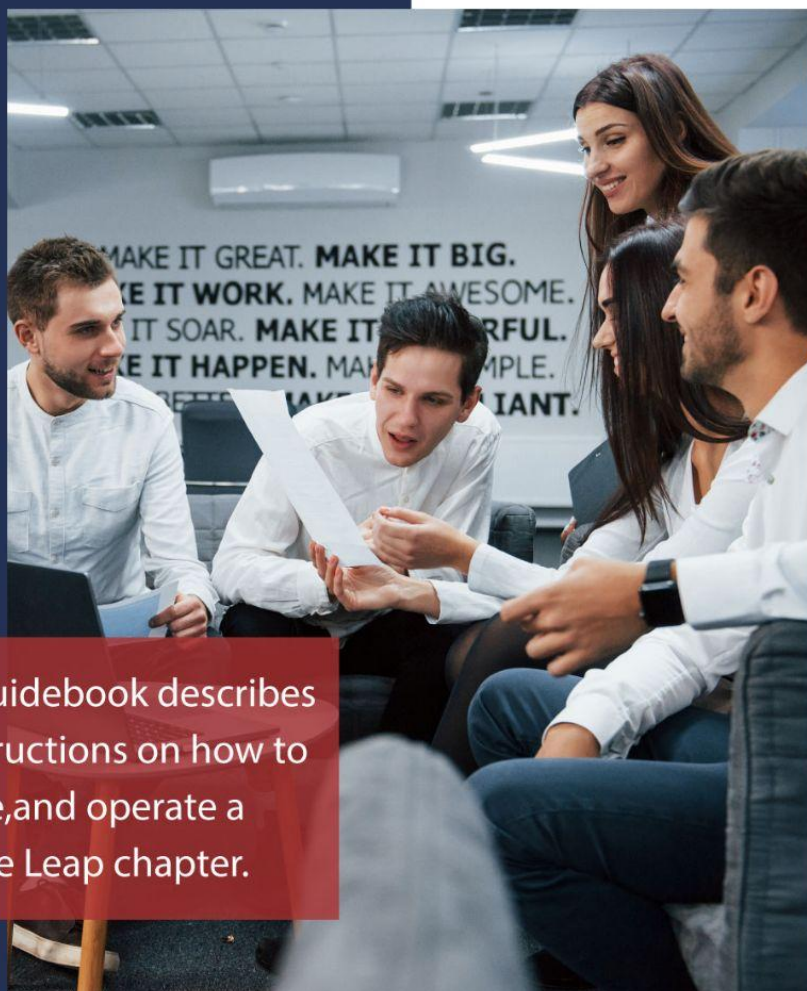# COLLEGE LEAP

NATIONAL OFFICE

COLLEGE LEAP 2021-22 CHAPTER GUIDEBOOK

VERSION: 21-8-1

OVERIEW: This guidebook describes step-by-step instructions on how to establish,manage,and operate a successful College Leap chapter.

Table of Content:

Welcome Letter

Hi, Future Chapter Leaders,

Thank you for making the first step in starting a College Leap chapter at your campus! Based on the feedback we've received from previous chapter leaders (many claims that starting or joining College Leap is the best experience they had at their CCs), I think you've made the right decision! I'm very confident that starting a College Leap chapter would be a worthwhile and enjoyable journey for you, your team, and the community at your home college! But before you dive into the details of this guidebook, I want to remind you of two facts about starting a chapter:

1. It requires time and commitment: Starting a College Leap chapter is not just another on-campus leadership activity. We have very high expectations for our chapters and chapter leaders: each of our chapters should be the largest club on campus and leave some legacies to its home college. To meet this expectation, you and your team need to spend a lot of time and energy brainstorming, planning and executing. So be ready to reserve at least 10 hours per week for your work at College Leap.

2. It requires an entrepreneurial spirit and leadership skills: even with guidance from our national office, starting a chapter is a zero-to-one process and an entrepreneurial journey. So, like any other entrepreneur, you will deal with chaos, failures, and frustration all the time; you will need to come up with tasks for yourself, not waiting for orders; you will need to build, maintain, and motivate a team. To be honest, all these tasks are very challenging and demanding. So as to lead a successful chapter, you need to be a successful entrepreneur who fails forward and thrives in changes.

