



# **SEEDS Campus Ecology Chapters Handbook**

*Strategies for Ecology Education, Diversity and Sustainability*  
Ecological Society of America

Updated November 2022

## SEEDS Campus Ecology Chapters Handbook

Ecology clubs can play a vital role in ecology education and provide opportunities and experiences that textbooks, lectures, and even labs cannot match. This handbook is intended to serve as a resource for students who aspire to promote ecological awareness, education, outreach, and action through ESA-SEEDS Campus Ecology Chapters. Institutions that hope to start an ecology club can benefit from this handbook and use it as a resource for registration information, club establishment, guidelines, fundraising, and activity ideas. Already existing ecology clubs can use it to brainstorm and generate new concepts to improve upon their club.



*Hampton University SEEDS Chapter students circa 2008*

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## ESA-SEEDS: AN INTRODUCTION

### About ESA

The Ecological Society of America (ESA) advances the science and practice of ecology and supports ecologists throughout their careers. ESA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization of scientists founded in 1915 to:

- promote ecological science by improving communication among ecologists;
- raise the public's level of awareness of the importance of ecological science;
- increase the resources available for the conduct of ecological science; and
- ensure the appropriate use of ecological science in environmental decision making by enhancing communication between the ecological community and policymakers. Ecology is the scientific discipline that is concerned with the relationships between organisms and their past, present, and future environments. These relationships include physiological responses of individuals, structure and dynamics of populations, interactions among species, organization of biological communities, and processing of energy and matter in ecosystems. ESA's members conduct research, teach, and use ecological science to address environmental issues that include:

- biotechnology
- natural resource management
- ecological restoration
- ozone depletion and global climate change
- ecosystem management
- species extinction and loss of biological diversity
- habitat alteration and destruction
- sustainable ecological systems

ESA publishes a suite of publications, from peer-reviewed journals to newsletters, fact sheets and teaching resources.

### About SEEDS

The Strategies for Ecology Education, Diversity and Sustainability program (SEEDS) is the flagship award-winning education program of the Ecological Society of America. Its mission is to diversify and advance the ecology profession through opportunities that stimulate and nurture the interest of underrepresented students to participate, and to lead in ecology.

### History

SEEDS was established in 1996 to reduce, over time, the serious under-representation within the field of ecology of individuals from certain minority groups. The first phase of the program (1996-2002) focused on institutional support of historically black colleges and universities. The core SEEDS program components offer hands-on, engaging experiences

with ecology that exhibit the relevance and applications of the science. Each experience also provides opportunities to interact with a diverse group of ecologists and other motivated students to both broaden and deepen students' understanding of ecology and potential careers. Focused mainly on the undergraduate level, with extension services for communities, high schools, graduate students, and international collaborations, the SEEDS program promotes an ecology profession with wide representation to ensure environmental understanding and a sustainable future for all. To learn more about the history of SEEDS, read ["The First Six Years."](#)



*Students enjoying the sunset at the 2015 Leadership Meeting*

## **SEEDS Chapters**

SEEDS Campus Ecology Chapters are autonomous undergraduate student clubs that provide key focal points for local and regional environmental leadership advancement, community engagement and career development activities. Since 1996, SEEDS has built a wide network of campus chapters across the country and today, we are proud that more than 100 campus groups have affiliated with the program.

SEEDS Chapters are local affiliates of the SEEDS program, which further the mission of SEEDS on college campuses throughout the country. Chapter leaders and student members of each chapter engage in activities to promote ecology through education, outreach, recruitment, and career development. Each Chapter customizes its program to the interests of its members and the needs of its campus and community.

Examples of chapter activities include but are not limited to:

- developing a local chapter web page and making a significant contribution to the student online community and engaging in dialogue
- planning campus activities to support the goal and mission of the Chapter and SEEDS
- planning and attending field trips
- inviting guest speakers
- hosting ecology career seminars

- sending students to professional meetings in ecology or related discipline

SEEDS welcomes new schools to join the Chapter network and work toward increasing student awareness and interest in ecology. Ecology and ecology-related (Biology, Environmental Science, Earth Science...) clubs already exist, as well as newly formed student groups interested in ecology and the SEEDS mission, may apply to become a SEEDS Campus Ecology Chapter.

Some of the Chapter Benefits include:

- Certificate recognizing the chapter's participation in the SEEDS Campus Ecology Chapter program
- Chapter Grant opportunity to help each Chapter establish itself and/or sustain its presence on campus and beyond.
- SEEDS newsletter
- Potential for a visit from a SEEDS staff member to conduct a presentation or workshop on the program or careers in ecology
- Access to the Chapter and ESA member network

The requirements to become a SEEDS Chapter include that:

- Each chapter must support the mission of SEEDS – to promote ecology opportunities for underrepresented students or community members.
- Each chapter must have at least one faculty advisor or sponsor. The advisor(s) may be a member of the faculty or staff who is selected according to the criteria established by the chapter. Although there are no requirements for an advisor, the advisor should demonstrate dedication and commitment to the chapter's students and mission.
- Each chapter must have a student representative to serve as a liaison to the SEEDS program. The chapter is responsible for designating a representative and providing accurate contact information for this person to the program.
- To begin, each chapter should have at least 5 student members.
- SEEDS Chapter student members are not required to be ESA members, and we do not charge any membership fees.
- A yearly Chapter Report must be submitted to SEEDS Staff to be in "Active Good Standing" and qualify for financial support.

