



A GUIDE TO UNYSA

Campaigning in universities and schools
for a strong, credible and effective UN



www.una.org.uk/youth

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UNYSA

United Nations Youth & Student Association

Youth participation is essential in creating a more peaceful and just world and we need people like you to make it happen. This is a critical time to be involved in the work of the United Nations.

Welcome to the new **Guide to UNYSA**. If you are already an established branch we hope you will find some useful ideas for the coming year in these pages. If you are thinking of setting up a UNYSA branch we hope that you will find all you need to create and run your group. In either case, if there is anything you need please don't hesitate to contact the UNA-UK head office.

In this booklet you will find information about the **UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF THE UK (UNA-UK)** and its youth wing, the **UNITED NATIONS YOUTH AND STUDENT ASSOCIATION (UNYSA)**. It is also a practical guide for how to

set up a UNYSA branch. If you do decide to set up a UNYSA, our commitment to you does not finish with this booklet; rather, this is the beginning of an **exciting relationship** based on support and learning from each other.

Setting up and running a UNYSA branch is a **fantastic experience** for young people: it gives you the opportunity to encourage others to join you in a cause that you believe in; it helps you develop many skills that will be essential for your future career; and it establishes a network of friends and colleagues, enabling you to meet people whilst trying to make the world a better place.

The first thing you need to know is that **WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU!** We offer you the chance to get active, get involved and make a difference in effective and coherent ways, but you



are not going to be all alone in this challenging job. If you are motivated and have enough enthusiasm to start a new UNYSA branch at your university or school, this guide will tell you about the ways of getting started.

If after reading the guide you need more information or you have any questions **please contact the UNA-UK Campaigns and Education Officer:**

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United Nations Association-UK
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What do we mean by participation?

The term participation means 'taking part' or 'involvement'. Meaningful youth participation entails recognising and nurturing the strengths, interests, and abilities of young people through the provision of real opportunities for youth to become involved in decisions that affect them at individual and systemic levels. Successful youth participation involves shared decision-making and collaboration with adults who can serve as mentors for youth.

"Participation is more than just giving the younger members of our community a say - it is about listening to their views, taking them seriously and wherever possible giving practical effect to their ideas and suggestions. Children and young people are a resource in our community and organisations can only benefit from the qualities they are able to bring"

Gillian Calvert, Commissioner for Children & Young People (Australia)

What is UNA-UK?

Making a World of Difference Together



The United Nations Association of the UK came into being in 1945 as a successor to the League of Nations Union. **UNA-UK**, is a membership-based, voluntary, non-governmental organisation, campaigning and educating to help turn the ideals of the United Nations into reality. UNA-UK, **the UK's leading policy authority on the UN**, aims to promote awareness of and support for the principles of the United Nations Charter and the worldwide work of the UN and its agencies.

Although **totally independent of the UN system** and not funded by it, UNA-UK is deeply committed to the UN and its work. However, UNA-UK does not believe that the UN is perfect and beyond criticism! In fact, the reform of the UN, so that it is made stronger, more credible and more effective, is one of UNA-UK's key objectives.

UNA-UK enjoys the level of consultative status with the UN which has been granted to national non-governmental organisations, and, through membership of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), belongs to an organisation which has been accredited to the UN's Economic and Social Council with Category I Consultative Status.

UNA-UK liaises with its members through regional officers and a national, regional and branch structure. Members can join their local branch and play a full part in its work within the local community. All members receive a copy of UNA-UK's quarterly magazine *New World*.

UNA-UK works for global peace and justice through the UN by:

SEEKING to ensure that the UN is central to the UK's foreign policy. UNA-UK maintains an ongoing dialogue with UK government ministers, parliamentarians and the media on issues relating to the UN.

CAMPAIGNING to support the UN through UNA-UK's four policy areas: the Millennium Development Goals; peace and security; human rights and humanitarian affairs; and UN reform. UNA-UK provides platforms for senior UN personnel to address UK audiences. In early 2006, for example, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan addressed diplomats, civil society and UNA-UK and UNYSA members at a flagship UNA-UK event in London.

EDUCATION for global citizenship. Education is at the heart of UNA-UK's work. Only through education and public awareness can effective, lasting change be achieved. Youth is at the centre of UNA-UK's work by giving a voice to young people and making sure that they get involved in campaigns, lobbying and advocacy. This is the reason why UNA-UK has its youth wing, UNYSA, so that young people can express their opinions and make their participation real and effective.

UNA-UK's Objectives:

- To promote greater understanding and support of the role, functions and potential of the UN and its agencies in securing peace and freedom from poverty and oppression among peoples.
- To encourage and generate governmental and public support for UN initiatives.
- To promote and lead discussion of the new structures, roles and measures which could strengthen the UN.
- To work to ensure that the UN has the resources it requires to fulfil its responsibilities.
- In pursuance of the principles of the Preamble to the UN Charter, to:
 - a. work for friendship and understanding between the peoples of different countries and their co-operation in the tasks of peace.
 - b. to foster among the peoples of this country a sense of responsibility as world citizens.



What is UNYSA?

Unique in our position as a critical friend of the UN, we are a youth organisation striving to create a just and peaceful world

The **UNITED NATIONS YOUTH AND STUDENT ASSOCIATION (UNYSA)** is the youth wing of **UNA-UK**. UNYSA is a network of university groups, schools and individual members across the United Kingdom who exchange ideas and organise events in universities, schools and beyond. We are part of UNA-UK, not a different entity.

At UNYSA we believe that **youth have a right to be heard**. We want to live in a world where our opinions are taken into account, where we are considered to have a role in the present and not just part of a far-off yet promising future.

With the objective of influencing policy and getting involved in international issues, UNYSA runs a variety of national campaigns to lobby the government and press for reforms of the UN system to ensure the Charter's ideals are realised. The most effective way of making this possible is by setting up new UNYSA branches and societies at schools and universities, where young people can organise themselves, decide which campaigns they want to develop and organise trips and different events according to their own interests.

To do this, UNYSA societies rely on strong bodies that support their work and activities: an annually-elected **Youth Council** leads UNYSA and it is supported by a **Campaigns and Education Officer** at the UNA-UK head office in London.

Find out more about UNYSA by visiting www.una.org.uk/youth

What can UNYSA offer you?

