

2.0 Starting a Chapter

Creating a New ESW Chapter

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2.1 Registering a New Chapter

Starting an ESW chapter at your college or university provides you with leadership experience, the ability to apply for national [funding opportunities](#), project advice, a recognized identity, and a network of 1,000+ technical individuals who are committed to global sustainability. Initiating an ESW chapter will benefit you and your community, and will engage your peers in a powerful global initiative to build a better world.



To start a new chapter, follow these six steps below. We will elaborate on how you can accomplish each of these six steps in the rest of this chapter. If you are starting a new chapter it is best to familiarize yourself with these steps. It may seem like a lot, but your New Chapter Coordinator from ESW Headquarters will help you through every step.

1. Fill out the chapter inquiry form. The form can be found here. Submitting this inquiry will alert us of your interest in starting a chapter. A New Chapter Development Coordinator will respond to your inquiry and work with you at

every step of the process.

2. Recruit your friends. We require at least 10 initial members, preferably with a spread in seniority, before we can approve your request to start a new chapter. You can find members by having an initial interest meeting, asking faculty members to help promote the idea, and/or making announcements in classes or at local events.

3. Find a faculty adviser. Often a school will require a faculty adviser for student organizations, but even if you are not locally mandated, we want to have a faculty contact.

Faculty are around longer than students, and can provide institutional memory for both you and ESW-HQ. Further, they can be a great help in dealing with internal bureaucracy or a source of project expertise.

4. Determine a way to pay chapter dues. Some schools have a system to cover the dues of student organizations. If your school is not one of these, your engineering department may be able to cover the dues. A final option is to fundraise the money, or have local dues for members that are active on project teams. You should discuss chapter dues payment with the New Chapter Development Coordinator.

5. Brainstorm and identify potential projects. We want you to hit the ground running with a few potential project ideas. We

encourage you to meet with various faculty members to determine suitable projects for your campus and community. You can also talk with existing chapters through our various social networks to get ideas to replicate or adapt locally. Starting small and finishing something is worth much more for chapter longevity than immediately jumping to big dreams that stall.

6. Fill out the New Chapter Application. This application is the final step in becoming an official ESW chapter, and should be sent in with initial chapter dues. If you have any questions, you should discuss them with the New Chapter Development Coordinator.

Chapter Resource Kit
[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

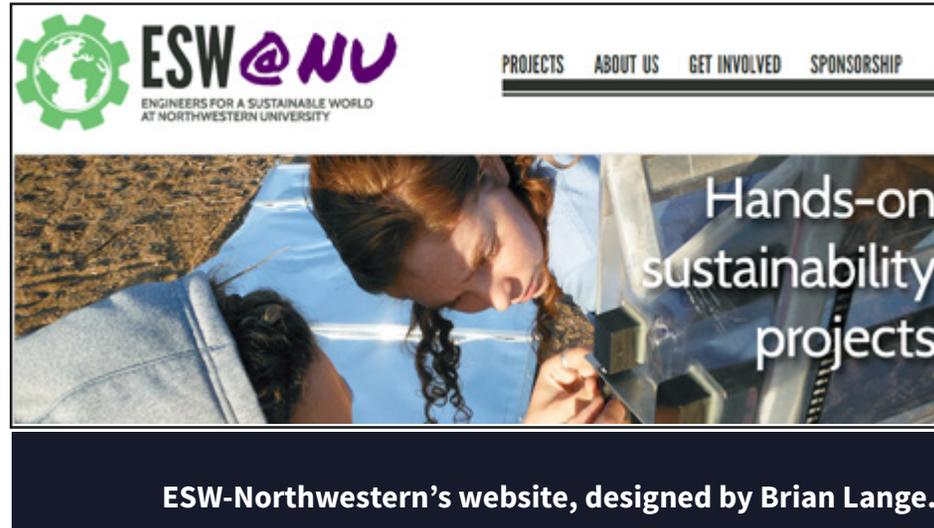


2.2 Getting Organized

There are a few organizational tasks you should take care of in order to start off strong. It is suggested you go ahead and get these small tasks out of the way before you start recruitment efforts. Following these steps will lay out a strong foundation for your chapter so you can hit the ground running.

Set up a chapter email account.