You may also review the [Chapter Application form](#) for more information.

### **Goals and Outcomes**

Today, we face challenges that are unprecedented in scope and scale as the impacts of environmental change become increasingly felt across the nation. Yet, these environmental issues often have local or regional impacts that disproportionately impact communities of color, low-income communities, and indigenous communities. Increasing the participation of African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Native Americans in ecology and environmental sciences is crucial to achieve relevant and effective results in the policies

and management decisions that impact our air, water, food, energy, wildlife, natural resources, recreation areas and sacred spaces.

Achieving this will require trained ecological scientists representing all racial and ethnic groups in the workforce. To address the serious issues threatening our ecological systems at different scales, it is essential to engage our communities, foster divergent thinking and engender innovative solutions.

The proposed ESA SEEDS Chapters Engagement program will support and expand opportunities for many more students underrepresented in ecology, on campuses across the nation, to:

1. Increase their understanding of ecological systems and functioning
2. Learn about the wide spectrum of ecology and environmental science careers in all sectors
3. Organize local or regional field explorations and community-oriented, culturally relevant activities
4. Develop their leadership skills in communication, policy, and stakeholder engagement among diverse populations
5. Expand their personal and professional networks in the field

### **SEEDS Chapter Engagement Plan**

The SEEDS Chapters Engagement Plan will be driven by ideas proposed by SEEDS Chapters. We seek to establish consistent and regular communications with all SEEDS chapter leaders and advisers e.g., through Virtual Cafes to exchange ideas for chapter activities and fundraising.

Among the possibilities for SEEDS Chapter engagement, we envision:

1. Regional undergraduate conferences that feature student research and career development activities
2. Local or regional field experiences or campus Bioblitzes to encourage local ecological knowledge, and connection to local scientists and professionals
3. Collaborative thematic projects to build a sense of cohesion in the SEEDS chapter network such as a water sustainability program or urban ecology project.
4. And more!



## PURPOSE

### Why Start an Ecology Club?

Ecology clubs serve many purposes beyond the obvious goal of promoting ecology. From personal and career development to a sense of community, clubs help participants network and have an overall better experience throughout their time with the institution.



### Education and Awareness

Club members increase their own knowledge of ecology, supplementing courses and putting into practice the principles learned in classes. Participants can also educate and raise awareness through outreach to the campus and community. This outreach can serve many purposes like promoting education and awareness among other students and community members. If people are more educated about ecology and what they can do, they will be more likely to implement ecologically sound practices. Outreach to the community also promotes the college or university and its students. Community members see the good actions of the students and the image of the college or university is enhanced.

### Personal Development

Ecology clubs also develop skills among the members. Club members who choose to become active can develop valuable skills such as public speaking, organization, management, and leadership. All members can learn the value of participation and cooperation.

### Social

Ecology clubs can serve a social purpose. Students can meet students with similar interests and become more involved in college or university life. Students involved are more likely to have a positive undergraduate experience.

### Career Development

Ecology clubs can also be a tool for career development. Club members can participate in activities that will allow them to hone their interests. Members can learn about career paths and options. Activities such as field trips and hosting speakers allow students to network with ecologists and related professionals.

## INTEREST ASSESSMENT

### Is There an Interest in Ecology on Campus?

When a student or faculty member wants to start an ecology club there is a natural tendency to take the idea and run with it. However, the success of the club depends on student involvement that is, in turn, dependent upon student interest. Before a club is established it is a good idea to assess student interest on campus.

## Informational Meeting

One way to assess interest is to organize an informational meeting and see what kind of response it receives. In this meeting you can assess the amount of interest and the different kinds of interest. The meeting can also be an open forum for initial planning. For an informational meeting, a day, time, and location must be set. If campus facilities are to be used, then this must all be arranged with the student affairs or activities office. If the school is not supportive then a dormitory lounge or public field can be used. Once these arrangements have been made, the meeting must be publicized. Flyers can be shared in social media and/or email. These could also be printed and distributed in classes, union mailboxes, in person on campus. Announcements can be made in science classes, campus radio, and on campus TV. The first indication of interest will be the number of students who come to the meeting although this is not the sole indicator.



Students participating in the 2017 SEEDS Leadership Meeting in Puerto Rico

At the meeting, the kind of interest should be ascertained. *What kind of club do the students want? Will it have a focus - outdoors, outreach, campus events?* Brainstorming can take place for a club name and for potential advisors. All ideas should be recorded. Finally, initial leadership roles can be appointed to continue the process to register or charter a club.

## Student Survey

Another way of assessing interest on campus is through a student survey. Sample questions could include:

- Is there a need for an ecology club on campus?
- Would you be interested in becoming a member?
- What would draw you to an ecology club?
- What times are most convenient for you to meet?
- What activities would you like to see an ecology club doing?

The survey can be shared online (social media, emails...). If you'd like you may print the survey to disperse in science classes and later through random student sampling in dormitories, student unions, and dining facilities so it will draw from a larger pool of students.

