



COLLEGE EV CLUB TOOLKIT: HOW TO GET STARTED



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Introduction

Welcome to the world of electric vehicle clubs, where you have the power to drive monumental change and spearhead the most significant evolution in vehicle technology since the advent of the automobile! As you embark on this journey, you'll discover the excitement and significance of embracing EVs as a transformative force for the future.

In a world racing towards sustainability, transportation electrification stands as a defining moment in our history. While other countries have already embraced EVs with open arms, the United States stands at a critical crossroads, yearning to accelerate its progress and become a global leader. Now is the time for action, and by starting your own electric vehicle club, you are a trailblazer revolutionizing how we move and shaping the future of our nation. This guide will provide essential steps, valuable insights, and proven strategies to ensure your club's success and help you drive the electrification revolution forward!

The momentous investments made by both the government and private companies are clear signs of the immense potential and undeniable weight behind the transition to electric transportation. As EVs have evolved from just a niche choice to a practical, cost-effective, and innovative option, they are reshaping the fabric of transportation and rewriting the rules of progress.

Beyond the captivating technological and economic prospects, embracing electric vehicles offers a profound opportunity to shift our nation's energy landscape. By generating our own energy and reducing reliance on foreign entities, we foster national self-sufficiency and secure a brighter future for generations to come. When constructing the vehicles themselves, we have the opportunity to build American industry—promoting jobs and ethical labor practices along the entire supply chain. Through a robust circular economy, vehicles and their components can be recycled and refurbished, reducing excess waste. It's not just about driving EVs: it's about driving change, empowering communities, and embarking on a journey that transcends transportation to redefine our relationship with the world around us.

And here's the best part: the power is in your hands to create something extraordinary, unique, and tailored to your vision. Your electric vehicle club is where you have the freedom to craft an experience that reflects your passion, goals, and dreams. Whether fostering academic discussions, driving local policy change, engineering new technologies, or organizing awe-inspiring events that captivate your campus, your club can become a resounding force that sets the course for a brighter, sustainable future.

This guide will outline the steps necessary to build your own EV club. Based on experiences of student EV clubs across the country, this guide outlines the numerous obstacles and opportunities awaiting you on this electrifying journey. From establishing your club's vision and

purpose to navigating the intricate landscape of EV-related challenges, you will find valuable insights and practical advice to help you drive monumental change.

Getting Started

Vision:

Mission Statement

The first step in creating your electric vehicle club is to outline a clear purpose and vision. This initial goal will be the driving force behind all your club's endeavors. Remember, you don't have to make the mission statement perfect on the first try; it can continuously evolve over time. Describing your vision is essential as it enables others to understand and join your mission.

Focus on the benefits and challenges of transitioning to EV and allow that to guide you as you craft your mission statement. Let's take a look at an example of an EV club's vision statement:

The Electric Vehicle Organization is founded to encourage the adoption and development of electric vehicles on campus and in the community and shall strive to unite students of all majors, ages, and backgrounds in the development and adoption of electric vehicles.

Once you have a clear vision in place, you're ready to move forward and build a remarkable electric vehicle club that will make a lasting impact on your campus and beyond.

Choosing a Target

In the realm of electric vehicle clubs, the opportunities to make a difference are vast and multifaceted, encompassing a wide array of challenges and avenues for impact. From navigating the complexities of charging infrastructure to advocating for supportive legislation, from exploring sustainable sourcing of EV components to delving into battery technology advancements, the possibilities may initially seem daunting. However, this comprehensive list serves as an excellent starting point to help decide what direction you will lead your club. As club members meet and local needs are identified, additional focus areas will emerge naturally. This list includes areas of significant importance and tactics to achieve these goals.

Opportunity Areas

- **Charging Infrastructure:** Building a robust and accessible charging network is crucial for increasing EV adoption. Your club can advocate for more charging stations on campus and within the local community, ensuring electric vehicle owners have convenient access to charging facilities. For engineering-inclined clubs, consider addressing charger

reliability and efficacy. Large-scale charging networks can only operate if the individual charging stations are effective and consistent.

- **EV Incentives:** Collaborating with local and state authorities to advocate for green energy incentives, such as tax credits and rebates, can significantly boost EV adoption rates and make electric vehicles more accessible to a broader audience. Consider collaborating with utility companies as well. By incentivizing the purchase of EVs, utility companies can expect significant increases in electricity sales.
- **Electrification of Public Transportation:** Promoting the electrification of public transportation systems is a powerful way to reduce carbon emissions in areas most impacted by transportation pollution. Your club can collaborate with local authorities and transportation agencies to advocate for electric buses and other eco-friendly transportation options.
- **Renewable Energy Integration:** Encouraging the integration of renewable energy sources with EV charging infrastructure helps create a sustainable transportation ecosystem. Your club can work with renewable energy providers to promote using clean energy to power electric vehicles. Renewable energy generation can be independent generation for specific locations or sources connected through the grid. Finding which style is most effective for your area is vital.
- **Sustainable Transportation Solutions:** Advocate for sustainable transportation solutions on campus and within the community, such as bike-sharing programs, carpooling initiatives, and ride-sharing services that include electric vehicles in their fleets.
- **Circular Economy of EVs:** Explore opportunities to promote the circular economy for electric vehicles, including initiatives for recycling and repurposing EV batteries, minimizing waste, and extending the lifespan of EV components.
- **Sustainable Sourcing of EV Components:** Advocate for the use of responsibly sourced materials and components in EV manufacturing, ensuring environmental and social considerations are taken into account throughout the supply chain.
- **Battery Technology Advancements:** Collaborate with researchers and industry experts to advance battery technology, seeking innovative ways to enhance battery performance, longevity, and recycling capabilities.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Engage in policy advocacy to support legislation and initiatives that encourage the adoption of EVs and promote sustainable transportation practices at local, regional, and national levels.

