



Delegation Handbook

This 4th edition of the Delegation Handbook is the result of the work of many current and former members of the Network team, including: Sylvain Aubé, Allison Coady, Josianne Cyr, Nelly Desrosiers, Julie Dumontier, Cynthia Gervais, Ayesha Harji, Pascale Labbé, Jean-Sébastien Marier, François Moreau, Kelly O'Connor, Mireille Ouellet, Geneviève Paul, Julie Rivet, Sophie Rondeau, Marion Viau, Hannah Watler, and Elana Wright.

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FOREWORD

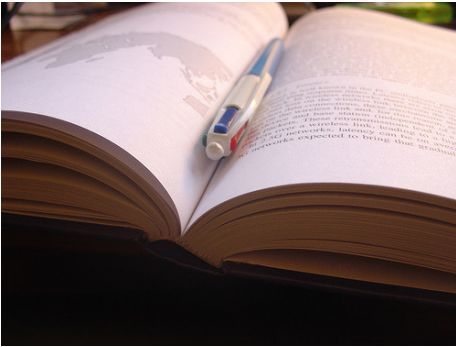
This Handbook was prepared by the team of the Rights & Democracy Network and student delegates. Its aim is to help Canadian university students who are members of the Rights & Democracy Network create and operate a Rights & Democracy delegation within their educational institution.

We hope that this Handbook will be useful to you: do not hesitate to share your comments on any part of this document with us.

We wish you the best of success in your efforts to contribute to the promotion and advancement of human rights and democratic development on your campus and in your communities.

The Network team

SECTION 1: INTRODUCING RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/sobriquet/298634762/>

The goal of the first part of the Handbook is to introduce Rights & Democracy as well as the Rights & Democracy Network, including the team, the delegations, and its different approach.



Rights & Democracy

International Centre for Human Rights
and Democratic Development

Rights & Democracy's work is at the heart of Canada's efforts to initiate, encourage and support human Rights & Democracy worldwide. Created by Canada's Parliament in 1988, Rights & Democracy is a non-partisan and independent Canadian organization with a mandate to promote democratic development as well as support and defend human rights as defined in the United Nations International Bill of Human Rights.

Rights & Democracy implements and supports projects that strengthen human rights, as well as laws and democratic institutions, principally in developing countries. One of our objectives is to help reduce the wide gap which sometimes exists between the formal adhesion of states to human rights agreements and the actual human rights practices of those states.

A unique organization

Rights & Democracy is one of the few organizations to work in both the areas of human rights and democratic development. Its approach is based on the fact that human rights must be respected and achieved in order for there to be a transition to democracy. For 20 years, we have worked closely with civil society partners, including human rights, indigenous people's and women's rights groups as well as democratic movements. We also collaborate with institutions such as national human rights commissions, electoral commissions and governments in Canada and abroad. We enjoy partnerships with institutions such as the North-South Institute, the Danish Institute for Human Rights and the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights.

In addition, our status as a non-partisan, independent organization often allows us to act as mediator in situations where there is no established dialogue or agreement between governments and civil society.

Programmes that meet human rights

Rights & Democracy operates at national, regional and international levels and focuses its expertise on four key themes:

- Democratic development
- Women's rights
- Rights of indigenous peoples
- Economic and social rights

We respond to other issues in Africa, Asia and in the Americas to reinforce human rights protection mechanisms of the United Nations and other regional organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and the African Union as well as to foster civil society participation in these mechanisms. We are also involved with young people through the Rights & Democracy Student Network, a network that encourages and supports students from Canadian universities who initiate awareness-raising activities to promote and reinforce human rights and democratic development worldwide. Raising awareness of the Canadian public on human rights and democracy issues is also one of our main concerns.

In addition to headquarters in Montreal, Rights & Democracy maintains three offices abroad:

- In Kabul to support women's rights in Afghanistan,
- In Port-au-Prince to reinforce civil society movements in Haiti
- In Geneva to actively monitor the activities of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Strategic objectives of our programmes

- *Democratic Development*: To further development and democratic practices *through* the promotion of human rights, by insisting on increased citizen participation in the decision-making process, and building the capacity of national institutions in order to ensure that States comply with human rights obligations.
- *Economic and Social Rights*: To help reduce the gap between principle and practice relating to the human rights of society's most vulnerable and marginalized people, especially those who live in poverty. Emphasis is on the right to an adequate standard of living and the consequences of foreign investments on human rights.
- *Women's Rights*: To facilitate the leadership of women's rights activists and defenders and build their capacity to meet the challenges of fundamentalism and militarization. This is to say that denouncing crimes and violence perpetrated against women during armed conflicts, supporting investigations and promoting a gender-specific approach in transitional justice systems are at the heart of our action.
- *Rights of Indigenous Peoples*: To contribute to implementation of indigenous peoples' rights and facilitate the use of international instruments by indigenous organizations to defend their rights. Emphasis is on participation by indigenous women in the political process as well as on strengthening their organizations and on training.

The scope of our work

Rights & Democracy maintains programmes mainly in the following countries: Afghanistan, Burma, China, Bolivia, Colombia, Haiti, Indonesia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Morocco, Sudan, and Zimbabwe.

A few examples of our efforts

- Support pro-democracy movements who lobby for a pacific transition toward democracy in Burma. Rights & Democracy was the first institution in the world to support the Burmese government in exile.
- Build the capacity of human rights activists and defenders to document women's rights violations at the local, regional and international level in Eastern Congo, in order that crimes of sexual violence committed against women and girls during a conflict not go unpunished.
- Support the participation of indigenous women of the Americas in the democratic process through education and capacity building of their organizations in order for them to participate fully in their society's political life.
- Help civil society at the South Africa - Zimbabwe border to document human rights violations in Zimbabwe, in order to prosecute those responsible for human rights violations at national, regional and international levels.
- Provide education tools to communities, civil society organizations and other interested groups to study the impact of foreign investment projects on human rights and enable them to better defend their rights.

