



*PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING IN  
THRIVING COMMUNITIES BEYOND THE EARTH,  
AND THE USE OF THE VAST RESOURCES OF SPACE  
FOR THE DRAMATIC BETTERMENT OF HUMANITY*

# Chapter Starter Kit

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**Created by Larry Ahearn, Al Anzaldua, Mario Anzalotti,  
Fred Becker, Perri Doutre, Sean Freeman,  
Claire McMurray, Candace Pankanin, and David Stuart  
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# 1 – Starting A Chapter

## What is the National Space Society?

Thank you for your interest in forming a chapter of the National Space Society (NSS). The NSS is a non-profit, educational organization (United States IRS designation 501(c) (3)) and is open to citizens of all nations. We are an independent organization and not in any way part of the United States government.

Our purpose is to develop the nearly limitless resources of the solar system and permit the establishment of a space-based civilization. The society sees this civilization as economically self-sufficient and supported by a free enterprise structure.

To this end we promote interest in space exploration, research, development and habitation through the media of conferences, the press, library and museum exhibits and other literary and educational means by stimulating the advancement and development of applications of space and related technologies; and by bringing together people from government, industry, academia, and all walks of life for the free exchange of information.

The National Space Society, the result of the 1987 merger of the National Space Institute and the L5 Society, is dedicated to the vision of people living and working in thriving communities beyond the Earth, and the use of the vast resources of space for the dramatic betterment of humanity. The society wants to share the prospects that this vision offers for a hopeful future. In short, we want “space for everyone to live, work and play!”

## What is a National Space Society chapter?

NSS chapters exist because of their members’ desire to see an aggressive, ambitious space program leading to the economic development of space and settlement. Most chapters have nonprofit status under the National Space Society, while others are legally independent nonprofits. What activities does a local chapter pursue? No two chapters are alike. They take on an identity consistent with the talents, interests and availability of local members. Another important factor is the availability of funding and local resources. Activities include:

### **Camaraderie**

- Sponsoring speakers and films.
- Interaction with other chapters about their activities and outreach.
- Operating your own chapter website, hosting chats, webinars or social media postings to share information.

- Conference, convention, Space Forum and Space Settlement Summit participation.
- Appearing on radio, TV, or podcast shows as “local space experts.”
- Participating in inter-chapter meetings such as chapter assembly and all-chapter meetings.
- Space Week, Yuri’s night and other national and international event organization.
- Forming a speaker’s bureau for use by local civic and school groups.
- The possibilities are endless.

### **Educational Outreach**

- Teaching courses: pre-k – 12, under grad and grad, and continuing education, etc.
- Co-sponsoring Explorer posts, young SEDS chapters, Scouts, Civil Air Patrol, or other youth groups.
- Educational videos from your chapter meetings
- Exhibits and Information Booths (at malls, conventions, conferences, etc.).

### **Advocacy**

- Visiting local Congressional representatives.
- Participating in March Storm political action activities.
- Political awareness campaigns, letter writing, sign making, etc.

Whatever your group decides to do, public relations are key. While an activity like teaching a course can be productive, making an ever-wider audience aware of your and our existence, purpose and goals. Public relations and publicity give your chapter and the NSS this level of visibility.

## 2 – Checklist: Creating a New Chapter of the National Space Society

NSS chapters may serve a local area ("Peoria, IL") or have a topical focus ("lunar bases"). Chapters are the local or topical groups of the society, organizing events, communicating with the public, and inspiring new generations of space activists. If you're interested in forming a new chapter, the basic steps are as follows:

- [ ] Find **three NSS members** in the area (including yourself) who are willing to help organize the chapter. The chapters coordinator in your region can help you find such NSS members.
- [ ] Decide on a **name** - see the NSS Rules chapters section for guidelines on naming. Example: "NSS Peoria" or North Madison Chapter of NSS".
- [ ] Create a democratic set of **bylaws** - basic sample bylaws for U.S. chapters are below. International chapters contact us for assistance. Attach your bylaws to your application.
- [ ] Read and agree to the **chapter rules**. All NSS chapters must follow the official NSS [chapter rules](#) (PDF).
- [ ] Fill out the chapter **application form** identifying your contact information and names of chapter officers.
- [ ] U.S. Chapters: Complete the **group exemption authorization letter** to claim your chapter as a non-profit subordinate organization to the IRS. U.S. chapters intending to obtain independent non-profit status and file separately with the IRS may skip this step.
- [ ] Email the chapter application to: [chapters@nss.org](mailto:chapters@nss.org).

