



## **Green Teams Inaugural Meetings Tips and Sample Agendas**

### **Introduction**

Penn State's Green Team network is part of a larger governance infrastructure supporting the strategic integration of sustainability into the University's teaching, operations, research, student services, and outreach efforts. The first step in this process is helping staff, faculty and students understand the breadth of sustainability concepts and how they fit into decisions that people make on a daily basis. Green Teams can play a role by embarking on a journey of sustainability literacy and creating paths for others to join in the discovery and excitement of contributing to a better future.

Below you will find some first steps to take in creating a Green Team. Please do not hesitate to contact [Lydia Vandenberg](#) at the Sustainability Institute, with any questions.

### **Identify collaborators**

- Talk informally among your peers to find others who are interested in forming a Green Team. Once you have one or two other people, organize a brainstorming session to define the team's purpose and aspirations.
- Consider having snacks such as homemade cookies
- There are many roles people can play and sharing the work engages people and lightens the load for any one person. Before the meeting, identify someone who can:
  - Take Notes
  - Write items on a white board or on a common document
  - A "researcher" who gathers information about other Green Teams and resources before the first meeting
  - Snack provider – consider ways that you can reduce the waste as much as possible, for example, serving the food on napkins, rather than plates

### **At the first meeting**

- Arrive 15 minutes early to meet with people, prepare the space, and build relationships as people arrive
- Clearly state the purpose of the meeting
- "This meeting is to see if there is interest in starting a Green Team and, if so, to begin to get a sense of what the focus of the team would be and how it would function. We'll start with a short activity/story/video. . ."
  - Need ideas for a video to show? Under the Training/Resources tab of the Green

- Teams website, each resource category has a video section.
  - Identify and thank others who are helping (or helped) gather resources, take notes, etc.
  - Do a quick Energizer/Focuser
  - Personal story of why a green team is important to you
  - Statistics or a news story
  - Short video (YouTube)
  - Humorous personal story or political cartoon
- Round Robin question: “So let’s go around and here from one another. Each of us will share why you are here and what you hope to contribute to the group.”
- Process suggestion: capture the main ideas, points on a white board
- Thank everyone for sharing and summarize/synthesize what you have heard. “So it sounds like people are interested in. . .”
- Process suggestion: after summarizing, ask the group, “Is this what everyone else heard? Is what I’ve said an accurate picture of what this group is interested in? What have I missed?”
- When everyone agrees the list is complete at this point, you can ask: “So would everyone like to continue meeting to discuss these ideas further and see how we can actually make a difference?” This is critical that you actually ask—and not assume—people want to meet again. Asking gets a commitment and that’s what you want.
- Closing and Next Steps
- Say something about how valuable—and fun!—a Green Team could be and that you look forward to getting together again. Look to the next meeting and give people a sense of what to expect (and that ACTION will be taken).
- “We will meet again (date/time/location of next meeting) and discuss our goals, challenges, and how our team will function (who will facilitate, how we’ll communicate between meetings, how we’ll get supervisor support, etc.).
- We’ll also discuss what ‘low hanging fruit’ there might be so we start taking concrete action right away.”
- It’s important to emphasize both ACTION (that you’ll actually be doing something) and PLANNING (that you’ll actually be strategizing and building something for the long term).
- Quote for closing: **“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.” - Jane Goodall -**
- Suggestion: Ask someone to volunteer to kick off the next meeting with something fun or interesting or to bring some kind of snack or something to share.

### **Between Meetings**

- Within 24 – 48 hours, summarize the main points from the first meeting and send them out to the group (and anyone who wanted to come but couldn’t make it)
- Share these notes and the attendee list with your supervisor/budget manager so they are kept informed

- Follow up individually with key people. These can be people who expressed a lot of interest or people who seemed against the idea or negative. Ask questions, listen, build the relationship.
- Contact [Lydia Vandenberg](#) in the Sustainability Institute and let her know about your group's interest. She will help connect you with other Green Teams and/or [Sustainability Councils](#) in your unit to ensure a coordinated effort. She can also review the information from the first meeting and strategize for the second one.

### **Green Team Second Meeting: Sample Agenda**

- Again start with an Energizer/Focuser, something fun. You could show the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) chart, watch one of the Fun with Green videos below, and then discuss which goals are addressed. Each of the following are about 3 minutes long.
  - [Piano stairs](#)
  - [Can Bank](#)
  - [Caught Green Handed](#)
- Review the First Meeting Results: If attendees do not already know each other, do a round of introductions. If you want ideas for fun icebreakers go to our Green Teams website for some great links to some simple, fun ideas. Then flow into an update of the group's first meeting decisions, such as the topics of interest identified.
- Setting Goals: At the first meeting, you brainstormed about what people wanted to work on. At this second meeting, you should decide how to turn those ideas into specific actions.
  - What project would you like to work on first? The project should be achievable in a short amount of time, have few constraints, such as timing, funding, or political sensitivity and should contribute to the University priorities as outlined in [the strategic plan](#).
  - You might get some ideas for a first project by consulting Penn State's [Green Paws Program](#), a self-guided set of actions to contribute positively to Penn State's sustainability mission. Monthly orientations are offered through the Learning Resource Network.
- Ground rules for your Green Team. If you have time, consider how your Green Team will function. (If you have run out of time, this could be the first thing discussed at the third meeting.)
  - Who should lead the team: select one main leader and an assistant. Should they also define how long the leader will lead?
  - Who will help facilitate our meetings?
  - How often will we meet? Where will we meet?
  - Who are the members of the team?
  - Do we have support from our leadership? If so, how will we communicate with him/her?
  - How will we share information from the meetings: emails, MS Teams?
- Complete the [Green Team Registration Form](#) and Lydia will be in contact shortly. You all are now joining the network of Penn State Sustainability Champions! Welcome.