The John Humphrey Freedom Award

Created in honour of Canadian [John Peters Humphrey](#), who prepared the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the John Humphrey Freedom Award has been presented each year, since 1992, to an organization or individual from any region of the world, including Canada, for exceptional achievement in the promotion of human rights and democratic development. The Award consists of a grant, as well as a speaking tour of Canadian cities to help increase awareness of the recipient's human rights work.

Available publications

Rights & Democracy issues a variety of publications on human rights and democratic development. Here are just a few:

- *Public Interest Litigation and Political Activism in China.*
- *Governing Diversity - Democratic Solutions in Multicultural Societies.*
- *Human Rights Impact Assessments for Foreign Investment Projects. Learning from Community Experiences in the Philippines, Tibet, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Argentina, and Peru.*
- *Documenting Women's Rights Violations by Non-state Actors.*
- *Indigenous Women of the Americas – Second edition. Information kit.*

All of our publications are available free of charge on our website. To order, visit our website or write to us at network@dd-rd.ca.

Over 20,000 documents at your fingertips!

The Documentation Centre has amassed a unique collection on international human rights. The collection has been built up since the creation of Rights & Democracy through research carried out by our staff and activities in the field.

To consult our resources on site, simply call to make an appointment!
Please consult our online catalogue: www.dd-rd.ca/documentation

Stay in contact with the institution!

For further information on our activities or to subscribe to the Libertas Newsletter, visit our Web site at www.dd-rd.ca

Rights & Democracy is a non-profit charitable organization (registration number: 0808345-59).

SECTION 2: THE RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY NETWORK



The Rights & Democracy Network is one of Rights & Democracy's programmes.

The Network team works to fulfill Rights & Democracy's mandate in terms of "fostering and supporting research and education, discourse, the exchange of information and cooperation among people and institutions in Canada and other countries" through youth engagement.

To date, the Rights & Democracy Network has existed mainly through delegations in Canadian universities.

The Network is an initiative through which Rights & Democracy facilitates the creation of spaces for reflection and action in Canadian universities for the promotion and implementation of human rights through development activities and innovative projects. Therefore, the various initiatives that make up the Network's annual programme are in great part the product of our combined reflection and action!

Since the creation of the Network in 2003, "Rights & Democracy delegations" have been set up in universities across the country, from Nanaimo to St-Johns! Each year, delegations are active on campuses, and directly in the community to "set the world to Rights" in their own way.

Our bottom-up approach defines how we work: the various activities and innovative projects that make up the Network's annual programme are in great part the product of Network members' reflection and action rather than initiated by the institution's team. This is one aspect of our work that distinguishes the Network from other groups of student activists on campus. The other is that we use a human rights-based approach to observe and analyse a situation rather than starting from a needs standpoint.

Joining a Rights & Democracy delegation provides us with an opportunity to broaden our knowledge of globally relevant themes. It also enables us to share common interests with motivated students and take part in local actions that have a global impact.

For further information, please visit our website at www.rightsdemocracy.net.

Inside the Network

Our Network is made up of student delegations across Canada. Our delegations bring the Network to life.

There is one delegation per university and its members are the individuals associated with the university who have registered on-line¹.

- Membership is open to all without discrimination;
- A minimum of 70% of the members must be officially registered as students at the university;

All members of a university's delegation can take part in its general meetings. Each member of the delegation:

- Has the right to vote at general meetings;
- Can present herself/himself as candidate for election to become a member of the executive committee;
- Can take part in the delegation's projects.

Throughout the year, the Network team sends each "communications delegate" an up-to-date list of new members who register online as well as their email addresses so that she/he can invite them to take part in our meetings and projects.

Each delegation can lead one or various projects in keeping with its student members' specific concerns but in connection with the themes and countries on which Rights & Democracy focuses. Sometimes projects can be developed jointly by members of different delegations across Canada or within a region.

As a matter of fact, we can draw on other members of the Network across Canada and in countries where Rights & Democracy's staff work when developing our project activities. The calendar below provides a snapshot of the exciting programme of events and projects in which we can take part, depending on everyone's interests. For a list of exciting past projects, visit <http://www.dd-rd.net/cms/site/projects>.

¹ You can become a member on-line at : http://www.dd-rd.net/cms/site/en/membres/devenez_membre.htm

Rights & Democracy Network Calendar

Date	Activity
September	Member recruitment and annual general meeting (election of the executive committee)
Late September or early October	National Retreat (one representative per delegation)
October	Meetings of delegations to discuss retreat (handbook, website, project guidelines, etc.)
October-November	Development of projects, including submission of Project Fund forms
November-December	John Humphrey Award Canadian Tour ²
November-March	Implementation of delegations' projects
December 8	International Human Rights Day and anniversary of the adoption of the <i>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i>
1st week of February	International Development Week
February-March	Regional Events (one representative per delegation)
April	Final meeting of the year and election of executive for the following year
April 31	Deadline for submission of project reports
Late April or early May	Annual Event (one representative per delegation)

² Since 2002, Rights & Democracy has presented the John Humphrey Freedom Award each year to an organization or individual from any country or region of the world, including Canada, for exceptional achievement in the promotion of human rights and democratic development. The Award consists of a grant of \$30,000, as well as a speaking tour of Canadian cities to help increase awareness of the recipient's human rights work. This tour offers an opportunity to interested delegations to host the recipient on their campus or in their community. For more information about the Award, visit: <http://www.dd-rd.ca/site/humphreyaward/>.