- UNYSA Youth Council consists of members of UNYSA who are elected to serve for a year at a time (with the exceptions of the president and vice-president who are invited to serve a second year in an advisory capacity). The Youth Council has officers responsible for university and individual members, campaigns and communications, and works to coordinate and implement UNYSA's central aims as well as helping with branch activities.
- There are 12 members of the Youth Council: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Campaigns Officer, Model UN Officer, Communications Officer, Website Officer, Individual Membership Officer, Membership Officer, Former President and Former Vice-President.
- An annual **Youth Conference** is held every spring where you can participate in seminars and workshops. Here you have the opportunity to meet other youth members, learn from their experiences and share your own. In recent years these have been held in conjunction with UNA-UK's Annual Conference, giving us an opportunity to meet and discuss issues with UNA-UK members.
- We can advise you on **public speakers** whom you may be able to approach to speak on a subject relevant to the areas your UNYSA is interested in.
- UNYSA is the perfect place for you **to meet young people** with similar interests. Learn and have fun at the same time by organising a party to raise funds for landmine clearance, for example.
- **Campaigns** are a way for you to get actively involved in a variety of national and international issues. In recent years UNYSA has run campaigns that include 'Stop AIDS', 'Adopt-A-Minefield' and 'Fresh Water Year'.
- UNYSA actively lobbies the government on UN issues and participates in UNA-UK's **annual lobby of parliament**. The lobby is designed to focus MPs' attention on UN topics, and to put pressure on the government to follow through with its commitments in respect to issues such as the Millennium Development Goals and nuclear non-proliferation.
- Whether it is letters to the press, advertising, interviews, presentations or seminars, UNA-UK and UNYSA publicise information about their advocacy work on UNA-UK's website, www.una.org.uk.
- In UNA-UK's magazine *New World* UNYSA has a dedicated section called **Newer World**. In these pages you will find reports on UNYSA activities and campaigns and articles that we think will be of interest to our members. If you would like to contribute to this magazine please send articles to unyasa@una.org.uk, putting 'Newer World' in the subject line.





How to set up a UNYSA society

If your school or university doesn't yet have a UNYSA, here are the steps you will need to take:

STEP ONE

If you are a university student...

ASK YOUR STUDENTS' UNION. The best thing to start with is to approach your students' union and see how the procedure of setting up a society works. Some universities require a minimum number of people to join while other unions may charge you a fee, so go and ask the union about its rules.

If you are at school...

ASK ONE OF YOUR TEACHERS FOR SUPPORT. Societies are always run by students but it is good if you have the support and advice of one of your teachers. You should ask people who you think might be interested in the UN and international affairs - teachers of politics and history, for example. They may be willing to help you to organise the society and even participate in talks and events.

STEP TWO

Get 3 or 4 friends to help you...

It's much more enjoyable when you have friends to help you. To do it alone is hard and much less fun! So ask a few friends if they like your idea of setting up a UNYSA society and start working as a team.

STEP THREE

Contact key departments

We're sure you and your friends will make an excellent team, but you want to expand the UNYSA and make it bigger. The best thing to do is to approach departments that could be interested

in supporting a UNYSA society (eg. international relations, development studies, peace and conflict resolution and social policy). If you are a school student, contact teachers that you feel may be interested in the work of the UN - they might be happy to inform their classes about your society.

One way of approaching students in those departments is **by sending an email to the secretary or administrator** of each department and asking her/him to **forward the email to the students**. And also put posters up around the school, departments or students' union.

STEP FOUR

Set up a formal structure

Once you have a good group of people (around 20) you need to establish at least **3 or 4 official positions**, such as Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, President or Membership Officer. Eventually, if your society gets bigger, you will need more positions, such as Campaigns Officer, Fundraiser, Web Developer, etc. The key objective in doing this is to **split the work** and make the society more manageable. You need to establish the **key tasks for each person**.

During the year you will need to have meetings, starting with one to establish the formal structure. You will need another one to decide what kind of events you are going to run. There is no limit on the number of meetings that you can hold, but don't forget the social side of the society. It is important to have fun too and to make the society interesting in all senses!

STEP FIVE

Advertise your society

Use all available resources to publish your UNYSA, such as the **students' union newsletter/paper**, or stick up posters or distribute leaflets. Let people know that there is a very exciting project on the rise and that they can be a part of it.

STEP SIX

Keep track of your members

This is probably one of the most important things that you need to do. To make the most of your society and to

guarantee its survival it is vital to get the contact details of all the people who can assist you. For UNYSA, **members are a priority**. It is important that every time you run an event there is somebody in charge of taking down attendee details. Make sure that you have a form which includes: **email address, term time address and permanent address**. Permanent addresses are essential if you want to keep your members for more than an academic year. You can then also create a mailing list for future events and invite your members who have left university to join **UNA-UK's Young Professionals Network** (for details see www.una.org.uk).

STEP SEVEN

Develop a programme of interesting events

You need to think of a programme that will be interesting for your school or university that doesn't overlap with other societies' events. The societies that organise interesting and innovative conferences, talks, films or parties are the ones that **get more people along!**

Think of a programme with 3 or 4 activities. The success of these events will depend on 2 things: **how interesting the topics are** and **how well organised** the events are.

Before the end of every event that you organise you need to remember that you need to invite people to join your society. Tell them the advantages of becoming a member and before they go tell them about the next meeting (the most effective approach is to always make sure you have a date for your next event lined up to tell people!).

KEY POINTS

- You need **good speakers** to talk about the UN or other international topics.
- Use the **resources in your own university or school**. You may find that you have an expert at your university or school in the topic you are interested in.
- **The social aspect of UNYSAs** - eating, meeting new people, partying - is very important. We don't need to behave like ministers at the World Bank! We need to be able to help to build a better world and have fun at the same time. It is, for example, possible to organise a party for landmine clearance: you raise money to clear landmines, educate people about the problem and also you have fun with your friends at the same time. Another good idea is to organise international meals - an Indian or Japanese night, for example.
- You may have the best programme in the world, but if you don't tell anyone about your activities, nobody will come. So don't forget to arrange **publicity** and develop a system of communication at your school or university through emails, leaflets or notices in departments.
- Publish the details of your events well in advance so people can plan to be there.
- Ask your student union about **venues** as they are normally able to offer good places. At school, ask your teachers. Always do this well in advance.

