

**OXFAM YOUTH AMBASSADORS**

# **GET STARTED**

How to organise your  
action group



**OXFAM**

# GETTING STARTED

## Becoming an Oxfam Youth Ambassador

Becoming an Oxfam Youth Ambassador is your chance to be part of making the world a fairer place. To get started just get a group of passionate young people together and Oxfam will support you to take action on global issues.

Our term-by-term Calendar of Action will help you put your ideas into practice, giving you the chance to show leadership, work in a team and make your voice heard. You might produce a video, invite your local MP to school, or put on your own event. Every term we'll provide materials, guides and top tips plus an Oxfam contact to provide support and advice.

**'It's great to be able to be the change you want to see.'** Mayowa, 18

When you get started your teacher or another adult at school should register you with us as Oxfam Youth Ambassadors. Once you've taken part in three different activities and tell us about what you've done you'll receive your Oxfam Youth Ambassador badge. The skills you'll develop doing the badge will be useful in all your subjects and in CVs, personal statements and UCAS applications.

### REGISTER NOW WITH OXFAM

If you haven't already, it's important that a teacher or other adult at school registers the names of the Youth Ambassadors as soon as possible so we can:

- Allocate you an official Oxfam contact.
- Support you with advice, ideas and resources.
- Send you regular updates.
- Invite you to special events and let you know about more opportunities.
- Keep track of your progress as you complete your Youth Ambassadors badge.

The Youth Ambassadors badge is free. To get the most out of your experience we hope you'll aim to organise or take part in at least one activity per term. You'll also need to keep a brief record your activities and send it to Oxfam at the end of every term.

If you would like Oxfam to visit your group please contact the relevant regional coordinator.

North of England: 0161 234 2793

Midlands: 0121 6343611

South West: 01179 166475

London & the South East: 0207 802 9981

Alternatively you can email [education@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:education@oxfam.org.uk)

# 5

## TIPS FOR GETTING A GROUP TOGETHER

Every successful campaigning group relies on teamwork to make it happen. Working with others will help you develop ideas, share your skills and stay motivated.

**1** Think about like-minded people who care about similar issues – ask them to join, and get them to invite people they know too. Set up a Facebook group, send out email invitations, and put up posters. Explain what you hope to achieve by starting your group.

**2** Organise an event relating to Oxfam's work – like a film screening or art exhibition about global issues – and use the event to get more people involved. Look out for events at school or college where you can have a stall to promote your group.



"There are different personalities and everyone contributes in their own way."  
Safa 15

**3** Do something creative to promote your group. For example you could bake some cakes with Fairtrade ingredients and share your slices at a lunchtime stall.

**4** Organise a fun activity – like making your own Oxfam t-shirts or painting a banner – that will capture people's imaginations and encourage them to get involved.

**5** Think about who's missing from your group (e.g. arty types, big thinkers, or people who are good with numbers). Ask specific people to join, or target particular clubs. Your local Oxfam contact can help you develop the skills you need to get people on board (eg planning, persuasion and promotion).

# MEETINGS

## 5 steps to holding effective meetings

Meetings are your chance to share ideas, plan activities and check your progress. Right now, there are probably millions of people around the world sitting in meetings. Not all of these meetings will be going well. But with the right approach, your meetings can be fun, effective – and can make things happen.

**“We choose what to do and how to do it – we were asked ‘what do you want to do next?’ We’re not often asked that. We’re in the driving seat. I’ve learned I can take more initiative.”** Tara, 14

A good meeting will have...

### 1. A GOOD CHAIR

And not just to sit on. A good meeting will usually have a chairperson or facilitator. Chairing a meeting isn't about talking the loudest or giving lots of opinions. A good chair makes sure that everyone speaks up, no-one dominates the discussion, and that you stick to the agenda. The chair also needs to make sure that agreements are reached that you are all happy with.

### 2. A FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE

Remember to welcome newcomers and give everyone a chance to have their say. Don't be afraid to disagree with each other, but do work together and support group decisions, even if they don't go the way you want. Try to generate a creative atmosphere. Putting some music on or bringing snacks can make all the difference if there's a lot to get through.

### 3. CLEAR GOALS

The best meetings happen when everyone is really clear about what you're trying to achieve (for example, the change you want to see happen, or the campaign you want to support). If things get stuck, refer back to this.

**“Everyone really enjoys it, we're relaxed, we know each other really well. We choose to give up time. The relationship with the teacher really matters. It's important to keep the group quite small.”** Brianna, 14

### 4. A CLEAR AGENDA

Your agenda is the plan of what you need to discuss in the meeting. Share the agenda at the beginning so everyone can see what there is to get through in the time available. To make sure you fit everything in, allocate each agenda item a time limit – it's the chairperson's role to make sure you stick to schedule.

