

## **Starting an Ecology Action Centre Campus Club**

Thank you so much for your interest in bringing the Ecology Action Centre to your campus! This guide will help you create your own EAC campus club and ensure that it is successful and inspiring. Before starting your own club on campus, make sure to check if there's already an existing EAC Campus Club at your school.

### **Who we are:**

The Ecology Action Centre is a member-based environmental charity based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. We take leadership on critical environmental issues, from biodiversity protection, to climate change, to environmental justice.

### **Steps to Creating your Own EAC Campus Club:**

#### **1. Getting Ratified**

Your university or college campus likely has a ratification process for qualifying new clubs. You will need to determine who your Executive will be beforehand, as they will be the one to fill out the form. Some clubs require up to 3 executive roles, which could include positions like President, Vice-President, Treasurer, or Secretary.

Here are links to some of the ratification pages.

Dalhousie University: <http://dsu.ca/connect-with-societies>

Saint Mary's University: <https://www.smusa.ca/get-involved/societies/active-societies/>

MSVU: <http://mountstudents.ca/clubs-and-societies/>

NSCC: <https://www.nscstudentassociation.ca/student-orgs>

NSCAD: <http://sunscad.org/forms/>

Acadia University: <http://theasu.ca/campus-life/clubs/>

StFX University: <https://www.stfx.ca/student-life/clubs-and-societies>

Ratification typically lasts for 1 year, and needs to be re-ratified annually. It can take up to a month to confirm your ratification, depending on the institution.

If your post-secondary institution not have a ratification process, find out how you can start your own EAC Campus Club by asking another campus club how they got started.

Let us know if you're looking to set up or join an EAC Campus Club! Email our Community Giving Manager, Dana Lipnicki, at [dana@ecologyction.ca](mailto:dana@ecologyction.ca)

#### **2. Funding Opportunities**

Some post-secondary institutions might offer funding opportunities for clubs in the form of grants or bursaries. Don't forget to check this out as it can provide the funds your club will need to host events and raise support and awareness for the Ecology Action Centre throughout the year!

### **3. Growing your EAC Campus Club membership**

There are many ways to get the word out that you have just started your own Ecology Action Centre Campus Club. Here are some ways to let your classmates know and grow your club!

Club Fairs: At the beginning of the Fall semester, there is often a club fair at many universities and colleges designed specifically with you in mind, so that people looking to join clubs can find you! It is absolutely worth your time to make sure you can attend one of these events. Make sure you have a club sign-up sheet as well as an EAC Communications Sign-up Sheet with you to get new members of your club engaged!

Word of Mouth: Would your professor let you announce your club to the rest of your class at the end of a lecture? Do you have roommates or friends with similar interests that you can invite to join your club? Will current EAC Campus Club members invite their friends to the next meeting? Inviting people to join is often the most effective tactic for acquiring new members to your club.

Get Published: Write about your new club in the campus newspaper or an online forum. Widen your network and let people know why your club is awesome and how they can get involved to increase your club membership!

#### **A Note on Retaining Club Members...**

Make sure your EAC Campus Club members stay involved by giving them roles. The best and strongest campus clubs utilize their members' strengths! Give members different titles and responsibilities if they are interested in committing to the club for the school year. This will make them feel more valued, accountable, and invested in the success of the group. Roles that can be offered to club members may include:

- Event Coordinator
- Promotions Manager
- Club Membership Recruitment Team Lead
- EAC Marine/Food/Transportation/Etc Team Info-Expert
- Meeting DJ
- Snack Master

These are just a few options! Be creative and have fun with your role names, to make them fit and enhance your team dynamics.

#### 4. Hosting Meetings

- a. Have a consistent meeting time and location. This keeps people from getting confused about when to meet. Make sure there is team buy-in on a day of the week and time that works for everyone's schedule. You may find a Doodle Poll helpful for this, and you can update it on a semester-by-semester basis.
- b. Send a reminder about the meeting a day in advance, along with a meeting agenda and last week's meeting minutes. This way, members can go into the meeting knowing what the meeting will be focusing on and what the goals for the meeting will be. This allows people to prepare for the meeting to make it more effective and efficient!
- c. Be mindful of the time. Students are busy. Make sure your meeting starts and ends at the time you say that it will.
- d. Have an agenda. Start with an ice-breaker to get people talking! Then, you can choose whether you'd like to discuss the work of the Ecology Action Centre, plan an event, collect signatures on EAC's latest petition, or sign up people to EAC's communication sheet! Make sure meetings end with to-do's for the next meeting (when applicable) and make sure to put it on the agenda for the next meeting to follow up!
- e. Have Fun! Bring cookies to your meeting, tell an environmentalist joke or a funny story, bring an inspiring EAC-win to share with your members! Protecting our environment can be emotionally taxing, so make sure you're supporting your club members and having a good time each time you meet. You're doing really important work!

#### 5. Fundraising for the Ecology Action Centre

Fundraising is critical to the work we are able to do, and the energy of campus clubs helps us to accomplish so much more! Check out our website [www.ecologyaction.ca/fundraise](http://www.ecologyaction.ca/fundraise) to find out how your Campus Club can raise funds and awareness for the Ecology Action Centre. **100% of the funds you raise go to the area it is most needed!**

#### Tracking Your Revenue and Expenses:

This is really important! Your campus club ratification likely requires transparency in this, and it is also important for the Ecology Action Centre so that we can issue tax receipts where necessary and measure your impact as a campus club.

#### Exclusively for Campus Clubs:

We are happy to provide the support of our Community Giving Manager Dana Lipnicki for one 1-hour meeting each semester to discuss how your team can do more for the Ecology Action Centre. Dana has had experience starting her own campus club as well as experience hosting events on behalf of other organizations, fundraising, engaging new audiences and successful succession planning. To reach out, contact [dana@ecologyaction.ca](mailto:dana@ecologyaction.ca).

## **6. Succession Planning at the End of the Year:**

a. Leadership and Role Changes. Are you graduating at the end of the year? Is your treasurer going to be too busy next Fall to stay in their role? Are there new positions due to other people leaving? By the end of January, ask role-holding members to decide if they are interested and available to maintain their position the following school year. This gives time for other members to express interest in the position openings. Role-holding members for the following September should be elected by group vote.

b. Training and on-boarding. Provide insights on your experience in your role and responsibilities with your incoming replacement. Make sure any need-to-know information is shared, such as teaching them how to ratify the group next year, where the email list lives, or how to submit expenses at the end of the semester. Ensure that other incoming positions are trained in the same way by their predecessors.

c. Keep the bond between the club and EAC strong. Connect the new student leadership of the EAC Campus Club with our Community Giving Manager, Dana Lipnicki, at [dana@ecologyaction.ca](mailto:dana@ecologyaction.ca). If there are any questions or assistance that they need as the school year kicks off, Dana is happy to help get the club off to a smooth start!