If these facts made you more excited, you are the person we want to work with! In the following sessions of this guidebook, you will find out more about how to start and manage a College Leap chapter. However, one thing I want to emphasize here is that College Leap chapters are transfer clubs on campus, so always keep that in mind when you refer to your chapter. Please let us know at team@collegeleap.cc should you have any questions!

We hope to welcome you and your chapter to the College Leap family soon,

Best Regards,

Jay Zhao
Co-founder at College Leap

About College Leap

College Leap is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization founded at UC Berkeley to empower U.S. community college students by building a national community to provide opportunities and information about leadership development, career and internship, extracurricular activities, volunteer, scholarship, and university transfer process. There are two major components of College Leap—chapters and projects. Since its incorporation in 2019, College Leap has established 15+ chapters nationwide and launched 10+ national programs.

1) College Leap Chapters:

College Leap chapters are registered student clubs at community colleges. Our chapters are transfer clubs on campus to support local community college students, especially those who are looking to transfer to 4-year institutions. With the guidance and help provided by the national office, chapters will recruit members, organize chapter projects, and promote national projects to their local community.
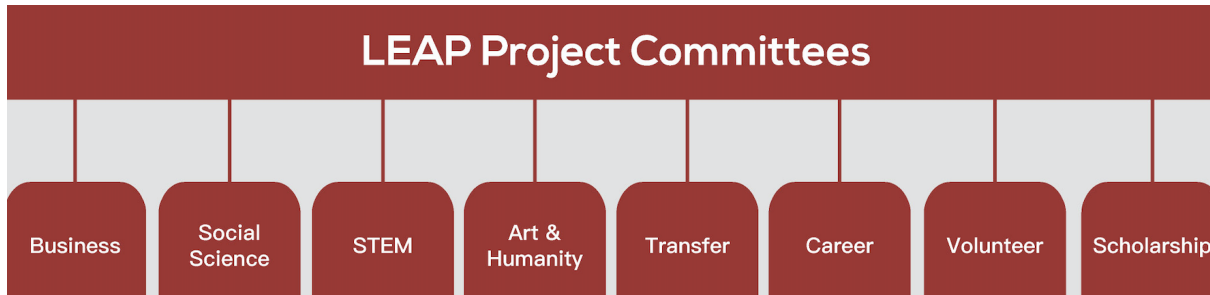
Chapter list (not all are currently active):
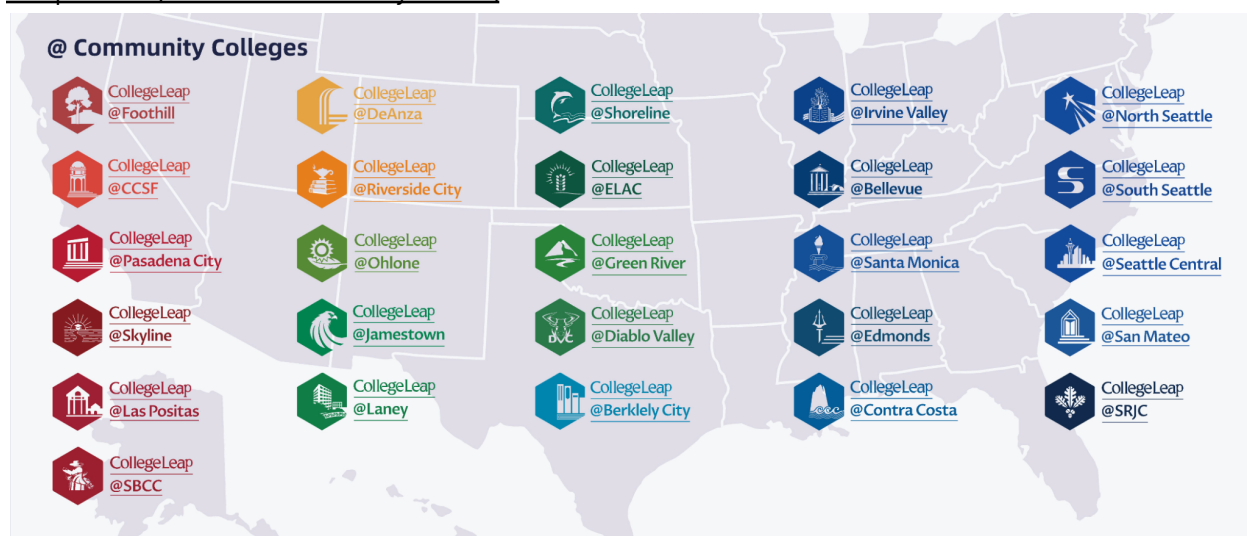
2) College Leap Projects:

College Leap Projects are events, programs, and competitions organized by eights project committees. These projects are normally open to all community college students.

College Leap project committees:

All College Leap projects are categorized into three tiers: 1) Standalone Competitions/ Conference; 2) Premium Projects; 3) Open-to-All (all chapter projects are Open-to-All projects, which are open and free to anyone).

College Leap Project Categories (not all are officially launched):

		Business	Social Sciences	STEM	Art & Humanity	Transfer	Career	Volunteer	Scholarship
	Standalone	Pitch & Case Comp	CRC	CC Hack & Math Comp	Essay Comp		Company sponsored programs		Own
	Premium					Transfer Webinar	Consulting & Webinar	CSP Fellow	
Springboard Mentorship Program	**Mentorship**	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔
	Workshops	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔
	Open-To-All					TSN, Transfer Guide	Career Expo	CSP Attendee	
	Transfer Resource Database	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Examples from previous projects:
National Business Plan Competition (NBPC)
Community College Business Invitational (CCBI)
Transfer Student Panel Series (TSPS)
Creative Research Challenge (CRC)

3) National Office

College Leap National Office is the central structure within College Leap to manage chapters, chapter leaders, members, and internal operations. There are three national office centers: Chapter Center, Membership Center, and Internal Operation Center;

National Chapter Center: This center is in charge of establishing new chapters and managing the existing ones. The center will work very closely with all chapter leaders to provide support and guidance for their daily operations. Besides, this center will also be the bridge between College Leap and chapters as well as among chapters to pass on the information and share best practices.
Chapter Representatives' Council is under the National Chapter Center to promote collaboration and networking opportunities among chapters. One leader from each chapter will be required to attend the council's monthly meeting (more on Meetings Session).

National Membership Center: This center is in charge of all College Leap freemium and premium members. However, each chapter should be responsible for its own chapter/club members.

Internal Operation Center: This center is responsible for all marketing, public relations, sponsorship/fundraising, technology, and other operational issues of the nonprofit organization.

Start a College Leap Chapter

To bring a College Leap Chapter to your campus, you have two options: 1) start a new student club; 2) affiliate an existing club.

1) **Start a new student club:**

Step 1: Find three chapter leaders (including you) and an advisor

To successfully start a new chapter, you need to first rally your core team. Besides yourself, you need to find two more students as chapter leaders and a faculty or staff member as your advisor. We recommend that your advisors are on board with your school's advisor guidelines. Please be aware that the advisor should be prepared to receive information and update from College Leap national office.

Step 2: Preparing your bylaws/constitution;

Having an official bylaw/constitution would be helpful in operating a chapter. You can find a template provided by College Leap here.

Step 3: Fill out the Chapter Application Form

With your advisor and chapter leaders, please fill out the Chapter Application Form. Once the form is submitted, each of the three chapter leaders and the advisor will receive an email to confirm their involvement. After receiving all confirmations, we will send you a welcome package with your chapter logo, official email account, and other documents.

Step 4: Chapter Activation/reaction:

At the beginning of each semester/quarter, your club needs to be activated by submitting this Activation Form, which asks for proof of administrator approval and a semester/quarter work plan.

Step 5: Welcome to the College Leap family

2) Affiliate an existing club.