*When assessing interest, it is also important to ensure that another club on campus does not already serve the same purpose. If there is a similar club, then perhaps you can form an ecology committee within that club. Other clubs with similar activities might include a biology club or an outdoors club. Ecology and ecology-related (Biology, Environmental Science, Earth Science...) clubs that are already in existence, as well as newly formed student groups interested in ecology and the SEEDS mission, may apply to become a SEEDS Campus Ecology Chapter!*

## REGISTRATION What Do Schools Require?

### Registration Process

The process of starting a club varies by school. Most schools require clubs to register. While at some schools only a simple form is required, at other schools' registration is a lengthy process. At the very minimum, registration forms require the name and address of the organization and the contact information for currently registered students. Contact your student affairs or student activities office for registration information.



*SEEDS Students at Field Trip to the Hopkins Marine Station in Monterey, CA*

Many schools require clubs to reregister every year. Depending on the school this may mean a fee each year. Plan this into your budget. To ensure that your charter will be renewed there are certain guidelines that must be followed, which usually entail attending meetings and, of course, adhering to all university policies and procedures.

### Delegate Responsibilities

There are usually many things to do when starting a club. The best way to handle it all is to share the responsibilities. Assigning tasks to interested students or even forming a founders committee to handle all the tasks is a great way to go.

If your school requires a proposal and/or charter and by-laws, then a person or committee must oversee this. Even if your school simply requires a form, then somebody must be in charge of filling it out. If your school requires a charter and by-laws, they may provide a sample format to follow. By-laws will include membership requirements which will have to be determined. Ideas to think about include: Will you have a minimum participation level for meetings and/or activities? Will there be dues?

### Choose a Faculty Advisor

Discuss what role an advisor would play in your club. Be clear about what responsibilities the club expects of the advisor so that the person you approach understands what their job will be.

Often the faculty advisor is chosen simply because they are willing. Instead, try to choose a faculty member who is genuinely interested. They can play a vital role in the club and should believe in the club and its work and have the desire to guide and help students. Plus, they must be able to commit time to the club. Of course, one would first turn to science faculty members, particularly ecology or biology. If a suitable faculty member cannot be found within these departments, do not overlook other departments. A history professor or political science professor with a strong interest in the environment could bring an interesting perspective to the club.

Once an advisor has been chosen it is important to maintain a two-way line of communication with this person. Include the advisor in planning and when arranging meeting times and locations try to accommodate the advisor's schedule. If the advisor is not able to attend, send them minutes and ask for feedback. Always ask the advisor for input when planning larger events. Use the connections of the advisor to your advantage. Often, they will be able to do or get things that students will not. Once the event is planned do not forget to invite the advisor!

## **THE FIRST MEETING**

### **Who, What, When, Where...?**

#### **Arrangements**

Once the club is properly registered the next step will usually be to plan a meeting schedule. When selecting a time and place, first consult with the advisor to accommodate his/her schedule. Also, try to make sure that your meeting time accommodates as many students as possible. It is important to try not to conflict with other clubs' meeting times or night classes. Once you have a day, time, and place in mind you must reserve a room through the Student Activities/Affairs Office.

#### **Publicity**

Leave enough time before the first open meeting to publicize it well. The use of social media is a great way to promote and grow your club. If you are not sure about other advertising mediums on your campus, ask around to find out. If you want to post flyers, posters, or send mailings then this will require some work and upfront costs. Try to recruit an art or design student. They will probably create the best-looking advertisements and they may appreciate the publicity for their work.

#### **Agenda**

At the first meeting be sure to welcome everyone and tell them briefly about what the ecology club is about. Tell them about possible projects and then get their input. You should project that there is a plan, but you want to be sure to include them in it with their ideas. A brief brainstorming session may be helpful. Within the first or second meeting, the officer's responsibilities need to be defined and nominations should be made.

#### **Parliamentary Procedure**

If you choose to conduct your meetings in a very formal, parliamentary style, you may want to consult a book on the subject. The most well-known is Robert's Rules of Order. For information and to order visit their website at <http://www.robertsrules.com>. The book covers all issues of parliamentary procedure including calls to order, orders of business, motions...

## **CLUB ORGANIZATION How to Keep It Running Smoothly**

### **Offices**

Generally, there are four officer positions: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

- **President**  
The president has the overall responsibility for the operation of the club. The president calls and presides over all meetings and reviews and approves all financial activity.
- **Vice-President**  
The vice-president performs the duties of the president in their absence or inability to serve. The vice president performs other duties as needed.
- **Secretary**  
The secretary keeps an up-to-date membership roster. The secretary keeps full minutes of all meetings and records all actions taken by the club. They maintain a complete file that includes minutes, copies of all contracts, and current correspondence.
- **Treasurer**  
The treasurer is responsible for the general supervision of the finances of the club. They prepare the budget, receive all payments due, collect dues, and issue receipts. The treasurer is responsible for the prompt payment of all bills. They also maintain up-to-date financial records and give a financial report at each meeting. Finally, they sign contracts when authorized to do so.

### **Committees**

Another useful practice is to form committees, especially when a club has a large membership. This ensures that each member is involved and that the officers do not do all the work. Common committees include fundraising, activities, membership, and publicity.