MAIN STEPS: SETTING UP A UNYSA

- Contact your students' union or ask for advice from one of your teachers
- Get some friends to help you
- Set up a formal structure (i.e. a committee)
- Advertise your society
- Take the names of all your members
- Develop a programme of events
- Contact us for any help and advice
- Remember to HAVE FUN
- Always think about timing: exams, holidays...
- Make sure you let us know about you and your members!





Your society

Your society's development depends on a variety of factors such as your interests, your members' interests, what the norm is at your university, and your students' union's regulations concerning registered societies.

CHOOSING A NAME

This is something for your society to decide. Usually, however, our branches are called '**(the University or School Name) UNA**' or '**(the University or School Name) UNYSA**'.

MEMBERS

Every society should realistically aim at having at the very least **20 members**. If you don't have this by mid-November get in touch with either UNA-UK's Campaigns and Education officer or the UNYSA Youth Council to discuss your membership recruitment strategy. **Not all members will end up active**, but the **more members** you have, the **more activists** you will get.

STRUCTURE

- **Committee** - it is up to you or your union what structure your society takes. Depending on your membership numbers, you may decide to have a formal arrangement, with a president/chair, a secretary and a treasurer, or just have a group of committed activists.
- No matter what structure you opt for, you must make an effort to make sure that **everyone who wants to be involved is given some activity/area of responsibility**. Always ask people what they want to be involved in and try to give them the jobs they want. Perhaps give them a simple task first so that they feel they are achieving things. Once you have got a number of people, you do need to make clear what everybody's responsibilities

are - whether this is formalised in a constitution is again up to you.

- What is necessary is that one or two people from the group, preferably the group leader, are **delegated to communicate with UNYSA as a national body**. This person needs to have access to incoming phone calls and needs to be an active member of the group.
- **Constitution** - this is again up to you, although unions may have their own requirements.

MEMBERSHIP FEE

- If this is not laid down by the union, you can **decide your own rate**.
- To join **UNA-UK** as a direct member - i.e. not through a local UNYSA - we charge **£6** for students and those aged under 26.
- By joining as a local group member you become a member of UNYSA, but not necessarily of UNA-UK.
- The best idea when stipulating what fee to charge is to investigate what other societies at your university charge. You should charge that (or slightly less than them!).
- If you need a quota of members to register at the union, take this into account when setting the fee!

SOME PRACTICAL STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW

When individual members decide to join UNA-UK they are charged an annual fee of £25, or £6 if they are students or under 26. For this membership fee people become full members of UNA-UK, eligible to attend UNA-UK events, and to receive UNA-UK's magazine *New World* direct to their doorstep throughout the year.

Your society must register with UNA-UK in one of two ways:

Full Branch: In order to become a full UNA-UK student or youth branch, your group must have six fully paid-up student or youth members of UNA-UK. You will then not have to pay an annual affiliation fee and you will be able to access the full range of support from UNA-UK headquarters and be eligible to attend and vote at Annual

Conference. We are encouraging all UNYSAs to exercise this possibility. If you are a new society, you may be entitled to a one-off grant of £50 from UNA-UK to help with start-up costs.

Affiliate Branch: For an annual payment of £25 your group can become an affiliate branch of UNA-UK. This will entitle you to receive some support from UNA-UK head office, but not the level that full UNYSA branches receive.

As a society you are free to charge members whatever membership fee you feel is appropriate - and this will depend on the amount and nature of events and activities you organise, and the costs of running your group. Whatever you choose to charge make sure that you keep accurate records so that you are accountable for how you use your members money.

We would ask you to encourage all your members to join UNA-UK as well; this gives them access to all the benefits of UNA-UK membership, as well as proving to the rest of the UNA-UK membership that as young people we are committed to taking an active part in making positive changes through the work of the UN and associated organisations.

However you choose to structure membership remember to keep records of your members so that you can contact them through the year.

ACTIVE MEMBER MEETINGS

- These are only for those active in the running of the society.
- They should take place about **once a week**, to keep the group's momentum going.

- Regularity is the key. Get used to meeting a certain time, at a certain place, and stick to it every week. 7.30pm on Wednesday in the Red Lion is UNYSA night, for example. This means that even if certain members don't turn up one week, they will know where and when to meet the next week.
- Try to make these meetings as inclusive and open as possible - if someone turns up to a number of meetings, invite them to join the committee, and give them something small to do, to get them involved and feeling part of the group, but without scaring them off.
- The meeting need not last very long: one round in the pub is enough, and often the meeting needs to do little more than agree to meet there again the next week at the same time. The important thing is to give your activists the opportunity to meet up socially, creating a strong group atmosphere.
- A good place to meet is often in a **pub/union bar**. The main requirements are table space and being able to hear yourself think! Some thought should go into where you want to meet.
- If a lot of your committee live off campus consider whether you want to meet during the day or in the evening.

EVENTS

- Events can range from speaker meetings to socials, Model UNs and debates. **These are for the whole membership - aim for one of these every two weeks.** The main objective is to keep members involved in the society, and to encourage armchair members to become active, as well as recruiting new members and raising your profile.



Organisation of a society committee

This brings us to the organisation of the committee - the people who do the work and on whose ability the success of the society depends.

Obviously the size of the Committee will depend on the size of the society and on its general aims. In general, a committee of six is usually a minimum, of whom one will be Chair, one Secretary and one Treasurer with two or three others who can, as the society grows in size and activity, take on special responsibilities such as Membership Secretary or Press Officer, for example. A really large and busy society can need a committee of 12 or more active members who would often work in sub-committees to arrange programmes and special social events. It is a good idea to establish links with the local UNA-UK branch to ensure that their membership is kept in touch and brought along to the society's activities.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Chair: UNYSA believes in a dynamic role for the society chair. She or he should be the inspiration and driving force behind the society as well as its leader. She or he should be the ideas person and must also ensure that all group decisions are carried out, while keeping abreast of everything that is happening within UNA-UK, the Youth Council and the society itself. The chair needs firmness, tact, energy...and a great deal of enthusiasm!

Vice-Chair: The vice-chair deputises for the chair in case of illness etc, and usually acts as chair at any sub-committees that may be set up to organise social events, programme planning and membership. You probably won't need a vice-chair at first.

Treasurer: The treasurer needs to be systematic and accurate - people who pay subscriptions and give donations expect that their money will be wisely spent and carefully accounted for. The society treasurer will have an official receipt book for

subscriptions. These should be paid to the society treasurer. The treasurer should note all subscriptions receipts in the appropriate place to show that the subscriber is a member of the society.

