



## Affinity Group Forming for Rebel Without Borders in XRNL

**For registration as an AG for Spring Rebellion, see bottom of the document**

### **What are Affinity Groups?**

Affinity Groups (AGs) are the basic organising structure for any action. They consist of 4-12 Rebels that will do the action together. It doesn't matter if people are high risk or low risk, as long as Affinity Groups contain people that are roughly on the same level of arrestibility. This is not only for the organisation of the action but also to provide an important support network for each other. Preferably, affinity groups are familiar with each other and can therefore rely on each other during the action - within each AG it's recommended to find a "buddy", and the two of you will look out for one another and know what to do in case of emergency or arrest of the other. If this is not the case in your AG beforehand, it will definitely happen during the action, since nothing brings people together like blocking a road.

### **What do Affinity Groups (AGs) do?**

There are several roles AG can take on within a large scale action (to be explained in more detail below). Most importantly, AG's do the action together and take care of each other. Affinity Groups are autonomous groups within the action, which keeps the element of unpredictability alive. If the Action & Logistics Team needs an AG to block a specific part of the blockade they can ask the AG to do so. The AG can then decide whether or not they want to take on the task or not.

**For example**, during the April Rebellion Week in London, the pink 'TELL THE TRUTH' boat was about to be taken away by the police from Oxford Circle. An Affinity Group therefore, really quickly and without asking anyone's permission decided to glue themselves to the boat and to the ground so that the police couldn't take the boat away for several more hours.

During International Rebellion Week, you can decide to join the blockade at any point. Once the police announces that they will start arresting people, the members of the AG that don't want to be arrested will get up and leave the blockade, or remain until they

feel too unsafe to do so. They are then also immediately arrestee support and media people for the rest of their AG that wants to be high risk.

Affinity Groups can also decide on being outside the blockade and join the Wellbeing team or the Media team.

### **How are Affinity Groups (AGs) Organised?**

Affinity groups (AGs) are organised in a non-hierarchical and autonomous way, sometimes taking lead on last minute decisions within XR's national campaign. Everyone has an equal voice in the decision-making process. Everyone has a different viewpoint and it is important to cover all bases. It is important to note that every AG is autonomous and can make their own decisions within the action, as long as it adheres to the principles and values of XR.

### **Spokescouncils**

When decisions need to be made that affect all rebels involved in an action, a spokescouncil will be held. Each group sends a representative to the spokescouncil meeting, where issues such as tactics, overarching action guidelines and logistics are discussed. Spokes may need to consult with their group before discussing or agreeing on certain subjects. Consensus on each proposal has to be achieved not only within each group but also among all groups together, so that the individual groups don't lose autonomy.

### **Interviews during Actions:**

It would be good for everyone in your AG to have a statement general statement of why they are in the action incase the media asks you during the action. However, when you are asked to give a longer interview you should redirect the journalists to the media spokespeople. This is to have a unanimous messaging of XRNL to make sure our principles, values and demands are properly communicated by spokespeople who were trained on this. Everyone can become a media spokesperson before and during the blockade by contacting the media and communications team.

### **Every Affinity Group has:**

- A Name (for example: Blackbird, Flipflop, Snowflake, Foxtrot, etc.)
- A Representative / contact person with a phone
- A Wellbeing Person
- One or more first Aid Kits

**AG Representative:** will take on the role of being the first point of contact for action planning, and will get information from A&L that they will pass on to their AG. There

can be a backup representative but this can be decided later or spontaneously – if this is the case then the rep should pass on those contact details to the A&L contactperson. They will join the Mattermost channel ‘Affinity Group Reps’ to get updates for AGs during RWB and pass them on to the group. They also let the AG Coordinators know about any change in their Affinity Group, like people leaving or joining their AG.

**Wellbeing Person:** To provide support for the group the wellbeing person should preferably be low risk so that they can provide arrestee support for the group. It should be noted however, that there is no assurance that they won’t be arrested during the action. In some actions, all present will be arrested.

Although each member should bring their own water, food, etc – there should be an AG member who is explicitly looking out for the wellbeing of their group. They can provide water and food (e.g. grapes or cookies) and/or blankets, tissues etc.

They can also take care of the phones and any valuables the members of their AG might bring to the action.

They make sure to provide practical and emotional arrestee support ensuring that the arrestee support from Regenerative Culture knows that members of your AG were arrested.

Other roles include regularly checking in on the mood of each AG member, and make sure that provisions have been made for medical needs of members *before the action* in case of arrest etc.

### *Optional Roles*

**Media Coordinator:** Ideally each AG would have someone specifically taking responsibility for media coverage on the day. This may include live streaming, live tweeting, and generally promoting the action through any online platforms. This role should also be taken on by someone with a low risk of arrest, as photos and videos taken on the day will be accessed by the police if an arrest is made, and can be used to incriminate fellow activists.

**AG Facilitator:** The facilitator will collect the numbers/contact details of everyone in their Affinity group to create a Whatsapp/Signal/Telegram group in which the group can stay connected. Depending on what the AG wants, the facilitator schedules meetups for the Affinity Group to meet. The facilitator can facilitate discussions and decision making process during the action.

## **AG Registration for Spring Rebellion**

This last part explains how you can join the Lentebellie with an Affinity Groups (AG). In short: Affinity Groups are super important for the success of the Lenterebellie, so

let's make as many as possible quickly! If you already have one, inform your friends to form one too. The intention is that ultimately everyone forms an Affinity Group.

### **How do you form an Affinity Group?**

- The best way is to participate in a Non-Violent Direct Action (NVDA) Training. Multiple groups are always formed at the end of the training. At the bottom of this page is an overview of all upcoming training sessions.
- If you have already done an NVDA training, or do not have the time, visit a social event where affinity groups are also formed. See also this guide for facilitating such an event.
- REGISTER FOR SPRING REBELLION:
- Register as an affinity group:
  - English: [https://actionnetwork.org/forms/ag\\_register\\_xrnl/](https://actionnetwork.org/forms/ag_register_xrnl/)
  - Dutch: [https://actionnetwork.org/forms/ag\\_registreer\\_xrnl/](https://actionnetwork.org/forms/ag_registreer_xrnl/)
  
- Register if you wish to join an affinity group but don't have one yet:
  - English: [https://actionnetwork.org/forms/ag\\_join\\_xrnl/](https://actionnetwork.org/forms/ag_join_xrnl/)
  - Dutch: [https://actionnetwork.org/forms/ag\\_sluitjeaan\\_xrnl/](https://actionnetwork.org/forms/ag_sluitjeaan_xrnl/)