The Giving What We Can Guide to Easy Chapter Creation
Aka: Erwan's Method

GIVING
what we can

Setting up a new chapter is, I believe, as simple as it seems. It needn't be hugely time-consuming, as an event can take as little as six hours to prepare for (including promotion). 20-30 hours work over a period of several months, or roughly an hour or two a week, can be sufficient to set up a sustainable and vibrant chapter. -Erwan

In this document I will be outlining a chapter outreach method first tried out by Erwan Atcheson. Using this method, Erwan was able to remotely start up chapters at Belfast and Glasgow in less than 20 hours per chapter. In this document I will be outlining a step by step guide for applying this method to new universities. The guide is based on Erwan's own practices, and makes some relatively minor changes based on some worries (articulated below **like so**)

Erwan's Method can be applied in two different contexts. The first is in a city/university where we have no chapter, and the other is in a city/university where a new chapter is just starting out, and is short on committee members. Each step in the guide below is written on the assumption that we don't yet have a chapter in the area. At the end of the guide, I will outline the changes that need to be made to this plan in order to use it in a context where there is a new chapter that is looking for more committee members.

A few quick notes about this guide: first, it should be noted that these are predominantly guidelines - for example if you want to write your own emails to departments and societies, feel free to do so! I provide the drafts merely as a guide for what these messages might look at. I should also point out that setting up chapters on the ground is hard, and people might get disheartened, so one of the important parts of these roles will be supporting people, and remind them that they're doing valuable work! Indeed this will be one of the major roles of Chapter Mentors, but it is something that should be kept in mind when we are thinking about recruiting new people to start up chapters. It is also important to keep everything relaxed, friendly, fun, and non-confrontational when interacting with

new people and aiming to set up chapters in new places- they are doing/will do great work, we don't want to scare them off!

Throughout the document I make reference to two types of volunteers; 'Chapter Growth Team members' and 'Mentors'. 'Chapter Growth Team members' are volunteers who are interested in helping to promote chapters by producing resources, actively encouraging new chapters to emerge, and strengthening bonds between existing chapters. Chapter Mentors are interested in all of the above, and in addition look to directly mentor newly formed chapters, by skyping them every few weeks, talking them through best practices and following up on best practices. You can read more about the Chapter Growth Team [here](#) and Chapter Mentors [here](#).

Erwan's Method

1. Social Media.

1.1 Create a Facebook Community page for the local chapter

Create a dedicated email address (gmail) and then use this email to create a new facebook account. This account will be used as an avatar for the chapter.

Sign up for a new Facebook account (a person) called "Gwwc X" after the name of your group using the new Gmail account

Use [this image](#) as the picture for the avatar. Use a basic image editor (you can use Paint on Windows or Preview on Mac) to write the name of the chapter underneath the logo. You should use **bold** Source Sans Pro for the font, which you can downloaded from [here](#) if it's not already on your computer. See the example picture [here](#). If you're not sure how to do this, email Giving What We Can, and we'll organise it for you.

Create a Facebook Community Page with the name: "Giving What We Can: X"
- Go to https://www.facebook.com/pages/create
- Choose 'Cause/Community'
- Name your page 'Giving What We Can: X'

Use a local photo from the area for the cover photo on the groups page (check the Wikipedia page for your city, or search [Flickr](#) and then change the 'License' type to 'Creative Commons' for free-use images)

-Post to this weekly (more often if possible) with news about what Giving What We Can is doing, what your chapter is doing, or positive stories about effective altruism or global development (try to avoid

controversial topics, or topics that cast aid and poverty relief in a negative light). A simple way is to repost content from the main GWWC FB page.

<I have worries about the following two steps, they seem crucial but not sure if they might come off as 'too-spammy' is there a different way to achieve the same end?>

Have this avatar join every local group (university or not) in the area that seems relevant.

To each group, post a link to the Facebook page with this message: "Here's a page some of you might be interested in: stay up-to-date on cost-effective ways to end global poverty. Members pledge 10% of their income to charity." <question- is this the optimal pitch?>

1.2 Create a Twitter Account for the local chapter

Follow the relevant features of 1.1 (ie. avatar choice, email, ext.)

Follow anyone in the local area that seems interested in global poverty/charity/effectiveness.

Tweet similar tweets as the main Giving What We Can twitter account to reduce work!

You can use 'Buffer' to automatically cross post tweets and Facebook updates in regular intervals.

2. Recruiting volunteers.

2.1 Post on the FB page, on the FB groups, and via twitter that you are looking for volunteers to help run this new society.

As long as you are managing remotely- be sure to have a post pinned to the top saying the following:

> *Giving What We Can: X is a brand new chapter of Giving What We Can, the global movement supporting the world's most effective charities. We're just starting out in X and we're looking for volunteers to help run this chapter. If you're interested, please send a message to the page, or to gwwc_x@gmail.com*

After putting the post on the Facebook page, and tweeting out that you are looking for volunteers to any twitter followers;

2.2. Use the following Draft emails to reach out to common University Mailing lists:

[The Main Student Organization](#)

[Philosophy Department](#)

[Economics Department](#)

[Math Department](#)

[Computer Science Department](#)

[Development Department.](#)

[Politics Department](#)

[Life Sciences](#)

It would also be worth reaching out to other departments to the list- If you have written a draft emails to one of these departments- link to it in a comment *here*.

It is also worth looking into the Phil/Econ/Development department to see if there are any individual professors there who are particularly interested in global development, moral obligations to the lives of the poor, or effectiveness focused interventions.

2.3. Contacting Interested Individuals

10-15 people will likely respond. [Erwan's estimates]

The aim is to get 2-3 core members committed to running the society.

