
PyLadies Handbook Documentation

Release 2.0.4

PyLadies

April 03, 2017

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Release v2.0 (What's new?).

The `pyladies` kit gets you up and running with starting a PyLadies local group, including what's needed, advice, event planning help, and some tools that may be helpful.

The `pyladies` package is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License](#).

You are free to use all the graphics in this kit to print your own t-shirts, stickers, and other merchandise with one restriction: if you are selling these items, marking up the price is fine as long as profits goes toward anything women in Python/open-source/computing related. (We encourage you to use merchandise based on graphics in this kit to raise funds for starting or growing your PyLadies local group, or hosting PyLadies meetups at conferences!)

Quickstart

Getting Started

Installation

pyladies can be easily installed using:

```
$ pip install pyladies
```

So You've Decided to Start Your Own PyLadies Group

YAY! We're excited to have people like you join our growing community and want to help you get your group launched as quickly and painlessly as possible. If our experience is any indication, your first major event will galvanize and inspire the Python community in your area and create momentum for subsequent events, so it's crucial to start things off on the right foot!

To help you get started, we've created an open-source kit for starting your own PyLadies group in your city. PyLadies is part social club, part stepping stone toward the Python open-source world.

How to use this kit

Copy our model (fork & contribute). Or fork and make it completely different. We don't mind if you get creative!

Checklist

Here's all of what needs to be done to start a PyLadies group locally. You may of course adapt this list to meet your group's needs.

PART 1

Once you have received a confirmation that the the initial PyLadies request form was approved and setup, continue on:

PART 2

Overview

About

We are an international mentorship group with a focus on helping more women become active participants and leaders in the Python open-source community. Our mission is to promote, educate and advance a diverse Python community through outreach, education, conferences, events and social gatherings.

PyLadies also aims to provide a friendly support network for women and a bridge to the larger Python world. Anyone with an interest in Python is encouraged to participate!

Types of Local Groups

A local group can be:

1. a geographic group: for a city, region, state, or country
2. a student group: for a university, college, or school
3. an interest group: for any topic (e.g. PyGame, SciPy, Django)

The larger the local group, the harder it is to meet in person. Large local group's events will be mostly virtual meetups that occur online, whereas small local group's events tend to be in-person meetups.

A local group can consist of sub-local-groups, making both the in-person and virtual meetups possible.

Group Size

It's fine if your local group is small. Having just 2-3 women who meet regularly to exchange Python tips and tricks counts as a local group. What matters most is *quality*, not quantity.

Larger local groups have more flexibility to organize different types of events, but it's harder to get everyone together for dinner.

About

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Deeper Dive

Policies

We try not to have too many rules and regulations (everything above has been nothing more than advice we offer to make things easier for you, given that we learned much of it the hard way). Generally, local group organizers are free to do whatever they want, as long as it's in the best interest of their local group and/or PyLadies in general.

The following policies have been written up so that you may simply copy and paste them into email responses, to help you deal with awkward or tricky situations.

Code of Conduct

PyLadies is dedicated to providing a respectful, harassment-free community for everyone. We do not tolerate harassment or bullying of any community member in any form. This does not only extend to members of local PyLadies communities, but to anyone who chooses to become involved in the larger PyLadies community of users, developers and integrators through events or interactions.

Harassment includes offensive verbal/electronic comments related to personal characteristics or choices, sexual images or comments in public or online spaces, deliberate intimidation, bullying, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks, IRC chats, electronic meetings, physical meetings or other events, inappropriate physical contact, or unwelcome sexual attention. Participants asked to stop any harassing or bullying behavior are expected to comply immediately.

If a participant engages in harassing behavior, representatives of the community may take reasonable action they deem appropriate, including warning the offender, expulsion from any PyLadies event, or expulsion from mailing lists, IRC chats, discussion boards and other electronic communications channels to resolve the issue. This may include expulsion from PyLadies Meetup group membership.

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please act to intercede or ask for help from any member of the PyLadies community, IRC chat admins, website admins, or organizers/representatives of any physical events put on under the auspices of PyLadies.

