



The Zeitgeist Movement

# Chapters Guide

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## Special Notes:

- When reading this document, regardless of whether you desire to read only a portion that may concern you, please read first and foremost the “Basics” section below.

- An online version with extra content is available at <http://tzmchapters.net>

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# 1. The Basics

## ***In this Section:***

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# 1.1 - Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to assist and facilitate the creation and development of any kind of Chapter within *The Zeitgeist Movement*. Topics include, but are not limited to: organizing a core group; organizing local events and projects; setting up communication mediums; how to deal with “noise” in the chapter, etc.

Before reading this document and creating a chapter, it is highly recommended to read or view the *Zeitgeist Movement Orientation Guide* (found at [www.thezeitgeistmovement.com](http://www.thezeitgeistmovement.com)) in order to comprehend the Movement’s overall aims and ethos, and understandings around the global Resource-Based Economic Model (RBEM) it advocates.

A core logical conclusion of the Movement, as derived from empirical evidence pertaining to economic and environmental sustainability, and sociocultural issues, is that, in order to move toward a sustainable, peaceful and happy future on this planet, the monetary system must be replaced. This is due to it being inherently and irredeemably flawed as well as being responsible, either directly or indirectly, for a large proportion of destruction in the world. It is in the key focus area of educating the world that the millennia-old monetary system is now obsolete that the Zeitgeist Movement is, indeed, standing on the doorstep of history. The manifestation of the Movement at the local community level -- its most visible focal point to the populous -- is the global network of local chapters worldwide. Therefore, by starting and building a local chapter in accordance with the tenets and understandings of the Movement, you are personally adding to this unfolding history in a very positive way.

As in most documents, within this one there is the necessary use of very basic but potentially polarizing terms such as “we,” “us,” “they,” “them,” and their derivatives, within the context of larger phrases. Although such phrasing is natural for drawing distinctions and lends itself to properly conveying the subject material, it is critical to understand that there is truly no “us versus them” within the Zeitgeist Movement. It is all “us”, globally, as we are all, in the end, one people sharing this single fragile planet. This needs to be your mindset as you apply yourself to activism with the Movement.

Unlike most movements and organizations today that operate according to a hierarchical system, “our” purpose takes shape around a shared set of understandings, which is the body of ideas that “we” have collectively agreed to support, and hope that others eventually do too. This allows the Movement to be leaderless and holographic in nature, operating on a basis of voluntary contribution and consensus. Both the concept and role of “leader” become redundant when groups share responsibility for completing tasks, making decisions, and achieving outcomes.

Thus, regardless of the path of education and awareness that got them to this point, *any* person who becomes consciously aware of, and advocates for, the aims and ethos of the Movement, becomes an immediate representative of the Movement at any point they choose to become one. From here it is only a small step further to spread awareness, start a Chapter, and contribute to the Movement. It is naturally encouraged, therefore, that as many people as possible step up to represent these ideas, in order to reach critical-mass awareness in communities around the world as quickly as possible.

## 1.2 - A Chapter in the Zeitgeist Movement

The Zeitgeist Movement has an organized structure built, out of necessity, upon chapters that facilitate collective activism as well as the flow of information in an organized manner, relating to a vast range of members worldwide.

### Definition

A chapter is defined as a self-motivated group of active members of the Zeitgeist Movement in a particular region that serves and functions as an accurate representation of the Movement in their respective region.

### Function

The function of a Chapter is to create and sustain a work-oriented environment from which activism can then be performed in accordance with the understandings supported by the Movement. It is also part of a global Chapter structure for information purposes and larger order activism.

### Chapter tiers

- a) Chapters administration - Composed of international coordinators
- b) National Chapters - Organized by country (*e.g., Portugal, Colombia, New Zealand*)
- c) Regional Chapters - Next tier beneath national according to the specific context of a given country, for example: region / district / state / province
- d) City Chapters - Level beneath regional according to the specific context of a given state or province, for example - usually a city / suburb / college campus

These Chapter designations and the differences between them will be explored in greater detail later in this document.