#### **Fundraising Committee**

The fundraising committee must first know the school and state policies for raising funds. For example, some schools will not allow door-to-door solicitation on campus. Once there are revenues the club must also be aware of state laws regarding taxes. Sources of funds include membership dues or fees, the student affairs office of the college or university, fundraising events or sales, and grants from philanthropic foundations.

#### **Membership/Recruitment Committee**

This is a vital part of any club. Since students graduate there must be a regular influx of new members. This committee should also be on top of school policies for membership such as minimum membership requirements, GPAs etc.

The most effective recruiting method is personal contact. Discuss what it was that motivated current members to join. Ask each current member to try to bring one new member to the next meeting. Another effective recruiting tool is setting up tables in the student unions or quads, and through social media marketing.

Generally, people join clubs to meet new people, make friends and have fun; for an experience that will add to their resume; for opportunities to develop and use their skills and talents; and, for a chance to serve others and make a difference. If the club can effectively articulate how it addresses these needs, it will be more successful in recruiting new members. Keeping members can also be a challenge.

### **Tips for Engaging Members:**

- Give each member responsibility and the authority to make decisions. Create a system of accountability.
- Orient new members. Meet them over lunch or coffee. Find out why they were attracted and their skills or talents.
- Take advantage of the unique skills and talents of your group members, including the new members.
- Use social media to spread the word
- Recognize a job well done.
- Make it fun to belong. Include social activities for a chance to mingle and relax.
- Use meeting times effectively. Start on time and end on time. Keep the meeting well organized.
  - Make sure the first activity is really dynamic!



*SEEDS Students on a 2015 Field Trip to the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest in Oregon*

### **Icebreakers**

Icebreakers can be helpful at meetings (whether virtual or in-person) with new members. For ideas, check out <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/icebreak.html>.

### **Tips for Recruitment and Promotion**

Informing the campus and community of the club and its activities is crucial. It is important for recruiting new members and building morale among the members. Some ideas include:

- Be sure to participate in campus events such as club fairs at the beginning of the school year. This is a **MUST!** Have a posting party. After members go out and distribute fliers or posters, regroup afterward for pizza.
- Use social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Slack
- Use campus media including radio, mail, email, web page, newspaper, newsletters...
- Use bulletin boards in the student union and academic buildings.
- Personal contact such as door-to-door announcements is also effective.
- Set up information tables or booths in the union or dining hall or resident halls. Make friends with the RAs!
- Put group members in costumes and have them hand out flyers.

- Use a sandwich board or A-boards on campus.
- Give out free or discount tickets to campus events.
- Develop a logo or trademark. (there's a customizable SEEDS version for Chapters!)
- Develop a listserv (Google Groups) of interested people for specific events.
- Use teasers (short one- or two-word signs) to build curiosity.
- Set up a publicity phone-a-thon.
- Perform skits in public areas like dining halls, unions, and quads to draw attention to an event.
- Partner with other clubs or fraternities – this can include allied disciplines or interests e.g. photography club interested in nature or a trail association
- Work with the biology department and graduate students
- Seek support from faculty to speak to students during lectures

### **Activities Committee**

This is perhaps the most important committee of an ecology club. Without interesting, exciting, fun activities the membership will suffer.

### **Planning Activities**

- *What is the goal?* While this may seem like an unimportant detail, it is not. The goal of the activity will decide the planning. There should be a balance of activities that are for entertainment, education, outreach, fundraising... Activities with a goal of entertainment should be fun and details like music and decorations will be more important. Activities that are for entertainment are also good for attracting new members and so should be highly advertised. Examples of entertainment activities include club parties and movie nights. Educational activities would include field trips. Outreach would include *working with community schools or community cleanups*.
- *How many people will be involved?* Will the activity include the club members, interested prospective members, community members...? Will it be open to anybody? This will be decided by the goal but will determine the costs, materials, location...
- *What are the costs?* You must know how much the activity will cost in relation to how much money is available and then decide if the activity is worth the cost. Sometimes a fundraiser for a specific activity is worth it. Costs to consider include transportation, rental and gasoline, food/meals, venue rental.
  - *Set date and location* First decide the date. When choosing a date, check the school calendar, community calendar, athletic schedules, religious and cultural holidays, midterms, finals, semester breaks. Next, decide where it will be held. Remember to consider the number of people involved, and the facilities needed. Make any necessary reservations for venues with the Student Activities Office. If the event is outside, plan for rain locations or rain dates. Within the venue think about where things will be located.

- *Contact student activities office* Most schools require on-campus activities to be approved by the Student Activities office. Usually, they require a notice of several months for a major event and notice of at least two weeks for smaller activities. Consult your Student Activities Office for your school's particular regulations.
- *Brainstorm and assign tasks* Brainstorm all the tasks that will need to be accomplished. Create a checklist of jobs and then assign specific responsibilities to each volunteer. Develop a realistic timeline. Count back from the selected date to set deadlines. If the event is too large for your club, consider cosponsoring the activity with another club or with a department. Don't forget to use the talents of the group! Make use of a tool like Facebook chat for committee communications.
- *Publicize* Usually, the larger the event, the more advertising there will be. Use campus methods like campus TV, radio, flyers, student union bulletin boards and free tools such as social media.
- *Do not assume anything* The only thing that will happen is what the club arranges to have happen. For example, when you think about reserving a room on campus, do not assume that the room will have furniture or a podium, or a microphone...



