

Guidelines: Creating Local NAMA Chapters

The central activity for a Local Chapter might be the Chapter meeting. Chapter meetings and all that they can offer are a tangible benefit of membership at the local level. "Bring a friend" or "Bring a colleague" theme nights may also be a successful way of showcasing and growing the Local Chapter.

The important thing is that we as an organization can find strength in these numbers. A larger organization carries more clout (for example in discussions with governments, i.e. the NAMA Political Outreach Program) and also offers increased credibility to the members of the organization on a global, national and local level.

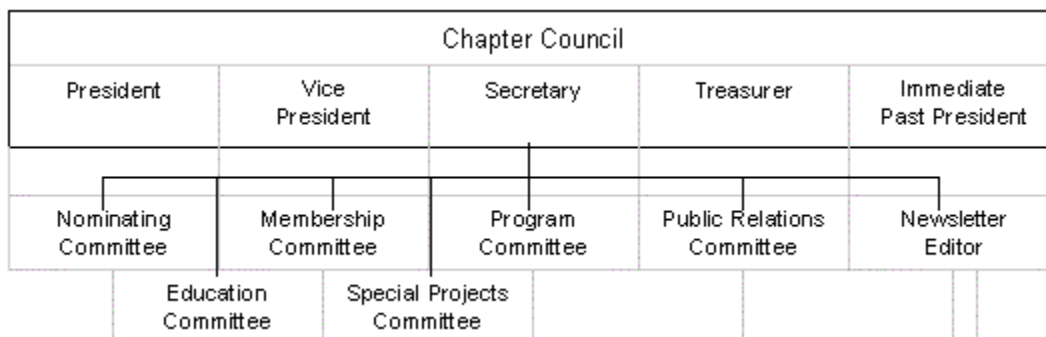
A Proposed Route to Creating a Local Chapter

1. Contact the NAMA office or a member of the NAMA Chapters Committee and you will be assigned a Chapter Sponsor. Your Chapter Sponsor will send you the Chapter Guidelines and other information that you need in order to start a local Chapter. They will also continue to help you create your Chapter bylaws and guide you through the process of getting approval from the NAMA Board of Directors for Chapter status.
2. Round up three to five volunteers in your area who are interested in starting a Local Chapter. This is the core team that will help you prepare the constituting meeting. It may also be smart to arrange one or more informal sessions prior to the constituting one. Both to see if there is enough local interest to start a local chapter, and to see how many NAMA members there are in the region (you need 5 members to petition for Chapter status).
3. Write a tentative plan for future meetings and other chapter activities to present at the constituting meeting.
4. Prepare the Petition to form a Local NAMA Chapter. Also include the suggested Chapter name, Chapter boundaries and interim Chapter officers. The list of officers shall include a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, or a Secretary/Treasurer, and additional officers as approved by the Chapter.
5. Find volunteers who will help develop the Chapter Code of Ethics or adopt the [NAMA Code of Ethics](#). Submit the Bylaws to the Chapter Council, Chapter Sponsor and Chapter membership for review.
6. Organize a constituting meeting with at least five (5) people that currently are, or are prepared to become, NAMA members and support the Local Chapter. The Petition should be signed at the meeting (with each name printed or typed next to the signature) by at least five members requesting to be recognized as a local Chapter of NAMA. Have the President sign the Charter.
7. Submit the Petition, along with the Chapter Charter, proposed Code of Ethics and the proposed boundaries of the Chapter to the NAMA Chapter Sponsor and NAMA Board of Directors for approval. Your Chapter Sponsor will inform you continually about the progress of your petition.

These seven steps will help you build the necessary infrastructure and also advise you on how to make your Chapter grow and prosper.

The Organization of a Local Chapter

The Local Chapter is a vital part of NAMA, and the Chapter Council with its President occupies the most prominent leadership position in the Chapter. In addition to being a key to the success of the Chapter's programs, the Council can make important contributions to the success of Association-wide programs. Most Chapters start out with a small Council consisting of three to four officers, but as the Chapter grows the organization of the Council might look something like the figure below. The Chapter Council is elected while committee managers, who report to the Chapter Council, are usually appointed.



Typical organization of a mature Chapter

An important support in starting the Local Chapter is the Chapter Sponsor. He or she is a veteran NAMA member elected by the NAMA's Board of Directors, and is responsible for overseeing the operation and activities of one or more Chapters. The Chapter Sponsor will be an essential part of helping you to get a Chapter started. The Chapter Sponsor is also a member of the NAMA Chapters Committee and the Chapter's link to the Association's Board of Directors and, as such, is the conduit to a wealth of NAMA opportunities.

A Local Chapter is part of the NAMA organization, but it is responsible for its own finances. A chapter's first source of operating income is the chapter dues and/or suggested donations. Chapters are responsible for collecting their own dues and/or donations, separate from NAMA dues, and verifying that chapter member applicants are current NAMA members before approving chapter membership applications. Most chapter activities are self-sustaining; that is, each activity pays for itself.