Tactics

- **Industry Funding Streams.** Both local and federal funding is available for research and the promotion of EVs. Utilize this funding to assist your club and other EV promoters in your area. Understanding the current incentives is mandatory to assist adoption effectively. A comprehensive list of existing state and federal incentives and initiatives can be found [here](#).
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Raising awareness about the [benefits of EVs](#) and dispelling myths surrounding electric vehicles is vital. Your club can organize public awareness campaigns, educational workshops, and promotional events to inform people about the positive impact of transitioning to electric transportation.
- **EV Conversion Workshops:** Organizing workshops that teach students and community members how to convert conventional vehicles into electric ones presents a hands-on opportunity to drive sustainable mobility solutions.
- **Electrification Events:** Host electrification events and showcases where students and the community can experience electric vehicles firsthand. Test drives, demonstrations, and interactive exhibits can dispel common misconceptions and generate enthusiasm for EVs.
- **Student-led EV Design Competitions:** Organize student-led electric vehicle design competitions, fostering creativity and innovation among engineering and design students while advancing EV technology.
- **Partnerships with Companies:** Forge partnerships with local businesses and industries to promote EV adoption among employees and customers. These collaborations can lead to shared resources, sponsorship opportunities, and mutual benefits for your club and the business partners.

Building the Team:

Recruitment

The backbone of any successful electric vehicle club is its team—a group of passionate individuals dedicated to positively impacting your campus and beyond.

To kickstart your club, you'll need a core group of 3-5 dedicated members who will set the tone and welcome newcomers. Look for individuals who share your passion for electric vehicles; they could be friends or classmates eager to make a difference. Attracting students to join your club may initially pose a challenge, but it will become easier as your club gains momentum.

Once you've established a solid foundation, it's time to raise more awareness about your club. Promoting a brand-new club across your campus may feel daunting, but have confidence in your vision, and you will be able to develop an impressive student organization. When speaking to potential members, highlight some benefits or unique opportunities students can gain by joining the electric vehicle club. For instance, they can learn about cutting-edge EV technology, contribute to sustainability efforts, network with like-minded individuals, or learn about career opportunities and industry needs.

Diversifying your recruitment strategies is crucial. Only by effectively using in-person and digital recruiting strategies will you be able to grow your club. While often requiring more effort than posting on social media, In-person methods are often the most effective way to recruit new members. However, before you start calling in students, some critical details must be included: What is your club? What do you do, and how do you do it? You must clarify what activities new members will perform and their respective outcomes. While some students may be enticed by the industry itself, many students will need to know exactly what they are signing up for. Once you are clear on expectations, you can begin spreading the word across campus. Typical approaches to recruiting include:

- **Posters and Flyers**

A classic example of recruiting, posters, and flyers are a tried and true approach to growing awareness of your club. Use unique content and location to get the most out of your physical content. There are thousands of posters across college campuses; you will have to break the mold to stand out. In your content, use shapes and images that are attention-grabbing and exciting. Be creative with where you put up your posters. High-traffic areas are ideal, but avoid pinboards overflowing with other posters. Find new locations where it can stand out on its own. Table tops are a great option, keep in mind that posters on tables are often thrown away after a couple of days, so always put posters out early in the day, ensuring as many students see them as possible.

- **Tabling at Events**

While many universities have student life days or other events specifically for student clubs to connect with the school, you will have to go above and beyond to grow. Consider tabling at other events, including sports games, concerts, fairs, or any other occasion with good attendance. If no events occur at your recruiting time, set up a table in a high-traffic area at the busiest time of day. Setting up shop on a random corner or sidewalk may feel odd, but be assured, this is an incredible way to meet new members. Having a bowl of candy or another small free item will significantly increase your engagement, sure some students may only speak to you for the snack, but with every student you talk to, you are building recognition of your club. Always have handouts or QR codes for additional information and the next steps for joining.

- **Classroom Announcements**

Short presentations to classes are a great way to target the specific types of students you are looking for. When asking a professor to make an announcement in their class, it is best to ask in person, as it shows effort and assures the professor that you will be using their time effectively. Keep announcements short and to the point. Always leave a website, link, or social media handle for students to engage with. Handles can be written on a whiteboard or handed around as a flyer. It is often best not to allow questions at that time and instead point students to additional information through your provided media.

- **Residence Halls**

School dormitories are great locations to promote your club. While putting up posters and flyers inside of dorms is useful, it is the existing network within residence halls that is most valuable to your cause. Many dorms have regular mandatory hall meetings and newsletters that reach all their residents. Do your best to access these opportunities by contacting RAs and Resident Hall Directors.

- **Related Groups**

A great way to find students likely to be interested in your club can be found in existing clubs or groups with a similar focus. These groups can include environmental groups, engineering groups, sustainability groups, and more. The best way to approach these groups is to attend their meetings. In this way, you will not only be able to share your club in person, but you will also learn from the structure and organization of another club. It is essential to remember that many students already engaged in clubs may already have full schedules. Regardless, sharing your club with like-minded individuals is invaluable as they will likely pass along the information. Maintain contact with these clubs as you may wish to collaborate with them in the future.