This Code of Conduct has been adapted from the [Plone Foundation](#) and is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported [license](#).

Official PyLadies Guest Policy

(If anyone asks to stay with you in the future other than a trusted friend, say something like “I wish we could accommodate you, but PyLadies has a strict policy of not allowing members to host out-of-town guests” and then paste this, minus the parenthetical note.)

In the interest of safety and security of our members, PyLadies organizers, volunteers, and members are not permitted to host overnight out-of-town guests who wish to visit town for PyLadies events.

This is a strict formal policy, chosen to ensure that the PyLadies organization continues to be taken seriously and treated with complete respect by the professional software and tech communities.

Policy on Controversial Issues

As a PyLadies local group organizer, you may be asked for PyLadies' position on controversial issues. Often, these are diversity-related issues.

PyLadies' policy is to have no official position on controversial issues. By choosing this policy, we allow ourselves to be a group full of diverse ideas and differing viewpoints.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can men attend local PyLadies group events?

It's up to you. Generally, it's good to hold women-only events as well as events for both genders (either women and +1 guests, or anyone who wants to attend). Just be aware that the dynamic of the room tends to change when the male:female ratio becomes lopsided.

A good way to hold a mixed-gender event is to partner with a local Python user group.

Be extra-clear in your event description about whether men are allowed/what the rules are – it will save you a lot of time, and prevent awkward conversations.

Is there anything like PyLadies specifically for men?

There doesn't seem to be a burning need for a PyLadies for Men ;) That said, if you're a man and want to start a similar group, we'll support you. You can even make PyLadies knock-off t-shirts. One enterprising gent has printed "PyLaddies" shirts, and there is an IRC channel on Freenode, #pygents, for the men who love PyLadies =)

Can I use the PyLadies logo and graphics for any purpose?

Any of the graphics at <https://github.com/pyladies/pyladies-kit> can be used for your own group promotion. Feel free to use them for websites, printed materials, t-shirts, and anything else that benefits your group.

Even if you don't have an official group, you can use the graphics for anything women-in-Python related, as long as any funds resulting from your use of the graphics go toward Python gender diversity initiatives.

Can transgender women be PyLadies?

Anyone who considers herself a lady and does Python is a PyLady/Python lady. We support all women, whether female by birth or not.

We encourage you sure to make trans women feel welcome by saying so in your meetup group and event descriptions. Here is an example of a statement you could include:

PyLadies [city] is welcoming to and respectful of trans women. We encourage all women to come out to our meetups.

If the idea of trans people is new to you, you might want to take a look at [this fantastic illustrated book about gender](#), [this comic](#), or any of the many other introductions to trans issues on the internet.

Is your goal to segregate by gender?

No! PyLadies and local PyLadies groups are about making the Python community explicitly welcoming and accessible to women.

Women who wouldn't otherwise attend a Python user group meeting often attend local PyLadies group events, as a gateway to getting involved with Python programming as a beginner, or getting more involved in the Python community as an intermediate/advanced developer.

How do I set up reimbursement for Meetup fees?

The PSF will [most likely reimburse](#) your Meetup.com organizer fees for a local PyLadies meetup. You can [submit](#) a grant proposal, and [here](#) is a sample grant proposal to get you started.

What if my question isn't answered here?

Ask in IRC [#pyladies](#) on [freenode](#) if you must. But feel free to organize your PyLadies group however you wish, and make it completely your own. We're here to help you, not to limit you or control your plans.

Contact

Points of Contact

Our [general email](#) is the best place to shoot any questions you may have.

If you have more casual questions, IRC is one of the best places to start. You can usually find several of the main PyLadies points of contact in [#pyladies](#).

IRC [#pyladies](#) Community

Whether or not you're part of a local group, the IRC [#pyladies](#) community welcomes you. [#pyladies](#) is on [irc.freenode.net](#). Instructions on how to chat in [#pyladies](#) IRC are [here](#).

Quite a few well-known men and women in the Python community participate there and try to keep it a friendly place. Ask Python questions there, talk about what your local group is up to, or just say hi.