The Network Team

The delegations of the Rights & Democracy Network can always count on the support of Rights & Democracy's staff. The Network team supports each delegation by providing:

- Resources and educational material such as:
 - Flyers, bookmarks, posters and stickers to recruit members and promote your projects
 - Handbooks, guides and a selection of documents to fuel our projects
 - An on-line introductory course on human rights, called "Putting the World to Rights"
- Administrative tools such as:
 - Budget form to plan a project
 - Media tools to promote the project
 - Letters of support and/or a model charter to obtain official recognition at the university
- A section of the Rights & Democracy Network website for each delegation:
 - To communicate with members within delegations and with other delegations
 - To promote our projects and events
- Suggestions for developing projects:
 - Based on current, urgent and/or underreported human rights themes and/or
 - Based on the ongoing programmes and projects of Rights & Democracy's partners and staff in one of the four thematic areas mentioned in Section 1: *Introducing Rights & Democracy*
- Recruitment of speakers for seminars, conferences and events:
 - Who are part of the experienced staff of Rights & Democracy
 - Who are international human rights defenders with whom Rights & Democracy work (during the John Humphrey Award tour for instance)
 - Who are field experts in the broader network of Right & Democracy
- Advice for networking activities:
 - To recruit new members, or to work with other delegations in your region or across the country
 - To create partnerships with faculties or other organisations as a means to strengthen your project
- Assistance in obtaining academic recognition for projects

The Network's Human Rights-Based Approach

The Network offers an opportunity for Canadian university students and the people we mobilise to observe and analyse a situation through a human rights lens, as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in numerous other treaties and instruments. Rather than using needs as *the* starting point in our analysis of a situation, Rights & Democracy, its Network, and Network delegations seek to identify population groups where inequalities are particularly deep in order to empower those groups, overcome the discrimination they face, and foster a better distribution of power – which ultimately lead to human rights *for all* rather than a few. Choosing a human-rights approach in our work enables us to strengthen the capacity of both persons or groups (right-holders) to claim their rights, and states, governments or others (duty-bearers) to meet their obligations towards them.³

As a student network linked to Rights & Democracy, our activities must also fulfill Rights & Democracy's mandate to uphold the International Bill of Rights, which is composed of five major human rights instruments:

- the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#);
- the [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#);
- the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#);
- the [Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#);
- the [Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty](#).

All of the above should help to guide and inspire the work of our members and ensure that we are fulfilling the Network mandate of effectively defending and promoting human rights. All projects, events or actions undertaken by student delegations have to be relevant to international human rights and democratic development.

³ For more on using a human rights-based approach, see Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2006). Frequently Asked Questions on a Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation. 40 p. Available at <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FAQen.pdf> [last viewed 21.08.09]

The Network's Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics was drafted by the Rights & Democracy Network team to help members promote the Network's objectives of promotion, protection and implementation of human rights.

Network members (hereinafter: "the members") shall:

1. Respect others and avoid all forms of discrimination

- Members shall respect minimum human rights standards, as stated in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*;
- Members of a delegation shall respect the dignity of other members, avoid causing harm, minimize personal conflicts with other members and ensure that all interested individuals not be isolated or excluded from delegation proceedings;
- Members of a delegation shall maintain harmonious and respectful relations with all individuals with whom they interact as part of their involvement with the Network;

2. Demonstrate equal treatment

All members are equal and should not be treated differently because of age, race, origin, sexual orientation, social condition or any other personal characteristic.

3. Demonstrate integrity and transparency

- Members shall act in accordance with the laws in effect, they shall also act faithfully and honestly in the best interests of the Network and the delegation;
- Members shall refrain from using Network resources for personal purposes;
- Members shall oppose and refrain from taking part in embezzlement or any act that is contrary to the public interest or generally accepted ethical standards;
- Members shall provide the Network's team with timely information regarding irregularities committed by any individual connected with the Network;
- The executivecommittee of the delegation shall provide information requested regarding its proceedings, and shall complete financial and project-related documentation in order to leave a trail for future executivecommittees. Moreover, for the sake of transparency and to ensure effective operation, delegation meetings are open to all members and are not reserved to the executivecommittee.

4. Respect environmental standards

During Network activities, members shall consume products and use materials that do not adversely affect the environment or those who use them. In addition, these items shall be disposed of in a clean and sanitary fashion using appropriate facilities, including the use of recycling bins and other environmentally sensitive initiatives.

5. Act in accordance with the democratic expression

Democracy shall constitute the basis for all delegation management and implemented projects as well as dictate the conduct of delegation members, partners and any other individuals with whom they are involved. The executive committee shall be elected by members present at the annual general meeting. The meeting shall be publicized to all members.

6. Partnerships

In the context of projects implemented in cooperation with other groups or associations, Network members shall ensure mutual respect between groups as well as ensuring that established projects comply with the Code of Ethics' standards and that the mandates or objectives of other associations do not contravene those of the Rights & Democracy Network.

7. The “Rights & Democracy Network” graphic symbol and image

- The Network logo may be used for delegation activities and projects. However, under no circumstances may it be used for personal purposes;
- When delegation members and their executive committees use the terms “Rights & Democracy Network”, they are under obligation to respect the institution's values as well as to act in the best interest of the Network and refrain from damaging the Network's image;
- The Rights & Democracy logo may not be used without written permission from Rights & Democracy.

8. Communications

Communication amongst Network members, and between delegations and the community shall be clear, honest, non-defamatory and devoid of hateful language.

Final provisions

- a) This Code of Ethics is available online on the Rights & Democracy Network's website www.dd-rd.net for consultation by members and the general public;
- b) This Code of Ethics may be amended in accordance with the organization's evolution.

Conclusion⁴

This Code of Ethics constitutes:

- a) A call for cooperation, professional action and respect;
- b) An opportunity to rally around a common ideal which is to facilitate compliance and sharing of Rights & Democracy and the Network's human rights approach;
- c) A tool for reflection on the values that inspire action as well as on the nature of relationships that Network members must entertain in their school, work and life environments;
- d) A reflection of the rules of conduct expected from members of the Rights & Democracy Network;
- e) A call to exceed expectations.

