



2018/2019 Action Group Application

Action groups are the core of OPIRG. They are groups of volunteers who organize autonomously to address a specific social justice or environmental issue. This may include direct action, research, raising awareness, or educational campaigns. Action groups receive a variety of forms of support from OPIRG-Brock.

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PLEASE RETURN PAGES 11-13 & SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION TO OPIRG BROCK EITHER BE SUBMITTED VIA E-MAIL (IN WORD OR PDF FORMAT) OR BY DROPPING THEM OFF AT A PUBLIC BOARD MEETING BEFORE Monday, October 1, 2018.

Steps for creating an OPIRG Brock Action Group

1. Have an idea for a social justice group/ campaign (and people to help organize it)
2. Download the Action Group Application
3. Review the Action Group Policy (included in this package) and OPIRG Brock Safe Space Policy (included in this package) to see if OPIRG Brock is a good fit for your group/ campaign
4. Ask any questions you may have at the Action Group Information Sessions on ****September 13, 2018 & **September 20, 2018**
5. Submit your application to OPIRG Brock by ****October 1, 2018****

****VERY IMPORTANT****

In order to submit your Action Group Application, two of your members must be members of OPIRG Brock. An OPIRG Brock member is:

- A Brock undergraduate student who has paid the annual membership fee; and whose membership is in good standing with the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors.
- A community member who is not a Brock undergraduate student, has paid the annual membership fee; and whose membership is in good standing with the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors.

If any member of your group is not currently an OPIRG Brock member, and wishes to Opt-In, they are able to do so through the following steps:

1. Email opirgb@gmail.com expressing interest of membership, which will add "Community membership" to the upcoming board meeting agenda.
2. Attend the following public board meeting (schedule will be listed on opirgbrock.com). If you are unavailable to attend this meeting, please send a representative in your place. If you are unable to find a representative, the Board of Directors will provide further information on an alternative method.
3. To this board meeting, bring \$7.50 for the annual membership fee.
4. Using the OPRIG Brock Safe(r) Spaces Policy, and all other OPIRG Brock institutional documents, the Board of Directors will assess the proposal for your membership.

****Note:** Expressing interest in becoming an OPIRG Brock member does not guarantee approval. To be considered a member-in-good-standing is relative to the OPIRG Brock Safe(r) Spaces Policy and subject to the discretion of the Board of Directors.

OPIRG-Brock Action Group Policy

A - Summary

Action Groups are the core of OPIRG. Action Groups are defined as groups of volunteers or clubs who organize autonomously to address a specific social justice or environmental issue. They are groups of volunteers who organize autonomously to address a specific social justice or environmental issue. This may include direct action, research, raising awareness, or educational campaigns. Action Groups can receive various forms of support from OPIRG-Brock.

B - Definitions

Action Group Member – Any person who participates in the organization, tasks, and planning of an Action Group. An Action Group Member is not required to be an OPIRG member to participate in the Action Group.

Action Group Signing Member - The two (2) Action Members who acts as the primary contacts for OPIRG Brock, and provides their personal contact information in their Action Group's application each year. This Action Group Member must be a member-in-good-standing with OPIRG Brock. This Action Group Member will be one of the primary contacts OPIRG board and staff to use to contact the group unless stated otherwise.

Annual General Meeting (AGM) – Each year, in the winter semester, OPIRG Brock hosts its AGM. This event is an opportunity for Action Groups to speak to the work they have been doing over the past year. If an Action Group is unable to attend the Annual AGM, OPIRG Brock will share their annual report on their behalf.

Funded Action Group – An Action Group who receives a set annual amount of funding, in addition to the services available to all Action Groups, for the work they are doing. If a project requires funding beyond the allotted budget, a separate individual proposal can be submitted to the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors.

Member-in-good-standing - A Student who has not financially opt-ed out of OPIRG Brock for the fiscal year; a community member who has paid the annual membership fee; a Student or Community Member who has never lost their membership status based on a violation of the OPIRG Brock Safer Space policy; a Community Member who has never lost status or has not been approved for Community membership due to legally putting the future of OPIRG Brock at risk.

Non-funded Action Group – An Action Group who applies for status, but does not request any funding for the year. Non-funded Action Groups have access to all OPIRG Brock Services and events. If a Non-funded Action Group wishes to request funding from OPIRG Brock, an individual proposal can be submitted to the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors.