Creating a digital path. You must have a central digital location that all of your recruiting material leads to. When interested students find a flyer or poster, they should be able to navigate to your organization's main web page easily. Whether this is a page on a social media platform or its own website does not matter. On this page, you will provide details on engaging with the club, including a sign-up form, leadership contact information, or a new member meeting location and date. Whatever method you choose should be prominently displayed on your main page and easy to navigate. Make the application process as accessible and welcoming as possible. After putting in all the effort to build interest with students, the last thing you want is for students to be discouraged by a confusing digital footprint.

By employing various messaging strategies and mediums of communication, you increase the likelihood of attracting students from multiple majors, ages, and backgrounds. For guidance and examples of effective recruiting materials, please visit this page ([📄 Recruiting](#)).

Officers

While your club grows, it is crucial to effectively delegate roles and responsibilities to new members. Avoid the temptation to run the whole show by yourself. In the long run, it's better to let others make mistakes and learn rather than burning yourself out trying to accomplish everything. Given that your club is brand-new, conducting effective leadership elections might be challenging initially. Personally delegating roles can serve as a temporary solution until a more robust democratic process is established. Relying on the leadership of a single person can work for quick decision-making initially but is not sustainable and, if not addressed, could eventually collapse the club. For the club's long-term viability, responsibilities and authority must be distributed among members to ensure they gain the necessary skills and training to maintain the organization even after the founding president graduates.

Choosing an effective club structure can be tricky, and it will often depend on your individual club's specific goals and usual activities. However, certain roles are fundamental regardless of the particular leadership structure. These roles include:

1. **President:** The President plays a central role in leading the club's strategic vision and maintaining an effective working culture. They should have a bird's-eye view of the entire club and ensure that each part is functioning effectively. Additionally, the President often serves as the point of contact between the club and the university, as well as other external businesses or organizations.
2. **Business Manager:** The Business Manager is responsible for all club financial transactions. It is vital to maintain accurate financial records from the outset. Without careful oversight, transactions can be lost in communication, leading to discrepancies.
3. **Director of Marketing:** Marketing plays a key role in the club's success. The Director of Marketing is tasked with maintaining a consistent and clear image of the club. Producing professional and engaging materials is essential when publicly advocating for the club's cause. Creating a recognizable style with specific colors and fonts can be beneficial.
4. **Director of Safety:** Prioritizing safety is essential, particularly when working with any type of tool. Even a single injury can instantly shut down the club. The Director of Safety monitors all potential health hazards and implements preventive measures when necessary. Additionally, as EVs gain momentum and popularity, some detractors have created myths regarding their safety. A dedicated Director of Safety can ensure accurate information and protocols, help educate students on [EV safety](#), and dispel any misinformed fears.

Advisor

Cultivating positive relationships with the faculty at your university is an invaluable asset for your electric vehicle club. Faculty advisors can provide valuable assistance with networking and club management and offer useful advice based on their expertise. Before approaching a potential advisor, check if your university has any specific requirements or guidelines for this role.

When seeking an advisor, it's essential to determine the level of involvement you expect from them within the club. Some advisors may prefer active participation, attending every meeting, and being deeply involved in club activities. Others may opt for a more hands-off approach, providing guidance and support as needed. Regardless of the level of involvement, finding an advisor with whom you can develop a solid and trusting relationship is vital to the club's success.

Many faculty enjoy engaging with proactive students and are often eager to offer support and mentorship. Initiating contact can be as simple as sending an introductory email or stopping by their office during office hours. This initial outreach lays the foundation for building a positive and fruitful relationship with a potential advisor. During your search, keep an eye out for faculty who drive an EV, as they may be a great place to start.

Remember that faculty advisors can bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to your club, and their support can significantly contribute to the club's growth and impact on campus. Don't hesitate to seek their guidance and expertise as you continue to develop your electric vehicle club.

Making it official:

Constitution

Now that you have a group of students together and a faculty advisor, it's time to take the necessary steps to make your electric vehicle club official at your college or university. Each educational institution may have its own unique processes for starting a club, so always adhere to your university's guidelines and requirements.

While some universities might swiftly recognize your club, others require more time and effort. If you encounter challenges in gaining recognition, persistence is key. Don't be discouraged by initial resistance or bureaucratic hurdles; instead, view them as opportunities to demonstrate your commitment and determination to make your club a reality. Engage proactively with the university's organization responsible for clubs to illustrate your dedication and seriousness in establishing the club. As you work on securing recognition, focus on continuously improving and expanding your club's activities. Demonstrating consistent attendance and achievements

will strengthen your case for recognition. If you are looking for more information on events and activities, try the Making a Difference section.

Flexibility is vital during this process. Your club's direction and activities may evolve as you gain more members and insights. It's not uncommon for universities to request clubs to write a constitution before granting recognition. Although this may initially seem daunting, remember that it doesn't have to be perfect from the outset. The constitution can be amended over time to reflect the evolving nature of your club as it grows and matures. Avoid being overly specific in your language, allowing for flexibility in future corrections and additions. For an example of a constitution, go here ([☰ Constitution for Engineering Focused Club](#) [☰ Constitution for Advocacy Focused Clubs](#)).

Your faculty advisor can be valuable in advocating for official recognition, so leverage their support and expertise. Their backing can make a significant difference in gaining approval for your club.