⁴ These conclusions are inspired by the Code of Ethics of the Fondation québécoise du cancer (Quebec Cancer Foundation), available online in French at : <http://www.fqc.qc.ca/pdf/codeethique.pdf>

SECTION 3: CREATING A DELEGATION



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/drewmyers/2211382500/>

The goal of the third part of the handbook is to describe the steps involved in creating a Rights & Democracy delegation and in ensuring a stable and long-lasting structure... as time passes and the members graduate!

In each step of setting up and running a delegation, we must always keep the following considerations in mind: a Network delegation's raison d'être is to facilitate the creation of spaces that, overall, will enable us, in our respective areas of study and professional activities and in co-operation with our peers in different sectors, to:

1. Raise awareness among the public about the issues related to human rights, democratic development, and globalization, notably among:
 - Students from different disciplines
 - The university community
 - Civil society
 - Government
2. Solicit points of view, opinions, and proposals on these issues;
3. Implement projects, lead by our student members, related to human rights and democratic development;
4. Promote the International Bill of Human Rights⁵;
5. Encourage the development of capacities and knowledge of our members about human rights, democratic development, and international cooperation.

⁵ The International Bill of Rights is composed of five major human rights instruments: the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#); the [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#); the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#); the [Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#), and the [Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty](#).

Step 1: Obtaining Official Recognition of a Delegation at your University

Approach the body responsible for student associations. The documents concerning the specific requirements and regulations relevant to this procedure are usually available on the website of all universities, often under the heading “Student life”, and then under a heading often called “associations”, “groups”, or “clubs”.

The advantages of creating an official administrative and operational structure at universities are significant. Benefits can include, for example:

- Official status as a legal person, allowing the delegation’s members to open a bank account;
- Additional funding from the university or student association;
- An on-campus office;
- A phone line or voicemail;
- Permission to post announcements and advertise on campus;
- The ability to announce events on the university’s website;
- Permission to book rooms and audio-visual equipment on campus;
- Access to tools offered by the university;
- More stability and sustainability for your group from one year to the next.

Ask for the Network’s support. When asked to submit a charter or constitution, members can use our model charter, and modify it according to the delegation’s needs and the requirements of the university. This model can be downloaded at www.rightsdemocracy.net, in the Resources section.

REMINDER!

Don’t forget to submit the draft of the charter to the Network team for prior approval. Send it to network@dd-rd.ca.

Don’t forget to use the Network logo properly! Read the guidelines provided in “Using the Rights & Democracy Network Logo” (see the Promotional Tools in the Resources section at www.dd-rd.ca).

EXAMPLES

The Network team can write a letter of support or provide any other form of support. It can also provide a list of all registered members on campus to help you in being recognized as a group. Don’t hesitate to ask. It will be our pleasure to help.

Develop contacts with resource people on campus. Resource people at the university can assist in making the link between the delegation, the institution, and Rights & Democracy, which allows for better cooperation from the university. A resource person can be a professor, a teaching assistant, or any member of the university personnel (programme or service director, department chair, etc.) Resource people can be asked to assist from time to time according to need, for reviewing documents, for inviting

speakers or for support when making requests to the university. It's up to all of us, on each campus, to identify resource people and to make contact with them. When a resource person has been identified, please advise the Network team.

Step 2: Recruiting, Preparing and Holding an Information Table

TIP

September and January are your friends! The first three weeks of each semester is an ideal time to recruit new members.

Spread the word! Publicize, whenever possible, the schedule and location of your recruiting stand on student radio, student newspapers, and association newsletters. You can also send a letter to this effect to other extracurricular clubs and associations sharing your interests. Use university and student associations' email distribution lists.

TIP

You can ask the Network team to visit the delegation on campus during your recruitment activities. A member of the team will give a presentation about the Network, present a human rights 101 workshop, or brainstorm ideas with your new recruits.

REMINDER

Be sure to have Network posters, bookmarks, flyers, stickers, and/or other materials provided by the Network on hand. To order these, visit the Resource section on the Network website at www.rightsdemocracy.net.

Take note of the names and email addresses of interested students. Then, within five days (so they don't forget about meeting you!) send them a welcome email reminding them to sign up on-line. Then, our webmaster will send you the names and emails of your new members.

Be visible and tech-savvy! Have a laptop and access to wireless internet and make the Network's website accessible at your recruitment stand so that interested students can sign up as members immediately.

Project the Network's website on a screen or wall, and play the Network members' videos. If you have Network t-shirts, why not wear them!

Be proud! Don't hesitate to show off examples of the delegation's previous projects or those of others across Canada.

Be reachable! Create a generic email address for the delegation with gmail or hotmail, and share the password with the other members of the executive, so that it can be reached by all delegation members.

Be visible and accessible! If possible, place recruitment tables in different buildings on your campus in order to reach students from different faculties and departments. If not, be sure to hold it in a central location where all students gather at the beginning of the semester.

If the above strategy is less successful than you expected, plan short visits to classes. You could go to faculties which do not necessarily appear related to human rights or which are not very often associated with human rights issues, i.e. biology, arts, education, marketing, music, etc.

TIP

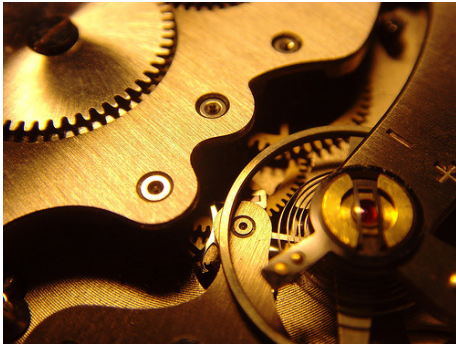
Plan the annual general meeting so that it takes place the week following your university's activity fair so as not to lose interest of the registered students. Plan a get-together immediately following the annual general meeting to provide a more informal setting where members can meet.

REMINDER: Always use your official name and logo

Your official name, the "Rights & Democracy Delegation at University of X" must always be used, as it provides a format that is common to all member delegations. To avoid confusion with Rights & Democracy, the institution which manages the Network, be sure to always use the name "Rights & Democracy Delegation at University of X".

