

Rutgers University Step-by-Step Guide
Undergraduate New Student Organization Recognition

Starting a New Organization at Rutgers University – New Brunswick

Student organizations provide an outlet to connect and develop with others, create and express ideas, and inspire and impact the community.

This resource packet provides valuable tips for establishing a new organization on campus. It also provides policies and guidelines that must be adhered to in order to be recognized and registered by Rutgers University.

Questions? Contact the Department of Student Centers & Activities/Student Involvement Office at neworgs@echo.rutgers.edu.

PART 1: Create a Profile

Step 1: Draft a Statement of Purpose for your organization's Constitution

First, develop a Statement of Purpose that will serve as the **underlying foundation** for your group. Consider the following as you develop your purpose:

- *What do you hope to accomplish?*
- *How will you serve Rutgers University and its students?*
- *How are you **distinctly** different from other organizations?*
- *What do you value, hope for, believe in, and support?*
- *Are you part of a larger organization or cause?*

Step 2: Develop the Constitution

The Constitution provides the operating framework of your organization. **We recommend that you use the "Sample Constitution" as a guide (See guide below).**

The following articles must be included in your organization's constitution:

- * **Name and one acronym/short phrase of your organization**
- * **Statement of purpose**
- * **2-3 Potential events or programs **that specifically support your mission****
- * **Active membership/ voting privileges**
- * **Title and role description for all officers**
- * **Officer election, selection, and removal method**

Note: Must be an entirely democratic process (i.e. secret ballot, 2/3 or majority vote, include all members)

*** Amendment method**

Note: Must be a democratic process (i.e. secret ballot, 2/3 or majority vote, include all members)

*** Dues (if applicable).**

- Note: If you require dues you will not receive funding from any of the Allocation boards.

The following articles in your constitution are **required verbatim**:

- *“Membership shall be open to all Rutgers University students and must comply with federal laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, military service, and veteran status, and any other category protected by law.” (Article III)*
- *“This organization shall abide by all applicable laws of the State of New Jersey and the United States.” (Article IX)*
- *“This organization shall abide by all applicable rules and regulations of the University and under the privileges as granted by the Division of Student Affairs and by the rules and regulations of the Board of Governors.” (Article X)*

Draft your organization’s constitution for upload as a Microsoft Word document into the online application.

Step 3: Select a Faculty/Staff Mentor (optional)

You may want to identify a Faculty/Staff Mentor who has the time, resources, and energy to help your organization flourish. Their expertise and interest can assist the organization in generating new ideas. **A Faculty/Staff Mentor does not serve as an advisor. Their sole purpose is to assist the organization as a mentor or teacher with some degree of expertise that relates to the mission of the organization.** The Mentor must be a full-time faculty or staff member who actively works on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus. Graduate students are not eligible to serve as mentors.

You should schedule an appointment with all potential mentors, and discuss the following information with them before choosing a mentor:

- *The purpose of your organization*
- *Potential activities/projects the group will be involved in*
- *Requirements for the Mentor to serve as a Faculty/Staff Mentor*
- *The Mentor’s role in the organization (e.g. provide expertise, attend meetings, etc.)*

Step 4: Delegate Officer positions

Delegate leadership positions to at least **three** officers meeting the following requirements to serve as **Primary Officer** (e.g. President, Editor-In-Chief, General Manager), **Treasurer**, and an **Additional Officer** (e.g. Vice President, Co-President, Managing Editor, Assistant Editor)

All Officers:

Must be full-time undergraduate students registered at Rutgers University – New Brunswick/Piscataway campus. First-semester students who do not have a GPA are ineligible to hold an officer position.

- **Must have a minimum GPA of 2.0**
 - **Note:** Candidates running for a governing board are required to have a minimum GPA of 2.5 (e.g. RUSA)
 - **Note:** Only one officer may be a transfer student. This student must have at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA at their previous institution, and must provide transcripts proving this to the Department of Student Centers & Activities/Student Involvement Office for review.
- Prepare a list of the names, NetID's, RUID's, and email addresses for the 3 required officers, the Faculty/Staff Mentor (if applicable), and 7 additional Rutgers University undergraduate members.
 - **Note:** For the top three officers, you will also need to provide their position and phone number.