Step 1: Check Criteria

To be affiliated with College Leap, an existing club needs to 1) have been operating for more than ONE year at the time of application; 2) have 10+ members and 1+ advisors; 3) share the College Leap's mission of empowering community college students;

Step 2: Preparing your bylaws/constitution;

Having an official bylaw/constitution would be helpful in operating a chapter. You can find a template provided by College Leap [here](#).

Step 3: Fill out the [Chapter Application Form](#)

With your advisor and chapter leaders, please fill out the [Chapter Application Form](#). Once the form is submitted, each of the three chapter leaders and the advisor will receive an email to confirm their involvement. After receiving all confirmations, we will send you a welcome package with your chapter logo (we will add "a college leap chapter" to your original logo), your official email account, and other documents.

Step 4: Chapter Activation/reaction:

At the beginning of each semester/quarter, your club needs to be activated by submitting this [Activation Form](#), which asks for proof of administrator approval and a semester/quarter work plan.

Step 5: Welcome to the College Leap family

3) Chapter semester timetable:

1. Beginning of Semester:
   a. Chapter Activation: Each semester/quarter, your club needs to be activated/reactivated by submitting proof of administrator approval and a semester/quarter work plan;
   b. Kick-off meeting: your chapter, including chapter leaders and advisors, will meet with College Leap national office to discuss your semester plan and introduce College Leap projects;
2. During Semester:
   a. Monthly Chapter report: a report needs to be submitted every month.
   b. Monthly Chapter Representatives' Council Meeting: one representative from your chapter will be attending the meeting with leaders from other chapters;
3. End of Semester:
   a. Wrap-up meeting: your chapter, including chapter leaders and advisors, will meet with College Leap national office to wrap up your semester. This is also a good time for you to introduce your new board (if applicable) to the national office.
   b. Certificates (only for those leaders that stay with the chapter for a year)

4) Set up your chapter team:

There are many ways you could build your team and be a successful College Leap chapter. However, these are some best practices from the most successful chapters in the past. You don't have to follow them strictly.

Build your executive board

When you first start, you might not have many people on the team. The preferred model is to start with four chapter leaders in the executive board. These four people will be in charge of various aspects of the organization. (Certificate will be awarded to each executive member that stays for more than a year.) You may use different titles for these positions but ultimately they should cover these functions:

1. President:
   President will be responsible for looking at the broader scale of things and for making sure that the whole organization operates effectively. We expect you to be the person who could build and motivate a team. You will also need to establish orders and deal well with chaos. Besides your chapter's daily operations, the president will also be in charge of all communications with your advisor and College Leap national office to ensure that every stakeholder is well-connected with the chapter.

2. Secretary:

     Secretary is the glue to put all pieces and members together. You will be in charge of administration- and finance-related activities to keep the chapter active both with your college and College Leap. In some chapters, the secretary is also responsible for fundraising and other membership-related tasks.

3. VP of External Affairs

     VP of External Affairs will be mainly dealing with various tasks to recruit members and participants for chapters and projects. These tasks would include but are not limited to marketing, social media, project promotion, and business development.

4. VP of Internal Affairs and Chapter Projects

     VP of Internal Affairs and Chapter Projects will be building up chapter projects, generating the content, and engaging chapter members. Depending on the number and workload of your chapter projects, this position can be split up into several roles, each focusing on one specific scope.

Other than these four positions, some College Leap projects would require designated liaisons from each chapter. If your chapter sponsors these projects, you need to have positions (project directors) for these liaisons.

Set up committees

Each of the executive positions entails a lot of responsibilities and commitment, so they sometimes could be too overwhelming for executive members to take care of themselves. Thus, we recommend each chapter set up several committees under some of the executive members to help them handle heavy workloads. To help our chapters recruit more committee members, College Leap will have a maximum of 15 certificates per year reserved for committee members.

You can set up project committees for chapter projects, marketing committees, fundraising committees, membership engagement committees, etc.