Anyone can plan and host virtual meetups in IRC [#pyladies](#). You should host one! Just tell one of the ops to update the topic with info about your meetup. See the "Promotion" section for further details about how we can help spread word.

You can also create [#pyladies-whatever](#) IRC channels for your country, language, interest group, etc. Ask [sandpy](#) for help registering your channel under the [#pyladies](#) namespace.

How do I...?

Advice

Event and Location Ideas

By Barbara Sharette

Ideas for meeting spaces/venues

- Local tech company spaces - ask people you know who work there, or ask your own employer if there's a meeting space you can use.
- For companies willing to let you use their meeting spaces, offer them the chance to do a hiring spiel to open the meeting.
- Check with the organizers of other tech meetup groups for venue ideas.
- Contact local hacker spaces
- Contact local coworking spaces
- Contact your local university's CS department

Getting the word out

- Email the organizers of other tech meetup groups to ask them to help advertise your event.
- Put posters up at universities, or contact the CS student society. Ask the department secretary to contact grad students.
- Partner with other groups for jointly hosted events
- Get business cards to hand out at events
- Set up a Twitter account

Meeting ideas

- Workshops with themes/goals (e.g., one workshop on how to build a small webapp, another one where you try to use python to solve some brainteasers)

- Hold a small competition for your group where there's a goal and you split into two teams and try to solve a problem faster, or better (performance, speed, etc.).
- Beginner Python and Git classes
- Get involved with hack days with other local user groups
- Brainstorm ideas for group projects, so that you have a collection of specific projects to work on for hack nights.
- Leverage Google Hangout to offer support to existing members on matters that hinge more on conversation than on in-person hacking (e.g., PyLadies recently hosted a hangout to chat about the PyCon call for proposals)

Finding Sponsors/Raising Funds

If your group is small, you don't necessarily need sponsors. Hosting meetups at coffee shops, restaurants, or people's houses is fine.

However, you may want to organize trips, conferences, and other types of more costly events. If so, you will need to raise local group funds and ask local Python shops to consider sponsoring an event.

Research local companies and approach them. Often, a company that already hosts other meetups will be willing to host your PyLadies group. Ask them if they'll provide pizza/drinks; if not, charge attendees a fee that covers food (and more, if you want to use the funds for future events).

The [Python Software Foundation](#) has been very supportive of PyLadies. They have a [special donation page](#), where donors can use PayPal to make donations directly to the PSF that are tax-deductible, which can then be used to reimburse PyLadies organizers who pay for various event costs.

See our sample `PSF grant proposal` to raise money for t-shirts, tables, and chairs.

You can apply for a Python Sprints grant to raise money for food, power strips, name tags, and anything else you might need to run a sprint/hackathon, up to \$300:

Some PyLadies designs and printing instructions are provided with this kit. The cost is roughly \$500-750 for 60 shirts. Shirts can be sold for \$20 each (you can adjust the price to meet your needs/currency, of course).

See the "T-Shirts, Stickers, and Other Merchandise" section for more details.

Many companies are looking for ways to give back to the developer community. You'll want to put together a corporate sponsor info packet.

See our sample info packet at `upload sponsorship doc to git repo`. Borrow ideas from it, and customize it to fit your group.

Dealing with volunteer/organizer burnout

Organizing a PyLadies group is hard work, and no less for the people who volunteer to help out. *burnout* is a page to help recognize and deal with signs of burnout.

Events

Event Types

Organizer Events

Very useful for planning sessions, but also for support and accountability.

Python Ladies' Nights

The PyLadies aren't ALL about coding – we also love to socialize and have fun!

Hosted: a potluck/party at a member's house Meet: at a bar or restaurant

Workshops

You can host workshops either as full-day events every 1-3 months or so, or as evening events that occur weekly.

Intro to Python

1. Austin PyLadies Intro to Python.
2. PyStar has some great tutorials for beginners.
3. Learn Python the Hard Way by Zed Shaw
4. custom (depending on your needs)

Intro to Django

1. Poll tutorial from [Django Docs](#).
2. Sandy Strong's [Intro to Django Workshop slides](#).

Other topic of interest workshop

1. Find a programming/relevant developer book that you'd like to study. Host a weekly study group.
2. Host a weekend workshop about game programming, startups, journalism, etc.