Any officer that does not meet these requirements will be notified by email that he or she cannot hold an officer position. This student is responsible for notifying the other officers of the organization. The organization will be **denied**, and the remaining officers must re-submit a new application with a replacement for the ineligible officer within **one week** of the student's notification of ineligibility.

Step 5: Acquire an Affiliation letter, if applicable

Student organizations that have a relationship with a "parent" or national/international organization must present documentation confirming their affiliation with the larger organization. The affiliation letter is an official letter or email from the head of the parent organization stating that he or she is authorizing the start of the Rutgers chapter. It must include the signature of the director, president, or other prominent individual who has the authority to allow your chapter to begin.

- **Note:** *The policies and procedures of the University, as well as local, state and federal laws prevail over those of any parent or national/international organization. All decision making/policy setting will remain under local campus administrative authority.*

The national affiliation letter must be acquired BEFORE starting the online application and must be uploaded to the online application in PDF format.

Additional Items you will need to prepare before applying online:

1. Short summary for the Organizations Search Page
 - These are 1-2 sentences **that clearly represent your club's mission or purpose**
2. Full Description for your organization's profile

- This is your “official and complete” statement of purpose but could be expanded to include group history and/or goals if desired
- 3. getINVOLVED URL
 - Students can use this to locate your organization’s getINVOLVED profile. You will create a short phrase or acronym for your organization that goes at the end of the URL (e.g. <https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/TheSimpsonsOrg>)
- 4. External Links (*if applicable*)
 - External websites for your student organization such as your organization’s Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
- 5. Contact Email
 - This should be an email that the group checks regularly and uses for questions, space reservations, etc. (e.g. Simpsonorg@gmail.com)
- 6. Street Address
 - Most organizations will use 613 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Step 6: Register on getINVOLVED

At this point, you are ready to apply for organization recognition through your getINVOLVED profile.

1. Log in to getINVOLVED website: getINVOLVED.rutgers.edu
2. Update the personal profile already created for you as a student at Rutgers – New Brunswick
3. Click on the Tab called Organizations
4. Select Recognize a New Organization on the bottom left corner
 - a. **Note:** This will only show when the application is open as per the deadlines on our website.
5. Complete the online application
 - a. You will be required to upload all required documents and sign the Hazing Compliance form.

Our New Student Organizations committee will review your application after the submission deadline.

All applications are thoroughly reviewed, and if necessary, you will be contacted for any clarification via email. Changes must be submitted within **one week** of this notification. The organization’s top 3 officers and the Faculty/staff mentor (if applicable) will be notified of a decision by email and through your getINVOLVED profile.

Note: Approval notifications will be emailed in August if you apply during the Spring semester and in November if you apply during the Fall semester.

Please email neworgs@echo.rutgers.edu with any questions or concerns.

PART 2: Provisional Status & Approval

If approved, your organization will hold a **“provisional” status for one year.** You will receive a letter via email that describes all requirements that must be completed within this time frame. During this period,

the organization's officers and members **must** demonstrate that the organization's services and/or programs are geared towards and have a positive impact on the Rutgers University community.

Provisional Status Requirements:

- Your Mentor/members/officers' will each receive an email from getINVOLVED asking them to verify their membership/position within your organization. They will have to click the link in this email, which takes them to the online system to confirm their membership/position. **Remind them to look for this email.**
- You must educate your group's members about the University Hazing Compliance Policies. Your online acknowledgement will indicate that the officers of your group understand and are compliant with this policy.
- You must attend Officer Trainings (you will be notified of dates via a provisional e-mail).
- You must meet with your assigned advisor to establish a working relationship. **Note: This is NOT your Faculty/Staff mentor.**
- Learn about funding sources from your advisor. **Note: You will not receive a SABO account number until you receive funding.**
- Maintain at least 10 members (not including your Faculty/Staff Mentor) on your organization's getINVOLVED profile.
- Additional requirements listed in your provisional letter.

