

## Beginning Steps to Develop Your USAWE Affiliate Organization

Creating an Affiliate Organization can feel a little daunting at first if you have never done this before, and if you do not have a strong community already developed. There are many resources on the USAWE website developed by other AO leaders to help you get started. Here are a few first steps to guide you through the beginning stages of development.

Creating a FB page or group is incredibly helpful (see the AO page Resources section for a helpful guide on this topic). I suggest joining a few other existing AO groups, and see how they are doing things to get some good ideas to help you.

Reach out to all your local horsey friends, and get together in person to brainstorm ideas on how to get others involved in what you are doing.

Reach out to educators (instructors) who are already doing WE. Invite them to partner with your AO by offering to promote their events, and by hosting them as clinicians for your events.

Locate a few local facilities that would enjoy hosting events, so you can share the love and bring WE to new people on their own turf.

Playdays (see the AO page Resources on the USAWE website for more details on this) offer a very good entry point for people new to WE. Having someone dedicated to giving instruction to all newbies at these events is super helpful. Providing a low-stress environment to encourage people to give WE a try in small, bite-sized segments will help new people gain the confidence they need to give a full-day clinic or schooling show a try. For some, it will be all they need to spark their interest in pursuing WE as a new discipline. For others who have no desire to compete, attending Playdays will provide them the opportunity to become a network of friends who share an interest, and they will become your future pool of people helping on the ground to make your future larger events a success.

Obstacle building parties are a super community-builder as everyone is on the same playing field, and can learn to work together and get to know each other without horses.

Create a calendar with instructors and facilities as this creates community and strength.