## 1.3 - Getting Real with Expectations

As a volunteer movement, activist participation comes from people who derive satisfaction from contributing their time, skills and personal resources toward furthering the Movement's direction. If an individual is not deriving some sort of satisfaction from their participation, then they will quickly burn out and move on in search of something else that is more satisfying. The level of disappointment or satisfaction an activist experiences is largely impacted by their internal comparison of what actually occurs with their preconceived expectations. It is, therefore, important to become self-aware of any personal expectations concerning three areas in particular that may require adjustments that allow for greater margin of satisfaction. The three areas are: what you expect for a transition to a Resource-Based Economic Model (RBEM), what you expect for the Zeitgeist Movement as a whole, and what you expect in your role as a chapter coordinator.

### What to Expect for a Transition to an RBEM

The Movement acknowledges that in order for a new sustainable system to be both created and maintained globally, we, as a civilization, need to have both an understanding of the new set of values required to sustain it and a genuine desire to participate in it. This understanding and desire needs to be cultivated by creating critical mass awareness -- essentially a global paradigm shift -- which is the biggest task in bringing an RBE model into existence. We are doing our best to create this paradigm shift by introducing others to these ideas and educating them about the benefits that come with an RBEM as compared with our current monetary system. While we, of course, desire this to happen as soon as possible, and believe the more we step up our activism efforts the better the chances are for accelerating our progress, one quickly finds this enthusiasm is tested daily against the barriers of cultivated ignorance and superstitions perpetuated by the current Zeitgeist. There are also larger factors largely beyond our control: the depletion and exploitation of natural resources, natural disasters, wars and other conflicts around the world, government and media controls, etc. Thus it is possible that an RBEM is outside the scope of what will occur in one's lifetime. People who thrive as activists for the long haul are those who see value in simply participating in creating the *possibility* of an RBEM at some point in the future. In other words, there is a pleasure reward derived from the act of raising awareness that is not dependent upon an immediate outcome or direct benefit. In order to see the changes we wish for we must enact them, as urged by Gandhi, "*You must be the change you wish to see in the world*", regardless of whether we live to see such changes personally or not. Any volunteers acting in immediate self-interest are likely to rapidly become disappointed with the pace of change.

## **What to Expect of the Movement**

We all come from different experiences with non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, political organizations, corporations, community groups, perhaps a combination of these, or perhaps none of them. Because of this, people bring all sorts of expectations based on what they have participated in in the past. Some of these expectations are workable within our model and others are not. It helps to understand first how our structure differs from other entities. First of all, we are not an entity that occupies a particular physical space. We have no offices or classrooms specifically designated for our work. Essentially, the entire world is both our classroom and our office. We are global and without boundaries. The Zeitgeist Movement (TZM) is not any formal entity by the definition of any government. TZM refers to the hundreds of thousands of activist volunteers worldwide that actively support raising awareness about the Movement's direction, and participate in the existing global communication structure in some way while doing this. The Movement is predefined as an educational effort created by a network of volunteers advocating a move away from a monetary economic system and into an RBE using science and technology for the sustainable management of the earth's resources. Outside of this, we have adopted a model most similar to the Civil Rights Movement and our non-violent approach to creating change has been inspired by figures such as Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. Both of these individuals are famously known for their non-violent resistance methods to gain attention and to create opportunities to educate others about new possibilities in order to facilitate a cultural change in values that support positive change.

Expectations of chapter activity within the Movement should take into account the nature of work done on a voluntary basis by intrinsically motivated individuals who are adding the work to their already busy schedules. If, at any time, a person is unable to contribute their time and work due to family, health, relocation, job or other personal matters, it is expected that they may choose to discontinue, or at least, pause their volunteer work. The expectations of a coordinator, therefore, need to allow for varied cycles of productivity that reflect a continuous rotation of new volunteers stepping in and some experienced volunteers stepping out on an ongoing basis. For this reason we try to automate and standardize as much as possible in our communications so that we can easily retain momentum with new volunteers. Despite attempts to facilitate ease of chapter functioning, a certain level of both patience and creative problem-solving are required when working within the limitations of volunteers and resources.