Provisional Status Privileges:

- With your advisor, you can begin planning programs and navigating the policies and procedures of being a student organization at Rutgers University.
- You can reserve limited space at the Rutgers University Student Centers for organizational meetings and small activities. **Note: You will not be able to reserve equipment or change room set-ups until you receive funding.**

Denial of Recognition

The Department of Student Centers & Activities will deny recognition if:

1. Any group is an extension of a University department or class and whose primary purpose for existing as a Recognized Student Organization is to support the goals of the department or class.
2. Any group has significantly congruent missions and goals of another registered student organization already in existence. Slight differences in mission or goals do not warrant recognition.

Potential reasons for denial include, but are not limited to:

- Umbrella groups which combine different aspects of already-existing organizations into one "umbrella" organization
- Any portion of the mission of another organization
- Your proposed mission can be accomplished by any other existing organization

- Your officers do not meet the minimum 2.0 GPA requirement or they are first year students and do not yet have a Rutgers GPA.
3. Any group who restricts membership, except in the case of honorary student organizations that restrict solely on the basis of GPA and/or class standing. In the case of honorary organizations, recognition may be granted but funding will not be allocated by any allocations board.
 4. Any group that is in violation of any rules and regulations of Rutgers University.
 5. Any group which does not fulfill the recognition requirements (e.g. incomplete constitutions, ineligibility of officers, failure to submit an appropriate national affiliation letter if applicable, having graduate students as officers).
 6. The organization's programs and services do not meet the needs of Rutgers University.

Please note that this is not a complete list and each organization will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

If you wish to appeal your denial, you must email neworgs@echo.rutgers.edu within **1 week** of your denial notification to receive further information on the appeal process.

Note: Your appeal may not be reviewed until after the application process closes. Your appeal must address the issues provided in your denial and appealing does not guarantee approval.

Part 3: Full Recognition

If you have completed all of your requirements by the end of your provisional period, you will be notified via email that your organization is fully recognized and the provisional title will be removed from your getINVOLVED profile. **If you do not complete the requirements, your profile will be inactivated and your organization will be derecognized.** All benefits will be revoked and you will not be able to reapply until the following academic year.

Note: After you receive full recognition, you must re-register your organization for the following academic year.

Sample Constitution

****Items highlighted in blue are required verbatim clauses and cannot be altered in any way****

EXAMPLE: 'The Simpsons' Student Organization of Rutgers Constitution (Title)

ARTICLE I The name of the organization shall be "The Simpsons Student Organization of Rutgers" **(Insert Name of Organization)**

ARTICLE II The purpose of the organization shall provide a network for students with a strong interest in The Simpsons television show, by providing a forum for students to discuss, debate and socialize over the love of The Simpsons. **(This must be specific, unique and free of duplication from any currently recognized student organization – see [getINVOLVED](#) for current organizations)**

Section I The Simpsons Student Organization will hold events such as Show Nights, Trivia Nights, and The Simpsons Family Feud.

- Simpsons Show Nights are nights in which student members gather to watch episodes of the Simpsons show.
- Simpsons Trivia Nights are nights filled with a variety of games revolved around the famous TV Show. Winners will have the opportunity to win prizes such as gift cards or the complete Simpsons' series on DVD.
- The Simpsons Family Feud is an event where teams of Simpsons' lovers are able to compete. Questions will relate to the show and the winners will get a grand prize.

(There must be 2-3 examples of how you plan to support the organization's mission on campus. This may be through events, programs, projects, etc. The events are hypothetical and should be used as a starting point for your organization to base future events off of.)

ARTICLE III *Membership shall be open to all Rutgers University students and must comply with federal laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, military service, and veteran status, and any other category protected by law.****

ARTICLE IV The officers of the Executive Board shall be President, Treasurer, and "additional". **(All Student Organizations MUST have a Primary officer such as a President/Editor-In- Chief, a Treasurer, and one additional officer such as a Vice President/Managing Editor, Secretary). Descriptions should vary depending on your organization's needs.**

Section I The PRESIDENT will be responsible for overseeing all organizational meetings, and seeing that the organization meets its stated goals. The President is responsible for the organization and its actions, and is its representative.