OPIRG Brock – The Brock chapter of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group.

OPIRG Brock Community Member – A person who is not a Brock undergraduate student who is an OPIRG Brock member; has paid the annual membership fee; and whose membership is in good standing with the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors.

OPIRG Brock Student Member – A Brock undergraduate student; has paid the annual membership fee; and whose membership is in good standing with the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors.

OPIRG Provincial – The network that connects OPIRG chapters across Ontario.

Organizing group – A specific group / project that does not have Action Group status.

Support for Action Groups - The types of support available to groups may include, but is not limited to:

- Booking meeting space within the OPIRG's office space or getting room booking support from OPIRG Board & Staff members
- Financial support (dependent on status and proposals)
- Networking and building connections to other groups on campus with shared interests
- Photocopying & printing for Action Group content, up to 100 sheets in Black & White
- Promotion for the group and its events through OPIRG's website and media accounts
- Support in accessing university resources
- Strategic support meetings with OPIRG staff and board members (e.g., help with projects, outreach, planning)
- Trainings (e.g., anti-oppression 101 and consensus decision making workshops)
- Use of OPIRG's office resources (ie. phone, computers, educational materials, button maker, etc.)

C - Rights & Responsibilities of OPIRG Brock

1. Action Group Application Process

1.1. Each year, the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors will determine the number of Action Group spots available, both funded and non-funded.

1.2. OPIRG Brock reserves the right to not grant an organizing group Action Group status, even if they had been granted status in the previous year(s).

1.3. Each year, OPIRG Brock must host a one (1) month application process for Action Groups. During this period, a minimum of two (2) information sessions must be hosted, one on Brock main campus, and one in a community-based location.

1.4. Following the close of the application deadline, the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors will have its annual review meeting where it will assess the submitted applications, and decide the new Action Groups for the coming year.

1.5. All groups who submitted an application will be notified of their status within three (3) days of the Board of Directors meeting to review applications.

2. Annual details and information

2.1. Each semester, OPIRG Brock will coordinate an anti-oppression training, specifically for representatives from Action Groups. OPIRG Brock Board and Staff Members will also be present at these trainings.

2.2. Each semester, OPIRG Brock will host an event specifically aimed at connecting Action Groups, and promoting their work to the general public.

2.3. Each year, in the winter semester, OPIRG Brock will compile its Annual General Report, which will include a section devoted to Action Group Reports. At the Annual AGM, if an Action Group is unable to attend, a representative from OPIRG Brock will read the submitted report.

3. Suspending and revoking Action Group status

3.1. The OPIRG board of directors reserves the right to suspend or revoke the Action Group status of any group if the group fails to meet the above requirements, deviates substantially from the group's proposed goals, plan of action, or budget, becomes inactive, or otherwise jeopardizes the reputation of OPIRG-Brock or causes harm to the community.

3.2. If OPIRG Brock revokes the Action Group status of a Action Group, the OPIRG-Brock Board of Directors shall provide immediate notice of termination of status, and also shall provide a written reason for their decision to revoke Action Group status within two weeks of the decision.

3.3. If OPIRG Brock revokes the Action Group status or an Action Group hasn't responded to emails from an OPIRG Brock Staff or Board member for two (2) months or after five (5) consecutive emails, the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors shall provide an immediate notice of their revoked Action Group status to the group within two (2) weeks of the decision.

3.4. If OPIRG Brock suspends the Action Group status of an Action Group, the OPIRG-Brock Board of Directors shall provide immediate notice of suspension. Board members will meet with Action Group members to discuss the matter and identify the restorative measures required to release the working group from suspension. OPIRG-Brock reserves the right to make this suspension public.

D - Structure, Rights, & Responsibilities of Action Groups

1. Structure & philosophy

1.1. Action Groups may define their own organizational structure, however they are encouraged to use consensus-based decision-making.

1.2. Action Groups must focus on a topic within OPIRG's public interest mandate of contributing to social and environmental justice. Specifically, Action Groups must maintain the OPIRG-Brock's mandate at all times and avoid and address any and all racist, sexist, classist, ableist, anti-Semitic, homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic and/or any other oppressive language or actions in meetings and events.

1.3. Action Groups must not promote any particular political party.

1.4. Action Groups must not fundraise for profit or allocate any of their annual OPIRG Brock budget to any external group. Additionally, salaries, travel expenses and stipends for Action Group members are not allowable expenses.