Hackathons/Sprints

LA PyLadies has hosted hackathons where attendees bring laptops and projects of their own to work on. Beginners are pointed to learnpythonthehardway.org and instructed to work through the tutorial, asking for help as needed. They are urged to post exercises to Github, as a way to dip their toes in the world of open source software.

Hackathons can be evening, full-day, or all-weekend events.

Virtual meetups

PyLadiesAU held their first group meeting as a virtual meetup. See [Australian PyLadies](#) for details.

The IRC [#pyladies](#) channel is always available for anyone to use for virtual meetups. Feel free to use it without asking, or create a [#pyladies-whatever](#) channel if you prefer.

Meetups as part of a Python user group (PUG) meetup

A PyLadies event can be as simple as women getting together and talking about each others' Python projects in a small group after a local PUG event.

Anything to encourage women to attend and continue attending PUGs is great. Talk to your local PUG organizers and ask for their help and support in having a post-PUG informal PyLadies meetup.

You might also consider trying to give a `talks/beginner` at a meetup. This can help bring more beginners who might otherwise be scared away to the group.

Code review sessions

Reviewing someone's coding project together can help everyone learn better coding practices.

Conference prep sessions

Python conferences that might interest your group: PyCon, DjangoCon, PloneConf, SciPy (Python for Scientific Computing)

What you can do to prepare together:

1. Brainstorm talk ideas. Help each other put together talk outlines.
2. Review each others' talk proposals.
3. Practice talks in front of each other, in a small group.
4. Practice in a larger group, as a joint event with the local Python user group.

Conferences can be stressful, but they're also a lot of fun, particularly if you're attending with a friend or a small group. There's also a good chance you will run into PyLadies from other groups!

Event Checklist

So you're ready to host an event?

To host an event

- **Decide the type of event. Examples:**
 - Hack night/hack weekend
 - Sprinting on an Open Source project (e.g. Django, CPython, etc)
 - Workshop - introductory Python, intermediate, intro to Git, anything
 - Study group
 - Coffee & hack
 - Speaker series/lightning talks
 - Check out ideas on other locations' websites and meetup pages.
- **Email local tech companies to ask for event hosting support:**
 - You can find companies that use Python by looking at their job boards, and other Python group events

- If you're in a bigger city, choose a location that can be easily accessible via public transit, or have ample parking
- **Cold-email a general email address if you don't have an actual contact at the company. This is still highly effective.**
 - * Be upfront with what you need; just hosting space? Space and food? For how many people?
 - * Include proposed dates/times
 - * Offer time during the event for them to pitch their product(s) and/or any job openings
 - * Ask for a description of the type of space available; feel free to ask to check it out beforehand
 - * Events often need wifi for attendees, and if it's an event longer than a few hours, then easy-to-access power outlets are needed as well
 - * Be mindful of the company's RSVP/check in wishes if they have any. Do they want First & Last name? Will there be alcohol served, and therefore ID needs to be checked?
- **Once date & event is set with the host, post up the event on Meetup.com group**
 - Be sure to setup the RSVP limits if space is limited. Apprehend about 50%-60% of RSVPs will actually show up (if it's a free event).
 - Give an exact address; Meetup.com allows you to hide the address to non-group members.
 - Be *clear* on who can attend. Women only? Women and a guest of +1 (of either gender)? Both women and men? Complete n00bs to Python? Or solid Pythonistas?
 - Detail what is needed to be prepared for the event. Just bring themselves? Do they need their computer? Prior knowledge?
 - Be explicit if there will be food/drinks or not so folks can plan ahead.
- **If hosting a workshop, solicit for mentors.**
 - Have an easy sign-up sheet for mentors (perhaps a Google Docs form).
 - Prep the mentors by detailing what you plan on doing, what your expectations are for the event, how best they can help
 - Often times, it's hard to get all-female mentors. Most of the time, male mentors are very nice and helpful.
- A few days before the event, email RSVP'd folks to update their RSVP status if they are no longer going. This is especially nice if folks are on a waiting list for the event.
- Arrive a little early; folks will always arrive before doors officially open
- Have nametags for attendees. If having a workshop, have mentors wear nametags and perhaps a special sticker or something to designate that they are mentors.
- Post any resources for the event - either before or afterwards.
- Have fun!