Chapter Projects:

Organizing and launching chapter projects are crucial for your chapter to gain popularity and recruit members. We encourage you to be creative in brainstorming ideas and building chapter projects. However, all chapter projects need to be 1) aligned with the chapter's goal to support transfer students; 2) free and open to everyone on your campus. To get you started, here is a list of previous successful chapter projects:

1) **Alumni webinar & Interview:**

A lot of our chapters actually took advantage of their alumni networks to bring back their alumni who have transferred to 4-year universities to share their experience and tips in webinars and interviews. This would be a good way to get attractions for your chapter when you first start and provide value to your members.

Ways to reach out to alumni:
- Referrals from your professors;
- Personal connections;
- Linkedin Message: when you add them on Linkedin, don't forget to add a note stating the purpose.
- Facebook groups of previous year's students

Ways to make the request:
- Start by asking for a 15-min conversation to introduce yourself and the chapter;
- Don't forget to send a Thank-you note afterward

How to host a webinar:
- Prepare the speaker(s): you want to make sure the speakers have the right expectations on what questions they will get during the webinar and what experience they will need to share; You should also have a host for the event.
- Promotion: you can request a flyer from College Leap or you can make your own. Then make sure you reach out to the transfer center and professors to ask them to share the information. You can also use social media and the social media groups to promote;
- Recording: record the session to post on your Youtube channel.
- Disclaimer: always remember to address that everything shared in these webinar only represent the speaker's personal opinion, not ours. Students shouldn't make decisions solely based on this information. This way, we can avoid any potential responsibility and harm to your chapter.

A chapter that has done a spectacular job on this is our chapter at Irvine Valley College. You can check out their content on their social media (Instagram and LinkedIn: College Leap @ IVC)

2) **Campus/transfer guidebook**

Almost all community colleges provide a wealth of opportunities to their students. However, some students are unaware of the existence of these resources and thus couldn't take full advantage of them. So some of our chapters decided to put together a living resource handbook for their members to refer to. Some chapters would also put together a transfer guidebook to collect transfer information for their members.

Where do you find the campus resources:
- College's website
- Newsletter from college centers and programs
- Facebook/Discord groups

A chapter that has done a good job in this would be our PCC chapter. You can find their campus resource guide and the transfer handbook on their social media accounts, or ask us.

3) **Transfer, major, or professional-related workshops:**

Workshops and webinars are among the most common chapter projects at College Leap. Other than alumni webinars, they can also be used to answer questions and provide information in other fields. So you can definitely use this format for a lot of purposes. For example, several of our chapters have host transfer application essay workshops, major workshops, internship seminars, etc.

Our Edmonds College Chapter once held a project called Majornator, where they invite professionals of differnet major to share their career path. You can find more details here
Our De Anza Chapter once held a series of workshops to help students find internships. You can find the webpage here .

4) **Integrated projects**

Some of College Leap projects, aka integrated projects, will require collaboration from our chapters. We will inform our chapters of such projects, and they can choose to sign up for these projects or not based on their chapters' plan. Each integrated program will have its own requirements and responsibilities.

Other than what's mentioned above, you are definitely encouraged to come up with new ideas for your chapter projects as long as they meet the criteria above. When you launch a new chapter project, you can follow these general steps:

1) Identify a problem faced by students at your school;
2) Brainstorm ideas to solve the problem;
3) Figure out the elements of your project;
4) Work on an action plan (Steps, who should you talk to)
5) Timeline and goal;

If you encounter any obstacle or challenge you can't solve on your own, you are welcome to schedule a meeting with Jay (jay.zhao@collegeleap.cc) to discuss.

Meetings

General Member Meeting:

We recommend you host one general meeting at least every semester to introduce your chapter to all general members and potential members. Before the meeting, you want to promote it to more students on campus by posting your flyer in the bulletin board and social media groups. During the general meeting, you should cover these information:

1. College Leap
2. Your chapter;
3. College Leap Projects;
4. You Chapter Projects;
5. Ways to get involved

Some of our best chapters also use general meeting not only as ways to promote their projects but also to recruit for executive and committee member ;

Executive Team Meeting:

We recommend you host executive team meetings, either with or without committee members, every week to check on progress and assign tasks. Each of your executive meetings should be roughly divided into these three parts:

1. Review & Update:
   Reviewing tasks and progresses of the past week, providing feedback, and checking on completion status;

2. Weekly To-Do-List:

    Assigning next week's tasks to each member. Make sure the assignments are measurable ("reach out to 2 professors", not "reach out to professors"), attainable (challenging but possible), time-bound (deadline will lead to more efficiency). Also make sure you have one person to take notes of the tasks so you can refer back in next week's meeting ;

3. Discussion & Feedback:

    If any member has something they want to discuss or seek help for, this is the right time. You should also take advantage of this section to give your feedback (praise or constructive feedback) so that the members will feel their inputs are being valued and recognized. Make sure everyone is involved in the discussion, and no one is dominant.