Once you are approved as an NSS chapter, NSS will instruct you to proceed with the following steps.

### Employer Identification Number (EIN) – U.S. Chapters Only

The first of which requires your chapter to file with the IRS to obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN). This is needed to do the required annual IRS 990 form filing and for national NSS reporting. If your new chapter is an existing non-profit organization that independently files with the IRS, you may skip this step.

- Instructions for obtaining an IRS EIN are [here](#).
- [ ] EIN number received

## **Chapter Bank Account – All Chapters**

The next step is to open a banking account in the name of your chapter. This is now required by the NSS. We recommend that your chapter have two signers on the account for guaranteed access or for easier account transfer if new leadership is elected. Your chapter will use this account for any financial obligations related to your chapter. This is also where the NSS will send any rebates, stipends, award money or any other financial assistance. This is also where you will deposit member dues (if any) or if your chapter wins awards from any other contest or competition you may participate in as well as any donations you may receive.

- Chapter bank account in place

## **Bill.com Account – All Chapters**

The NSS uses Bill.com to pay chapters and they will initiate the process. Once NSS sends you money, Bill.com will contact you to set up an account. Know that this account is password protected and NSS has no access to this account and can't help you if you forget or lose this password or if you change leadership. It is your responsibility to update all info with them. You can alternately have the NSS set up this account for you. The NSS Treasurer will have access. You will have to arrange this in advance with the NSS prior to receiving any monies your chapter is owed, or you will automatically be contacted by Bill.com to set up this account.

- Bill.com account or NSS Treasurer arrangement established

### 3 - NSS National Follow Through

When a valid chapter application is approved, you will receive the following responses from the NSS chapter team:

- [ ] A **chapter code** and **chapter recruiter code** - this number is used to track rebates and member-chapter relations: your chapter will receive half the amount paid by new members joining the NSS because of your chapter's participation in recruiting them. A new member must let the NSS know your chapter code prior to joining. See the Chapter Rules for details.
- [ ] Your chapter will receive a **supporting stipend** when your chapter retains an NSS member from the previous year.
- [ ] **Listing** on the chapters website.
- [ ] **Listing** in *Ad Astra* magazine.
- [ ] **Free hosting** for your chapter website if desired.
- [ ] Inclusion in the **chapter-leaders mailing list**.
- [ ] **Resources** to help your chapter with educational outreach and projects.
- [ ] Invitations to monthly **chapter Zoom meetings**
- [ ] Invitations to **Space Forums** and **Town Halls**
- [ ] Invitations to **chapter gatherings at the ISDC**

## 4 - NSS Chapter Application Form

Date	
Proposed Chapter Name	

We, the chapter officers, have read the [NSS Chapter Rules](#) and agree to abide by these rules and amendments duly passed on by the NSS Board of Directors:

Print Here	Sign
President	
Secretary	
Treasurer	

Primary chapter contact name:	
Primary Phone:	Secondary Phone:
Email:	

Secondary chapter contact name:	
Primary Phone:	Secondary Phone:
Email:	

Upon chapter approval, the following information will be published in both *Ad Astra* magazine and the NSS website. If you don't have a website, notify us when you do and we will update your *Ad Astra* and NSS website listing.