Secretary: This is probably the most vital job - to see that decisions of the committee are carried out. If the committee agrees to invite the local MP to speak at a public meeting, it will be the secretary who writes to extend the invitation, giving details of the date, time and place, what will be required of the speaker, where he will be met and so on. As the group grows in size it may be necessary to appoint assistants to take some of the work off the secretary's shoulders. These could include a:

Minutes Secretary: To take notes of the decisions of the committee and distribute copies to the members so that they know what has been agreed, and who has promised to do which tasks before the committee meets again.

Membership Secretary: To keep a record of paid-up (or potential) membership, chase members when their subscriptions fall due, enrol new members, and pass subscriptions to the treasurer.

Press Officer: This is another of the jobs which should be dealt with by the secretary in the early days but if your group has a member who is keen on advertising or publicity, or handy at designing posters or full of bright ideas, appoint him or her as publicity or press officer. The job involves giving advance publicity to your programme by finding suitable advertising sites.

YOUR UNYSA COMMITTEE MEETINGS

What happens when all these busy people assemble for their regular meeting? To run a society efficiently and keep an interesting programme going, the committee will

probably need to meet once a month to exchange notes of what each of the officers has done, and to agree what needs to be done.

An agenda should be sent to members with a copy of the minutes of the previous meeting about a week before each meeting. This is important since it will not only remind members of the date of the meeting but also give them an idea of what is to be discussed and give them a chance to devote some thought to any problem that needs to be settled. The agenda should cover the following items regularly:

- Apologies for absence.
- Minutes of the last meeting: circulate them in advance to avoid having to read them out.
- Matters arising: the opportunity to make sure that all decisions agreed at the last meeting have been carried out.
- Correspondence: who has written to whom, about what and what replies have been achieved.
- Financial report: a statement from the treasurer of income, expenditure and balance in hand.
- Membership report: how many new members recruited recently, sources of potential membership and how to contact them.
- Reports from sub-committees: e.g. programme planning.
- Special business: as detailed by the secretary or chair who may want to introduce a major item.
- Date of next meeting, to be arranged for a date convenient for as many members as possible.
- Any other business? The chance for officers to seek the advice and guidance of their fellow committee members on a particular problem or query.

Committee meetings can be fun if they are not too formal. Remember that the committee is not the society: never let the committee be the only thing that meets. The society as a whole must gather regularly, at least for discussion groups. The group is not everything either - there are always potential members out there who must be encouraged to join. The temptation to make the society into a cosy clique must be strongly resisted.

Your society and your students' union

As each students' union has its own rules, this can only be a rough guide. But getting to know your union is probably the most useful thing you can do. Most union officials (especially sabbatical ones) are very willing to help, and the union can do a lot to make your life easier, as well as giving you financial backing.

REGISTERING WITH THE UNION

This is vital - it will mean that next year you will automatically be entitled to a stall, if you book one! Depending on the policies of the union, it might also mean that you could get:

- Notice board space.
- Space in the union's handbook.
- Website space (and often help in how to develop it).
- Entitlement to hire rooms either for free or for a token price.
- Money to help set up the new society and cover your administration costs.

In order to register, there are often regulations that have to be followed. Check with your union to see what these are.

Publicity

To have a successful group, **you need to be known to exist**, so good publicity is vital. You need to make sure that all your members know about what is going on, and that those people who are not members know what is happening so that they can get involved should they want to.

All publicity must include date, time, venue and event details.

Make sure that all publicity is approximately one week in advance of the event - this means you avoid people getting bored and stopping mentally noticing your material, but also is early enough for people to pencil it into their diaries, and avoid making other plans for the evening.

POSTERS

These are the best way of attracting people who otherwise might not have heard of you, or of reminding members of the event.

Producing posters: These can be produced on a computer or, once you have registered with your students' union, most unions will help you produce posters, or help towards the cost of getting them printed professionally.

Where to put them: careful consideration should be put into where posters are put up. Good places are:

- Libraries
- Relevant subject departments
- Students' union notice boards
- Student accommodation

FLIERS

These are an effective way to get people's attention, especially as they are easy to pin to notice boards.

Try to hand deliver as many as possible - this way you make personal contact with those who expressed an interest, and it is less intimidating for them if they decide to become involved. It also helps you to find out if the person has moved, or if you have the wrong address.

STUDENT PRESS

This is the most effective tool available to you to highlight your existence. If possible try to get your events mentioned both before they take place and after, by trying to get the event covered within the next edition.

How to do this:

1. Have your events included in the diary sections that most papers and radio stations run - that way you get free publicity for the event and will hopefully attract new people to them.
2. Press release your events to the student papers and radio stations so that hopefully they will send someone along to your event and write an article on it. Don't worry or give up if you don't get a response; at least you will have made your society known to the student journalists.
3. If no one from a paper comes along, take some pictures yourself and send them along with another press release to the papers, as this will increase your chances of getting something in the student papers.
4. Send details to UNA-UK headquarters so we can include them in UNA-UK publications.

WEBSITES

If you are registered at the union and are offered a free website, do take it, even if no one in your group has any idea on how to produce a website! The best idea is to try to get someone in your group or a friend of one of the group's members to produce it, as this way it can be updated very regularly.

EMAIL

This is the cheapest way to keep in contact with your members and to advertise your events, although this has the disadvantage of only reaching existing members and tends to be the least effective means of getting them to come. Mass emailing is at its most effective when it is a simple reminder of something people already know about. Therefore it is best to use it a few days before the event, just to jog people's memories.

If you are at school...

- You could: organise a non-uniform day and raise funds for a project that you like.
- You could: organise a prom with an unusual topic, like "poverty", "fresh water for all", or "human rights".
- You could: organise a Model United Nations General Assembly.
- You could: organise an international day where all the students bring something from their countries.
- You could: organise an exhibition with pictures about the UN to raise awareness in your school.
- You could: organise a film session with films relating to the UN or international issues.

Speak with your teachers as much as you can and make sure that they get involved - they'll love it!

Recruiting members

how? who? why?

The best way to get members is through organising interesting events and fun socials.

Remember that people, on the whole, join societies to make friends - **the most friendly, inclusive societies, therefore, also tend to have the most members** and the most activists as people are increasingly willing to give up their spare time for the club. At all events, make sure that you make any new people feel welcome and part of the group.

