



## HOW TO BECOME A BEYOND PLASTICS AFFILIATE: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

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Welcome! Interested in having your local organizing group become a Beyond Plastics Affiliate?

Beyond Plastics Affiliates are existing groups and organizations who are aligned with our goal of ending plastic pollution and want to make plastics an organizational priority. These groups engage in education, public policy reform, and community action to address plastic pollution. They receive training and support to pursue advocacy against plastic pollution in their local community.

**Please note:** We applaud businesses that are taking the lead to reduce plastics, but unfortunately we are bound to keep our Affiliates limited to non-profit organizations. If you are the proprietor of a business and want to do this work, we highly recommend joining [Upstream's Reuse Solutions Network](#), which provides resources and connections for reuse companies across the U.S.

Our goal is to build a vibrant and effective anti-plastics grassroots movement built on well-informed policy and advocacy goals; to achieve the institutional, economic, and societal changes needed to save our ecosystems, and ourselves, from the plastic pollution crisis. The most meaningful work toward ending plastic pollution begins at the local levels of government. Once change happens locally, it spirals upward, impacting state-level policy, and influencing federal policy, and so on. To make it happen, we need **you!**

Affiliates remain self-directed but Beyond Plastics provides support by offering resources, tools and policy guidance, connecting you with other anti-plastics groups, activists and experts in this growing movement. We provide:

- A monthly [Beyond Plastics General Meeting](#) which any affiliate members may attend;
- Ready-to-use campaign materials and organizing toolkits;
- Up-to-date information from our staff watchdogs about policies of interest or concern; and
- Paid Zoom and Action Network accounts as needed.



*"We don't need a handful of people doing zero waste perfectly.  
We need millions of people doing it imperfectly."*

*~ Anne Marie Bonneau, Zero Waste Chef*

## **GETTING STARTED — in just 2 easy steps!**

### **1. Feel Out The Fit**

Can your group make addressing plastic pollution an organizational priority? Please read Beyond Plastics' [Message, Purpose, and Principles](#), our foundational document. After careful consideration, decide whether or not you agree. If this does *not* resonate for you and your organization, becoming a Beyond Plastics Affiliate is not the right fit. If you do agree with our message, purpose and principles, fantastic! Read on for the next steps. A reminder that businesses and for-profit organizations can't affiliate and should consider joining Upstream Solutions' [Reuse Solutions Network](#).

Have a discussion with your organization members to ensure that everyone is on the same page about this new commitment and secure their approval.

Why do you want to take on plastics? How much commitment and time do you want to devote to the issue? How do you want to organize within your group?

*Tip: One way to structure Beyond Plastics within your current organization is by forming a committee that mimics that of a Local Group. See our [Guide for Setting Up a Local Group](#) and [Key Roles](#) for ideas on setting up a successful organizing structure.*

### **2. Make It Official**

Beyond Plastics hosts a directory of Local Groups and Affiliates on our website. The intention of this map is to help people in your area find you without having to go through Beyond Plastics. To add your organization to the directory as an affiliate, we'll need some information such as your group's name, location, website, contact email, and social media handles.

Fill out this [form](#) to put your organization on the national map at [BeyondPlastics.org](#).

You'll then be able to register to attend the quarterly meetings to get the latest information on the issues, support from Beyond Plastics, and coordinate efforts nationwide.

## Optional: Take Our Free Grassroots Training

[Sign up for the Beyond Plastics virtual organizing training](#). Any member of your organization is welcome to take our free virtual training, especially whoever will take the lead on your plastic pollution work.

We offer the two-part virtual training on a quarterly basis and each session takes roughly two hours to complete, for a total of four hours. A member of Beyond Plastics will be in touch to share the next training dates. In the meantime, continue organizing on reducing plastics or see our Menu of Campaigns for ideas.

## Use our Campaign Library

Peruse the [Campaign Library](#) for initiatives that you can run locally along with templates and other resources you'll need for the campaign. Campaigns fall into three main categories:

- Education - Reaching as many people as possible with our message and educating them about the issue.
- Policy - Working to change local, state, and federal regulations or laws.
- Reduction - Initiatives to reduce single-use plastics in your community.

**\*\* Please note:** We ask that you not advocate for any plastic policy positions that aren't aligned with Beyond Plastics' Message, Purpose, and Principles as a Beyond Plastics Affiliate. [Click here for an overview of Beyond Plastics' policy positions](#) and, if you have any questions, please check with Beyond Plastics by contacting Alexis Goldsmith, Organizing Director, at [alexisgoldsmith@bennington.edu](mailto:alexisgoldsmith@bennington.edu)

## Do A Deeper Dive

Whether you're waiting to take the training or just want to learn more, we've curated some of our staff favorites below. Spend some time cozying up to these sources and use them to spark discussion and raise awareness within your organization.

- [The Story of Plastic](#) documentary film
- PBS Frontline's [Plastic Wars](#)
- [Plastic Atlas](#): Facts and Figures About the World of Synthetic Polymers, Heinrich Boll Stiftung
- [The New Coal: Plastics and Climate Change](#), Beyond Plastics, October 2021
  - Rebecca Altman's article in the *Atlantic*, "[How Bad Are Plastics, Really?](#)", January 2021
  - [Plastic: A Toxic Love Story](#) by Susan Freinkel
  - [Thicker Than Water, The Quest for Solutions to the Plastic Crisis](#) by Erica Cirino, October 2021



- [\*Plastic Unlimited: How Corporations Are Fueling the Ecological Crisis and What We Can Do About It\*](#) by Alice Mah, July 2022
- David Sayer's [plastics wiki](#), an amazing assemblage of easy-to browse information on all aspects of the plastic pollution crisis
- Judith Enck's seven-week online course, [Beyond Plastic Pollution](#), at Bennington College - offered in both the fall and spring semesters and open to people of all ages everywhere.

## QUESTIONS?

If you have questions, please email our National Organizing Director, Alexis Goldsmith at [alexisgoldsmith@bennington.edu](mailto:alexisgoldsmith@bennington.edu). It will take all of us working together to stem the rising tide of plastic pollution and we are grateful for your willingness to take this exciting next step with us.