<i>Ad Astra</i> listing chapter contact name:	
Address:	
City & State:	Zip:
Phone:	
Email:	
Chapter Website:	

## 5 – U.S. Chapter Group Exemption Authorization Letter

I, \_\_\_\_\_, duly authorized officer of \_\_\_\_\_ (“Chapter”), represent to the National Space Society (“NSS”) as follows:

a. Chapter is organized and shall be operated at all times exclusively as a nonprofit organization exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (“Code”) as an organization described under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and in full compliance with the requirements thereof;

b. Chapter is not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code;

c. Chapter is and shall be: i) a “subordinate” of NSS; ii) affiliated with NSS; and iii) subject to the general supervision or control of NSS; and,

d. The fiscal year of the chapter is the same as that of NSS which is [Jan 1 – Dec 31].

Chapter confirms that its governing instrument (e.g., charter, articles of association etc.) [a copy of which was previously submitted to NSS/or which is attached hereto] is in full force and effect. Chapter further confirms that a detailed description of its purposes and activities, including the sources of its receipts and the nature of its expenditures [a copy of which was previously submitted to NSS/or which is attached hereto] is accurate as of the date of this letter.

Chapter authorizes NSS to take all action including, but not limited to, filing all appropriate documents with the Internal Revenue Service (“IRS”), pursuant to the group exemption letter dated **September 16, 1996** and issued by the IRS to NSS in accord with Rev. Proc. 80-27 (“Group Exemption Letter”), to add chapter to the roster of subordinate organizations covered by the Group Exemption Letter. Chapter also agrees to file a statement with NSS each February confirming the information set forth herein which is necessary for chapter to remain a subordinate organization that is covered by the Group Exemption Letter and which is subject to the supervision and control of NSS.

Chapter Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of authorized officer: \_\_\_\_\_ [Sign]

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one:

Chapter's employer identification number (EIN) is \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter has applied for an EIN.

Chapter has not yet applied for an EIN. Please help us with this.

Address of record for NSS HQ mailings:

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Chapter address, c/o, street address/P.O. Box

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City, State, Zip

Address (for IRS purposes – PO Boxes are **not** acceptable):

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Chapter address, c/o, street address

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City, State, Zip

## 6 – Non-U.S. Chapter Confirmation of Country Compliance

I, \_\_\_\_\_, [Sign]

duly authorized officer of

\_\_\_\_\_ Chapter,

represent to the National Space Society (“NSS”) as follows:

Please check appropriate boxes:

YES [ ] Chapter confirms that its governing instrument (charter, bylaws, articles of association etc.) [a copy of which was previously submitted to NSS/or which is attached hereto] is in full force and effect. Chapter further confirms that a full description of its purposes and activities is accurate as of the date below.

YES [ ] Chapter confirms that it conforms to the laws of the country it resides in governing the operation of not for profit or educational organizations/groups, whichever applies to this Chapter.

\_\_\_\_\_ [Sign]  
Authorized officer

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 7 – Educational Institutions Declaration

For chapters associated with Educational Institutions, Schools, Colleges or Universities (any academic institution worldwide, both U.S. and international):

YES [ ] I am an employee of the educational institution.

YES [ ] The chapter is following the institution's rules for groups and its rules for any members who are not legal adults:

\_\_\_\_\_ [Sign]  
Advisor or group supervisor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 8 – Sample U.S. Chapter Bylaws - [Chapter Name]

NAME The name of this organization shall be \_\_\_\_\_.

### PURPOSE AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of the chapter shall be the same as that of the National Space Society. No funds or assets of this chapter may be used for any other purpose. The chapter shall operate under the rules of the NSS Bylaws and Chapter Rules, and the chapter Fiscal Year shall be the same as that of the NSS. Upon dissolution, all remaining chapter assets may become the property of the National Space Society.

### MEMBERSHIP

The membership in the chapter consists of those people who have agreed to become members, three of whom must be NSS members who have paid Society dues for the current year. The chapter may collect chapter membership dues in amounts determined from time to time by the Board of Directors of the chapter. The chapter members may deny or withdraw a person's membership in the chapter by a two-thirds vote of the chapter members present and voting or by proxy at a general membership meeting if a quorum exists. All chapter members will be encouraged to become members of the National Space Society.

