
Ideas for Recruiting Members and Getting Noticed

The more people hear about Effective Altruism (EA), the more effectively people will act to make the world a better place. They will donate to effective charities, select high impact careers and research avenues, and so on.

This guide will give you tips on making the largest EA chapter in the world. It will guide you through each of the ways of recruiting members.

These tips are both for building up your members and can also be used for advertising a single event.

The best ways to recruit are:

1. [Through your own networks and relationships](#)
2. [Through existing networks and relationships](#)
3. [Through direct activism](#)
4. [Through a figurehead](#)
5. [Through non-targeted outreach](#)



1. Your own networks and relationships

Talk to the people you know: friends, coworkers, family members, etc. If you're interested in making the world a better place, chances are that some of your friends and family are interested in that too.

- Ask everyone you know if they would come to a single event to try and find out a bit more about effective altruism. Recommend an event that you think they may be interested in. For example, if they are thinking about jobs then they may be interested in a discussion of effective careers.
- Ask your friends to volunteer. This could be volunteering in a tiny way, directly with you, to help start the chapter. Or it could be volunteering with THINK or other EA organizations in some way

Post about your starting a meetup on your facebook page. Have your friends share the post. especially people who have many facebook friends or friends in different social groups. See the [sample pitch](#).

- When you host an event invite all of your friends on facebook. Get as many people as possible to invite all of their friends and so on. [Use this tip](#) to invite many people at once

Take Action:

List 10 people you know who would be interested in attending a meetup. Think about what topic they would each be interested in.

Name: _____ - Invited: [], Name: _____ -
Invited: [] Name: _____ - Invited: [], Name:
_____ - Invited: [] Name: _____ - Invited: [],
Name: _____ - Invited: [] Name: _____ -
Invited: [], Name: _____ - Invited: [] Name:
_____ - Invited: [], Name: _____ - Invited: []

Find 3 of your facebook friends who will share your pitch



2. Use existing networks and relationships

Joint events with similar societies

Run an event with another organisation, Choose groups based around a topic like poverty, animal welfare, philosophy, ethics or politics. Most of the time they will be looking for events to put on and would love to work with you. For each event you hold make sure you explain THINK and Effective Altruism so that the attendees from the other organisation can learn more.

Get similar societies to advertise you

If they are supporting a good cause likely they would happily plug THINK to their members.

Maybe also consider turning up to events for other organisations and talking to people there and see if they would be interested in joining THINK.

Also go talk for other societies. Some societies will be looking for a speaker There may also be societies where anyone can go present or a university equivalent to TED talks.

Get a professor to give credit for attending THINK modules

If you can do this expect amazing results!! This will not be possible at every university. Consider offering a course with a certificate yourself, or in partnership with another organisation. For example a course in “practical ethics”.

Make sure you are listed

Make sure your name is up on any of your university’s database of student groups. Make sure your meetups are listed on your university’s event calendar, and anywhere else that students may look for events or societies to join. (You may need to be registered as a student society). Also Some universities have volunteering services so that any organisations who want volunteers can give their details. If you can do this go for it.

Take Action:

E.g. List 3 organizations relevant to THINK on campus

1. _____ Way to contact:



2. _____ Way to contact:

3. _____ Way to contact:

Contact each one and ask if they would hold a joint event. If they say no ask to at least have a mention on their newsletter list.

Think of 3 places where students might look to try and find out about events

1. _____ Listed: []

2. _____ Listed: []

3. _____ Listed: []

Make sure you are listed on each of these



3. Direct activism

Go to student fairs

I repeat: Go to student fairs! Many universities will hold fairs for students to find out what goes on at that university (Student Activity fairs / Volunteer fairs / Freshers fairs / etc). Often there will be a large fair at the start of the academic year, but more specific fairs (like a Charities Fair) can be throughout the year. These fairs provide an excellent opportunity for labeling. Sometimes you need to be registered as a student group to get to these events, but if you can get to these events go to them! [See here](#) for advice on labeling.

Talk to people directly - Labeling and leafleting

In fact why wait for a student activity fair to start up. Just get a table an/or some leaflets and a convenient passing place and get students to sign up to your new society. [See here](#) for advice on labeling.

Class announcements

Ask (phone, email, visit) professors to allow a short 3-5 minute presentation at the beginning of their class. Target large relevant (like politics and philosophy) classes. Prepare a short presentation. Keep track of which professors and classes you have talked to.

Action:

Write down the dates of student fairs over the next year:

Four Professors who would be interested in Effective Altruism

1. _____ To contact: _____
Contacted: []
2. _____ To contact: _____



Contacted: []

3. _____ To contact: _____

Contacted: []

4. _____ To contact: _____

Contacted: []

Practice your pitch

See the [2 minute THINK labeling pitch](#), tweak it to your audience and conversation style then practice it in front of the mirror.

4. A popular event

Find a famous person (and host an awesome launch event)

Are there any famous academics or other famous people (journalists, politicians, etc) either at your university or in your university town. Also have a look at our list of potential famous speakers here. Contact them (calling or writing is better than email), explain THINK and ask if they would be willing to talk at a THINK event.