Getting it Rolling:

Meeting location

Securing a reliable and accessible meeting location ensures good attendance and fosters a sense of belonging within your electric vehicle club. When choosing a meeting venue, prioritize accessibility for all students, minimizing travel distance as much as possible. Consistency in meeting locations and times is necessary to avoid confusion and to encourage regular attendance among members. Constantly changing meeting venues can deter potential participants, making building a consistent and engaged membership base challenging.

As you select a location, consider how the room's setup will impact the dynamics of your meetings. Standard classrooms with forward-facing seats may naturally lead to a lecture-style atmosphere, which might not be conducive to open discussions and collaboration. For more interactive and engaging meetings and events, opt for spaces with tables and open layouts that foster group discussions and teamwork.

Engage your faculty advisor in the process of selecting meeting venues, as they likely possess a good understanding of the school's layout and available spaces. Their insights can help you identify suitable locations that align with your club's needs and objectives.

Securing an appropriate and inviting meeting location creates an environment conducive to meaningful discussions, idea-sharing, and collaborative initiatives. A welcoming and well-suited meeting space can contribute significantly to the success and cohesion of your electric vehicle club.

Meeting structure

Effective organization and preparation are the cornerstones of productive meetings. Without a clear structure, members may leave meetings feeling like they're spinning their wheels without making progress. To avoid this, it's essential to plan each meeting carefully and set measurable goals to achieve.

Before the meeting commences, outline the agenda and desired meeting flow to ensure you stay on track. While conversations might naturally deviate from the initial plan, always strive to achieve the goals you've set for the meeting. Having a well-defined agenda helps keep discussions focused and productive.

Taking meeting notes is invaluable. Record key points, decisions, and action items discussed during the meeting to avoid unnecessary repetition in future gatherings. This practice enhances continuity and provides a reference for tracking progress and keeping everyone informed. It may be difficult for you to take notes while running the meeting. Designating a member to take notes lets you focus entirely on the meeting.

Action items are your best friend. After each meeting, document the specific tasks that need to be executed and detailed accounts of how they will be accomplished. Assigning particular responsibilities and setting deadlines will help maintain efficiency within the team, reduce the likelihood of procrastination, and ensure timely progress by holding members accountable.

Implementing a structured approach to your club's meetings creates a foundation for meaningful discussions, decision-making, and task completion. An organized and goal-oriented approach will empower your electric vehicle club to make tangible advancements and achieve its objectives.

Setting Goals

Setting the right objectives is undeniably the most critical factor in attracting and retaining members for your electric vehicle club. Your goal acts as the unifying force that brings all members together, bonded by a shared purpose. It's essential to define a goal or set of goals that are impactful yet attainable, motivating students to work hard and solve problems while avoiding feelings of futility.

Measurable and achievable metrics of success play a significant role in keeping members engaged and motivated. These metrics serve as tangible evidence of progress and accomplishments. For instance, you can track achievements such as the installation of charging stations on your campus or in your community, receiving acknowledgment from local government or industry or creating a new partnership, or successfully completing a specific

component of an electric vehicle build. Each milestone you reach together adds to the club's sense of achievement and boosts member morale. Without indicators of success, the club risks losing momentum and may struggle to maintain its appeal. When members can point to tangible outcomes of their efforts, they feel a sense of ownership and pride in the club's success.

Funding

Securing resources to support your club is imperative to club success but can be a confusing and discouraging process. Fortunately, the world of EVs is experiencing massive growth, providing numerous funding opportunities. Sponsors, including your university and external donors, can contribute to your funding efforts. Many schools offer grants for student research or projects, making them a top priority for your club's financial needs. If you encounter challenges finding student grants, seek advice from your advisor or contact your college's fundraising department. Their broader view of the school's finances can point you in the right direction.

When applying for school grants, consider what your university looks for in a club. These elements include:

- **Engagement:** Demonstrate students' level of involvement and participation in your club. A high number of members or attendees showcases the genuine interest your club generates among university students. Additionally, emphasize how engaged students are—beyond mere attendance—in the work your club is doing to strengthen your case.
- **Impact:** While evaluating the impact of a new club can be challenging, share your club's vision of its positive effects on the campus. Provide quantifiable metrics to support your claims, such as attendance numbers, successful campaigns, or completed projects, and offer evidence of your club's potential impact.
- **Education:** Emphasize that your club offers valuable learning experiences not seen elsewhere on campus. Highlight the subjects your club teaches, such as EV technology, interpersonal skills, and leadership. Running a club is a valuable opportunity for students to develop skills not typically taught in classrooms.
- **Sustainability:** Demonstrate your club's focus on long-term viability. Showcase the organizational structure you have developed and involve first- and second-year students to ensure your club's continuity even after the founding members graduate.

Fundraising from outside sources can be challenging, as each relationship with potential donors is unique. Consistent communication and engagement are essential for maintaining positive relationships with potential sponsors.