1.5. Action Group members must treat all shared spaces and materials with respect (e.g., clean up after using shared space, be considerate of others who may want to use the space or other resources).

1.6. Action Groups must be student-led, campus based or must organize primarily in the Niagara region.

2. Communication

2.1. Action Groups must provide the personal contact information for two (2) Action Group Members, referred to as Action Group Signing Members. The Action Group Signing Members must be able to respond in a timely manner to all inquiries from OPIRG-Brock, including requests for updates on the progress of the Action Group. New contact information must be updated in a timely manner if there are any changes to this information or if a contact person leaves the group. The Action Group Members who provided their contact information must be either a Student or Community Member-In-Good-Standing with OPIRG Brock.

2.2. Direct communication from an Action Group to OPIRG Brock must take place via email. If a message sent to a board member or staff member's personal Facebook Messenger, or any other social media messaging tool, it will not be replied to unless it has been discussed among the board/staff member and the Action Group member previously. The only exception will be that messages received by the OPIRG Brock Facebook Page account will be replied to.

2.3. Action Groups give consent to OPIRG-Brock to use news of the Action Group and photographs of its events and activities to promote OPIRG-Brock. Action Groups will be featured on OPIRG-Brock's website.

2.4. Action Groups are encouraged to regularly inform OPIRG-Brock staff of major projects, events, and other activities of the Action Group.

2.5. Action Groups must include OPIRG-Brock's logo (or an indication of association with OPIRG-Brock) on all posters and other promotional materials. Electronic copies of these materials must be submitted to OPIRG Brock two (2) days before being made public.

2.6. If any promotional material submitted to OPIRG Brock by an Action Group is deemed in conflict with the OPIRG Brock Safer Space Policy, the Action Group is required to cease distribution of this material until its revisions are in accordance with the OPIRG Brock Safer Space Policy.

3. Annual Application Process

3.1. Action Groups must complete OPIRG-Brock's Action Group Application Form annually and receive approval from OPIRG-Brock's Board of Directors. Pre-existing working groups are not guaranteed renewal. There is an annual October 1 deadline for applications. If there is still space available after the deadline, new applications may be considered throughout the year.

3.2. If an organizing group receives an email requesting further information, they have five days (5) to provide the requested information.

3.3. If an organizing group is denied Action Group status, they have seven (7) days upon receiving the email notification to request further clarification on their application. This could result in an email reply or having a meeting with a representative from the Board of Directors. Requesting this meeting does not guarantee a change in Action Group status.

4. Financial Support

4.1. If an Action Group wishes to receive financial support from OPIRG Brock they must submit an annual projected budget for the coming year with their Action Group Application.

4.2. Funded Action Groups will be required to have a financial check-in meeting once every three months between September and April each year.

4.3. If an Action Group wishes to be funded by OPIRG Brock they must have a bank account in the group's name prior to being issued a cheque.

4.4. A funded Action Group will be required to submit its receipts with two (2) weeks of purchase to be claimed against their total annual budget.

4.5. A funded Action Group cannot submit receipts non-related to the budget submitted during the Action Group Application process.

4.6. If an Action Group receives a message requesting further clarification on a submitted receipt, the group has five (5) days to submit the requested information to OPIRG Brock. Receipts can be submitted in person to an OPIRG Brock board or staff member, or scanned and emailed to opirgb@gmail.com.

4.7. In the case an Action Group requires a cheque prior to a specific date, an invoice must be submitted to OPIRG Brock a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the date it is needed.

5. Annual details and information

5.1. At least two members of the Action Group must have received anti-oppression training through OPIRG-Brock's anti-oppression workshop or an equivalent workshop (as deemed by OPIRG-Brock's Board of Directors) or must commit to attending the next available session that school year.

5.2. Upon completing the OPIRG Brock Anti-Oppression Training, or having provided the information on equivalent training, an Action Group will have thirty (30) days to submit a Anti-Oppression and Safer Space Plan to OPIRG Brock. A template for this plan will be provided by OPIRG Brock.

5.3. When using the OPIRG Brock office photocopier, all usage must be logged in the "OPIRG Brock Photocopy Log" binder.

5.4. Action Groups must provide a written report on their work at OPIRG-Brock's Annual General Meeting, taking place in the winter semester of each academic year. Groups will also have the opportunity to present their report in person at the Annual AGM.