Similarly, ALWAYS use the logo that was designed for use by all Network delegations. To download it in different formats, simply go to our Resources section, then Promotional Tools at www.dd-rd.ca. You are also strongly encouraged to read the guidelines provided in Using the Rights & Democracy Network Logo (see the Resources section also).

SECTION 4: RUNNING A DELEGATION



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/gamin/383003317/>

This fourth section offers a structure for a delegation's executive committee. This structure divides tasks and responsibilities among the members of the executive. It's up to you to adapt it to your needs!

To assist you in running a delegation, we suggest you use one of two models: the collective model and the executive model. A mix of both may be a better reflection of the way many delegations choose to work....

The **collective model** is often favoured by smaller groups, because it allows us to reach decisions by consensus and is less hierarchical. In this model, members' roles are more fluid, allowing everyone to participate in more than one aspect of a delegation's operations (be it administration, finance, communications, event planning, etc.) Tasks are distributed at meetings but adjustments can be made along the way, as members' interests and time availability may shift.

In the **executive model**, members are assigned specific roles and are expected to be the main person responsible for a specific aspect of a delegation's operations. Groups which choose the executive model tend to vote as a way to make important decisions and have formal annual general meeting. This model can be better suited to large groups.

This model should not impose a hierarchy in terms of power among the members of the executive nor among the members of the whole delegation. All members are equal. The executive committee is there to make the link between the Network team and the daily life of the delegation which can otherwise become quite complex. The Network team is always available to all the members of the delegation equally, and will act in respect of that in all of our communication and actions.

Whichever model your delegation chooses there are six areas of tasks (in a purely executive model, you could also see them as roles) to be performed in order to run an effective delegation:

1. Project Coordination
2. Administration
3. Finances
4. Communications and Website
5. Community Relations
6. Ethics, Equality, and Diversity

REMINDER

It's very important to keep an up-to-date list of the members of the executive committee – or a contact person if you do not work using the executive model – on your delegation's page of the Network website: <http://www.dd-rd.net/cms/site/node/2>. This allows the Network team, your delegation, and the students at your university to know who to contact about your delegation's activities.

1. Project Coordination Tasks

General

- Co-ordinating the activities of the executive committee in the fulfillment of its tasks;
- Liaising between the delegation and Rights & Democracy Network team;
- Submitting the names and email addresses of the members of the executive committee to the Network team;
- Ensuring the long life of the delegation by recruiting new members;
- Submitting a report to the executive committee and to the Network team about the main activities during his or her mandate, in order to keep records of the Delegation, and to ensure the delegation continues;
- Respecting the tasks and roles as outlined in the Charter (see the Resources section on the Network's website).

Meetings and Elections

Calling, presiding over, and writing the agenda of annual general meeting and meetings of the executive committee and of the delegation:

In fairly large delegations, **general meetings** are very important for maintaining ties between members and creating a sense of belonging. They serve to guide and give legitimacy to the decisions of the executive committee. The first is held in the fall; this is the official launch of your programme of activities. The last is held at the end of the year in order to elect the executive committee for the following year and evaluate the operations and accomplishments of your delegation. In addition, this assembly will be the ideal opportunity for determining the outlines of your programme of activities for the following year.

TIP**What to do at your first general meeting**

1. Presentation of the delegation, the Network (goals and objectives) and of Rights & Democracy;
2. Description of the responsibilities of the positions to be filled on the executive committee;
3. Election of the executive committee;
4. Presentation or brainstorming about activities to be organized;
5. Planning of recruitment activities;
6. Designation of one/some resource person/people;
7. Adoption of the Charter (see the model charter in the Resources Section);
8. Gather and update members' full contact information.

The **executive committee meetings** are also important. Depending on the number of projects and activities, executive committee meetings can be held two to four times per month;

Presiding over **the elections of the executive committee** (in an executive model):

- Elections for the following year take place at the last general meeting of the year; if not hold them at the first meeting of the year in the fall;
- Advising members as early as possible that elections will be held;
- Each person interested in a position must briefly introduce him or herself during this meeting and summarize why he/she aspires to this position;
- On a blackboard, write the title of each position, and underneath each write the name of the candidates and hand out one ballot per position to the members present;
- The members mark their choice and hand their folded ballots to the election manager;

TIP

It might be a good idea to leave one vacant position within the executive committee to allow a first year student to apply in September during their first semester.

Official Documents and Finance

- Holding signing power for the delegation;
- Signing bank transactions with the treasurer.

Planning and Programming

- Submitting project plans for the year to the Network team for discussion and approval during the fall. This planning should take place after the first general meeting of the year, and after consultation with members;
- Submitting an annual report of the major tasks and accomplishments during your mandate as the lead delegate in order to ensure continuity and smooth transitions from year to year.

2. Administrative Tasks

- Assisting in the completion of coordination tasks;
- Taking minutes of meetings, distributing them and posting them on your delegation's website;
- Handling the technical requirements (room and equipment reservations, etc.) relating to meetings;
- Keeping and organizing all important documents in the delegation's archives;
- Submitting to the Network team and the incoming executive committee an annual report on the key accomplishments and main tasks performed in order to ensure continuity and proper operation of the delegation in subsequent years;
- Liaising with the Rights & Democracy Network team on the files for which he or she is responsible.
- Respecting the tasks and roles as outlined in the Charter (see the Resources section on the Network's website).