(If they turn you down ask if they would officially endorse THINK / become an official patron of the student group, / provide a supportive quote / etc)

Get students to perform (and hold a awesome launch event/party)

Can't find someone famous. Lots of student bands, dance, music or comedy groups will perform for free for a good cause, if asked. Furthermore they will bring all their friends to the show. Combined with a few pitches for THINK this could be an excellent way of getting your name out or running a THINK launch event/party

Feel free to contact me for help with a launch event, at: sam@thelifeyoucansave.org.

Other events

Consider other possible popular events with an EA twist, such as a "How-to-improve-the-world- themed speed dating". Try to tap existing networks, such as holding the event with a particular food hall or college. We have a donor who will put money towards [Giving Games](#). If you run one of these, link the amount of money that goes to charity to the amount of people who attend. To get a game set up email: giving@thehighimpactnetwork.org.



Action:

List either 4 famous people to contact OR 4 student bands / entertainment groups

1. _____ To contact: _____
Contacted: []
2. _____ To contact: _____
Contacted: []
3. _____ To contact: _____
Contacted: []
4. _____ To contact: _____
Contacted: []

5. Non-targeted outreach

Send around more emails:

To interested faculty members / to grad students / to relevant departments / to everybody you know / to any mailing lists you are part of / etc. In the email ask people to forward them on.

Advertise online:

Create a facebook page (see the tips [here](#)). Invite all of your friends to join. Ask for shares from other college connected pages.

Put up flyers:

In dorms / on dorm billboards, walls and doors / in dorm bathrooms & stalls / in hallways and elevators / in locations designated for flyers / at bus stops or community centers.
(Sample flyers can be found [here](#))

Get in the news



Get mentioned in the local and school newspapers & radio stations. Issues press releases, talk with reporters, and talk with your university's press-relations officer.

Action:

Create a facebook page for your meetup (see the tips [here](#))



Tabeling advice

WHERE AND WHEN

- Pick high-foot-traffic areas like a dining hall, student union or plaza.
- Make sure that it's not too crowded. You want the table to get noticed and you want people to have the time to stop and talk.
- Aim for a variety of places and times so as to get a good mix of people.
- Get permission — make sure you are allowed to table there.

ORGANISING VOLUNTEERS

Have a rota system so that there is someone manning the table at all times, ideally more than one person at a time. This can easily be organized together when people meet or via a Google Spreadsheet or you can use a site like when2meet.com to see when people are free.

WHAT GOES ON A TABLE?

When a table is set up well, it can build the reputation of an organization as being credible and active. Make sure the table looks attractive and professional.

- A large poster or sign or banner to help project your presence into a flow of people.
- Other posters and pictures and facts on display
- A way for people to sign up to your mailing list. This can be a sign-up sheet on a piece of paper or a spreadsheet on a laptop or a form online.
- Materials on the table could include:
 - Fact sheets.
 - Copies of relevant books.
 - Buttons.
 - Leaflets/flyers. If you have leaflets/flyers try to make sure that all the important information such as what THINK is and when your next event will be is on one leaflet that you encourage people to take.
 - Calendar of events.
 - Food. If you have some food make it something that people have to stop to eat and can't just put in their bag (so cakes are better than sweets).
 - A computer/TV showing the THINK video.

WHAT TO ASK FOR

- You can just ask students to sign up to your mailing list. Otherwise ask them to sign up to a particular campaign or sign a petition or take the pledge.
- Always have an optional box for interested in volunteering. This is an excellent way to gain useful information for sifting people who may be willing to help you or THINK.

SAMPLE TABLING RAP

You need a reasonable idea of things to say to stop and get people's attention. Trial and error and giving



each other feedback will help a lot with developing an effective pitch. Perhaps start with something like

Hi there, do you want to make the world a better place?

(They say 'yes. You nod and agree and look enthusiastic)

Ever thought about what's the best way of doing that, of making the world a better place. Cos that is what THINK does. THINK is all about looking at how we can use strategy and creativity to make a bigger positive impact on the world

For example you may give to charity, but some charities are crap and will waste your money yet other charities will use tiny amounts of money to improve hundreds of lives.

(If at a fair: Our estimates show that some of the volunteering opportunities in this room are 100s of times more effective than others)

We also look at making a difference with your career and are connected to an organisation that offers free ethical career advice for any career path. Like which research opportunities in each subject make the biggest difference.

We meet up regularly and discuss the most effective ways of improving the world. Does that all make sense?

(If they say 'no' explain in more detail. If they say yes nod enthusiastically again)

Awesome! Our next meetup is ... (fill in details)

So lets add you email address to the email list and lets get you involved.

OTHER TIPS

- Use the table as a base, not as a wall to hide behind. Get the more confident tablers to "float" out into the traffic flow to reach more people. Don't be afraid to go up to people.
- Don't leave a table unattended.
- Give each other feedback. The best way to train is to learn by doing. One person table for a few minutes while the other person watches. Then alternate and give feedback. Or table near each other so you can give lots of feedback.
- On average, you can expect each person to get about six names of students interested in your group in an hour.
- If you are using a sign-up sheet write some names and email addresses at the top. No one wants to be the first to sign an empty sign-up sheet.
- Most of the time you only need their email, so do not bother to collect names as well.

FOLLOW UP

- Chase up. If you have asked people to do something like donate to effective charities then send emails to check they have done it
- Offer an event as follow up. For example, a dinner or a social event.