When approaching fundraising, understand the specific benefits each group offers to the other. While your club is not selling a product, donors still receive something from their contributions. Some benefits your club can offer include:

- **Talent Pipeline:** One of the most significant motivations for private companies to engage with student groups is access to potential talent. Companies often struggle with recruiting quality employees and engaging with your club allows them to identify and connect with motivated and talented individuals. By being part of your club's activities, companies can observe students' capabilities, work ethics, and enthusiasm, making it less risky for them to hire your members in the future. Consider hosting events that allow recruiting officers to interact with your members, showcase their company's values and opportunities, and even offer internships or co-op programs to club members.
- **Marketing:** Your club can provide companies with valuable publicity and recognition. By displaying a company's logo or brand on your club's projects, merchandise, events, workspace, and social media, they gain increased visibility and exposure. Engaging with a club dedicated to making positive environmental changes reflects positively on the company's image, portraying them as an environmentally responsible and socially conscious organization. This association can attract customers who share similar values and enhance the company's reputation in the eyes of the public.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility:** Many companies have corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, aiming to contribute positively to society and the environment. Supporting your club aligns with these CSR goals, as your club's activities are focused on sustainable transportation and environmental consciousness. By supporting your club's efforts, companies can fulfill their CSR objectives and demonstrate their commitment to making a difference in their communities and beyond.
- **Networking and Industry Insights:** Engaging with student clubs allows companies to connect with the younger generation of potential consumers and advocates. By interacting with club members, company representatives gain valuable insights into the perspectives, preferences, and concerns of the youth market. Additionally, through interactions with your club, companies can stay informed about the latest trends, innovations, and developments in the EV industry, providing them with a competitive edge in their field.
- **Tax Benefits and Community Engagement:** Donating to your club may also offer private companies tax benefits and incentives, making their contributions more appealing.

Moreover, supporting student clubs like yours allows companies to actively engage with their local communities, showcase their commitment to education and youth empowerment, and build stronger connections with the academic institutions in their region.

Keep in mind that companies often plan their budgets well in advance, including charitable contributions. Some companies may not have available funding when you first approach them, but maintaining a positive relationship and continued engagement may lead to support when their fiscal period rolls over or when they allocate funds for charitable purposes.

Making a Difference:

Marketing Events

Effectively advertising your upcoming event or activity is the key to attracting a sizeable and diverse audience. Begin by posting on various platforms and displaying physical posters one week before the planned event. Eye-catching and engaging posters with bright colors, bold text, and unique shapes can capture students' attention. Keep the poster content concise while providing essential details such as the event's time, location, and topic. For inspiration, you can find examples of compelling posters here: [Activities](#) .

As the event date approaches, make additional posts the day before and the morning of the event. College students often plan their schedules more spontaneously, so these reminders can help them avoid conflicting plans on the day of the guest speaker event. By strategically timing your posts, you increase the chances of attracting a broader audience.

Socials

Hosting collaborative and enjoyable social events with other clubs or organizations can be a fantastic way to engage members and raise awareness about your EV club across campus. Unlike formal meetings, socials don't need a specific objective other than providing members with a good time and an opportunity to socialize with other students. These events can also serve as excellent opportunities for recruiting new members who may be intrigued by the relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

There are numerous ideas for organizing socials, such as movie nights, game nights, or fun competitions like popsicle stick bridge-building challenges or [egg drops](#). Outdoor activities like lawn games or Capture the Flag can also be a hit. When planning a social activity, aim to cater to a broad audience to ensure maximum participation and interaction among participants. If you need more ideas, other clubs and organizations have produced a plethora of detailed guides on running engaging activities.

To ensure good attendance at your socials, consider offering incentives, with food being one of the most effective draws. Pizza from a local restaurant or a cookout can work wonders in attracting participants. Another successful tactic is hosting competitions with prizes for the winners. These prizes can be relatively inexpensive compared to catering an entire event while still providing a strong incentive for participation.

Guest Speakers

Inviting a diverse range of guest speakers can add immense value to your EV club's activities. These speakers can include professors, students, company executives, community leaders, and policy specialists—each of whom brings unique insights to the table. Depending on the nature of the event, you can host these talks exclusively for your club or make them open to the entire school and the public. When selecting speakers, aim to cater to a broad audience, ensuring their presentations will be interesting and relevant to students of different majors and career goals.

To keep the audience engaged and prevent lectures from becoming too lengthy, try to limit guest presentations to under an hour. College students already spend considerable time attending lectures and classes, so making the presentations engaging and interactive is essential. Including demonstrations and hands-on activities can get students up and moving, making the event more dynamic and memorable.

It is important that guest speakers are provided with an attentive and engaged audience. To achieve this, provide information on the speaker to students prior to the event. Requesting students to prepare questions in advance to ask the presenter always facilitates better engagement and conversation. Guest speakers want to feel that they are making an impact and that their presence benefits your club. Regardless of the presenter or subject, always do your best to show your guests the utmost gratitude and respect. A thank-you letter or email a day or two after the event helps show your appreciation and show your interest in their presentation has continued.

Public Events

Regarding events your club can host, the possibilities are endless. However, it is essential to remember a couple of crucial things when planning any event.

1. Define the Purpose

When planning an event, the first step is determining the objective and purpose. Consider what you want participants to take away from the event and what impact you aim to create. Whatever objective you choose, ensure there are measurable ways to gauge the event's success. For instance, if your goal is to educate the community about EV facts, keep track of the number of participants engaging with your hosts and materials. Having quantifiable metrics of success not only aids in planning future events

but also serves as a powerful tool when seeking funding for upcoming endeavors. Presenting donors with evidence of past successful events significantly enhances the likelihood of receiving funding support.