*SEEDS Students on a Field Trip in Tucson, AZ*

## **Planning Timeline**

- The Week Before
  - Confirm facility reservations and set-up
  - Confirm all arrangements for speakers/performers including transportation.
    - Confirm that all volunteers know what they should be doing
  - Make a checklist of last-minute details that must be taken care of (supplies, decorations, refreshments)
- One Day Before



- Confirm all arrangements: set up, clean up, food service, last-minute publicity, technical services, security, schedules, staff duties, payments...
- Contact everyone involved and make sure they know when to be where.
- Day of the Event
  - Arrive at least 1 1/2 hours before the event begins.
  - Make sure the set-up is going on schedule.
  - Check equipment, make sure it works properly.
  - Make sure you have the necessary payments. Obtain and save receipts.
- Post Event
  - If you are responsible for cleaning up, make sure it is done.
  - Thank everyone involved. Write a letter or notes to anyone who contributed to the event, including your advisor, donors, and workers.
  - Conduct post-event evaluation; communicate suggestions to future planners and sponsors.
  - Pay all the bills promptly.
  - If the event is canceled or rescheduled, all affected parties must be notified immediately.

## GENERAL MEETING GUIDELINES

The key to a successful meeting is planning and organization. First, write an agenda.

### Writing an Agenda

An agenda forces the group to follow an orderly progression of topics. Disperse the agenda several days prior to the meeting. This will allow the members to give their input by email prior to the meeting. It will also allow members to come to the meeting with input. Don't forget to get the advisor's input on the agenda too.

Arrange the topics on the agenda according to time. Put the topics that will require the least amount of time at the top of the agenda and end the agenda with the topics that will require the most time. This way, you will be able to dispense with more topics in a shorter amount of time.

### Meeting Minutes

Another key part of the organization is the meeting minutes. Minutes should include:



- Name of organization, committee
- Type of meeting
- Date and location
- Name of the presiding officer and secretary
- Notation of reading and previous minutes and how they were approved
- All of the major motions
- Adjournment - note the date, time, and place of the next meeting

The minutes serve as a permanent record and can be used for planning the next meeting. The minutes should be typed and distributed to all club members and advisor(s) in a timely manner after the meeting. Ideally, they should be ready within a few days after the meeting.

### **Running the Meeting**

Start on time. Mold a good behavior. If the officers start the meeting late, then members will be more likely to arrive late on a regular basis.

Whether the meeting is run formally or informally there are many factors to consider:

- The meeting room should have the proper number of chairs, with just enough.
- Chairs should be arranged in a random arrangement, such as a semi-circle, facing the front. Group interaction is necessary for a successful meeting to be held. A block or classroom style of seating eliminates face-to-face discussions.
- Make sure that meetings last no more than one hour.
- Make meetings fun with snacks, icebreakers, videos, and guest speakers.
- Watch closely and learn to read non-verbal communication. Watch for signs of boredom and disinterest.

**Brainstorming** Set a time limit of 10 to 20 minutes, depending on the size of your group and the complexity of the issue.

- The best group size is between 3 and 12 people. If you have more, break into two or more groups and brainstorm simultaneously.
- Record all responses in key phrases on a board or sheet so that everyone can read them.
- Be spontaneous, just call out responses.
- Don't criticize, praise, or judge
- Do not discuss ideas.
- After all the ideas have been given, the group can discuss and evaluate ideas and select the best ones.
- Be sure to use the ideas generated. Otherwise, the group will see their time, energy, and creativity wasted.
- Expect that only 5 to 10 percent of the ideas that come from a brainstorming session will be practical



*SEEDS Students at Glacier National Park in Montana*

## **Goal Setting**

- Seek Input - for maximum effectiveness, goals must be set with input from the entire group. People support what they help create.
- Prioritize - Based on group members' input rank the goals from most to least important. Divide long-term goals into smaller short-term goals.
- Set Target Dates - allow adequate time to accomplish goals and set deadlines for reaching the goal.
- Seek Approval - periodically review goals with the group to assure continued support.
- Restate the Goal - when a project comes up that will help in accomplishing one of the group's goals, refer to that goal and remind the group that this is their chosen goal.
- Evaluate Progress - evaluate things that could keep you from or are keeping you from reaching your group's goals. Develop a plan to remove the obstacles.
- Be Positive - a positive attitude will be a catalyst in getting members motivated and keeping them involved.

## **Group Communication Dynamics**

- Sending a message effectively
  - Use personal pronouns such as "I" and "my"
  - Make your messages complete and specific
  - Make your verbal and non-verbal communication congruent (don't smile when you have bad news)
  - Say important things more than once and in a different way.
  - Ask for feedback concerning the way messages are being received.
- Receiving messages effectively
  - Paraphrase the message back accurately, without evaluating
  - Describe your perceptions of the meaning of what was said.
  - Clarify until the sender and receiver agree on the message.
- Pattern of communication
  - Observe who talks the most. Try to have everyone say something at every meeting.
  - Observe who talks to whom and when.
  - Observe what triggers the behavior.

- Interruption is very harmful. Have people wait their turn.
- Beware of competition among members
  - A competitive climate blocks communication.
  - A cooperative climate leads to increased group cohesiveness and the ability to get more things done.