3. Finance Tasks

Since delegations can receive funding from the Project Fund (PFund) which come from public funds (Rights & Democracy is an independent institution but benefits from recurring parliamentary budget allocations.), well-managed finances are very important to ensure transparency and responsibility towards Canadian taxpayers. The financial tasks are as follows:

- Making all the delegation's financial transactions;
- Producing the delegation's financial reports;
- Opening the bank account in the delegation's name, if necessary, and holding signing authority for the delegation's banking transactions⁶;
- Completing the budget section of each Project Fund application form (PFund) submitted by the delegation (see the Resources section on the Network's website);
- Providing financial statements whenever required;
- Providing the Network and the incoming executive committee with the delegation's annual financial report in electronic format (as well as all financial transactions must be validated using the matching receipts or vouchers);
- Submitting to the Network team and the incoming executive committee an annual report on the key accomplishments and main tasks performed during his/her term of office on the executive committee in order to ensure the continuity and proper working of the delegation in subsequent years;
- Liaises with the Rights & Democracy Network team respecting files for which he or she is responsible;
- Respects the tasks and roles as outlined in the Charter (see the Resources

⁶ The Network team strongly encourages you to open a bank account in the name of the delegation. Cheques are then written in the name of your Delegation, and not in the name of the name of one of the members of the project team. This account requires at least two signatures in order to deposit or cash the cheque, which ensures more transparency and continuity from year to year as members of the executive change.

- section on the Network's website);
- If applicable, supervising fundraising activities which support projects and organizations which share similar values and principles with the Network (see The Code of Ethics in Section 2 of this Handbook).

4. Communications and Website Tasks

General

- Ensuring appropriate use of the Network's logo;
- In cooperation with the Network team, keeping the membership list up-to-date;
- Submitting to the Network team and the incoming executive committee an annual report on the key accomplishments and main tasks performed during his/her term of office on the executive committee in order to ensure the continuity and proper working of the delegation in subsequent years;
- Submitting to the Network coordinator an annual report from the delegation on the outcome of projects undertaken during the year;
- Liaising with the Rights & Democracy Network team on files for which he or she is responsible;
- Respecting the tasks and roles as outlined in the Charter (see the Resources section on the Network's website).

Internal Communications

- Enrolling new members, managing membership lists and assuring the confidentiality of member data, including email addresses;
- Ensuring compliance with the delegation's communications standards in conjunction with the Network team;
- Managing the delegation's correspondence and transferring messages from the Network or partners to the appropriate members of the executive committee or all delegation members.

External communications

- Drawing up the delegation's annual communication plan;
- Writing and distributes media releases;
- Liaising with the media in consultation with the Network team;
- Publicizing delegation events.

Network Website

In cooperation with the Network webmaster:

- Displaying content and contributing to the development of the visual presentation of the webpage dedicated to the delegation and its projects;
- Regularly updating the delegation's webpage;
- Providing technical support to delegation members concerning the creation and maintenance of discussion forums (with the assistance of the Network webmaster, if necessary);
- Ensuring that the visual presentation and content complies with accessibility standards for persons with disabilities.

5. Community Relations Tasks

General

- Taking charge of receiving official recognition for the delegation on your campus;
- Coordinating the participants and volunteers when delegation activities are held;
- Submitting an annual report to the Network team and the incoming executive committee on the chief accomplishments and main tasks performed during his/her term of office on the executive committee in order to ensure continuity and proper operation of the delegation in subsequent years;
- Liaising with the Rights & Democracy Network team respecting files for which he or she is responsible;
- Respecting the tasks and roles described in the Delegation Charter (see the Resources section on the Network's website).

Visibility of the Delegation

- Establishing relationships with other organizations and clubs who work in similar fields⁷;
- Creating and maintaining links with other Rights & Democracy delegations located in cities nearby; invite them to participate in your activities, keep informed about their projects, and offer to collaborate with them;
- Maintaining a good relationship with the educational institution: this is essential in order to benefit from the institutional support that you will need to see your activities through to completion;

6. Ethics, Equality, and Diversity Tasks

- Ensuring consistency of the delegation's operations with the objectives, the approach, the Code of Ethics, the Partnership guidelines, and the Charter of the Rights & Democracy Network (see the Delegation Tools, where each of these documents is available);
- Promoting activities related to the human rights of members of marginalized and more vulnerable groups, such as women, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples;
- Developing strategies to facilitate the participation of students who are members of marginalized groups;
- Preparing and distributing to project teams a list of ethical products and services available in the community and provides support to project teams to ensure that the partnerships developed by the delegation are ethical;
- Defining the ways in which democratic values can be reflected in the delegation's activities;
- Providing, as required, support to project teams;

⁷ On your campus, think of groups working for human rights such as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender), immigrants and refugees, disabled people, aboriginals, and the environment.

- Being responsible for the evaluation of the activities and projects of the delegation:
 - Preparing evaluation forms to give to participants immediately following each activity (see the Resources section on the Network's website);
 - Preparing evaluation forms for the members of your delegation (see the Resources section on the Network's website);
 - Planning a meeting for this evaluation.
- Submitting to the Network team and the incoming executive committee an annual report on the chief accomplishments and main tasks performed during his/her term of office on the executive committee in order to ensure continuity and proper operation of the delegation in subsequent years;
- Liaising with the Rights & Democracy Network team respecting files for which he or she is responsible.
- Respecting the tasks and roles described in the Delegation Charter (see the Resources section on the Network's website).

TIP

During your last general meeting, reserve some time for evaluating: the organization of the delegation, communication between the executive committee and the members, whether you achieved your goals and objectives, the involvement of members vs. their expectations. Were the members satisfied with their experience? What would they do to improve?

During the last executive committee meeting of the year, it might be helpful to evaluate the group dynamics, whether democratic principles were respected in decision-making, etc. (See the Resources section on the Network's website for a template of an annual evaluation report).

Section Toolbox

- List of Members on Your Executive Committee
- It's Meeting Time
- Rights & Democracy Network Code of Ethics
- Annual Internal Evaluation Form
- Healthy Group Dynamics

SECTION 5: PLANNING AND ORGANIZING ACTIVITIES



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/guillaumegoyette/471833387/>

The goal of this fifth and last section of the Handbook is to help plan your activities in order to achieve your delegation's mission and objectives, and to evaluate your activities.

