to multiple accounts](#).

This includes the direct messages you may receive from your social media accounts.

Admins’ Access to Emails and Social Media Platforms

Email passwords as well as passwords to social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Blog, etc. must be shared with all three local admins. If the primary admin steps down, this will provide continuous management of the group. If all three administrators leave at once, passwords and other access must be turned over to the next group of administrators.

What must be seen on your Social Media Platforms

1. Announcements of your Meetups and activities including Urban Sketchers Org global events and challenges. If you use Facebook, create your Facebook events
2. Group photos of your activities.
3. Share all your group sketches and those of sketchers visiting your city (not just admins)

NOTE: The group is not affiliated with a private or personal business enterprise, so please do not advertise any type of companies, brands or associations.

Building and Growing Your Chapter

Tips on how to increase membership

- Approach local art programs/groups in your community and schools
- Connect with public relations/events department in your city; they may feature or co-host your events
- Collaborate with a popular business for a meetup location. Choose a business with a strong social media presence and have them share your meetup event, this will bring in new people
- Connect with local art stores and together organize a group meetup at their location, possible goody bags and discounts could be arranged
- Put flyers up in public spaces around your city and especially in locations of upcoming events
- Create a QR code to attach to everything like flyers and simple business cards that links to your main social media page or blog. Chapter Business cards are great to have on hand while out sketching
- Create interesting meetups with easy, free parking, access to public transportation, toilets
- Plan more than one event a month if you can manage - try a variety of days and times, weekends/weekdays. Conduct a poll on your facebook page or via email to see what times work for events for the majority of members
- Encourage members to post their own mini-meetups. This is especially helpful if your group area is spread out.

Encourage Participation

- Participation within a group is probably the biggest challenge of running an Official Chapter. Members must feel supported, inspired and safe. It is up to the Admins to create a safe space for members.
- How to create this space:
 - Clear rules posted for anyone joining the group, positive support only, no bullying or negative comments will be tolerated. Members need to respect one another's personal space
 - Everyone and all skill levels are welcome to encourage inclusion
 - If you want a diverse group of members you need to sketch at diverse locations
 - Many times popular tourist locations are static and do not offer much variety
 - Diversity is strength to a Chapter
 - As an Admin, show all members' work and share on Instagram. Get tips on how to repost here ([Guidelines for Social Media Reposts](#))
 - Designate one Admin that is outgoing and friendly to welcome each new member, this can be done in batches once a week. Generally, the welcome message should be friendly, the links to posting guidelines and where to find events on the Chapter page. All Admins should comment on each weekly post to fully welcome new members
 - Every sketch that is posted on your page should receive a comment: a simple "like" is nice but a comment is more supportive and validates the post
 - The word "Welcome" can never be used too many times
 - If your group is doing outreach, for example, having an information demo booth at an event, running a workshop at a school or library - please make sure anyone that volunteers is vetted by the Admins. It is risky to have a member who is not known by the group Admins to volunteer in a capacity that represents your Chapter
 - Always put your best, friendly, respectful face forward

Admin Participation and Tasks

Make a list of tasks, discuss each Admin's strengths and determine who is best for certain tasks and projects. If volunteers can choose what tasks they want to do this will make for a happier and more effective Admin team.

Don't hesitate to ask for help outside of your Admin group, for example, you could have other members help with graphic design, set up a show, or create videos of meetups. Most Chapters have the required three but others have more. It is easy to burn out so ask for help when needed.

Collaborate With Nearby Chapters

Combine meetups, take a short road trip to visit and sketch with nearby Chapters where possible. Bigger events can create momentum for your group, bring in new members and also create a sense of community between Chapters.

How to Become an Official Chapter

Admins of aspiring groups can register their interest by emailing membership@urbansketchers.org

For more information and the main requirements for becoming an official Chapter of USk, please visit the Urban Sketchers website

<https://urbansketchers.org/chapters/>

<https://uskmem.clubexpress.com/>

For Frequently Asked Questions, please visit <https://urbansketchers.org/faqs-for-chapters/>

Checklist Before Signing Up

Are you ready to become an Official Chapter?

- Do you have an email address for the group? (not mandatory)
- If so, do all administrators have their password access to your group's email?
- Do you have a Facebook group account?
- Aside from Facebook, do you have any other Social Media for the group?
- In the event that it is not a Facebook group, do all the administrators have password access to your social media accounts like Instagram, Flickr, Blog, etc.?
- Can you tell us the history of your group? How your group started, presence in the community, events organized if any?
- How often do you have meetups or sketchwalks?
- Is there any other type of activity aside from sketching that is carried out?
- Do you have a logo for the group? (If you don't have it, please wait until you become an official chapter for making one)
- What is the closest chapter to your city? It has to be at least 1 ½ hours drive away from your city. You can see it in Chapter Finder on ClubExpress or in virtual map on www.urbansketchers.org

Make sure you have met all the criteria and all items above are ticked before signing up.

>>>>> [https://uskmem.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?page_id=60&club_id=174485:](https://uskmem.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?page_id=60&club_id=174485)

Membership Team Committee (Regional Coordinators)

Asia

Patrick Ng (Singapore), *Membership Director*
Alvin Wong (Hong Kong)
Flora Wang (Beijing, China)
Farah Irani (Pune, India)
Song Keesung (Suwon, Korea)
Donald Saluling (Jakarta, Indonesia)

Africa / Middle East

Oceania

Leonie Andrews (Canberra, Australia)

Europe

Javier Mas Pinturas (Seville, Spain), *Membership Coordinator*
Inma Lazo (Seville, Spain)
Lolo Wagner (Strasbourg, France)

Americas

North America

Isabel Santos (Toronto, Canada)
Mary Jo Ernst (West Michigan, USA)

Central America

Marcela Vargas (San Jose, Costa Rica)
Janelle Subauste (Panama City, Panama)

South America

Ronaldo Kurita (São Paulo, Brazil)
Ivan Jerônimo (Florianopolis, Brazil)