## **Funding Sources: Where to Get the Money**

Before planning any fundraising consult your school's Student Activities Office as most fundraising requires prior approval. Knowing both your immediate objective and long-term goals is vital to the selection, planning, and implementation of a fundraiser.

## **Fundraisers and Sales**

The following sites are central sites to review the goods and services offered by a variety of fundraising companies:

- Fundraising Products to Help Your Org  
<https://doublethedonation.com/tips/productfundraising-ideas/>
- A Guide to Different Types of Fundraising <https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/differenttypes-of-fundraising/>
- Amazing Fundraising Ideas Any Organization Can Try  
<https://www.wildapricot.com/blog/fundraising-ideas>
- Fundraising Ideas & Products Center: [www.fundraising-ideas.org](http://www.fundraising-ideas.org).
- ABC Fundraising: [www.abcfundraising.com](http://www.abcfundraising.com).
- All Fundraising Products & Companies <https://www.fundraiserinsight.org/directory/>
- The Fundraising Directory: [www.fundraisingdirectory.com](http://www.fundraisingdirectory.com).

The following sites are central sites, especially for colleges and universities:

- Campus Fundraiser Ideas: <https://www.juniata.edu/campus-life/activities/100fundraising-ideas.php>
- College Fundraising Ideas: <https://www.gofundme.com/c/fundraising-ideas/college>
- Fast Track Fundraising: [www.fasttrackfundraising.com](http://www.fasttrackfundraising.com).



*University of Puerto Rico at Bayamon - LIFE SEEDS  
Chapter student members circa 2008*

## SEEDS OPPORTUNITIES

### SEEDS Chapter Grants

The SEEDS Campus Ecology Chapter program offers [Chapter Grants](#) to support Chapter activities and projects which further the mission of SEEDS. This funding ensures the program can support innovative Chapter project ideas that promote ecology to underrepresented students. Each project must clearly support the mission of SEEDS – stimulating and nurturing the interest of underrepresented students in ecology – and incorporate ecological science and its communication through education and/or research.

#### *Examples of Projects*

- **Chapter Collaborations:** joint projects with other Chapters, travel or distance communication costs, creative ecology, conservation projects with a regional focus, or regional undergraduate conferences. *We strongly encourage chapters to work with others within reasonable proximity or virtually.*
- **Outreach activities:** local or regional field experiences, campus BioBlitz's to encourage ecological knowledge and connection to local scientists and professionals, sustainability events, projects with K-12 students and/or teachers, community members, etc.



Hampton University SEEDS Students during a planting project in 2008

- **Research activities:** supporting opportunities for students to conduct and communicate ecology research. This should be student-led research by the chapter and should not be the independent study research of a single student or faculty adviser/s
- **Career development:** hosting a seminar series for students on campus.
- **Student development:** field trips for students to become exposed to areas of ecological interest.

#### *General Grant Guidelines*

- **Scope and Size of Awards**

Funding for Chapter Grants is subject to availability of funds. In the past, we have awarded grants from \$300 - \$5,000. Please check our website for current information. The amount requested should be reflective of the size and scope of the project. ESA is in the position to provide funding for SEEDS chapters solely through the generous support of our donors. It is our policy that we do not pay any indirect or overhead costs (0%) on grants or awards given to selected individual or institutional recipients in our program activities.

- Eligibility
  1. The SEEDS Campus Ecology Chapter must provide evidence that it is in good standing with the college or university and with the SEEDS program. This requires submitting a list of members and officers with their emails (at a minimum), a brief report of past activities and future plans as evidence of good standing, maintaining accurate activity and financial records, submitting reports when required, and meeting membership requirements. Any late or outstanding issues may deem the Chapter ineligible for a Chapter Grant.
  2. New Chapters must be established for at least 30 days (from the date of the acceptance letter) to be eligible for a Chapter Grant.
  3. Projects must be led by undergraduate Chapter members.
  4. Proposals must be signed by the Chapter President and a faculty adviser must serve as project director.

- Selection Criteria

Obtaining a Chapter Grant is a competitive process and awards will be made based on the strength of the proposal and the cost-effectiveness of the proposed activities in furthering the mission of SEEDS and promoting ecological science education and/or research. A higher ranking will be given to projects with broad impact and dissemination and to those that include matching funds (anything from a small campus fundraiser to large institutional support). A selection committee of Ecological Society of America members will only evaluate complete proposals.

- Evaluation and Reporting

ESA will monitor the effectiveness of the project through periodic assessments. Awardees are expected to provide brief, informal updates to ESA staff throughout the term of the special project by email and/or social media. A final report must also be submitted no later than 60 days after the indicated project end date.

### ***Chapter Grant Proposal Submission***

Each proposal must include an abstract, project description, budget narrative, and appendices, and must follow the proposal guidelines. It is recommended that Chapters closely follow the guidelines posted on our website for a competitive proposal.

Any relevant proposal materials that cannot be sent electronically may be mailed to SEEDS Chapter Grants; Ecological Society of America; 1990 M Street NW, Suite 700 Washington, DC 20036.



