Guidelines for hosting a Membership Event

1. Book a special Membership Meeting (via Zoom, given the pandemic restrictions) and invite all current members of your club.
2. Plan out the schedule for the meeting, which would ensure that both new and longstanding members contribute. The meeting should be an informal and fun event; there should be no ‘hard sell’ and no obligation to take part. The message can simply be come, enjoy a fun evening with a glass of wine and find out more about what we do.
3. Create an event on Facebook and invite everyone who has liked your club page.
4. Create a graphic (using Canva; or any other tool of your choice), which you can then use to post about your event on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, several times in the weeks leading up to the event.
5. Each of the existing members should aim to invite at least one friend or colleague to the meeting; someone who was likely to be interested in finding out more.
6. Contact local organisations and charities who you may have worked with in the past, such as the local women’s refuge, to inform them of the event and to say that any of their female employees or service users are welcome to attend.
7. If possible, try to get mentions on your local media channels to promote the event.

The meeting should be very light-touch and informal. You can start by asking everyone to introduce themselves; if they are not a Soroptimist, they can be asked to say what they know about us; if they are an existing Soroptimist, they can be asked to say what they like best about being a Soroptimist. Then 3 – 4 members can be invited to speak about different aspects of Soroptimism or specific past projects.

So, the top tips for hosting a membership meeting would be...

- Plan a fun, light-hearted event – it’s not a sales pitch!
- Advertise it as far and wide as you can. Use social media and get press coverage too, if possible.
- Issue specific invitations to women (friends, associates, colleagues etc.) who you think would be a good addition to your club.
- At the meeting itself, allow existing members to tell their personal stories about why they became a Soroptimist and why they stay. These personal accounts will be more compelling than dry programme action reports or statistics!
- Have a back-up plan! Many of the guests won’t be ready to join yet, but will stay in touch or help from the sidelines, and may even join in the future. So have a plan for staying in touch with them, whether in person or via social media or an email newsletter, for example.