### MEETINGS

There shall be at least one general membership meeting every year. All members shall receive a one-week notice of the meeting in writing, in person, by phone or multiple emails of the time and place of the meeting. A general membership meeting may be called at any time by a majority of the Board of Directors, President, or a petition signed by 1/2 of the membership. Business may be transacted at any general membership meeting by a majority of those members present and voting unless otherwise specified. The first general meeting of the members will be on \_\_\_\_\_. Society members and other people who have agreed to form the chapter shall be informed of the time and place of this meeting.

### OFFICERS

The chapter shall have a minimum of 3 officers including President, Secretary, and Treasurer and shall not allow any person to hold a principal chapter office unless such person is a member of the NSS. A single person may hold the offices of Secretary and Treasurer. Officers and Board members shall be elected annually at a general membership meeting and shall serve until their successors are elected. An officer may be removed from office by a majority vote of chapter members present and voting at a meeting or by proxy, if a quorum exists, for

which members were given at least one month advance written notice of such proposed removal. If an office or Board position becomes vacant, the remaining Board members may select a replacement from among the regular members of the chapter to serve the remainder of the term.

## DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

The President shall: preside at meetings of the membership and of the Board of Directors; administer all affairs of the chapter, in accordance with the decisions of the Board of Directors and the membership; in addition to such other members of the chapter as are from time to time designated by the Board of Directors, act as the official representative of the chapter; sign all agreements to which the chapter is a party; delegate those responsibilities and powers to other members of the chapter as may be appropriate; act as liaison between the chapter and the Society.

The Secretary shall: maintain records of resolutions passed at all meetings of the membership and of the Board of Directors; keep the membership roll and provide a copy to any Board member or to the NSS if requested to do so; provide notice of meetings to the membership and the Board of Directors.

The Treasurer shall: receive, record, and safeguard all monies paid into the chapter; keep full and accurate books of account for all financial transactions of the chapter; render a financial report or open the books for inspection when called upon by the Board of Directors or the NSS; pay all duly approved bills of the chapter.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All powers of the chapter, except as otherwise explicitly provided in these Bylaws, rest in the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may delegate the power to administer the affairs of the chapter in specified areas of activity to such members as it finds appropriate or convenient. The Board of Directors shall consist of no less than three or no more than seven members elected annually at a general membership meeting. All Officers shall be Board members. A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A matter disposed of in a meeting conducted by telephone, electronically or mail will be considered acted upon when a majority of the Board has voted in the same way regarding the matter. Board meetings may be held by mail, by phone, electronically or in person.

## RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENT

These Bylaws may be ratified or amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a duly called general membership meeting.

## 9 – Support Contact List

### **NSS Vice President for Chapters**

Gabriela Lindberg

[gabriela.lindberg@nss.org](mailto:gabriela.lindberg@nss.org)

### **Director of Chapter Support**

#### **Chapters Assembly Executive Secretary**

Perri Doutre

[perri.doutre@nss.org](mailto:perri.doutre@nss.org)

### **Chapters Committee Chair**

David Stuart

206-241-6165

[david.stuart@nss.org](mailto:david.stuart@nss.org)

### **Chapters Internet Coordinator**

Ronnie Lajoie

256-509-3833

[CIC\\_J6@chapters.nss.org](mailto:CIC_J6@chapters.nss.org)

### **Chapters Assembly Chair**

Prathmesh Barapatre

[prathmesh.barapatre@nss.org](mailto:prathmesh.barapatre@nss.org)

### **NSS Vice President for Chapters emeritus**

Larry Ahearn

773-373-0349

[LDAhearn@aol.com](mailto:LDAhearn@aol.com)

## **Websites**

### **NSS Chapter Resources**

<https://nss.org/chapters-resources/>

### **Chapter Coordinators**

<https://nss.org/chapter-coordinators/>