

## **OPIRG/GRIPO ACTION GROUPS POLICY** (March 2013)

**Subject:** ACTION GROUPS POLICY (4 pages)

**Summary:** This policy describes the purpose, creation, features and dissolution of Action Groups.

**Amended:** March 2013

### *Purpose*

1. OPIRG Action Groups are volunteers working together on our campus and in our community to understand and educate and take action on a social justice issue of their choice (for example, the environment, human rights, healthy food, etc.). Each action group is independent and receives assistance from OPIRG.

### *Method of Application for Action Group Status*

2. Interested groups must complete an Application Form for Action Group Status with OPIRG/GRIPO-Ottawa. There is an annual April 30 deadline for applications. If there is still space available after the deadline, new applications may be considered throughout the year.

### *Requirements for Action Group Status*

3. Action groups must focus on a topic within OPIRG's public interest mandate: social justice, economic justice, public health or environmental justice.
  - 3.1 Action Groups are required to be connected to our campus (through campus recruitment, campus meetings, campus outreach, distribution of materials, University of Ottawa student members or campus events).
  - 3.2 Since OPIRG welcomes volunteers from all political parties, action groups will not promote any particular political party.

- 3.3. Action groups do not fundraise for profit or for a headquarters organization if the board does not feel it is appropriate.
- 3.4 Action groups must have the independence to work on their own projects. Action groups which are local chapters of established non-governmental organizations will be approved on a case by case basis. The board may also review the status of action groups which may have lost their independent decision-making roles by adopting another organization's campaign or by becoming a campaign of an external group.
- 3.5 Every academic year each action group must send at least one representative to OPIRG's **consensus and anti-oppression training** workshops. New action groups must send a representative to participate in the next OPIRG training.

#### *Expiry and Renewal of Action Group Status*

4. Action group status is valid until OPIRG's April 30 year-end, at which point action groups are asked to submit an Action Group Status Application for the new financial year beginning on May 1st.
- 4.1 Action group status renewal is not guaranteed.

#### *Withdrawal of Action Group Status*

5. The OPIRG board of directors has the power to withdraw action group status if the group does not follow the OPIRG-Ottawa mandate or does not satisfy all the Action Group Requirements listed above.
- 5.1 The OPIRG board of directors has the power to withdraw an action group's status if the members, acting on behalf of the action group, participate in or organize activities that are against OPIRG's mandate or jeopardize OPIRG's standing.
- 5.2 Action group status is also withdrawn from groups which become inactive.

#### *Action Group Members*

6. An action group:
  - may include members from the University of Ottawa and also from the Ottawa/Gatineau region, and

- has a minimum of 3 members and offers at least one meeting or event during each of the fall and winter semesters to be considered active.

### ***Bilingualism***

7. The use of French and English is encouraged within all action groups.

### ***Decision Making***

8. Action groups are encouraged to use consensus-based decision-making processes.

### ***Action Group Budgets***

9. OPIRG can provide financial support to a limited number of action groups so that they can obtain reimbursements of their expenses. As such, OPIRG has two types of action groups: those which receive financial support in addition to support in other capacities, and those which do not receive action group budgets but which do receive other kinds of support.
  - 9.1 Action group budgets may vary from year to year.
  - 9.2 OPIRG's financial year begins on May 1<sup>st</sup> and has three semesters. The size of groups' budgets is determined by the number of semesters left in the year when the group's Action Group Status is approved. Groups who meet the April 30 deadline and who are approved may receive a full (3-semester) budget. If applications are being accepted after the deadline (see paragraph 2, above), then the following budget allocations will apply:
    - a) Groups who are granted status in May or June may receive a full (3-semester) budget;
    - b) Groups whose status is approved in July, August, September or October may receive a 2-semester budget;
    - c) Those which are granted action group status in November, December, January or February may receive a single semester budget; and
    - d) Action groups which apply for action group status at the end of the year (during March or April) will be considered for action group status and funding for the following fiscal year.

- 9.3 Any action group can request additional funding by making a proposal to OPIRG's board. In order to obtain additional funding, an action group must allocate or spend all of their annual OPIRG budget money and also show that they have sought additional funding from other sources.

### ***Requests from Action Groups***

10. Action groups can request additional programming or training or suggest other action by making a proposal to OPIRG's board.

### ***Action Group Liaisons***

11. Each Action Group will select at least one volunteer to serve as OPIRG Liaison. This person will receive and share information about how OPIRG can assist the group (with volunteer training, etc.). The liaison(s) will make sure that OPIRG receives notice of the group's events and any new contact information.

### ***Programming***

12. Programming by action groups must reflect OPIRG-Ottawa's mandate.

### ***Reporting***

13. Every year each action group will prepare a summary of its activities for OPIRG's Annual Report to present at OPIRG's Annual General Meeting.

**Location:** OPIRG Policy Binder