

# Student Association Information

December 2016

## What is an SER Student Association?

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SER's Student Association Program provides an opportunity for students interested in ecological restoration and related fields to become involved in SER's global network, participate in SER conferences and events, and take advantage of SER resources. Organized and run entirely by the students themselves, student associations can be formed at any accredited academic institution, and provide a means for those students interested in pursuing a career in some facet of ecological restoration to come together in a likeminded group. The program was established in 2007 and can be formed by a motivated student group from most anywhere in the world.

Involvement in SER provides students with a number of valuable resources and opportunities. At SER's biennial World Conference, students are able to share their knowledge and experiences, network with other student associations, and interact with restoration experts from around the world. SER's regional chapters provide students with access to experts in their region and opportunities to participate in chapter conferences, leadership, and activities. Many SER chapters provide discounted student membership rates and student positions within their leadership structure.

Not only do student associations connect budding restoration professionals with SER's global community, they also provide a means for students to organize hands-on activities in their own communities and pursue professional development opportunities as a collective. Existing SER student associations have organized a variety of activities, including: volunteer and social events, native plant sales, restoration projects, workshops, roundtable discussions, career fairs, and fundraising activities, among others.

### **Fee Structure and Basic Requirements:**

Student associations are officially recognized within SER but operate under the rules that govern student organizations at their academic institutions. Each student association pays a \$160 USD annual fee to SER to receive a variety of benefits (detailed below).

The annual fee covers the cost of membership for the student association's faculty advisor and membership of the student leadership as well as the student members of the association. The student association should identify at least three student leaders (e.g. President, Vice President and Secretary) upon joining or renewing the association's membership. If a student leader leaves, the association must be appoint a new leader to take their place and inform SER of the change.

While both student association leaders and members receive all SER membership benefits, only full paid student members are eligible to hold leadership positions in SER's Board of Directors. Although SER requires three full student leaders be identified, the student association can construct their own internal leadership however they see fit.

### **Expectations of SER for its Student Associations:**

SER expects each of its student associations to organize a structured leadership, hold regular association meetings, and – if possible – participate in the international and regional activities of the Society. Each student association is encouraged to create bylaws and guiding documents upon formation. As a network of students interested in beginning their career in ecological restoration, SER encourages the leaders of its student associations to connect with new and existing SER student associations through the tools provided by SER, such as discussion forums and groups on ser.org.

Every 2 years SER holds a membership election to determine the [SER Board of Directors](#) (*the leadership of SER*). SER encourages every member of the association to vote in the election. Additionally, student associations can nominate any paid student of SER for consideration as the Student Representative-At-Large on the SER Board of Directors. The Student Representative-At-Large would participate as an official SER Board member for a 2 year term and would represent the needs of SER student associations and student members. Student associations are also encouraged to get involved in the Board of Directors, or leadership, of their local chapter.

Contact your [Regional Chapter](#) to become involved.

## **What is the Benefit of Starting or Joining a Student Association?**

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### **General Student Association Benefits:**

Included in the annual fee, student associations are afforded a number of benefits as a group within the Society. The general benefits given to each student association are listed below:

- Free individual membership for the **faculty advisor** (a \$65 value!)
- Official recognition as a student association of SER
- A group page on SER's Website (contact [membership@ser.org](mailto:membership@ser.org) for details)
- Permission to use the SER student association name & official SER logo
- Free electronic and printed promotional and educational materials from SER (*SER primer(s), brochures, stickers, educational documents, conferences promotions, etc.*)
- Unlimited volunteer and internship postings on SER's [Internship Board](#)

- Unlimited submissions to SER's online [Calendar of Events](#)
- Ability to submit articles and association updates for consideration in SER's quarterly newsletter, [SERNews](#)
- Ability to post job listings for a 50% discount on SER's online [Job Board](#)

## Networking and Participation Benefits

SER student associations play a special role in SER's World Conference on Ecological Restoration as leaders of SER's student community. Student associations can also connect with their local SER chapter and participate in regional conferences and events. Below is a list of conference and networking benefits student associations will have access to:

