

# New group helps young professionals network

By BILL POWER Staff Reporter  
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A new organization for young professionals in Halifax is off to a rollicking good start after selling out its inaugural event.

"If we wanted evidence of the desire for a broad-based organization for young professionals in the community, this is it," said Peter Moorhouse, one of a few dozen people involved in the Oct. 25 launch of Fusion Halifax, an organization dedicated to increasing community involvement and networking opportunities for people aged 20 to 40.

The organization's inaugural event, offering space for 250 people at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, sold out faster than organizers expected and other sessions are already in the works.

"We're definitely interested in shaking things up a little bit as far as opportunities for networking and community involvement are concerned," said Mr. Moorhouse, who is director of investor relations for the Greater Halifax Partnership.

Fusion Halifax will be a counterpart of similarly named organizations in Saint John, N.B., and Bangor, Maine, and will provide opportunities to network and get involved in the community without charging a membership fee.

"People who are involved in their community remain in their community," he said.

"This is important when so many other cities are aggressively courting people in this age bracket."

An informal survey of about 700 people conducted by some of the young professionals behind the formation of Fusion Halifax revealed some frustration among people in that age group about getting their views heard on issues such as the desire for a new and larger entertainment venue or problems with public transit.

Fusion Halifax will provide opportunities for input on arts and culture, urban design, sustainability, diversity, economic development, immigration and employment.

There will also be an emphasis on attracting interest and involvement from people new to the Halifax area, Mr. Moorhouse said.

## FUSION HALIFAX:

The new organization Fusion Halifax wants to stem the out-migration of people aged 20 to 40:

- Between 2001 and 2006, Halifax's population grew by only 3.8 per cent, or less than one per cent each year.

- After an episode of zero growth between 1996 and 2001, Nova Scotia's population grew by 0.6 per cent between 2001 and 2006.

- In 2004-05, an estimated 347 people moved to Halifax.

- From 2000 to 2004, 1,268 people between 25 and 44 moved to Nova Scotia, while Halifax experienced a gain of just 1,598.

Source: Statistics Canada data courtesy of Greater Halifax Partnership

"It can be tough for newcomers to get involved in a city the size of Halifax that has its established networks," he said. "We're hoping we can attract the diversity of membership that Fusion has achieved in the other cities."

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