WHOM DO YOU WANT TO ATTRACT?

This is an important question to ask. You need to think about how you are going to tailor your events - where a purely UN-focussed event will almost certainly attract those interested in international relations, it could well put off others who aren't interested in the intricacies of the UN. Although there is no correct target group, it is something that you should bear in mind while recruiting.

A good way to attract prospective members is to tap into other things going on at your university which are likely to attract people who are potential UNYSA members. These are just some suggestions of whom you could contact:

- International relations or history departments
- Economics or politics departments
- Language department

- Other student groups, such as international or environmental societies
- Campaigning societies (e.g. People and Planet)
- Friends/flatmates

The main thing to realise is that **most of your members will be armchair members**, the joiners rather than the activists. In order to have a successful group you **need at least four activists, and a much larger number of armchair members**.

CANVASSING PEOPLE

This is by far the most effective way to get yourself known among your members and potential members and therefore encourage membership.

It needs to be done within the first fortnight after people have expressed an interest at Freshers' Fair - especially as halls of residence are renowned for their laxity in the first few weeks when people are getting used to a whole load of new faces.

Not everyone from your core of activists will be suited to canvassing - like the Freshers' Fair stall, in order to be successful, you must come across as friendly and approachable.

If someone isn't in, write them a short note, saying sorry you missed them, but that you would love to see them at your next event.

GETTING PEOPLE ACTIVE

It is exceedingly difficult to judge who will be active in the society. It is therefore necessary to operate an 'open door' policy for both new and existing members, as you never know when people might decide to get involved. To give them every opportunity, you need to keep them fully informed of what is going on. Never give up on people - someone who has hardly done anything for three/four years can always suddenly become active!

OTHER PORTS OF CALL

You should already have been given the contact details of any UNA-UK members of whom we have a record at your university. If we do not have any contacts, it is a good idea for you to **drop a note to any tutors who**

might be interested stating that you are setting up a group and what your aims are, asking them if they would like to get involved and possibly inviting them to be an honorary president. Often tutors are very willing to let you leave literature lying around their department, or to hand out material at the end of relevant lectures, but it is polite to inform them beforehand.

Campaigning societies - it is also worthwhile introducing your society to the People and Planet, Amnesty International, Friends of the Earth, CND Student or STAR societies at your university. We sometimes work with them (amongst many other groups) sharing our skills and knowledge to ensure effectiveness in fulfilling our aims.

Tips for recruiting new members

1. HAVE A CLEAR AIM

Potential new members need to see the purpose of what they are joining. We need to be able to sum up clearly (and briefly!) what UNA-UK stands for: 'education to help turn the ideals of the UN into reality', 'campaigning for a strong, credible and effective UN' and 'a critical yet committed friend to the UN' may be some of the key words and phrases to use. Be clear what UNA-UK has to offer. This could include: lobbies, specific campaigns, connections, personal education in international affairs, UN insight, local programme and membership status.

2. PROMOTE LOCAL AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

If there is a nearby local UNA-UK branch or another university branch that has a programme of events it may be useful to have this information on-hand to show what new members can do locally. The events, social activities and actions that a UNYSA branch is involved in are often a great draw to new members.

3. JUST ASK...

Often we find that the best way to see if someone is interested in joining is to strike up a conversation and simply to ask him or her. They may have been waiting for someone to ask them to join for sometime. You may also find that although they start out not being too sure, after you have answered a few of their questions they may be delighted to join.

Why do we need members?

Members are the pillars of our work. UNYSA is a membership organisation which relies on the commitment and the good will of its members. UNYSA members play a vital role in spreading its message. The more members we have the more we will be able to influence public opinion and people to bring about change. In addition, more members mean that we can do more work towards a safer and better world.

WHAT MOTIVATES PEOPLE TO JOIN

- They believe it will benefit them or someone or something they care about.
- They have been convinced by your arguments.
- They are impressed by something UNA-UK or the UN has done.
- They wanted to join and have been waiting to be asked.
- They have enjoyed one of your events or parties.

YOUR MESSAGE

Membership means opportunities and participation

- UNA-UK is unique: it is the only non-governmental organisation (NGO) in the UK working specifically to support the UN.
- Through UNYSA, people can participate in working towards a safer world.
- UNYSA offers an opportunity to support the UN.
- UNYSA provides people with a channel to voice their concerns. Through UNYSA people can put forward their ideas on how to improve the UN.
- UNYSA offers people a platform for discussion.
- UNYSA educates on issues of global significance.
- UNYSA involves people in raising funds for vital projects in developing countries.

The benefits of UNYSA membership

UNYSA membership demonstrates support for the UN. It is reasonable to suggest that the UK government's support for the UN and its specialised agencies will be in direct proportion to the support demonstrated for the UN by the UK electorate.

UNYSA is a member of the World Federation of UNAs (WFUNA) which enjoys consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN. Therefore members are able to contribute to the debate about the present and the future of the UN, its agencies, organisation and functions.

As UNA-UK is a respected non-party political and all-faith NGO, its members are in a better position than non-members to influence the UK government about its international relationships, responsibilities and cooperation, and the resolution of problems which cannot be resolved nationally.

UNYSA exists to promote greater understanding of the role, functions and potential of the UN and its agencies. Many people in the UK are poorly informed about the UN. UNYSA can help to remedy this situation through its work.

UNYSA promotes friendship and understanding between peoples of different countries and fosters among people in the UK a sense of responsibility as world citizens.

Problems you may encounter

THE IMAGE OF THE UN

There is a great deal of positive thought about the UN and a general 'reservoir' of sympathy for what the UN does. However, people may have negative views as to what they perceive the UN is, or isn't, doing in a certain area. Remember that UNYSA is not an apologist for the UN. Whilst committed to the ideals of the UN, UNYSA is fully involved in the debate over how the UN can be more effective.

People may also see the UN as expensive and ineffective. This is a good time to remember the huge amount of positive things that the UN has done (its role in the ban on landmines, the eradication of smallpox, its peacekeeping successes, its role in championing human rights and the environment) and also that the core costs involved in running the UN is smaller than the cost of running the Tokyo fire service and is less than the amount spent by Americans on cut-flowers every year. Amazing but true!