    To run a successful meeting, we recommend you to:

    1) Schedule a fixed time slot for each week to make it a routine;
    2) Have a person in charge of meeting minutes and to-do-list;
    3) Have 15-30 minutes in the end as team-bounding time;
    4) Engage everyone in the process and provide feedback when necessary;
    5) Make sure it is an enjoyable experience for the whole group.

Chapter Representative Council's Meeting:

This is the monthly meetings with the national office and representatives from other chapters. One representative from each chapter must present in the meeting (If a chapter fails to attend the meeting twice in a row, it will be deactivated). During the meeting, we will cover:

1) New College Leap projects and information.
2) Updates from each chapter (you will need to prepare and submit a monthly report before the meeting)
3) Chapter of the Month: Based on the monthly reports, the council will vote for the Chapter of The Month;
4) Network
5) Guest Speakers

Your chapter can apponint one person as a representative for the whole year, or choose to have a new representative each time.

Other Chapter Activities:

Marketing

It's very important for your community to understand the value of College Leap and your chapter. Marketing can help your chapter reach more people, recruit members, and promote the chapter and College Leap projects.

Following are several ways our chapters found to be effective for marketing purposes:

1) Social Media:

Instagram and Linkedin prove to be the two best social media platforms for our chapters. So we highly recommend you set up accounts on these two platforms as parts of your social media marketing. Depending on the formats of the chapter projects, some chapters also use Youtube, Twitter, Podcast, etc.

    What content can you post:
- Event announcements & summaries;
- Chapter projects materials & content
- Information about your chapter and leaders;

    How to promote your social media accounts:
- Promote your accounts in your college groups
- Reach out to your friends and ask them to share the information posted by your chapter;
- Ask your college's and other clubs' accounts to share the information;

2) Tabling on Campus

Most colleges provide opportunities throughout a semester for clubs to do tabling on campus. You should definitely take advantage of those opportunities. For some colleges, you need to get approval from your college first.

    When should you do tabling:
- Club Day;
- School events (orientations, etc.)
- Regularly (some colleges allow you to have a regular tabling stand)

    How do you prepare for a tabling event:
- Flyers (Chapter intro, events, etc.)
- Sign-up sheet (Name, email, etc.);

- Tablecloth
- Be friendly and active (don't wait for others to talk first)
- Set an ambitious yet feasible goal

What should you do after the tabling events:
- Follow up the sign-up emails with instructions on how to register as a member;
- Include these emails to your email list;

3) Business Development

Reaching out and establishing partnerships with your college centers and other clubs can be very effective in acquiring new members and promoting projects. Thus, we encourage you to build a reach out list at the beginning of a semester.

Who should you reach out to:
- College Centers/Offices:
  - Transfer Center;
  - Career Center;
  - Major Departments;
  - Education Resource Center;
  - Honors Institutes
- Student Government/clubs
- Professors

Why do you reach out:
- To promote your club or chapter projects;
- To recruit;
- To find advisors

How can you reach out:
- Online (Email, Linkedin, etc.)
- In-person (Office hour)
- Referrals

4) In-Class/Cross-Club Promotion

You can also make a short presentation or distribute flyers in your classes and other clubs' events; Some professors and clubs are very open, so don't be afraid to ask

Member Engagement:

When students first become chapter members, make sure they feel they are taken care of, or they will become inactive very quickly. Without your members, you don't have a chapter, and we couldn't deliver the value. So here are some ways we found to be particularly effective in engaging members:

1) Email List & Newsletter

Make sure you collect email addresses from your members in the first general meeting and then consolidate them into the chapter member email list. Sending out regular (monthly, or biweekly) newsletters would be a good way for your members to know what is going on at your chapter and at College Leap. You can use platforms such as MailChimp to send out your newsletters.