Ideally in finding those 2-3 core members, you will pass them onto their corresponding Mentor as soon as possible. If you don't yet have a mentor in line to connect with the area you are out reaching out to, post in the facebook group to note that you need one. If none respond, contact [Jonathan Courtney](#). As a rule, during initial contacts, feel free to respond as GWWC x ASAP, and then pass them onto the mentors at the earliest convenience.

That said, one could take the following actions if one is not a mentor:

Always respond to all contacts within 24 hours if possible.

Find out if they'd like to help, and how.

Ask if they could perform specific tasks for the society, for example:
- finding out how to become an official university society
- taking charge of the FB page and/or avatar or twitter
- sending out emails
- making a logo

Try to meet up face-to-face with the person as soon as possible. Failing that, video calling is a good second best.
- If you yourself are not a mentor- put them in contact with a mentor to take this step.

Give people defined roles, eg President, Secretary, Treasurer, Media: When assigning the roles, consider following the outline in [this guide](#).
- If you are the mentor, if not encourage the mentor to do it.

Organise a group meetup (face to face or by video)
- If you are the mentor, if not encourage the mentor to do it.

Facebook friend/follow on twitter everyone.
- If you are the mentor, if not encourage the mentor to do it.

Existing-Chapter Changes

The outline above assumed that there was not yet a University/City chapter in place. That said, most of the steps can be taken as is, with a few exceptions:

First, you will want to have the head of the current chapter also have access to the GWWC X avatar. This will be done by having the same GWWC <name> account used by both the chapter heads in the area and the assigned member of the Chapter Growth Team.

 Ideally, all personal interactions (i.e. over facebook chat, or twitter PMs) will be directed to the person running the chapter. If the Chapter Growth Volunteer gets contacted while they are using the Facebook Page, the easiest thing to do is to create a group chat with the avatar, the chapter leaders facebook account, and the person who is interested. This will ensure that there is immediate personal contact made from the chapter leader in the area!

Another important additional step in applying Erwan's method to an area that already has a chapter in place will be to get in contact with the chapter before helping them with outreach. To that end, it will be important that the person doing outreach for an existing chapter is a Chapter Mentor, as part of their role will involve interacting with the new chapter on a regular basis.

The mentor can either take these actions for a chapter, or provide them with this outline and delegate these activities to the chapter itself. It is up to the mentor to decide what is best, but in many cases, it is probably preferable to have the chapters do it themselves.

That is the end of **The Giving What We Can Guide to Easy Chapter Creation**. *Below I detail some of the steps that Mentors will take after the steps above have been complete. These are only applicable in areas where there isn't already a chapter (i.e. where a new chapter is starting)*

Next Step- Connecting the Interested person/people to a Mentor.

Once the Person is put in contact with either myself or a Chapter Mentor, they will go onto the following track:

Second action- First Email

Triggered by getting contacted by the individual (Email or Facebook).

I provide Introductory Chapter Documents in an email, and encouraging them to Skype me at their earliest convenience.

Example of email:

Hey <name>,

It is great to hear that you want to start a Giving What We Can chapter in <place>! My name is Jonathan Courtney and I am the Director of Outreach for Giving What We Can. As part of my role, I help new chapters (like yours!) to start up- sharing best practices, and directing them to other EA's in their area. It would be great if we could chat over Skype later this week to go over the details of starting a new chapter. Feel free to find a time that works for you on my [online calendar](#).

If you would like, before we chat you can take a look through our [chapter resource](#) google drive. In particular I would suggest looking over the [starter pack](#), as it outlines many of the steps involved in starting a new chapter.

Looking forward to talking to you soon!

Best,

Jon

<For volunteers, for those who have contacted the GWWC facebook group have them send me an email, and I will respond with them>

Third Action- First Skype Call

In the skype conversation I:
- Ask them about their background

- Answer any general questions they might have about GWWC/EA
- Point them to good online sources if they are interested (and not already a big EA)
- Emphasize the point of how awesome chapters are as a way of fighting extreme poverty and promoting effective altruism.
- Provide them with new chapter resource document, make them admin for Giving What We Can facebook group in their area.
- Schedule a Skype call for the next week to chat about actionable items coming out of the document.
- Give them link to Chapter Hub
    - For the time being, have them introduce themselves on the Chapter Facebook Page.

Fourth Action- Second Skype Call.
- A week after the previous call.
- Send an email the day before to confirm.
- Discuss their actionable items to get a committee- who do they think they should contact? Talk about strategies for getting committee members that have worked in the past.
- Low time commitment, event that is likely to attract people who would be interested in EA (singer's TED talk- with Q+A if they think they can handle it- talk though common Q+As with them) - Other actions suggested by chapters for getting committee members
- Put them in contact with anyone else from their area that has expressed interest (from my continued emailing/social media efforts)

Fifth Action- Email to follow up about Committee event/activities
- Follow up a day after event or at agreed upon time
- Set up first Skype with full committee- make introductions, answer any questions.
- Start Shared Google Doc we will use for progress/actionable items
- Ask them about plans- provide suggestions for big first event, refer to relevant documents about how to organize event- lead up time, how to get speakers, provide formated posters that they can drag and drop into. Have feedback forms with their name on it to make mail list. Provide guide for managing a mailing list.
- Emphasize the importance of having a few follow up events after, no need to rush it.

Sixth Action- Email 3 weeks before big event to ask them about the progress is going, -
- Ask if there is anything we can do to help.

Sevent Action- Follow up after the big event, they have become a chapter!
- Give them general suggestions and common hurdles (make sure to stay on the look out for new committee members!)
- Set up monthly/termly Skype times. Congratulate them!