Working from your personal email is fine for informal discussions, but you will want to set up a central email account that can be accessed by the necessary officers in your chapter. An org email account also acts as an archive for future leaders and a consistent point of contact for people outside ESW. We highly recommend using Gmail, as a Google Account has plenty of useful apps for your chapter. All hail the Google overlords.



Determine a method for documenting work. Where are your agendas, receipts, CAD files, budgets, notes, etc. going to go? Do your future leaders a favor by setting up an online account to store important files. Google Drive is great for collaborating with both your officers and your general body members and Dropbox is a trusted service for

storing large files (good for design projects).

Establish your social media accounts. If you plan on advertising your events via Facebook, Twitter, or any other social media platform, go ahead and set up those accounts under the chapter's email account. Fill out your profiles, set your tag lines, and upload a picture or two so that these sites are ready to be run by whichever officer that takes on that responsibility.

Create a website. While maybe not something you need to do immediately, setting up a website quickly will aid you in recruiting

new members and establishing yourselves on campus (see Chapter 5). It does not have to be fancy, and there are plenty of free platforms you can use to create one painlessly (Wordpress, Blogspot, Wix, Weebly). Check with your school to see if they can set one up for you. A chapter is not required to have a website to be a part of ESW. If you don't want to or can't create a website locally, ESW National is happy to help you build out a basic page on our national site that you will have total control over. If a chapter does have a local website the following rules must be followed:

- It must use an appropriate ESW logo and color scheme (for more information, please consult the [ESW Branding Guidelines](#))
- It must have correct URL links to the ESW National website (www.eswusa.org).
- If applicable, it must reference the correct ESW mission and vision statement, which can be found at [Mission & Vision](#).

Branding Guidelines
DOWNLOAD HERE



2.3 Building Momentum

Recruiting Your First Members



We have written a whole chapter about recruiting new members, which you can check out in Chapter 4 (it is okay to skip ahead! we promise!). To kickstart your recruitment process and land those first few key members and officers, take a look at the following tips.

Start with your friends.

You probably know some nerds passionate about the environment, so it only makes sense to reach out to them first. It is totally reasonable to start your chapter with a core group of friends.

Reach out to the department.

Your professors, faculty, and

offices are all there to support you and your endeavors, so utilize them! Teach out to the heads of engineering departments and sustainability offices and ask if they can help you advertise your first meeting or populate your list serv.

Spam those list-servs. Students receive a lot of emails, but that should not deter you from sending out emails to any and all sustainability and engineering list-servs you can get your hands on. Your email should describe what is ESW, get people excited about the possibilities of working with ESW, and provide the details for your first meeting. An example of such an email is

located here.

Shout out. Nothing is quite as effective as putting a face to a movement. Ask your professors if you can pop into the beginning of class for two minutes to give an ESW elevator pitch. This works best at the beginning of the year when classes have not picked up.

Pitch it! Win over new members by nailing down your ESW pitch. A well rehearsed pitch will make you look like a pro at tabling events, classroom visits, and even via emails. See the sidebar for details on how to pitch ESW.

Pitching 101.

If you have ever been to a recruitment fair, you have likely had to “pitch” yourself. Pitching involves rattling off a 30 second to one minute spiel in an effort to sell *something*. In our case, we are trying to “sell” ESW to new members. When pitching ESW to new members, here are the main points to hit:

Projects

Gets hands on experience building and/or designing projects that you choose.

Network

Make lifelong friends that share your interests.

Leadership Experience

Improve your soft skills by organizing meetings/projects, speaking to larger groups, and coordinating work through email etc.

Community

Get to know people in your community and give back in meaningful ways.

2.4 Kicking it Off

Your first general body meeting (GBM) marks the end of the messy, amorphous forming stage of starting a chapter. Think of it as your campus debut. There are a million ways to do an intro GBM, but here we present a great base example. Just like this example, a good intro GBM will garner excitement among students, boost your members, and initiate a project or two.

Kicking Off Projects

When ESW-Berkeley re-started their chapter in 2014, they used their first meeting to kick off a bunch of new projects and identify project leaders. The meeting centered on project ideation, which is a hands-on, interactive meeting that gets people excited about the possibilities of working with ESW.