PEOPLE RELATE TO SINGLE ISSUES

Although some people seem to relate only to single issues, many do see that global issues in particular tend to be inter-related. UNYSA is involved in single issues (landmines, the environment, conflict in Africa, drop the debt) but holds a unique interconnected view of these problems.



Where to look for new members

PUBLIC OCCASIONS AND EVENTS

A good place to start is at local events. Obviously 'green' fairs and other events with an international angle can be a great place to seek likeminded people. However, don't just preach to the converted. You could go to other events not so internationally minded such as garden parties. Use all the big events that your university or school organises to promote your society.

LOCAL AFFILIATES

Every branch of a political party, trade union, local Chambers of Commerce, church or religious group, school or other educational establishment, youth group, local organisation with an international link, interest or concern or your local town-twinning committee is a potential local affiliate member of UNYSA. We already have all these groups represented amongst our members. These groups may be very interested to know about UNYSA and could be a great source of members from within their ranks as well.

RECRUIT THROUGH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

You may be a member of another local NGO, society or religious group. These can be great places to meet likeminded people who may be willing to join your society. You might also ask other local groups whether you could distribute recruiting material to their members - but be aware not all groups will say yes.

HAVE A PARTY

You may consider organising a party or evening drinks event as a primarily social occasion but also linking it to UNYSA. You

could offer food and entertainment such as music or a video-showing on a UN-related topic. Your task is to use the opportunity to present UNYSA in an attractive way that will make people want to join. This kind of event does work.

START WITH YOUR FRIENDS

You could start your recruitment drive by trying to convince your friends and family of the need to join UNYSA and support the UN. They will make a good testing ground for your technique, and who knows, they might even decide to join!

TARGET PEOPLE TO INVITE TO MEETINGS

Depending on the event, the target audience may vary. For example, if you have a speaker specialising in international economics, it would be worth it to publish the event jointly with the economics department at your university.

BE VIGILANT!

An opportunity to recruit a UNYSA member could happen anywhere, at any time. Next time you get into a conversation about refugees or the environment think 'UNYSA'. If it's a topic the UN deals with, then it's likely it is also an area that the UNYSA takes an interest in. If you are chatting about anything from health to international postage, take the opportunity to talk about UNYSA and recruit new members.

FOLLOW UP, FOLLOW UP, FOLLOW UP...

This can't be stressed enough: if a branch collects names at a meeting - any meeting - follow them up with a phone call, letter, email, or a visit, and make sure this is done soon after the meeting/event. Don't ignore them! Time and time again it is the lack of a follow-up strategy which has proved the bane of development.



Organising a successful event

Over the years UNYSA branches have organised a number of successful events. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Speaker events: You may find that there are members of the academic staff at your school or university who have an area of expertise of interest to your members. You could also look further afield; last year UNYSA branches were addressed by the Rt Hon. David Blunkett MP, Lord Hannay, Sir Brian Heap, and a number of other distinguished speakers.

Debates: You could organise these yourselves on various issues of interest to your members, or in conjunction with other organisations. These could also take the form of debating Security Council resolutions or of simple motions such as 'This House believes...'

Trips: In the past UNA-UK groups have visited the UN in New York and Geneva, The Hague and other UN projects in countries around the world.

MUN: Model United Nations meetings can be organised on a range of scales, and to focus on many different topics.

Campaigns: You could get involved with one of the campaigns run by UNA-UK or UNYSA, which include Stop AIDS, Citizenship and Trade Justice. Visit www.una.org.uk/youth for more details.

AIMS OF THE EVENT

An event may be a part of your society campaigning strategy (eg. a conference,

seminar, a fundraising event such as a garden party or a dinner). Or it may simply be an educational event such as a school quiz or Model United Nations General Assembly (MUNGA). Whichever type of event you are planning it is above all a way of marketing the opportunities for people to support you and UNYSA.

One of the most fundamental ideas of fundraising and gaining support is that giving support to a worthwhile cause is not a burden but an opportunity for people:

- to achieve something
- to have an input
- to meet their own needs
- to pursue their own goals
- to gain satisfaction and enjoy themselves

Once you know this, you can seek support without hesitation, embarrassment or apology.

PLANNING AN EVENT

The most important aspect of any event is good planning. There is an easy way to help with the planning stage of any event and that is to use what is known as the 4 Ps to help focus the mind:

- **Product** - What are you selling? What is the aim?
- **Place** - Where is it taking place? Where is it available?
- **Promotion** - How are you going to let people know about it (publicity, advertising, tickets)?
- **Price** - How much is it going to cost (this could be 'cost' measured in time, commitment or funds)?

ORGANISING THE WORK

It helps and is usually essential to have a committee or group of people to work together on an event, particularly if it is large or complicated.

Once you have decided on your event you need to design a schedule for carrying out the main tasks. This will enable you to see what tasks need doing and it also should give you some idea of who is best to take on particular tasks (you may need to ask others with specific talents to help you).

COSTING

It is always best to do an initial costing to test the feasibility of the idea. You need to estimate the cost and the likely benefits (which would be measured in terms of numbers of new members recruited) from the event. It is no good putting lots of energy into an event which doesn't justify the return.

RUNNING AN EVENT

Running an event is more like staging a performance. Successful events leave participants with the same glow, the same shared sense of involvement. Thinking of it this way also helps to focus on specific issues:

- What is the effect we are aiming for?
- Who are the stars? And who is going to be at the front of show (this requires people who are good performers but not necessarily good managers, so the chair of the society may not be the best person and it may even be someone outside the society)?
- What is the message you want to put across?

- What is the action? People remember things they have done rather than those they have been told about.
- How will it open? What is the climax and what is the end?
- What set do you need? And how will the right ambience be achieved to make the event special?
- What roles do you want the supporters/spectators/customers to play and how will they be drawn into playing these with zest?

Not all of these will be relevant, but if you think in these terms it will help to encourage ideas. It also underlines the importance of rehearsal and preparation.

TEAMWORK

A burden shared is a burden halved not just in terms of workload, but if things go wrong you don't need to carry the responsibility all yourself. A good team is desirable. Most people will help, so just ask! Once you have a schedule you can usually divide the jobs between the team.

DEBRIEFING

After the event have a debriefing and produce a report. Keeping records means that if the event is repeated you have detailed information on the successes and what pitfalls to avoid in the future.

FINAL WORD

If you have never done this sort of event before get in touch with one of the Youth Council or UNA-UK's Campaigns and Education Officer, who should be able to help or put you in touch with other useful contacts in the area.