2. Audience

The next factor in event planning is determining your target audience. Identifying the specific group you want to engage with allows you to tailor your messaging effectively during the event and in your advertising efforts. As an electric vehicle club located on a college campus, you have the potential to reach a large audience comprising students, faculty, and even the surrounding community. Defining your target audience should align with the purpose of the event you're planning.

If you aim to promote EV sales, focusing on families and faculty members who can afford these vehicles may lead to greater success. On the other hand, if you aim to foster sustainable thinking and behavior, directing your efforts towards students, who are still shaping their perspectives, could be the most effective approach.

Once you've decided on your target audience, consider the expected size of attendance from this group. Determining the scale of your event becomes imperative in selecting an appropriate location.

3. Venue

When selecting the perfect venue for your event, several vital factors demand careful consideration:

- **Permission:** First and foremost, choose a location you have permission to use. Your first action must be to obtain the proper permissions and reservations required. Without a place to host your event, every other aspect is obsolete. Long before reaching out to vehicle owners, it is important you verify who will be insuring the vehicles attending. Insurance may be provided by the school, the sponsor of the event, or the owners themselves. Whatever it may be, it is essential there is some form of liability coverage.
- **Accessibility:** An ideal event location should be easily accessible, providing suitable parking options and smooth foot traffic flow. Ensure there are convenient routes for transporting materials and vehicles to and from the venue. Access to necessary power sources is essential for a seamless event experience. Lastly, choose a location close to your target audience, making it convenient for them to attend.
- **Safety:** Prioritize the security of your attendees by choosing a venue with proper barriers to protect against traffic. Access to shaded areas, restrooms, and water

stations is vital, particularly for outdoor events. Clearly defined paths for vehicles and pedestrians will help prevent potential accidents. Lastly, select a location free from other interfering activities that could detract from your event's focus.

- **Visibility:** Opt for a venue that offers maximum visibility to the surrounding area. A location that catches the eye will help attendees locate the event easily and pique the interest of passersby, enticing them to explore what your event has to offer.
- **Timing:** Consider the most accessible time of year and day for your target audience. While weekend mornings may work well for families and faculty, students may be less inclined to attend early in the day. Choose a season that is likely to have favorable weather conditions, typically spring, and fall, although weather can be unpredictable. Always have a rain date scheduled well in advance.

4. Amenities

Once you've selected and reserved the event location, it's time to focus on preparing the essential components of your event. Start by securing the more intricate aspects early to streamline the planning process. If your event involves food or music, prioritize their arrangements first.

For food-related aspects, ensure you have a plan for sourcing, distributing, and cleaning up after the provided food. This will help create a seamless dining experience for your attendees. Similarly, if you plan to have music at the event, ensure you have the equipment, technicians, and power necessary to support the performers. If bands or performers have their own equipment, confirm availability as soon as possible.

Having these exciting amenities secured early on will reduce complications in the planning process and enhance your event's appeal to potential collaborators and attendees. When reaching out to potential partners or sponsors, having food and music already organized will demonstrate your event's professionalism and boost their enthusiasm to join. If you cannot generate these elements yourself, consider joining an existing event. This will reduce planning on your part and attract participants with diverse activities.

Additionally, address the need for a supplier of tables and chairs for your event and determine their capacity. Before approaching anyone to help host the event, ensure you have access to the required equipment. While rental companies are an option, it's a good idea to check with your school's grounds and facilities first, as they may be able to support you with the necessary equipment.

5. Participants

With the groundwork laid for your event, it's time to reach out to potential participants and collaborators. Your club can consider partnering with other clubs and organizations on campus, local businesses or dealerships, and even government representatives. Don't hesitate to approach anyone you believe will add value to your event. Asking for their involvement opens a line of communication and presents an opportunity for fruitful collaboration. Even if some decline, it's all part of the process, and you never know who might be interested in the future. Creating a digital sign-up sheet is a great way to track who has agreed to participate and collect their contact information.

When contacting potential sponsors or participants, make sure to provide them with all the pertinent details, including the time and location of the event. Moreover, clearly communicate your vision for the event and what you hope to achieve. This will help external groups assess whether attending aligns with their interests and how they can contribute.

Highlight the benefits they will receive from participating, such as recognition, advertising opportunities, networking prospects, or even recruiting possibilities. By showcasing what they stand to gain, you'll increase their motivation to join forces with your event. Consider including these details in email templates for contacting participants, making communication more efficient and consistent.

Remember, the success of your event is not solely dependent on your club's efforts but also on the collective support and engagement of participants and collaborators. Building strong partnerships can amplify the impact of your event and foster a sense of community in the pursuit of a common goal. For examples of completed email templates used for contacting participants, go here [📧 Event Outreach](#).

6. Advertising

Effectively promoting your event is the key to attracting your target audience. Tailor your advertising strategies to reach your intended participants best. For students on campus, leverage the marketing techniques described in the "Marketing Events" and "Recruitment" sections. Utilize social media platforms, campus bulletin boards, and student newsletters to spread the word among your college community.

When reaching external groups beyond your school, explore various channels like email outreach and Facebook groups. Consider utilizing local newsletters or newspapers to tap into the broader community. Eye-catching posters strategically placed in high-traffic areas, such as restaurants and grocery stores, can help generate curiosity and interest among potential attendees from the local community.

7. Briefing your Team

Effective event planning begins with thorough preparation and proactive decision-making. A well-structured plan serves as a strong foundation for a successful event. Consider all the moving pieces of your event and how they will interact seamlessly. For instance, anticipate the arrival time of the food truck, plan its parking during unloading, and identify the team responsible for this task.

