



ASTRA NEW CLUB START-UP GUIDE

Ten Steps to Starting a New Club

- **Visit the ASTRA page** of the Altrusa International website where you will find information, documents and forms to help you get started (<https://astra.altrusa.org>). You may also request information from the International office at altrusa@altrusa.org.
- **Create your Altrusa ASTRA Committee and decide on your age group** to work with. ASTRA clubs can be in middle schools, high schools, community colleges or college/universities, or they can be community clubs not associated with a school (ages 11-25+)
 - Identify 2-4 Altrusans who will serve on your “Altrusa ASTRA Committee” working with your ASTRA members. This is an independent committee in Altrusa.
 - If you are working with a school and the school requires it, identify an employee/advisor from the school with which you wish to work.
 - Altrusa does *not* require a school advisor, only an “Altrusa ASTRA Committee” within your Altrusa club, but if the school requires it, we try to follow their school club charter practices.
 - Get your Altrusa Board’s approval.
 - Remember that Altrusans need to be present at ASTRA meetings and service projects, actively mentoring ASTRA members. School advisors may also be present and participating-- but ASTRA clubs are overseen by Altrusans.
- **Seek approval** from the school or organization to begin a new ASTRA club and hold meetings.
- **Hold an interest meeting** to provide information about this new ASTRA club (parents and students may be invited) and announce the date of the first ASTRA meeting.
 - Provide refreshments and try to have your first service project scheduled. A simple hands-on activity at the interest meeting is a great way to garner interest in the club!
 - Talk about the purpose of ASTRA, that it is student-run but mentored by Altrusans, and have a Meeting Sign-in sheet, Membership Applications, Parent Permission & Photo Release forms, and a sign-up sheet for the service project available.
 - ASTRA meetings can be as often as you want: 1-2 times per month is most popular. Meetings can be held before school, during school (with permission) or in the evenings. Whatever works for your Altrusans and your ASTRA members!
- Review the “**Charter Information Form**” on the ASTRA website and send a “**Letter of Intent to Sponsor an ASTRA Club**” to the Altrusa International office at altrusa@altrusa.org or ASTRA@altrusa.org. There is a sample letter on the ASTRA website referenced above.

- **To build interest, start with hands-on service!** Have the potential new ASTRA members participate in a service project. Start small and make it fun! Check out the ASTRA Service Projects list on the ASTRA website for ideas.
- **Schedule a meeting.** Decide on the ASTRA club name (“ASTRA Club of ___”). Elect ASTRA Officers and Committee Co-Chairs early on. Decide if the club will collect optional member dues. Have a Sign-in sheet and Membership Applications for new people. Have another service project for them to sign-up for or have the members brainstorm and choose other service projects they’re interested in.
- **Once you have 15 ASTRA members, submit a letter to the Altrusa International office,** emailing it to altrusa@altrusa.org with information on the details for chartering your new ASTRA club along with a list of the names of ASTRA Club Officers, ASTRA Club charter members, and the name and contact information of your Altrusa ASTRA Advisor per the Club Charter Information list on the website.
 - The International office staff will prepare and send Charter documents and Charter Member Certificates to you.
 - The Altrusa International President and International ASTRA Chair will provide a letter of Congratulations
 - You must allow 3 weeks from the time you notify the International office of your charter date to allow time for the chartering process to occur.
 - Also notify your District Governor and District ASTRA Chair of your Charter Ceremony date and invite them to participate in the celebration.
- **Work with the ASTRA members** to set the regular meeting schedule, plan service projects and membership activities throughout the year. You will also want to invite the ASTRA members to participate in some of your Altrusa club projects and events.
 - Remember: Altrusans on the ASTRA committee attend meetings and *mentor* the ASTRA members, but do not run the club. They *facilitate* the process.
- **Hold a Charter Ceremony** event to welcome the new ASTRA Club to the Altrusa family. There is extensive information and sample documents available on the ASTRA website to help with your Charter Ceremony and your ASTRA activities over time. Enjoy inspiring and helping these young people to grow in leadership and service!

HAVE FUN!