Don't forget to tell UNA-UK headquarters about your event: we can help publicise it!

Freshers' Fairs

A Freshers' Fair stall is an opportunity to advertise and market your society - it is your chance to sell yourself at your best and create an impression on freshers. Contact your students' union for details of its Freshers' Fair. They will be able to give you the dates for next year's fair and explain the requirements for getting a stall at the fair.

UNA-UK headquarters can provide fliers and posters for your stall. Please contact UNA-UK well in advance of the fair to request any material you may need.

THE STALL

Presentation: your stall presentation is vital, as often it is the only impression you will make on freshers.

- Aim for colour, impact and professionalism.
- Visually emphasise the fact that you are about the UN - put up any posters, flags etc. so that they are visible from a distance.
- Don't have the stall too crowded with stuff. Use the wall behind you instead and use whatever visually striking material you have to decorate it.
- Don't be afraid to use gimmicks to attract attention - any unusual event which will catch people's attention can help attract more members to your society.
- Make sure you take plain paper, a thick marker pen, sellotape, and scissors - you can never be sure when you might come up with an idea or need to create something else eye-catching for the stall.

Location: often this is something you can't determine. However, if you do have a say, try to get a stall near the doors, so that you can attract people coming in and out of the room. Try to avoid being near the sports stands. A stall next to the international students' organisation might be effective.

Running the stall: try to get at least two people staffing the stall. This not only means you can catch more passers by, but also makes the whole thing much more enjoyable as it gives each of you moral support.

Make sure everyone knows what time they are meant to turn up, and that they are able to hang around after the change-over to inform the next shift of what has happened in the morning/afternoon.

Try to get photos of the fair, as well as of all other events you organise. It need only be a few pictures, but it will not only look good on your website, as these can also be used for the UNYSA section of *New World*, so please do send the photos in.

Talking to freshers: Recruiting requires very different skills from campaigning or running a successful group. To attract people at the freshers stall you need to be as friendly, open and talkative as possible - make sure you make contact with people: smile and talk to them.

Be prepared for the fact that you can spend no more than 10 minutes with any one person. If someone seems keen, make sure you tell them to come to the next meeting, put a star by their name on the interested list, and keep them informed even if they don't turn up to the first few events, and possibly arrange to take them out for a drink, thus giving them some personal link with your group.

Don't put off potential armchair members. Explain to them that membership does not oblige them to be active. This is an important fact to stress at the Freshers' Fair, as you are interested in getting the members, not activists, at this moment in time. Although they may offer to help straight away, it is often better to let them first see what is on offer and how they can help.

If possible have people standing in front of the stall, handing out leaflets/fliers to those who don't stop at the stall.

Take down people's details - this is important! Ask them to print their details, and ask for as much information as you think people would be prepared to give - i.e. name, term address, email address, telephone numbers, home address, and students' union number (if relevant to registration).

Your society will eventually need all of these details - especially home addresses, in order to keep track of members over the holidays, but don't try to pressure them into giving all these details at the fair if they don't want to as this might scare them off, so instead wait until they have been to few meetings.

Getting money off freshers: Whether you are able to take a membership fee off people at your Freshers' Fair depends on your students' union's rules. However, even if you can take money off people, also draw up an 'interested' list of those who are wary of handing over money at the moment, but who might in the near future become members.

Know your literature: Have your own literature about your own society - especially fliers and posters with details of your first events. If possible have an agenda for the term at the fair. Definitely advertise the first meeting and any known speakers, as well as any joint events with other societies.

Make sure you have fully read your literature - this not only helps you answer awkward questions, but will also mean that you know which literature to recommend.

It is vital that straight after Freshers' Fair you email the UNA-UK Campaigns and Education Officer details of how the fair went. If you give us email addresses for your members we will be able to email your members directly with opportunities nationally and in your area.

WHAT TO DO AFTER FRESHERS: FIRST DRINKS PARTY

The main point of this is to give you a **second opportunity to sell yourselves**, especially to second and third years. This is the easiest way to prove to people, who are uncertain as to which society to join, that you are the nicer set of people!

Often people feel that this is the litmus test of how many people want to be involved in the society. This, however, is not the case - Freshers' Fairs drinks parties are notorious for no one showing up, and are often the point where groups fail, due to loss of motivation. **Don't think that everyone who will want to get involved will necessarily make it to the drinks party** - there will be lots of reasons why they can't make it, i.e. first essay due next day, new friends, can't find the room, etc.

However, there are certain things you should keep in mind:

- **Advertise the event well** - at the Freshers' Fair, in relevant departments, around the union, at relevant lectures, and at political societies.
- Make sure you speak to people you don't know personally who turn up at events, and then phone or write to them to keep in touch. It is vital that the organisers don't stand around talking to each other but mingle and chat to everyone who turns up, especially those who seem to be on their own.
- Avoid having the drinks party **clashing with other societies' events** which are likely to attract the same members - such as the international or campaigning societies.
- **Invite your friends.** A horde of people

might turn up out of the blue, but in case they don't, make sure you have enough people there to make the room not seem empty, and who can give the party a nice atmosphere.

- If possible, try to **combine this event with your first speaker meeting**. This involves planning the event well in advance and getting a speaker right at the beginning of term. This has the advantage of getting people who are interested in listening to the speaker to turn up, and also gives you an added edge over other societies' drinks parties - especially as speakers also often agree to stay and mingle for at least one or two glasses of wine (just in case, have one bottle of decent wine hidden for the speakers).

What you need:

- Alcohol - cocktails or wine?
- If wine, how many bottles and what proportion red to white? (the usual assumption is five glasses per bottle and half red and half white)
- Don't forget the corkscrews!
- Glasses - glass or plastic? Glass is better, and you can often hire them from an off-licence, but can get expensive if they get broken.
- Non-alcoholic drinks - what type (perhaps lemonade & orange juice) and how much to get?
- Nibbles - nuts, crisps, etc.?
- Room - if possible have a central location, preferably the students' union. Do remember to take into account a number of factors:

- a) When do you have to be out of the room?
- b) How long in advance do you have to book it?
- c) Is it free to hire?
- d) How many people can you fit in?
- e) What is the maximum noise level?
- f) Is it smoking or non-smoking?
- g) How easy is it to clean up?
- h) How easy is access to the room?

