



## Peer to peer recruitment

Resources for FDA  
representatives and activists



## What is peer to peer recruitment?

A major reason for people not joining unions is that they have never been asked. Peer to peer recruitment is about current members taking the time to ask colleagues if they are a member of a recognised union, and if not, encouraging them to join.

This encouragement does not need to be a 'hard sell' and this guide aims to give reps and activists some ideas for peer to peer recruitment activity to help start these conversations.

Since opening up our membership in 2015, we have welcomed thousands of new members in HEO and SEO grades from across the civil service. Despite this success, many civil servants in these grades are still unaware that they can join the FDA – the UK's fastest growing union. Help to continue this growth by asking your colleagues in these grades if they are a member of a recognised union, and encourage unrepresented colleagues to join the FDA.

As activists or reps in departments, you often have the opportunity to talk to potential members and you are best placed to talk about issues in your workplace – and there are various ways to approach this topic.

Speaking to people who have taken up a new position gives you a chance to welcome them to the department from the FDA and illustrate that we are visible in their workplace.

A good place to start the conversation with your colleague is to think back to why you joined the FDA. Talking about why you became a member and your positive experience gives something for people to relate to. Once you know what's important to someone, you can then talk about what the FDA is doing or could do on that issue.

## ‘Active and visible’ – the role of the activist

One of the most fundamental reasons that people will join the FDA is when they can see us taking action and succeeding. A good way to get more members engaged on a local level and joining the FDA is to find out members’ key concerns locally and address them. The issues could be something like a building move, a negotiation of a new policy or pay negotiations.

Whenever you encounter a workplace issue – for example, pay negotiations – you should think about how you are engaging with members and how you could encourage prospective members to join.

Here are a few opportunities you can take to increase visibility in your department...



### Inductions

A big intake of new staff presents a great opportunity to meet lots of new starters all at once.

Of course, inductions happen differently across departments, teams and roles.

You could ask for your branch to be given time to talk about what you do as a presentation to the new group.

The FDA organising team can provide you with resources and support to run your own FDA information sessions for new starters in your workplace. We can provide pre-recorded sessions and other resources providing helpful information that can be included in digital communications aimed at new starters. Alternatively, we can support you in developing your own bespoke plan – contact

**[organiser@fda.org.uk](mailto:organiser@fda.org.uk)** to find out more.

Alternatively, there may be a communal area where you can set up a stall. Find out when the large intakes of new staff are scheduled and how the FDA can have a presence at the induction events.

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### Walk-around

Sometimes it can be useful to do an old-fashioned walk-around.

This is exactly as it sounds – take some time, walk round the building and chat to staff and introduce yourself.

If your branch is across multiple sites and you're visiting a site that you don't personally work at, it can be a good idea to do this with a member there, so they can introduce you to the new starters (as well as the longstanding staff!).





### Stalls

These work well when they are done regularly, because it builds visibility for the FDA. It's also a point of contact for both potential and existing members to find out more about what the union is doing and how they can get more involved.

If you would like to organise an event or stall in your workplace this year, we can help. Contact us on **[organiser@fda.org.uk](mailto:organiser@fda.org.uk)** and we will send you a box of resources in the post.

### Events

Events are a great way of showing activity and getting members and potential members together.

If you have a local issue – such as a building move or organisational changes and restructures – you could use this to organise a meeting to engage with members and find out their views on what they would like the solution to be. Then you can show what you, and the FDA, are doing about the issue.

You could also ask the union to help organise learning and training events through FDA Learn, which can offer learning events on a range of issues impacting your workplace, including organisational change, equality, and career progression.



## Frequently asked questions

Although the most common reason people give for not joining a union is that they've never been asked, you may come across some people who have questions about the FDA.

### **Is the FDA worth the money?**

Yes! Compared to organisations with similar memberships, we are very competitive. Subscriptions allow the FDA to defend members' impartiality, integrity and professionalism; help progress members' careers through our professional development programme; be a pragmatic and influential voice fighting for better pay, pensions and working conditions, and provide first class representation.

### **Will it negatively affect my career?**

No! The FDA has members at all grades, including Permanent Secretaries. The FDA would take any personal case where someone's career was damaged by being involved in the union very seriously. However, the FDA maintains a good relationship with management across the civil service.

### **Aren't unions political? Civil servants are supposed to be impartial?**

The FDA is not affiliated to any political party and prides itself on acting with political impartiality. There is no political bar on civil servants being a member of a recognised trade union.





Members and activists should be encouraged to join our organising network, FDA On. It's a two-way channel which allows activists to talk directly to the FDA organising team and supports you with the resources and ideas you need to run campaigns, recruit new members and increase our visibility in your workplace.



## Join the FDA online

Scan the QR code or visit **[fda.org.uk](https://fda.org.uk)**