*SEEDS Students on a Field Trip in Arches National Park, UT*

## **Field Trips**

Ecology field trips are the cornerstone through which SEEDS introduces diverse students to the range of ecological systems and research in the United States. Students spend three-four days at an ecologically significant site, such as a field station, research laboratory, or national park, learning about the science of ecology, exploring career options, and seeing the practical applications of ecology. Students have the opportunity to find out more about what ecologists do through hands-on experiences with professionals, to receive training in specific areas, and to build networks with students and professionals.

## **Leadership Meetings**

Held annually, the Leadership Meeting is an opportunity for SEEDS student leaders to engage in a dialogue about the connections between science and society. The meeting provides a venue for SEEDS participants to develop 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills and understanding in communications, policy, community outreach, and education, rounding out their experience as young scientists. The Leadership Meeting was an extension of the SEEDS Undergraduate Research Fellowship program and since 2007 grew to include invited SEEDS chapter leaders and other students recognized for their leadership potential. ESA Governing Board members have joined us as guest speakers and since 2008, we have been delighted to have the participation and support of ESA Presidents who have graciously set time in their busy schedules to join the students.

## **ESA Annual Meeting**

To support and promote the participation of underrepresented students in the field of ecology, SEEDS offers Undergraduate Student Awards to participate in the ESA Annual Meeting every year. For 25 years, the ESA SEEDS program has been supporting students to participate in this annual gathering of ecologists, which brings together over 3,500 scientists to communicate their research. As well as hearing from experts in a variety of fields, you will be under direct tutelage from those same experts as you select your own meeting mentor! This is an amazing opportunity to be exposed to many different realms of science and to develop professional and personal skills – as well as a great resume builder.

While you're at the Annual Meeting, you'll be able to take part in hundreds of scientific presentations, pick up valuable skills in workshops and short courses, network with ecologists from around the world, continue to explore professional opportunities, see some of the most cutting-edge equipment in the field ... and take important steps forward in your career.

## **SEEDS Partnership for Undergraduate Research (SPUR) Fellowship**

The SPUR Fellowship is the highest honor in the SEEDS program, and fellows are encouraged to be outstanding leaders in the future of ESA. The award supports the undergraduate student

in designing and conducting an ecology research project of interest. SEEDS has established partnerships with field stations and mentors to offer exciting summer opportunities that will be tailored to meet your interests, career objectives, and growth as a scientist. For most opportunities, no prior research experience is necessary.

## Other ESA-related Opportunities

ESA is the world's largest community of ecologists, so taking the next step and [becoming a member](#) is one of the best ways to continue to grow in the science and meet ecologists from dozens of countries and hundreds of unique career pathways. As a member, you'll have access to our internal network of professionals, discounts on professional development opportunities like the Annual Meeting, training in policy advocacy, all content printed in our journals and eligibility for publishing grants.

Plus, our [Student Section](#) is one of the most vibrant parts of the Society—they support the Buell and Braun awards for presentations at the Annual Meeting, regularly meet to discuss strategies for success in school and the workplace and contribute to ESA decision-making as the voice of the next generation of ecologists. You can also join one of more than 30 other sections that cover a wide array of scientific and professional specialties and network more closely with people who share your specific interests.

And as your career steps forward, don't forget to get your [Professional Ecologist Certification](#) from ESA. This program offers an extremely accessible and affordable way to add a credential to your resume without needing to earn another degree and is built to ensure that your professional development needs are met in a way that allows you to grow over time. Plus, our partnerships with other organizations can open many doors to other credentials in the sciences!



## APPENDICES

### Sample Club Constitution & By-Laws

#### Preamble:

We, the undersigned, wishing to secure for ourselves the pleasures and benefits of an association of persons commonly interested in ecology, constitute ourselves the *(your club's name)* and enact this constitution as our governing law. It shall be our purpose to conduct club programs and activities as to promote ecology on campus and in the community.

#### Article I: Membership

All persons interested in ecology shall be eligible for membership. Membership shall be by application and election upon such terms as the club shall provide in its By-Laws.

#### Article II: Officers

Sec. 1. The officers of this club shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Sec. 2. The officers of this club shall be elected for a term of one year by ballot of the members present.

Sec. 3. Vacancies occurring between elections must be filled by special elections at the first regular meeting following the withdrawal or resignation.

Sec. 4. Officers may be removed by a three-fourths vote of the membership.

#### Article III: Duties of Officers

Sec. 1. The President shall preside at all meetings and conduct them according to the rules adopted. They shall enforce due observance of this Constitution and By-Laws; decide all questions of order; sign all official documents adopted by the club, and perform all other duties pertaining to the office of President.

Sec. 2. The Vice-President shall assume all the duties of the President in his/her absence. In addition, he/she shall organize club activities, plan, and recommend contests for operating benefits, and advance club interest and activity as approved by the club. Sec. 3. The Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of all meetings, keep a roll of members, submit membership applications, carry on all correspondence, read communications at each meeting, and mail written meeting notices to each member. At the expiration of his/her term he/she shall turn over all items belonging to the club to his/her successor.

Sec. 4. The Treasurer shall receive and receipt for all monies paid to the club; keep an accurate account of all monies received and expended; pay no bills without proper authorization (by the club or its officers constituting a business committee). At the end of each quarter, he/she shall submit an itemized statement of disbursements and receipts. At the end of his/her term he/she shall turn over everything in his/her possession belonging to the club to his/her successor.