## **What to Expect as a Chapter Coordinator**

The ideas of this Movement appear self-evident and, as a result, supporters who volunteer to become Chapter coordinators may expect other people to be equally enthusiastic and supportive through action once they become exposed and oriented to the information. Unfortunately, finding volunteers with the same level of acceptance and understanding, having available discretionary time to contribute, and who are actually willing to devote their spare time

to this direction, is not so easy. Instead of being frustrated by this state of affairs it helps to understand that this is not due to any shortcomings in those you are dealing with, but, instead, due to the deliberate social design of the Zeitgeist itself, which is to say that most of us are coerced or pressured to live in a form of distressed and distracted wage slavery. As our current socio-economic system continues to break down, people are concerned with their own survival: making ends meet, being able to feed their families, and taking care of basic needs. In addition, many people have endured a lifetime of conditioning to be a worker and consumer, allowing others to make their decisions for them instead of adopting self-directed education practices and questioning established institutions. It is also the case that some cultural differences in geographical regions are better poised to be open to learning new, progressive information than other cultures/regions, perhaps due to higher average levels of social awareness or simply more available time to devote to the process. With these understandings, it is important not to become discouraged if you feel like it is taking a while for other volunteers to step up to assist you in planning and executing awareness-raising events and activities. Every chapter once started with at least one person making some kind of effort to share this knowledge with others in some way. Some chapters had only one person spreading information for up to a year before they had others step up to assist and the chapter began growing. The important thing is that you are making an effort to inform people of where they can find out about solutions to the problems they perceive if they are interested. You are sowing seeds that may take a while to grow. Coordinators who are self-directed, self-motivated and derive pleasure from simply starting new conversations where they are and enjoy meeting new people tend to fare best over time in getting something started.

Sometimes it is tempting to want to replicate all the larger events that other chapters are doing because you desire that type of event for your community. However, it is important to know your limits and to plan events on a scale relative to the actual level of interest where you are. A suggested path is to start out with small events in the street, cafes, public libraries or community centres. Then, as the chapter grows and more skilled volunteers step forward, it will become possible to begin planning for events with a larger reach. It is helpful to recognize that it is better to plan for an event with 30 seats and end up turning some people away due to being over-capacity than it is to put massive energy and resources into renting a 500-seat, high-tech venue for an event that only 20 people attend. It is safest to plan so that the resources match the level of interest in the community to the best of your chapter's ability and then, even if you have to turn people away, this can simply be responded to as feedback for the next event to be slightly larger or to hold the same event again on another day to accommodate more people. Many people begin only virtually, by holding regular online meetings in a Teamspeak channel before meeting in person. However, it is important that, even in the beginning stages, individuals feel comfortable doing face-to-face streets-based or community activism or small meet-ups to begin to connect with people within your community at ground level.

## 1.4 - Point of Focus in a chapter

As a chapter, the point of focus should be to educate and generate awareness efficiently in a given area. Chapters have different tiers, and for each tier there is a specific focus. These points of focus are:

- **A National Chapter** should focus on setting up core tools and organization for development into regional chapters, translations, and organizing, creating, developing and adapting content to their region in order to be used by sub-chapters in local activism.

- **A Regional Chapter** should focus on relieving the national chapter from the responsibility of expanding into the various regional cities by directly supporting, guiding and promoting these developments. At first, depending on the region's size, a regional chapter may resemble the activity of a city chapter until it grows enough to be divided into a number of more localized chapters in the same region.

- **A Local Chapter** should focus on being constantly active in the local area, typically a town, city, or a college campus, by consistently organizing events and always trying to be visible and getting the word out there.

The Zeitgeist Movement is not a club. It is a worldwide campaign of mass-awareness. The result of creating a local community chapter is that it brings the activity of the Movement to community level -- literally into the backyards of "the masses". Increasing numbers of people have watched *Zeitgeist Addendum* or *Moving Forward* films and felt a connection with the message that these documentaries conveyed. It is very important, however, that chapters take this message of hope OFF the Internet and movie screens worldwide, and it bring it directly to the people. Only then does it become a message that everyone can participate in and be a part of. Everyone can feel the connection and get involved at whatever level they choose.

Another important fact to note about your local community chapter is that it functions as a gauge regarding the worldwide growth of the Zeitgeist Movement. As these local community chapters expand, so will the message and the enthusiasm. As people around the world continue to see the Movement's growth they will be eager to learn more about, and become more involved with, these concepts. These local community chapters therefore strengthen the whole movement, being, quite literally, the connection to the masses. Over time this increasing network of worldwide connections will culminate in critical mass.

