



## How to Start a Sustainability Club at Your High School

### Forming Your Club

1. Gather some friends and discuss what you'd like the club to work towards and what themes it will be structured around. For example, it could be a broad "Sustainability Club," or you could narrow it down to a specific environmental issue you'd like to focus on (i.e. Garden and Composting Club, Anti-Plastic Club, etc). For more ideas, see "Club Theme Ideas" resource.
2. Find out about the right timing for starting a new club in your school. Some schools require a long lead time so that stipends to pay faculty advisors can be voted on as part of the school budget. Some schools are more nimble and allow clubs to start up any time.
3. Ask a faculty or staff member to be your club advisor. Often, sustainability clubs will have advisors who teach in sustainability-related departments, like the sciences. This advisor must be willing to attend club meetings and facilitate conversations and requests between club members and the administration.
4. Write out a club proposal to present to your school administration. The proposal aims to convince the administration that your club will add value to your high school community. This proposal should include:
  - a. Name of the club
  - b. Paragraph detailing the specific purpose of the club, and why your high school needs this club
  - c. Names of the club's founders
  - d. Name of the club advisor
  - e. Outline of club positions (president(s), vice president, secretary, treasurer)
  - f. Budget and estimated funding needed
  - g. Logistics of club (how often will you meet, and where?)

5. Send in your proposal or present it to your school administration. Wait for their response.
6. Once your club has been approved, solidify the club logistics, such as where you will meet and how often.
7. If you need start-up funding, apply for it by filling out a funding request form. Have your advisor double-check the form. Submit the funding request form to your student council or equivalent study body government. Make sure that your funding application clearly states what you're going to use the money for!

## Continuing Your Club

1. Advertise your club to increase membership. Be clear on what the club aims to achieve (i.e. "Come join the John Jay Sustainability Club and help us reduce food waste and cut down on plastic use in our school!").
  - a. Design and print flyers for the club. These flyers should include your first meeting date/time/location. Make sure you get the flyers approved by your school before you post them around the school.
  - b. In addition to flyers, the club's founding members should also post a similar graphic on social media. Consider also creating an Instagram account and Facebook group for the club to post updates.
2. Plan your first meeting. Making your first meeting a fun event will entice students to come and join. For example, have a potluck where students bring their own food and reusable utensils and dishes, and watch *WALL-E* or *An Inconvenient Truth*.
3. MAKE SURE you have a sign-in sheet at every club meeting. Have interested students write down their name, email, cellphone number, and whether they're interested in a leadership position in the club.
4. Assign leadership positions, either based on the club's founders and/or through a vote. Make sure each person appointed knows exactly what their roles are in that position, and goes through the necessary training to perform those roles. The degree of training will depend on the policies of each school.
5. Keep other members involved by giving people jobs and training them to do them. Members can take notes at meetings, design graphics/flyers, post on social, text members

to remind them of meetings and activities, organize events, help at events, serve as liaison to other clubs or the administration/faculty, etc.

6. Have meetings at least once a month to maintain attendance and brainstorm new ideas.
7. In addition to these meetings, have fundraising events (bake sales, car washes, silent auctions, open mic nights, and donation-based events) that will give you the funds necessary to complete your projects and hold future events. Make sure every donation and source of income is tracked by your treasurer.

## Resources ([see PDF](#))

- Club Theme Ideas
- Sample club proposal form
- Roles of club leaders
- Sample budget
- Sample funding request form (this will be specific to your own school)
- Sample club meeting sign-in sheet
- Use [Canva](#) for flyers and social media graphics