Section II The TREASURER shall be responsible for all financial transactions of the organization. The Treasurer shall keep current and accurate records and reports of the organization's financial matters and shall be jointly responsible with the President for approval of all financial transactions with or for the organization and its financial assets.

Additional Officers (Student Organizations MUST have at least one additional officer):

Section III The VICE PRESIDENT will serve in the absence of the President and will serve as chairperson to any of the organization's committees and will oversee all recruitment and retention endeavors for the organization.

Section IV The SECRETARY shall record all activities and events of the organization. The Secretary will be responsible for all official correspondence of the organization both internally and with the University and outside agencies. The Secretary will also attend and keep minutes of all Executive Board meetings.

ARTICLE V The officers will preside over the election and will tabulate the results unless an incumbent officer is a candidate and in such cases he/she shall not tabulate the results. Nominations shall be made either from the floor or by self-nomination. Elections will take place by Spring Break and will be made by secret ballot, with a majority vote for election. **(There must be a Democratic Election Process. It doesn't have to be the same format, but it is required)**

Section I Nominations shall precede elections by approximately one week.

Section II Any student may only hold one office on the executive board at a time.

Section III If no valid candidates are elected for a particular office, the Executive board shall vote upon an individual to fill the vacancy within three weeks. If at that time no candidate can be found for the vacancy, one of the continuing executive board members shall serve in the vacancy duty until a valid candidate can be elected by the organization's members..

Section IV Elections shall take place every year, and Executive Board members may serve more than one term (one year) of office if and only if they are re-elected.

Section V In the event of a sudden vacancy in any executive office, the remaining executive board shall appoint an interim officer until such time as a proper official election may be held for the office.

ARTICLE VI An officer can be removed from office, through the process of impeachment. Impeachment proceedings may be brought against any executive officer of the organization by any 3 members of the organization. Grounds for impeachment include negligence or abandonment of duty to the organization, severe infraction of University policy while acting under the authority or representation of the organization, or any action which intentionally and maliciously harms the organization and/or any of its members. Such claims must be submitted in writing to the executive board no later than one week prior to a hearing in which all charges will be discussed and decided upon by the executive board. The executive board shall inform the officer of any such charges immediately or as soon as possible of any such claims. The impeachment vote shall be taken at this meeting. The individual being considered for expulsion shall not have a vote and shall not be counted amongst the number of voting members present. A two-thirds vote of the voting members is required to remove a member from office. If the President is the member being considered for expulsion, the Vice President shall run the proceedings. **(There must be an Officer Impeachment Process. It doesn't have to be the same, but it should be a fair and reasonable process)**

ARTICLE VII Any member may propose an amendment to this constitution in writing, provided to the executive board at least one week prior to a vote by membership. A 2/3 majority shall amend this constitution, subject to the approval of the Division of Student Affairs. **(There must be an Amendment Process. It doesn't have to be the same, but it is required)**

ARTICLE VIII Active membership/ voting rights shall be determined on the basis of attendance at a minimum of (X number) of (ORGANIZATION NAME) events and/or meetings before the organization's spring elections. **(This is an optional clause and can be tailored to your organization's needs).**

ARTICLE IX *This organization shall abide by all applicable laws of the State of New Jersey and the United States. ****

ARTICLE X *This organization shall abide by all applicable rules and regulations of the University and under the privileges as granted by the Division of Student Affairs and by the rules and regulations of the Board of Governors. ****

ARTICLE XI The dues for membership will be determined by the officers and must be approved by a majority vote by the members and will not exceed \$5.00 per semester. Members are not required to pay dues. Dues will be used to help the organization in raising funds for items not funded by the RUSA Allocations Board. **(This is an Optional clause. It can be changed or removed, but if you require dues, your organization will not be funded by any of the allocations boards.)**