OPIRG BROCK Safer Space Policy

November 1, 2017

A – Summary

The intention of this Safer Space Policy is to combat homophobia, sexism, transphobia, gender policing, racism, classism, ableism, and other forms of oppression that threaten the physical or psychological well-being of individuals attending the meetings or events of OPIRG-Brock, as well as people participating in OPIRG Brock Action Groups or as volunteers, staff, or board members. OPIRG Brock recognizes that it is unrealistic that our spaces will be a truly safe space for all individuals, but believe it is the right of all individuals participating to be free of these forms of oppression and that our best efforts must be put into combating them.

B – Safer Space Framework

1. Safer Space Standards

All individuals attending OPIRG events must help to maintain a safer space by managing their own behaviour including but not limited to complying with the following guidelines:

1.1. No Homophobia – Show respect for individuals of all sexual orientations. E.g., don't use the word 'gay' as an insult or use gay slurs.

1.2. No Transphobia – Show respect for individuals of all gender identities, gender expressions and gender performances. E.g., don't use words such as 'tranny' (unless using as a reclaimed word to describe yourself).

1.3. No Sexism – Show respect for individuals of all gender identities and all gender expression. E.g., Don't use words such as 'slut' or 'bitch' (unless using as a reclaimed word to describe yourself). Remember that people of all genders can perform all tasks. Remember that there is nothing wrong with a person of any sex being 'feminine' or 'masculine.'

1.4. No Racism - Show respect for individuals of all races. Do not fetishize, dismiss or isolate people of colour. E.g., do not use racial slurs or stereotypes.

1.5. No Classism – Show respect for individuals of all classes. E.g., be mindful of your class privilege and do not assume resources that are accessible to you are accessible to everyone.

1.6. No Ableism – Show respect for individuals of all abilities. E.g., do not assume what abilities a person has or does not have. Remember that not all disabilities are visible.

1.7. Acknowledge Colonialism – Recognize that the land we currently organize on has been colonized (forcibly taken) from the Indigenous people of Turtle Island. Recognize that the violence of colonization is not confined to solitary events, but is an ongoing process that continues to impact Indigenous peoples. For example, Indigenous people and cultures face a continued push for erasure and assimilation and we challenge the Canadian nationalism that reinforces the celebration of colonization.

1.8. Practice Consent – Respect the boundaries and autonomy of others. E.g., Ask for consent before touching anyone. Accept 'no' for an answer. Do not pressure others to engage in behaviours that they are not comfortable with.

2. Policy Application

2.1. Individuals must comply with OPIRG Brock Safer Space Policy while attending all OPIRG events and meetings and while at any location owned or leased by OPIRG Brock. The Safer Space Policy will be read or otherwise displayed to individuals attending all public events, not including public meetings.

2.2. Compliance with the Safer Space Policy will be a mandatory requirement of OPIRG Brock Action Groups to meet Action Group Status.

C - Violations of Safer Space Policy

1. Reporting violations

1.1. It will be considered sufficient evidence that the behaviour occurred if a witness reports the potential violation directly to a board member, staff member, signing member of an action group (the individuals who are listed with contact info on application), or a volunteer of OPIRG-Brock.

1.2. In the case of sexual or physical violence only the type of violation must be reported (e.g., sexual harassment).

1.3. In the case of acts of prejudice or discrimination, enough details of the violation must be provided in order for the board to determine if it was sufficiently intentional, reckless, and/or severe.

1.4. All personal details and contact information of the person reporting the violation will remain confidential to the individual(s) the violation was reported to, the OPIRG Board, and the staff members (if applicable), unless otherwise expressed by the person reporting the violation.

2. Violations Immediately Resulting in Loss of Standing

An individual will be considered to no longer be in good standing with OPIRG Brock, and will be banned from all of OPIRG Brock's events, meetings, physical locations, action groups and general membership if they commit any of the following:

2.1. Sexual or physical violence including, but not limited to, sexual assault, physical assault, or sexual harassment.

2.2. Intentional or reckless and severe acts of prejudice or discrimination (as determined by the board).

3. Procedure for violation(s) of Safer Space Policy

3.1. If an individual violates this policy (not including the violations above) an OPIRG Board member, staff member, or volunteer will discuss this violation with that individual at a time and location that OPIRG representative deems appropriate. If it is not apparent that the individual understands why their behaviour violates the policy this will be explained to them at that time.