To ensure smooth execution, delegate specific responsibilities to different team members. Assign key roles, such as music, food, parking, tables/chairs, and assisting collaborators, to individuals who can manage their respective segments effectively. Empower them with the necessary information and resources to handle their areas independently. Share contact details among team members for quick communication during the event. Maintained a master contact sheet with information for all organizers and stakeholders, including collaborating parties and suppliers, facilitating seamless coordination throughout the event.

Transparency and continuous communication are essential throughout the planning process. Keep all involved parties informed with updates and detailed instructions. Share maps detailing parking and activity locations, as well as comprehensive set-up and breakdown procedures. By providing clear guidance, each participating group will arrive well-prepared, maximizing the efficiency and impact of your event.

8. Day of the Event

On the day of your event, allocating sufficient time before and after the scheduled program for set-up and breakdown is imperative. Plan for at least an hour on each side to allow for any unexpected delays. Time tends to pass quickly during preparations, so giving yourself ample cushioning ensures a smooth start and conclusion.

During the event, primary planners should be available to assist wherever needed rather than being assigned to specific roles. This flexibility allows them to address any unforeseen challenges and make quick decisions to keep the event on track. Designate someone to observe the event, engage with guests, and take notes on how the day unfolds, as this feedback can be valuable for future improvements.

Despite meticulous planning, it's important to acknowledge that events may encounter unforeseen hiccups. However, maintaining a positive attitude and promptly finding solutions will ensure the overall success of your event. As the director, stay optimistic and focused on celebrating the achievements of your event, even if some aspects don't align perfectly with your initial vision. Embrace the experience and view any challenges as opportunities for growth, knowing that each event contributes to your expertise in organizing successful gatherings.

9. Learning from the experience

Learning from the experiences of hosting an electric vehicle event is the key to continuous improvement and creating even more impactful future gatherings. Take the time to reflect on what went well, what could have been better, and what unexpected challenges arose. Use QR codes and digital surveys to solicit feedback from participants, collaborators, and team members to gain diverse perspectives on the event's strengths and areas for improvement. Use this valuable knowledge to refine your planning strategies, enhance event logistics, and better cater to the preferences and needs of your audience. By incorporating these lessons into future events, you can build on your successes, avoid pitfalls, and create an even more engaging and memorable experience for attendees. Each event is a stepping stone toward becoming a seasoned event organizer, empowering you to cultivate a growing community of electric vehicle enthusiasts and drive positive change in the world of transportation.

Policy and Advocacy

Policy and advocacy efforts are a large piece of helping to make electric vehicles more accessible to consumers. Once your club has a core group of members, you can hone your focus for advocacy work through the club. There are various ways that policymakers and other decision-makers can advance transportation electrification and make EVs more accessible to the public. Select 1-3 key issues or opportunities to address to increase EV adoption on campus and in your community. These can be things other club members have noted, or you could host an event or use another engagement tool to collect feedback and understand what other community members want. Examples of key issues can include, but are not limited to, charging station deployment, availability of EV purchase incentives, availability of charging station installation incentives for residents, and improving battery materials sourcing.

Much of advocacy work begins with the relationships that you build. Start working on your focus issues by mapping out who is involved in the decision-making process. You should also do preliminary research on what has been done on this particular issue in your community/on your campus in the past. As you identify these key stakeholders and past actions, you will get a clearer picture of who you need to meet and what needs to happen to address your focus areas. For guidance on policy tools and strategies for advancing EV uptake, refer to this collaborative policy toolkit [AchiEVe: Model Policies to Accelerate Electric Vehicle Adoption](#), created by Plug In America, Sierra Club, Forth, and the Electrification Coalition. The toolkit shows the power of bold and strategic policies for vehicle electrification, highlighting several detailed examples from locations across the nation where policies are working and include model legislation and other templates.

As part of your advocacy efforts, consider running a campaign highlighting a particular issue you are trying to address. A campaign could focus on increasing the development of EV infrastructure on campus or, more broadly, be targeted at holding companies accountable for the public commitments they've made on EV deployment or technology development. It could also be crafted to help encourage the industry as a whole to institute more sustainable sourcing practices for EVs to further improve their impacts compared to gas vehicles. For example, Plug In America has been working to ensure that there are plenty of EV options for consumers and ran a campaign to encourage General Motors to offer smaller, more affordable vehicle types. Reaching out to Plug In America supporters and asking them to share their stories about the Bolt allowed us to communicate consumer demand and interest in the Bolt with GM. GM took this feedback and has recently announced plans to reintroduce the Bolt to the market. Think creatively about where your voice or the voices of those in your community can drive change.

For those interested in the electrification of transportation, understanding the utility landscape in their area is essential. Utility companies, often referred to as public utility or power companies, are entities responsible for generating, distributing, and supplying electricity to residential, commercial, and industrial consumers. Utility companies operate power plants that generate electricity using various sources, such as coal, natural gas, nuclear, hydroelectric, wind, and solar energy. Once generated, the electricity is transmitted through high-voltage power lines across vast distances to substations, where it is then transformed into lower voltages suitable for distribution. From there, the electricity is distributed through a network of power lines, poles, and underground cables to homes, buildings, and other end-users.