A typical concern at this point might be, "*Maybe I am not in a big enough location to have a chapter...*" This is absolutely not true. Chapters are needed EVERYWHERE. If, for example, you live in a small town of 1200 people or less, and you are versed in and motivated by the tenets of the

Movement, then you need to start a chapter. Again, that will show that the Movement is everywhere; that people in ALL locations are moved to take action. No location is so insignificant that it should be left out while people living there are motivated to raise awareness and instigate change.

Your job with your chapter is to simply be there; be there as a community presence. It is of paramount importance to become a part of your community. Set up a stall at a small community fair or at a large weekend outdoor music festival and every event in between that you are able to manage. This presence is what makes you a local community chapter of the Zeitgeist Movement.

Always keep in mind that The Zeitgeist Movement is a massive awareness campaign which tries to present the public at large with an alternative message to the current system. The way in which we are able to gauge whether this message is getting through is primarily by the number of new chapters starting up, and, in a secondary way, by the number of "members" within each chapter and its membership growth over time.

### **- A Member**

It is important to clarify what is meant by the term "member." A local chapter member will be someone who has "signed up" to their local community chapter, meaning they have signed up to your chapter website and/or electronic mailing list. If a chapter has 50 or 100 or 250 "members," these are simply people who have signed up in this way. It is an extremely simple process in which there are no hoops to jump through, and members do not need to pay any "membership fee". These people are not required to attend meetings, or be available for every chapter call, or even participate in any way if they don't want to. If your goal is maximal involvement then the reality will quickly become very discouraging as many, if not most, "members" will never participate at such a level. However, you can rest assured that this silent majority of the membership does, in fact, advocate for the Movement regardless of how visible their contribution may be. Many do so in their own sphere and interactions, in their conversations, even just in their own minds; and that is an important starting point for the required consciousness-shift.

One thing that most of these individuals, these "members" or sign-ups, have in common, is that they have seen our materials through supportive movies or lectures and felt so connected to the message that they "signed up" and became a "member." This is an example of the success of the Movement's message, and these sign-ups are a strong gauge of our success.

There will be two major groups that will make up your chapter. Your members or sign-ups and your "core" team. You should not worry too much about your membership or your sign-ups as this is not your main focus. It is your core team that will become the backbone of your chapter. Simply stated, the core team is the self-realizing group of focused and dedicated individuals that "get it" and consistently show up at chapter meetups, events, and so on. This is the team that will

make the local community chapter come alive, and will work to become a highly visible presence within your community.

How does a “core” team develop? Well, it is *you* initially; and it will become a group of all the key members who join your chapter and feel the need to take action, and who, as a result, make a strong commitment to building a community presence. Such individuals will step up of their own accord; you do not necessarily need to identify and/or recruit them as they are already self-motivated and will approach you. As a general statement they are all self-managing as well (as per the holographic theme introduced above), they are already up to speed, and they know instinctively what needs to be done. Ideally a core team will consist of two to eight individuals who will bring their talents and strengths to the chapter. It is important to understand that a “core” team cannot become too large as it loses its efficiency past a certain point. Most members who join your chapter will never participate at these levels. For mid-level involvement, there is always a need for volunteers who are available and keen to help with specific events and activities.

Now that you have the basic foundation of how a chapter is constituted and how it operates, this section concludes by revisiting the word “*club*.” The main reason not to behave as a club or have “club” members is simply that awareness involves constant growth, whereas “clubs” and “club memberships” go up and down -- “up” being positive growth and “down” being negative growth. If you run your chapter with a “club” or “membership participation” mentality you may someday face “negative” growth, with events ranging from occasional member “unsubscribe” opt-outs, or, in the worst-case scenario, whole chapter shakeups. This can lead remaining members to become disappointed and disheartened, and benefits no one.

# 2. Setting up a National Chapter

## ***In this Section:***

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## 2.1 - Gathering Volunteers & Social Media

Getting volunteers to help out in *any* chapter creation is an important asset in creating a strong chapter. At the national level, while technically only one person is required to set up the structure for a national chapter, it is very important to acquire all additional help possible

In order to maximize your chances of having someone help you out initially in chapter creation, an important first step here is to find out if anything or anyone is *already in place* as any kind of Zeitgeist Movement entity within your country. You can do the following:

### - Query the chapters administration

Assuming you haven't already done so, email the Global Chapters Administration (GCA) at [chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com](mailto:chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com) and tell them that you want to create a chapter in your country. If someone has contacted the GCA ahead of you for a chapter in your country, you will get their contact in the reply as well other indications and/or questions.