#### Article IV: Meetings

The By-Laws shall provide for regular and special meetings. At meetings, a minimum of one third of the membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

#### Article V: Dues

The club, by majority vote of those present at any regular meeting, may levy upon the general membership such dues or assessments as shall be deemed necessary for the business of the organization. Non-payment of such dues or assessments shall be cause for expulsion from the club within the discretion of the membership.

#### Article VI: Amendments

This constitution or By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the total membership. Proposals for amendments shall be submitted in writing at a regular meeting and shall be voted on at the next following regular meeting, provided all members have been noticed by mail of the intent to amend the constitution and/or By-Laws at said meeting. Robert's Rules shall govern proceedings.

#### **By-Laws:**

- I. Secretary. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep the constitution and By-Laws of the club and have the same with him/her at every meeting. He/she shall note all amendments, changes and additions to the constitution and shall permit it to be consulted by members upon request.
- II. Membership. Full membership includes all club privileges as well as rights to hold a club office and to vote for club officers. Associate membership includes all club privileges except for the right to hold office and vote for club officers. Membership applications shall be submitted at regular meetings.
- III. Meetings. Regular meetings shall be held on \_\_\_\_\_ of each calendar month. Special meetings may be called by the President upon the written request of any five club members. Notices shall be sent to members concerning special meetings and the business to be transacted. Only such business as designated shall be transacted. Such notices shall be sent so that they arrive not less than 24 hours before the meeting.
- IV. Dues. A regular monthly assessment of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per member is hereby assessed by the provisions of Article V of the constitution to provide funds for expenses.
- V. Interference committee. This committee shall consist of five members (appointed by the club President). The committee shall direct investigation, invite proper inquiries, establish technical facts and testimony, and report its results to the club.

- VI. (additional By-Laws may provide for technical, program, publicity, and other
- VII. committees, or other rules provisions not provided for in this sample constitution.

## Social Media Best Practices

As we mentioned throughout the Handbook, social media is a great tool not just to create interest around your SEEDS chapter/ ecology club in your institution but to grow your student organization. Here are some ideas:

*Before* you create your club's social media account(s)

1. **Create an email** for your organization: don't use your school or personal email.
2. **Create a Recognizable Logo** –The first step to marketing your club is to create a recognizable logo. Although not required it's strongly encouraged that you include the ESA-SEEDS logo.
3. **Strategize** - consider building a strategy that outlines your organization's social media goals, audience, voice, platforms, and management processes. Ask the following: "Will you use social media to communicate with potential new members, or will you focus on reaching current members? Do you want to promote events, or spread a particular message? Who will manage the accounts, and what is the process for transitioning ownership as students graduate?"

*After* you've created the social media account(s)

4. **Find User-Generated Content:** find pictures or videos from other students and create a simple yet memorable hashtag that is exclusive to your club; use it and encourage others to use it, too. You may also do a poll or a contest/giveaway
5. **Have Social Media Automation:** For example, automating all posts to your club's Instagram account so that they're also posted to the club's Facebook and Twitter accounts at the same time.
6. **Use Advertising:** student organizations usually have a small budget, but if an on-campus organization was looking to advertise online, social media marketing is one of the more affordable ways to do it.
7. **Make Online Events:** Take advantage of online events on social media and social media event listings for non-virtual events. In-person events are also crucial for the college experience and using social media enables your organization to track RSVPs, allow students to effortlessly share the event with friends, and publicize the event in relevant online communities.
8. **Collaborate & build relationships** with other clubs and students and remember to tag them in your posts and stories.
9. **Have fun!**

**More tips:**

- Uniformity: For example, make sure that any time you update your organization's featured image on Facebook that the image is also updated for other social networks. Same thing for an announcement or event description.

- Plan & Proofread: plan ahead of time what should be posted and try to keep the content varied/diverse. And check your grammar and spelling!
- Recordkeeping:
  - archiving any social media posts or comments to your organization's account in a document for reference and following up with any questions students ask.
  - Automatically save any images from your social media posts in an easily accessible location such as a Google Drive folder.
  - Collecting the information from any email receipts for the organization in a spreadsheet.
- Be Respectful
  - DON'T: Don't use your club's social media accounts for personal use; separate the personal from professional.
  - DON'T steal images – ask for permission and give credit!
  - DON'T be a spammer: Retweeting, liking, commenting, posting, and sharing is great, but keep everything in moderation.
  - DO: Use a calendar notification to silence your phone when you start a club meeting to prevent distraction and disruption.
- Be Active: respond to inquiries and interact with followers and members on social media
- Be Creative: take advantage of all the different platforms and the features they have (such as adding links, and “donate” buttons. Save fun/innovative ideas for future posts and events

Sources:

- [5 Ways to Grow Your Student Organization Using Social Media Marketing:](#)
- [10 ways to market your student club on campus](#)
- [The Ohio State University Social Media Tips for Student Organizations](#)
- [Social Media for Nonprofits: 11 Essential Tips for Success](#)
- [The Do's And Don'ts Of Social Media Marketing In 2020](#)
- [15 Do's and Don'ts of Social Media](#)
- [Social Media Etiquette for Business Owners: 25 Do's & Don'ts](#)