Promotion

One benefit of creating a PyLadies local group is having access to a worldwide support network of PyLadies who can help you spread word about your events.

How to promote your events locally

Do the following:

1. Post an event description on your [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) page or website.
2. Announce the event via your mailing list.
3. Create event flyers and distribute them at meetups, Python user group meetings, work, and the local universities. See [upload example or template to git repo] for an example.
4. Approach the career offices and engineering/science departments of local colleges and universities.
5. Contact old professors and teachers. Tell them about what you're doing; they'll be glad to hear from you. Ask to make an announcement to their current students at the start of their classes, or as an email.
6. Attend local tech/Python meetups. Be an active part of the local developer community. Show that you care about getting more women into Python development and programming in general. Be humble and ask for help from the group.

How we can help

Email the main point of contact for any of the following channels, and provide text and/or images for us to use:

1. Global PyLadies Newsletter: Good for announcements about meetups. Subscribers from all over the world. Please keep the text brief and include an image. (info@pyladies.com)
2. PyLadies blog: we would love for you to contribute posts to our blog! It's as simple as forking and then making a pull request off <http://github.com/pyladies/pyladies>

In addition, promote all of your events directly through the following: 6. PyLadies Google group: <http://groups.google.com/group/pyladies> 7. #pyladies IRC channel (FreeNode)

Whenever you have news of interest to the PyLadies community, all the above channels are available to help you make your announcement. We are always looking for good quotes and photos from Python developer women.

Guidelines for using the PyLadies promotion channels

Anything of interest to women in the Python community can be posted in the various PyLadies channels, provided that it meets these guidelines:

1. **Send us the actual text that you want posted.**
2. For local PyLadies local group events:
 - Send text for as many events as possible to the channels listed above. The more we can promote your events, the better.
3. For non-local-group events and general postings:
 - Postings should be relevant to women. Mention the women organizing and/or attending the event. Have their names link to their websites or Twitter accounts.
 - Don't just reuse the same blurb that you use everywhere; customize it to be relevant to the specific audience you're addressing.
 - We'd love to use the various channels to feature what PyLadies from everywhere are doing. If you know of someone who should be featured, you can write up something interesting for the blog, Twitter stream, etc.

- If you are hosting a Python community event or conference and need our help getting more women to attend, submit proposals, etc., a heartfelt explanation about why more women should attend and feel welcome goes a long way. A PyLadies discount code also helps: keep in mind that a huge part of our audience are students/those just starting out professionally with Python, who cannot afford to commit to events or submit proposals unless there is a known, guaranteed PyLadies discount.

Newsletter

The PyLadies global newsletter is sent out as regularly as we can make it; all work is voluntary, and all information is volunteered! Everyone who subscribes via the email form on <http://pyladies.com> will receive the newsletter.

Contributing

The editor of an upcoming issue of the PyLadies global newsletter might make an effort to gather info about all the local groups via a message to the organizers mailing list, but the onus is on each group's organizer(s) to send any updates about a group to the editor if they want to be included.

Editing

If you'd like to volunteer to edit the next issue, all you have to do is shoot an email to the organizers mailing list! Warning: it's a lot of work! We use Mailchimp.

Swag

Swag: T-Shirts, Stickers, and Other Merchandise

Currently, T-shirts are available via [Spreadshirt](#). Proceeds from the shop benefit the PyLadies organization and go toward things like nonprofit corporation setup, helping new local groups, servers, etc.

Sometimes we also create limited runs of T-shirts, stickers, etc. Check the blog or ask around in IRC #pyladies if you're interested in seeing what we have.

Local group merchandise

If you'd like to create merchandise for your own local group, you can create a shop on Spreadshirt, Zazzle, or any other print-on-demand site and have the proceeds go toward your local group.

Or you can have a local print shop print a small run.