In the context of transportation electrification, utility companies play a critical role in providing the energy needed to charge EVs. As the adoption of EVs grows, utility companies are tasked with meeting the increased demand for electricity by expanding charging infrastructure and ensuring the stability of the electrical grid. This expansion involves installing public charging stations, working on smart grid technologies to manage peak demand efficiently, and integrating renewable energy sources into their energy mix to reduce environmental impact.

Each utility company's approach to supporting EV adoption may vary, and some may offer specific incentives, rebates, or programs to encourage EV ownership and charging. By connecting with your local utility company, you can gain insights into their plans, collaborate on initiatives, and contribute to the growth of sustainable transportation solutions. To determine which utility company serves your region, you can reach out to local authorities, visit official [websites](#), or consult resources provided by energy regulatory bodies.

Building

Engineering your own electric vehicle is an incredibly fulfilling experience that captivates students and offers valuable insights into the technology driving EVs. However, constructing a

vehicle demands strict oversight and adherence to safety protocols. Mistakes can lead to serious injury and jeopardize your club's existence. While each university may have specific safety procedures, the following sections provide a starting point to ensure safety. Your pursuit of building an electric vehicle will be an enlightening journey, empowering your team with knowledge and innovation. Embrace this opportunity responsibly, and it will pave the way for a brighter, cleaner future in transportation.

Converting vehicles like bikes, mopeds, and go-karts to electric power can serve as an excellent starting project. It allows you to focus on the electric power system without the need to build the frame from scratch. If you aim to develop a custom EV, clarify your project's objectives. Common goals include reducing the costs of EVs, enhancing EV portability, or optimizing performance capabilities. For clubs seeking a more structured building challenge, competitions such as [Formula SAE Electric](#), [The evGrand Prix](#), or [The World Solar Challenge](#) offer great opportunities.

Safety: The importance of safety during the construction of these vehicles cannot be overstated. It is essential to take all necessary measures to ensure that every team member practices safe behavior. Designating a specific leadership position to oversee safety procedures is an excellent way to ensure the required level of attention. Members should work with a buddy system to have someone available in case of emergencies. Before any member handles a tool, comprehensive training in the club and the university's safety procedures is essential. Areas of focused attention include:

- **Battery Storage and Management**

Batteries must be kept in fire-safe conditions with proper fire suppressant equipment accessible at all times. Continuously monitor the health of battery cells to ensure there are no issues of under or overvoltage. Invest in high-quality chargers and battery management systems, which are crucial to protecting your expensive batteries. Anyone in regular proximity to batteries must understand the characteristics of a lithium-ion fire and how to deal with one safely. As always, dispose of batteries in the appropriate methods.

- **High Voltage Systems**

All members must understand the dangers of working with high-powered electrical systems. Members should understand the measures of electrical current and their implications. Always use the proper insulating personal protective equipment. If you are an inexperienced club, begin with lower voltage systems (around 12v-48v), as higher voltage systems are far more dangerous and require more expensive components.

- **Tool Usage**

Regardless if the tools your club uses are your own or belong to the school, members must be trained on the proper operation of each device and piece of equipment. Keep

your workspace clean and devoid of hazards. Consider creating an official club position that oversees the purchases, maintenance, and training of tools used by the club.

- **Vehicle Operation**

Once you have created an operational vehicle, it can be tempting to test it immediately. Before anyone uses your vehicle, ensure you have the proper safety measures in place, including protective gear for the rider and a designated testing location. Always address liability before operating a vehicle. If you are unsure how to create a liability waiver, contact your school's legal department. When not in use, make sure the vehicle has been completely disabled. Removing the key is often inadequate, as many members may know how to rewire the vehicle's starting relays. Consider locking away components like wheels or batteries to prevent unsolicited usage. While it is important to trust your members to make smart decisions, it is best to remove temptations.

Additional Resources:

Now that you are ready to start your own club, here are some resources to give you a headstart.

- Looking to connect with other college EV clubs?
 - Head to [The Wire](#) to connect with others! The Wire is a community of EV clubs from across the country
- Helpful resources from Plug In America:
 - [10 Reasons Why Your Next Car Should Be An EV](#)
 - To inform your advocacy goals and efforts, explore the [AchiEVe Policy Toolkit](#).
 - To find an EV model explore [PlugStar](#) or our [EV Guide](#)
 - For help answering any EV-related questions, contact Plug In America's [EV Support Program](#)
- For facts and statistics on EVs, start with the following websites:
 - [International Energy Agency](#)
 - [Alternative Fuels Data Center](#)
- If you are interested in competing in an EV design competition, take a look at these options:
 - [Formula SAE Electric](#)
 - [evGrand Prix – Electric Go-Kart Racing for Students](#)
 - [World Solar Challenge](#)
- If you want to host an event as part of a national campaign, check out Drive Electric Earth Day and National Drive Electric Week:
 - [National Drive Electric Week](#)
 - [Drive Electric Earth Day](#)
- For support in understanding how to engaging utilities, check out the following:
 - [Alliance for Transportation Electrification](#)
 - [Driving for Benefits: The Utility Role in Transportation Electrification](#)

- Canva templates for your club's use:
 - [Regular Instagram Post](#)
 - [General Instagram Story](#)
 - [General Instagram Post](#)
 - [Unique Recruiting Poster](#)
 - [Business Student Recruiting Poster](#)
 - [Engineering Student Recruiting Poster](#)
 - [General Recruiting Poster](#)
 - [EV Event Flyer](#)
 - [Collaborative Club Event Post](#)
 - [Event Small Flyer](#)