What to include in the newsletter:
- College Leap Projects;
- Chapter Projects;
- Content generated by your chapter (article, video, podcast, etc.)

Make sure you make the benefits of participation very clear. You should also add a short opening paragraph and an ending with a call to action (event registration, etc.). You are encouraged to unleash your creativity in designing the newsletters.

2) Welcome Letter

For the newly joined members, make sure you send a welcome letter with brief introductions about your chapter, projects, and ways for them to get involved. Normally, the sooner you send out the welcome letter, the more likely the members will open it.

3) Team Bonding

Engaging the general members is only part of the job. You also need to make sure the chapter executive team and the committee members are well-involved in the community. Remember, the best teams are the ones whose members would stay after the meetings. Here are some ideas for your team to bond.

- Dining Out;
- Group Event (game night, hiking, retreat, etc.)
- Virtual Happy Hour;
- Coffee Chats

Fundraising

Sometimes you would need a budget for your events, projects, team-bonding activities, so you need to fundraise to cover these expenses. Here are some ways for your chapter to get funds:

1) College's funds for clubs

    Most colleges have funds reserved for student activities, and all registered and active clubs can apply based on their needs. We recommend you apply for the fund as soon as possible. For different colleges, this process would be different, but in general, you will need to submit an application form stating the amount you are applying for as well as how you will spend the budget. You can find more information on your student government's website. If you need more help with applying for funds, you can contact the National Chapter Center for help.

2) Sponsorship

    College Leap is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, so companies can give us money for tax purposes. You can reach out to some companies and foundations to seek sponsorship for your events and projects. However, the money needs to go to the nonprofit account before reimbursing your chapter.

3) Merchandise

    You can also sell College Leap merchandise on your campus with your Chapter's logo on it. We can help you design. You can also consider selling other merchandise, but make sure they do not violate any laws or campus regulations.

4) Donations

    You can accept donations from your members, faculty, and staff members at your college.

LEAP Credit System

Although all College Leap membership and projects are currently free to all, we do plan to have premium memberships and charge registration fees for some standalone projects in 2022. LEAP Credits will be the currency, in addition to cash, within College Leap to purchase premium memberships, participate in College Leap projects, and buy College Leap merchandise. ($1 = 1 LEAP Credit; Premium Membership = $100)

LEAP credits can be earned by chapters, and they can also be rolled over to next year if leftover. The chapter as a whole will decide on how to spend the LEAP credits. Here are several ways for a chapter to earn LEAP credits:

a) Chapter Establishment (1000');
b) Semester Work Plan & Semester Activation (500');
c) Monthly Work Report (100') & Representative Council's Meeting (100');
d) Additional National Officers (100' /additional officer);
   (*Each chapter is required to have one representative in the national office. However, the other positions within the national office are also open to chapter leaders.)
e) Chapter Awards

Chapter Recognition/Awards

To recognize our chapters' accomplishments, the national office will grant awards to chapters based on their performance in Member Recruitment, Chapter Projects, Member Engagement, and Chapter Representatives' Council's Vote. The winners will be announced on both website and social media platforms. They will also receive certificates and LEAP credits.

1) Chapter of the Year — One winner per year - 1000 LEAP credits;
2) Chapter of the Semester — One winner per semester — 500 LEAP credits;
3) Chapter of the month — One winner per month — 200 LEAP credits;

Other than awards to recognize the overall performance of chapters, we also have awards for chapter projects and LEAP Projects:

1) Chapter Project of the semester— One winner per semester — 500 LEAP credits;
2) LEAP Projects' awards — One winner per College Leap Projects — 500 LEAP credits
   Some College Leap Projects will seek collaborations from our chapters, and thus an award will be given to the chapter that performs the best in that College Leap Project.

Contact Us

Website: collegeleap.cc
Email: team@collegeleap.cc