3.2. Repeated violations will result in loss of standing with OPIRG-Brock at the discretion of OPIRG-Brock's Board of Directors.

4. Procedure in the Case of Loss of Standing

4.1 OPIRG Brock will request a meeting with the individual who has lost standing, which will be attended by two members of the OPIRG Brock Board of Directors. If the individual refuses to meet in person the board may communicate with the individual by email instead.

4.2. Board members will indicate what led the individual to lose their standing (in a means that does not violate privacy of any survivor reports, can be limited to the type of violation e.g., racism/sexual harassment).

4.3. Board members will explain that the individual who has lost standing that they are no longer welcome at OPIRG events, public meetings, or physical locations (e.g., office space), and may no longer be a member of OPIRG-Brock or any of its action groups.

4.4. If an person has lost standing at OPIRG Brock, and attempts to join an active OPIRG Brock Action Group, this information, as well as the cause of lost standing, will be presented to the Action Group, and may impact their Action Group status.

4.5. Board members will provide individuals who have lost standing with educational resources related to the violation of the policy that the individual committed.

4.6. Any fees memberships paid by the individual for the current year will be refunded to the individual who has lost standing if they attend the requested meeting or provide a mailing address.

APPLICATION FORM FOR OPIRG-BROCK ACTION GROUPS

This application serves two purposes. It is an opportunity for your group to formulate your goals and plan of action for the coming year, and for the Board to get to know you, your group and your issue. To apply to be an Action Group, please answer each of the following questions. Most of these questions can be answered in one or two sentences. All Action Groups must re-apply annually. All applications can either be submitted via e-mail (in WORD or PDF format) or by dropping them off at a public Board Meeting. If you have any questions about applying to become an Action Group send us an email at opirgb@gmail.com.

LOGISTICS

Proposed Name of Action Group: _____

Is this group/ project (please circle one): NEW or EXISTING GROUP?

Your group/ project takes place during (please circle one):

ACADEMIC YEAR ONLY ACADEMIC YEAR + SUMMER

Action Group status you're applying for (please circle one):

FUNDED NON-FUNDED

Action Group's Email: _____ Website: _____

Action Group's Social Media Handles: _____

DESCRIPTION OF ACTION GROUP

(Please attach a sheet that answers the short answer questions)

Description

1. Short description of Action Group (50-100 word):
2. Describe the issue(s) & sub-issue(s) your Action Group will focus.
3. How does this issue relate to OPIRG's social and environmental justice mandate?
4. What are your goals for the coming year, short and long term?
5. What kinds of activities do you plan to help achieve these goals?

Volunteer Involvement

6. How many people do you foresee taking part in this Action Group?
7. Can anyone interested in the group join, or are there some membership criteria? If so, please specify?
8. Please describe your process for training new volunteers.
9. What are the tasks & activities involved with volunteering with your Action Group?

OPIRG Support

10. What kinds of support will you need from OPIRG? (e.g., types of support from staff; training; using OPIRG space for meetings; using the computers etc.).
11. What trainings would your group be interested in receiving from OPIRG Brock?
12. Do you wish to receive financial support from OPIRG-Brock? If yes, please include a budget form for your group.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide the following contact information for two (2) of your Action Group Members.

Action Group Representative 1

Name:

Email:

Primary city of residence:

OPIRG Membership Status (Please circle one): STUDENT COMMUNITY MEMBER

- I consent for my personal email to being added to the OPIRG Brock list-serve

Action Group Representative 2

Name:

Email:

Primary city of residence:

OPIRG Membership Status (Please circle one): STUDENT COMMUNITY MEMBER

- I consent for my personal email to being added to the OPIRG Brock list-serve

SIGNATURES

By signing below, I indicate that I have read and understand OPIRG-Brock's Requirements for Action Groups, and I agree to all of these requirements.

Action Group Representative 1 Name
(Please print)

Action Group Representative Signature

Date

Action Group Representative 2 Name
(Please print)

Action Group Representative Signature

Date

BUDGET FORM

Action Groups that wish to receive financial support from OPIRG-Brock must include a budget.

Does your group currently receive any other sources of funding, in addition to OPIRG Brock?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please list source(s) and annual amount(s).

Does your group intend on hosting any fundraising events this year?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please describe the events and what these funds will be used for.

Total annual OPIRG Brock budget available for Funded Action Groups: Maximum of \$300

Please provide a financial breakdown of the uses for your annual OPIRG Brock budget.