Creating an Exciting Programme for the Year

Here is a suggestion of steps to take in creating a programme that is logical, feasible, and exciting for all the members of the delegation. It is important to remember that, while you may be tempted to set high goals for your delegation, a small and innovative project that is well developed, managed and implemented can have much more impact. It is also a good way not to burn out anyone and to foster greater ownership amongst the delegation.

To keep everyone on track at the meeting when you begin to create the delegation's programme for the year, draw a matrix with steps one to four below as titles of columns or rows. You can fill it out together and modify it as you progress. You can also reflect on your project using the different sections in the Project Fund Form.

It is highly recommended to contact the Network team early in the creation of your programme, and to stay in touch with the team throughout the planning stages, in order to ensure that your programme is in line with the Network's mandate and objectives and that it meets the requirements of the Project Fund. The Network team can also help you in finding solutions to challenges.

1. Setting Goals

Reiterate and reflect on the goals of the Network delegations. Always remember that our Network's raison d'être is to facilitate the creation of spaces that, in a general way, enable us, in our respective areas of study and professional activities and in cooperation with our peers, to:

- 1) build our capacities for promoting and contributing to the advancement of human rights internationally;
- 2) promote the International Bill of Human Rights.

2. Choosing an Issue

Keeping your goals in mind, **choose a human rights issue** (ideally linked to one or several of Rights & Democracy's programme themes, regions, or countries) that concern members of the delegation and on which you would like to focus your action/project.

3. Selecting a Project Idea and Unpacking It

Brainstorm with member delegates projects/events/activities that you all feel excited about and that would help you promote your chosen human rights issue to your intended audience. The project that you decide to create should in particular enable you to:

- 1) raise the awareness of your peers and the general public to issues related to human rights, democratic development, and globalization; and/or
- 2) deepen your knowledge; and/or
- 3) solicit points of view, opinions, and proposals regarding these issues; and/or
- 4) contribute to promoting and advancing human Rights & Democracy.

TIP

Points 1) to 4) above are objectives that you might set for yourself. You can think of objectives as "things" you would expect and/or like to see happen. They are medium-term and should be clear, specific and realistic otherwise they are not useful. They must flow from the Network goals and not duplicate them.

At this point, it is also crucial to **think of the many possible shapes this project may take**. Think of these as **project activities**. For example, if your primary project objective is to attract a student audience, then you may want to organize a roundtable in the university centre with a defender of human rights –this would be your first project activity. Perhaps your project has only one activity, which is fine. However, you may want to have activities that flow in a logical sequence or that lead participants to take concrete action in support of the human rights issue your delegation has chosen.

TIP

Define your target audiences: this will guide you in choosing the format of your project activities and the most appropriate venue and time for implementing your activities. Is your audience only composed of students? Are faculty members included? What about community members, representatives from NGOs, and decision-makers?

4. Listing Needs and Establishing a Budget

The ideas that come out of brainstorming sessions in terms of **project activities must be feasible**. Ask yourselves: Are our human resources sufficient? Do managing activities interfere with mid-term or end of term exams? In terms of material needs, can we obtain what we need? Does the project make sense in terms of finances? Can we book the guest speaker we really want? How do we want to promote our project activities?

In terms of budget needs more specifically, start your thinking process using the budget template in Microsoft Excel, which can be found in the resources section of the website. The Network Project Fund Application Form also lists things to consider.

Your delegation may want to look into partnering with another organization or a supplier of products or services to meet certain needs. If that is the case, please consult the Network's Resources section for our guidelines on partnerships.

Think through all the potential needs to bring your project to fruition, but also the risks and challenges you may face, will help the delegation see whether the chosen activities are realistic and optimal. If they are not, then you may want to modify one or more activities so that you all feel comfortable with them.

5. Establishing Tasks, Responsibilities and Timelines

After the needs exercise, your activities will appear more tangible. At this point, you may want to **define all the major tasks that will bring about each activity**. The more detailed you are, the less likely you are, down the road, to run out of time or to forget anything.

EXAMPLE

If you want to invite a guest speaker to a roundtable, task 1 could be: draft letter of invitation and send; task 2: Confirm date, time and topic with speaker; task 3: Provide a thank you gift for speaker; task 4: Receive guest speaker at event, etc.

Leave it up to members to choose which tasks they will perform according to their abilities, skills, time availability and particular interests. At this point, you may find that there is more to do, in terms of logistics promotion and all, than members are ready to take on.... If this is the case, it is best to review once more the type of activities you want to do.

Last but not least, try to **come up with reasonable timelines for the major tasks**. The members who are "responsible" for completing these tasks must be comfortable with them. It is important to have an idea of when major tasks should be completed as some delays can have important ripple effects in other areas. At meetings, you can check in with other members whether tasks are underway, completed or delayed so that the delegation can make necessary adjustments.

6. Developing a Promotion Plan

An important task will be to promote your project in ways that will attract your targeted audience(s). Thinking in terms of your target audience(s) is key. Is the university radio stations widely listened to by students? Or are they more likely to get their news from the student newspaper(s)? Would they rather look at billboards? Are faculty newsletters ready to circulate information? Is Facebook an efficient tool in this case? Use your delegation's webpage as the central source for information about your event, and refer to it in all your promotional materials.

If you also want to attract participants from outside the university, can you place posters anywhere? Do you have time and enough members to have a small street team to pass flyers around?

However successful your promotion ends up being, it is not the number of participants that counts the most. Your project can still have been a great learning experience for the delegation and you should take pride in this

TIPS

Attract attention to your promotional items by focusing on (logo, images, colours etc.). Ensure that your materials are easy and quick to read. Make sure that your slogans are memorable so that they stick in people's minds.

In terms of content ...

The main ideas should be clearly outlined immediately. The central idea should appear in the title or slogan and/or image. The writing style should captivate the reader and the text should focus directly on your target audience.

To get the message across quickly...