- Participation opportunities at SER's World Conferences on Ecological Restoration
  - Ability to attend SER's World Conferences on Ecological Restoration at the discounted student member rate
  - Ability to play a leadership/planning role in student sessions at SER World Conferences Ability to participate in SER's student assessment and awards program at SER's World Conferences on Ecological Restoration
  - Ability to submit posters and oral presentations for consideration by SER's Scientific and Program Committee
  - Valuable networking opportunities at SER's student mixers, and student association meetings
  - Access to apply for travel grant awards offered by SER for its World Conferences
  - Possibility to participate at SER World Conferences as a volunteer (*location dependent*)
- Access to discounted student member rates to any other SER conferences and events
- Yearly online leadership meetings with SER's other student associations
- Ability to network with other student leaders through a student association discussion group

## Benefits to Student Members

Each student member of the student association receives all the benefits of an SER membership.

- Free subscription to SER's quarterly newsletter, SERNews
- Ability to suggest articles for consideration in SER's publications
- Access to SER's online [Career Center](#), where students can search job postings, post their resumes for free, sign up for job alerts, and search for internship, volunteer, and training listings
- A 25% discount to **ALL** Island Press books, including those in SER's series [The Science and Practice of Ecological Restoration](#)

- Discounts to journal subscriptions offered by SER (such as [Restoration Ecology](#))
- Discounts to SER World Conferences on Ecological Restoration and ability to participate in student meetings

## How do I Start a Student Association at my Institution?

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Student associations can be started by any group of interested students at any academic institution. There are four simple steps to becoming a recognized Student Association.

**Step 1:** To get started, your group must be in compliance with the rules and regulations for student associations set out by SER. Each student association must agree to adopt, in principle, SER's [governing documents, mission, and vision](#). Please read the following rules and regulations thoroughly:

1. Student associations must have a designated faculty advisor who is willing to mentor and sponsor the student association and its members. *The chosen faculty advisor will be given a free individual membership with SER*
2. Student associations must be registered as an official student group at their home academic institution and be in compliance with their institutions rules
3. The student association must designate three leaders
4. Participating students must be matriculated in a degree seeking program at the academic institution affiliated with the student association
5. The student association agrees to provide information to the SER Board of Directors (*specifically the SER Student Representative-At-Large*) or Executive Director upon request
6. The student association affiliation may be suspended or revoked by the SER Board of Directors at any time if their operations do not adhere to SER's by-laws, policies, or purposes or for jeopardizing the Society fiscally or legally.
7. The student association agrees to the following:
  - To relay any change in the association leadership and general membership to SER
  - To submit a master membership lists to [membership@ser.org](mailto:membership@ser.org) at least once a year
  - To provide SER with a quarterly update of their activities, status and any other necessary information
  - Student leaders agree to be responsible for relaying information from the SER head office and Board members to their participating students

**Step 2:** Once you have determined you are eligible and have registered as an official student organization within your home academic institution, your faculty advisor will need to sign the Student Association Formation Letter (attached) and submit it to [membership@ser.org](mailto:membership@ser.org) for approval from SER's Executive Director. Please allow at least 1-2 weeks for your application to be approved.

**Step 3:** Once your formation letter has been signed by an SER officer and your faculty advisor, a student leader or faculty advisor will need to complete the Student Association Membership Form online and remit the \$160 annual fee. The form will be provided upon approval outlined in step 2.

**Step 4:** Email a roster of your association's membership to [membership@ser.org](mailto:membership@ser.org) using the excel template provided. Be sure to identify the faculty advisor, three student leaders, and all regular members of your association.

## Payment

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**To remit payment**, your student leader or faculty advisor should first have contact with SER's Membership Director ([membership@ser.org](mailto:membership@ser.org)). Once you have completed steps one and two, SER will send you a link to the online Student Association Membership Form. Using this form you can remit payment by credit card online or request an invoice and us of a payment by check.

All checks should be mailed to our headquarters with your check:

ATTN: Membership Director  
Society for Ecological Restoration  
1133 15th St NW  
Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20005

Make checks payable to the Society for Ecological Restoration.

**\*Please Note:** If a member of your association wishes to subscribe to a SER chapter or journal, please contact [membership@ser.org](mailto:membership@ser.org) for individual payment details.

*The student association president should be in contact with the SER office at least once a year by phone or email.*

Contact SER's Membership Director with any questions or concerns you might have at [membership@ser.org](mailto:membership@ser.org) or call (202) 299-9518 from 9-5 EDT.