- Decorations - posters, flags, leaflets
- Bin-bags to clean up afterwards
- Rota for behind the bar
- Music
- Membership forms - remember this is still a recruitment event. Make sure that each person on the committee encourages

people to join or to come along to further events.

Also make sure you give a short speech on what further events are coming up for the rest of the term.



Some ideas for Freshers' Fairs

- Some candy
- Colourful fliers and banners
- Sign-up sheet
- TV playing something interesting, i.e. a MUN conference
- Give-aways: pens, pencils, candy, highlighters, pins, etc.
- Have a UN flag
- Album with pictures from past events
- Make a colour theme - light blue and white, or something else
- Have only people who are enthusiastic and very approachable at the stall
- Have posters and leaflets
- Don't have people only sitting behind the table
- Everybody on the stall have the same colour t-shirt
- Make a big board with all the advantages and benefits of joining
- Make another board with the main events of the year

Materials for Freshers' Fairs are available from UNA-UK head office. Please contact the UNA-UK Campaigns and Education Officer for further details.

A guide for dealing with the local media

The local media often seem to operate on a random set of criteria, and it is hard to know the best way to go about publicising your group. However, it is far less complicated than many think, and though there are no guarantees, the following advice should make it perfectly possible to build up a profitable relationship with your local newspaper, radio station or television channel.

KEEP IT LOCAL

Local and university newspapers especially, and local radio and television to a lesser degree, are there to report on local issues for local people. It is therefore fairly hard to interest local media in a national organisation dealing with international issues - simply having a local group is unlikely to provoke more than a cursory mention. Many organisations make the mistake of thinking that to say 'well, it affects everybody' should be enough, but it isn't. Put simply, the issues that are covered have to be directly relevant to the local area.

APPROACHING THE MEDIA

Many worthwhile stories are not covered in the local media. This is generally through a combination of poor organisation and frenzied activity in the news office. There is no great secret, and it is comparatively easy to have stories reported in the media by going about it the right way.

- **Make contact** - a well-disposed journalist is far more likely to publicise your activity. Give her or him a call to introduce yourself as the media contact for the group and very briefly explain what you do. Don't ask for the editor, as contrary to popular belief these days they don't have much input as to the content. The person you want to speak to is the news editor or the reporter for your area.
- **Deadlines** - all media outlets have a final point before the news bulletin or newspaper publication. Journalists will quite happily tell you the deadline but don't assume that by submitting an item with five minutes to go it will get in - your event or appeal is unlikely to be considered 'breaking news'.
- **Plan ahead** - the more notice you give, the better. For example, you are holding a fundraising event on Saturday, June 30 and the newspaper you are trying to get into comes out on Wednesdays. Their deadline is on the Monday, and you decide that you would like it featured in the edition of Wednesday, June 27. Therefore:
 - a) Give the paper a call about two weeks before the piece would be published, in this instance Wednesday, June 13, and simply tell them the event is coming up and that you will be sending through some information closer to the time.
 - b) Near the start of their 'news week', i.e. when they are starting to sort out the next edition, is probably the best time to send your press release; so in this case perhaps

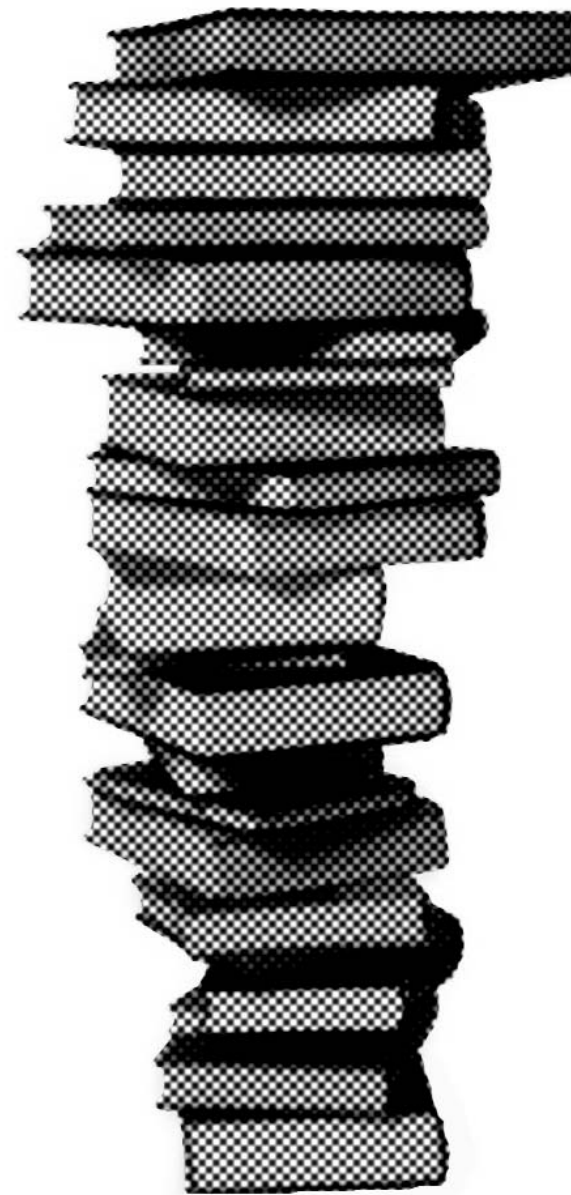


Wednesday, June 20. Try to have this arrive in the morning, as soon after 9am as possible, when the day's stories are being assigned.

- c) Call the paper to check that the press release has been received and if any further information is needed.
- **Consider the season** - Christmas and summer holidays are known in the trade as 'silly season' because of the lack of things going on. Government and council officials are on holiday, and schools are out. However, this also makes it an excellent time for a UNYSA group to feed the news-hungry reporters stories to fill their papers or programmes.
 - **Answer queries promptly** - there are few things so frustrating for journalists as posing questions only to be greeted with vague answers and no appreciation of deadlines. Consider that, while they are waiting for your response, their superiors are hounding them for the finished story. If you cannot answer a question immediately, let them know when you can have a response for them and stick to it.
 - **Say 'thank you'** - reporters often feel like an under-appreciated bunch! Having made an effort to help a local group out it is surprising how rarely they are thanked. So, if the media outlet has given you some publicity, send them an email or give them a call to say thank you. Not only is it polite, it will also endear you to the journalists and make next time far easier.

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