### 5. ACTION POINTS

Make sure someone keeps a written record of major group decisions, and who's said they'll do what by when. Send round your notes (or 'minutes') so people who didn't make it to the meeting can stay in the loop.



**ONLINE RESOURCES**  
For more ideas, advice  
and support, go to  
<http://bit.ly/15CbVFq>



## **TOP TIPS** for good planning

### **GOOD PLANNING IS ABOUT:**

1. Knowing what needs to be done.
2. Knowing who's responsible for what.
3. Giving every task a deadline.
4. Having a way of checking progress.
5. Adapting plans to overcome challenges.
6. Working together to agree a solution.
7. Celebrating when you reach your goal.
8. Reviewing what you could do differently next time.

### **ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:**

1. Are we clear on what we want to achieve?
2. How much time will it take?
3. How many people are needed to plan it?
4. Will it cost anything?
5. When does it need to happen by?
6. What are the main steps to make this happen?
7. Do the steps have fixed or flexible deadlines?
8. Who is available to help?

# THE YOUTH AMBASSADORS BADGE

Want something to show for your time? Now you can register with Oxfam as an Oxfam Youth Ambassador to learn new campaigning skills, make a difference and gain recognition from the UK's leading charity fighting global poverty.

Each term we will release new campaign guides on our website so you can learn about current issues and get organised in your group to make a difference. Then, as you take action during the year, we'd like you or your teacher to send us brief evidence showing that you've had experience of

leading others, participating actively and having a voice. You can do these three activities below in any order you like and there's no limit to the length of time they should take. However you must do each activity in a different campaign or activity. Once you've completed all three activities you'll receive your Oxfam Youth Ambassadors badge.

Here are some examples of the types of activities you can do. There are many more similar things you can do that aren't on this list. Please do them!

LEADING OTHERS	PARTICIPATING ACTIVELY	HAVING A VOICE
Write or co-write an assembly or lesson plan	Help to plan or present an assembly or lesson	Set up a Twitter account, follow your MP and tweet him/her regularly about a campaign
Take the lead in managing a group activity	Take part in a creative activity – eg: music or drama	Write a blog and publish it
Effectively chair group meetings	Take responsibility for and perform a specific project role in the group.	Write to your MP
Research a new topic and teach the group about it	Manage a stall	Write a press release for the local paper
Act as the link person with the Oxfam regional co-ordinator for a term	Help to run a fundraising event – eg: organise a rota	Write about your activities for the school newsletter or website
Lead the planning of a fundraising event or contribute creative fundraising ideas	Collect a petition from students or the community	Script and edit a short film
Take the minutes at meetings and be responsible for following up on agreed actions	Steward or help to run an event	Deliver part of an assembly or lesson
Liaise with responsible adults, eg: the school Headteacher, etc	Attend meetings regularly and contribute ideas and suggestions	Report back to Oxfam with news of your group's activities
Design and lead an inspiring activity	Take part in a 'hand in' with a clear role – eg: speaking	Design the flyer, poster or other publicity for a fundraising event
Take responsibility for time management		



“I’m not a rioting youth. I’m someone who wants to change things for the better – and my involvement with Oxfam has allowed me to do just that”.

Sarah, 17

You become an Oxfam Youth Ambassador once you’re registered and you begin campaigning. However when you or your teacher tell us you’ve completed all three activities you’ll receive your Oxfam Youth Ambassadors badge. The badge celebrates and recognises your passion, your experience and the time you’ve spent volunteering as an Oxfam Youth Ambassador.

The Oxfam Youth Ambassadors badge isn’t a qualification but it does show your commitment to volunteering, leadership, team work and communication. Your experiences and new skills will look great on a record of achievement, CV or UCAS application form.



Pupils at Upton-by-Chester High School in Cheshire celebrate the work they’re doing with Oxfam. Highlights include a ‘question time’ session with Labour Party leader Ed Miliband, and the school’s formation of an Oxfam Youth Action Board. Photo: Duncan Elliott.



# LEGAL STUFF

## Campaigning and charity law

**As a charity, Oxfam cannot express political views or promote any political party or campaign.**

1. Your group should never promote or express support for a particular party. However, you may comment on a party's position on a matter of legitimate concern to Oxfam (except in the weeks leading up to a national election, when heavier legal restraints are in place).
2. Make the distinction between your opinion and Oxfam's. If you describe Oxfam's stance on a particular issue, make sure you can say where you found it (check [www.oxfam.org.uk](http://www.oxfam.org.uk)).
3. If an emergency or high-profile event takes place, Oxfam will provide background information within a few days. You can always ask for advice from your Oxfam contact.