Here is how it works. First, spend about five minutes introducing ESW. Break attendees into small groups of 4-6 people and assign them a category of either water, energy, food, transportation, etc. Supply them with a huge stack of sticky notes. Task them with generating as many ideas

as possible, with quantity over quality, of ways to improve your campus and community around their given category. You can have the brainstorm go many different directions from here, but one way is to ask each team to focus on one of their ideas and refine it. Let every group present their idea to the large audience. Collect all the ideas at the end and then let attendees vote on which projects they would like to work on for the year!

Following ESW-Berkeley's example, meeting attendees were grouped around categories such as energy efficiency, renewable energy, and water conservation. Each group was able to brainstorm projects and create multiple projects under each category.

Ice Breakers

Throw in an icebreaker at the beginning to get people chatting. A classic is the Oreo challenge. Ask people to pair up and place one half of an Oreo on their forehead. The first person to get to Oreo into their mouth without using their hands wins!

Sample Agenda

If you are new to planning kickoff meetings, here is a sample agenda to get you started. This agenda was developed for a 20 person meeting where projects have been decided, but project teams had not.

Introduce yourself. Before you start talking about ESW or the meeting, let people know who you are! Do not forget to mention your position on ESW's board. It also does not hurt to give a little background about yourself and why you love working with ESW.

Quick overview of ESW. A lot of new members at the beginning of the year show up because they like the idea of the name of the org, but they do not always know what that org does. Provide everyone in the room information about ESW, starting with ESW-HQ and our nationwide initiatives and ending with what your local chapter does.

Ice breaker. After you have talked for a bit, break it up with an interactive icebreaker. Lots of people hate icebreakers, so lead

the way by being enthusiastic about it.

Present plans for the year.

Settle everyone back down and present your plans for the year. This should include any major events and all your projects.

Form project teams. Go through all the projects, explaining their timelines and major deliverables. After going through all the projects, have people physically move to different tables to form project teams. Some people may want to join more than one project. You may want to limit participation to one project or you can find a way to let them join multiple teams.

Determine project meeting time.

Collect everyone's availability and determine a time in which the project team can meet on either a weekly or bi-weekly basis. If there is time, you can start determining next steps or pulling together a Gantt Chart or timeline of tasks!

2.6 Faculty Advisers

Having a Faculty Adviser is a fantastic and downright necessary individual to have on your ESW team. Your Faculty Adviser exists to support you and your endeavors to grow and establish ESW on your campus. They can provide knowledge of resources within university, offer advice to your chapter, and

represent the chapter's interests to the engineering department.

Finding the right Faculty Adviser can be difficult. Plenty of professors are too busy to take on the commitment, while others may not seem to have a passion for sustainability. Ideally, your Faculty adviser should be

passionate about the mission and vision of ESW and have enough time to meet with your chapter once a month.

To find the right Faculty Adviser for your chapter, you can start by searching through your faculty's research to see who has an interest in sustainability.

Once you have a decent pool of professors to choose from, set up meetings to discuss the role of the Faculty Adviser to see if they would be a good fit. If you run into any issues, reach out to ESW at networks@eswusa.org. Once an advisor has been selected, get them to register as a member of ESW.



Interview with

Dr. Tony Kerzmann

Q. When did you become the adviser for your chapter?

A. We started the RMU chapter in the Fall of 2013 and I have been the advisor ever since.

Q. What do you like most about working with your ESW chapter?

A. First and foremost, I really believe in what ESW does! I enjoy the flexibility to work on engineering-related projects that are meant to do good locally, nationally or even internationally. I love the altruistic approach to engineering! Engineers should be Doers and not just Thinkers. ESW provides a great platform to Do things that are meaningful and not just talk about things.

“I really believe in what ESW does... I love the altruistic approach to engineering!”

Q. What are you most proud of when it comes to your chapter?

A. I think the thing that our chapter is most proud of is our persistence over the last couple of years to increase on-campus recycling. We have donated blue recycling bins to the RMU campus, created and posted educational recycling signage, and worked with facilities to increase recycling efforts.

The efforts of ESW has led the University to create a recycling and sustainability committee of which I too am a member. This committee rolled out its new recycling campaign this Fall semester which includes recycle bins all over campus and in all the dorms except for one.