Remember that the human eye reads text from top to bottom and from left to right; important information on the bottom right-hand corner of a page runs the risk of being overlooked completely. The eye can only see 4 simple things at a time; avoid information overload.

Repetition...repetition....repetition...

Repeat, repeat, repeat! That is how your message will get through!

And don't forget!

It seems obvious, but clearly indicate the location (with the name of the building, if your event is taking place on campus) the date (day, month, year) and the exact time your event begins. Sometimes we forget the important details in the creative process!

To promote major projects/events, you may want mobilize some media. If that is your plan, consult the Resources section on the Network's website for Media Strategy Guide and the Media Strategy Resources. You will find tips, models of press releases and much more.

7. Taking Stock or Evaluating

As part of the planning of your activities, think of how you will gather participants' feedback –see the Evaluation Form in the toolbox which you can modify. You can also interview a few participants, videotape the whole thing or take pictures. These are all good ways to document feedback. After completing your project, you can have a taking stock meeting, where you discuss based on evaluation forms, videos, pictures, etc. what went really well, and on what you can improve next time. Drawing lessons is very important in any project regardless of its size.

Celebrate! Projects aren't easy to plan, but they are lots of fun, and are great learning tools.

The Network team is also very keen in showcasing delegations' successes online and through the newsletter. You can send us your videos, photos and project descriptions anytime at network@dd-rd.ca, and be sure to upload them to your delegation's webpage. As for the challenges you faced and other tough lessons, feel free to share them as the team can help you find solutions for your next project.

Obtaining Support and Funding from the Network

You can always find support in the Network team, be it for content, speakers, logistics and planning tips, etc. Communicating with the team from the time you begin designing your project may even help save precious time and ensuring that the project idea is in accordance with the objectives of the funding for which you are eligible. You can indeed obtain up to \$1,500.00 to fund your delegation's projects during any given fiscal year (April 1st to March 31st). Before looking for partners or sponsors, consult the Rights & Democracy Network's ethical guidelines to see if your project meets the Network's ethical standards.

Using the Network's Project Fund

Rights & Democracy provides you with access to the Network's Project Fund (PFUND), which is reserved for members of a university delegation. This form has several objectives:

1. To assist you in preparing your "plan of action" for your project;
2. to allow you to develop a common vision of the project among your team and delegation;
3. to make you think about the Network's approach and how to integrate it, and how to ensure a global perspective;
4. to help you prepare a realistic budget for your project;
5. to offer the Network team enough information about your project plans so that it can have a helpful dialogue about your plans, and so that it can link your activities with those of Rights & Democracy.

You'll find the Project Fund Application Form in the Resources section on the Network's website. Once it is final, and all members agree with its content, please send it to the Network team at network@dd-rd.ca.

REMINDER

Stay in touch with the Network team!

Whenever your delegation has an activity, whether it is in partnership with another organization, whether it's a project, a conference, a team meeting or a workshop, let the Network team know by sending us an email or giving us a call! We can also follow your activities on your delegation's webpage. We can help promote your activities, announce it on the Network's web calendar and the newsletter, and add it to your delegation's official list of projects. Be proud of your achievements!

Section Toolbox

A Model of a Project Budget

Guidelines for Partnerships for Rights & Democracy
Delegations

PFund Application Form

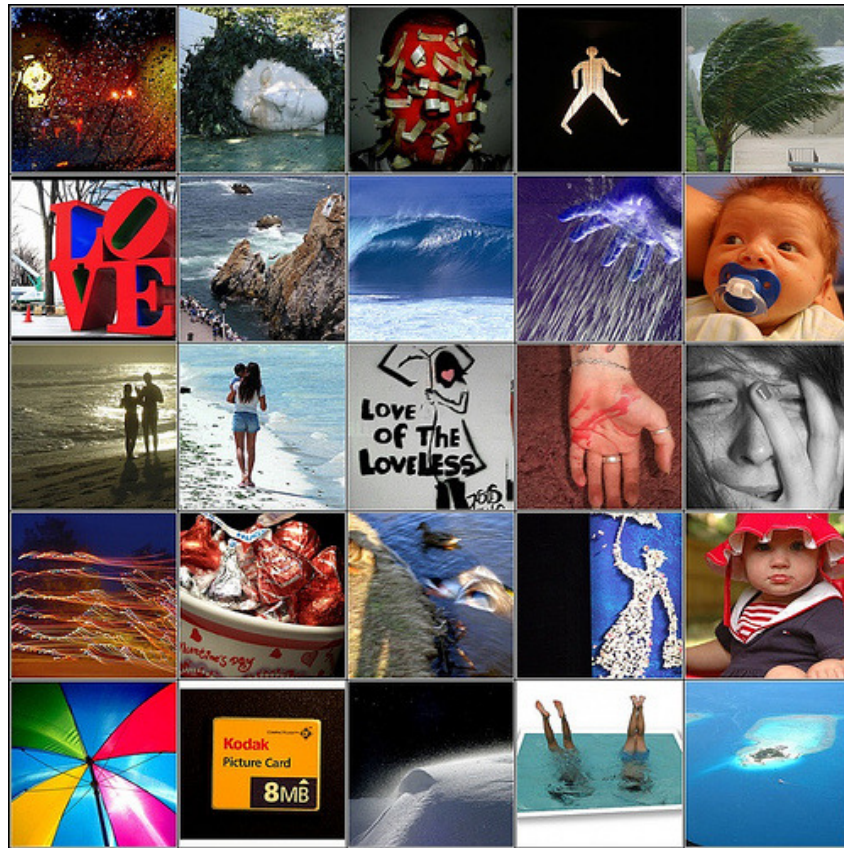
Activity Evaluation Form for Participants

Activity Evaluation Form for Delegation Members

Media Strategy Guide

Media Strategy Resources

Make good use of the Handbook.....



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/fariac/113796466/in/pool-ltw>

***And, on behalf of the whole Network team,
have a great year expressing
your commitment to human rights!***