### Money

1. If you want to raise money 'for Oxfam' (to be spent wherever it's needed most around the world), you don't need to include any special wording.
2. You can't fundraise 'for Oxfam' and then use that money for your group's activities – it's illegal. You can fundraise for your group, but when anyone gives money (eg donates, or buys a ticket) you need to make it clear where their money will go. To help with this, please use this statement on all promotional materials, tickets, and at the point of sale if you're running a stall: 'This fundraising activity has been organised by [your group name], a group of young people which campaigns on key issues, supported by Oxfam GB, registered charity no. 202918 (England and Wales) and SC039042 (Scotland). Proceeds from this appeal will cover the group's campaigning costs.'

3. If you want to put on an event and cover your costs with the takings, work out how much of the ticket price you think you'll need. Spell this out on your promotional materials and printed tickets (eg '£4 from every ticket sale will go to Oxfam').

### Respecting privacy

When you put on events and raise awareness, it's likely that you'll ask people for personal data, for example to join a mailing list or sign a petition. In legal speak, any person holding information about other people is obliged to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. As Oxfam is a registered 'data holder', your group's records are covered as long as you register your group with Oxfam and act within the law. You need to:

1. State very clearly how data will be used, who will hold it, and whether it will be shared with anyone else.
2. Make sure you store people's information really carefully. You might want to ask a teacher or youth worker to be responsible for keeping the data safe and secure.
3. Ensure data is up to date (for example, ensure you have the correct email address or mobile number).
4. Make sure there's a way for the person to opt out of you using their information. State what this is.
5. Show people what data you hold about them, if they ask to see it.
6. Only use personal data for the purpose for which it was provided.
7. No personal data held by the group should be passed to anyone outside of Oxfam without clear permission from the person.

### Keeping it safe and legal

As an Oxfam Youth Action Group, you have a responsibility to:

- Keep within the law.
- Protect Oxfam's reputation.
- Let Oxfam know what activities you are planning.



Young people in Newcastle under-Lyne rehearse play about education to take to Parliament. Photo: David Reynolds/Oxfam

# AND FINALLY...

## 3 activities to get your group started

### Practise your persuasion

Draw or imagine a big line on the floor, which represents a spectrum of opinions – from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘no way’. Read out some pre-prepared controversial statements, and ask everyone to stand on the part of the line which reflects their stance. Get people at different points to explain their views, and ask people to move along the line if they’ve been convinced.

### Prioritise your issues together

Write down the issues that people are interested in, then split up into smaller groups to investigate the top two or three. Take some time to research the background to the issue, how it affects people living in poverty, how your group can help,

and other people you can involve. Pin the findings up, and ask group members to agree on the issue they feel most strongly about.

**“I feel really good about myself.”**  
Emilie, 14

### Do some interviews

When you’re starting out, it’s great to get some extra support and feedback from people around you. Why not interview a youth worker, headteacher or local figure? Ask for their thoughts on the issues you work on, and talk to them about how they might support you. You’ll even get interview practice, which might come in handy if you meet your local MP further down the line.



Young people ‘Land grab’ Oxfam house. Photo: John Kentish/Oxfam

# CHECKLIST:

## Starting your group

**Let us know.** Contact your regional Oxfam Education & Youth Coordinator or email [education@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:education@oxfam.org.uk)

- Invite members to join.
- Arrange a first meeting or 'find-out-more' session.
- Get support from teachers, heads, youth leaders etc.
- Ask a teacher or other adult at school to be your main contact person with Oxfam and register your group. The registration form is at [www.oxfam.org.uk/youth-ambassadors](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/youth-ambassadors)
- Choose a regular meeting time and place.
- Read through your Oxfam Youth Ambassador guides and the Calendar of Action and Learning. The resources are at [www.oxfam.org.uk/youth-ambassadors](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/youth-ambassadors)
- Start planning your activities. Allocate group roles so you can get started on your Oxfam Youth Ambassador badges straight away.

Your Oxfam contact is:

### Support from Oxfam

We have a team of lovely people dedicated to supporting you. If you have any questions contact your Oxfam regional Education & Youth Co-ordinator or email [education@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:education@oxfam.org.uk)

We'd also love to hear about the actions you organise – send us your stories, photos and videos. We'll use them to inspire others – and help convince those in power to act, now

### Online resources

Loads more advice and ideas at: <http://bit.ly/15CbVFq>

Front cover: Pupils at Upton-by-Chester High School in Cheshire celebrate the work they're doing with Oxfam. Photo: Duncan Elliott. Oxfam is a registered charity in England and Wales No 202918 and Scotland SC039042. Oxfam GB is a member of Oxfam International. Inhouse 6064