*Note: As you follow all of the steps and recommendations in creating a national chapter that follow, please send frequent updates to [chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com](mailto:chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com) with your current state in development as well as the choices or issues you face. The CGA has experienced coordinators to advise you and to guide you, and this is an invaluable asset.*

### - Search for any groups or pages on social networking websites

This one is pretty straightforward, for example: do a Facebook search with possible search terms for a Zeitgeist Movement group in your country, for example "Zeitgeist [Your Country]" or "Zeitgeist Movement" translated into your local language. If you get any matches you should try to get in touch with the page admin (if it is a page), send a private message (if it is a profile account) and/or post your help request (if it is a group).

Other known social networking sites include: Google+, Twitter, Myspace, etc. Do not forget to check if there is a group with your country/region/city name on the TZM Network website (<http://www.tzmnetwork.com/>).

### - Do a google Search

While it is pretty rare, it is still possible that you can track useful information by doing a google search using search terms such as those mentioned above. You might find that someone held an event in your country and promoted it in their blog, or that someone has already started to build a website and has not yet contacted the GCA ([chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com](mailto:chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com)).

### **- Query the Linguistics Team**

In the Linguistics Team, sometimes there are active translators from countries that have no chapter. Sending an email to the Linguistics Team ([linguisticsteam@gmail.com](mailto:linguisticsteam@gmail.com)) may get you those contacts that can later on be a very valuable asset in helping with the future development of your chapter.

### **- Your own "community"**

Some chapters start out with a group of friends that want to do something. If you feel your friends or relatives support the Movement, perhaps you could ask them to join in and help you.

*After you have done your "scouting" by performing the steps described above, you are advised to do the following:*

### **- Establish a Facebook Page**

Create a Facebook page, upload a logo, add some apps like a welcome page, and feed it content about the Movement in the region and/or mirror some news/updates from the TZM Global page on Facebook.

**Note:** Avoid setting up a profile account for the chapter, such action goes against Facebook TOS (Terms of Service) and may result in your profile being de-activated from Facebook.

### **- Establish a Twitter Account**

This is also pretty simple: create an account, edit the profile accordingly (add logo, edit URL, etc.). As a bonus you can connect your twitter account to your Facebook account; this way one post in Facebook or Twitter gets automatically mirrored in both.

### **- Establish a Youtube Channel**

This is pretty straightforward: create a channel, upload some videos that might already be translated into your language. You might want to be a YouTube partner to enable longer video duration in your channel (in the footer links on the YouTube homepage, click "Creators & Partners"). After you have done this, email GCA at [chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com](mailto:chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com) so your channel can later be linked to the TZM Official Channel.

**Note:** Please respect Youtube's copyright infringement guidelines; your channel may be negatively affected permanently and your partner status immediately revoked otherwise.

### **- Other Social Networking Sites**

You can also join up with other social network sites that may have success in your country. Just be sure to have a small work-flow in your head or noted down regarding the order in which you will update content on your social media, because the more you have, the more you will have to repeat the same action each time you want to send an update.

*A Parting Note on Help: When asking for help from GCA, try to be as specific as you can. For example, try to detail some aspects where you need help, such as working with the website, working with images, working with translations, etc. In addition, where appropriate, address people by name personally, and, "To:" one person and "Cc:" others. This way you reduce the chances of being affected by the "diffusion of responsibility effect" (See "Organizing a Core Group" for more info).*

## 2.2 - Establishing a Website & Tools

After establishing your social media and getting some help you should then proceed with setting up the base of your chapter, the website.

Where would we be without the Internet? We all recognize the importance of this powerful tool in the organization of activist groups and the facilitation of communicating the message to a wider audience. It is extremely important, therefore, to establish a website to provide such information.

The website will be your point of reference where new visitors will learn about the Movement in their region and language; where supporters will be kept up to date with the Movement's news; and where interested members will be able to contribute, to join, to communicate, and to organize.

*Note: As part of your chapter website structural design, a longer-term goal to keep in mind is expansion into regional chapter pages and possibly their own websites.*

### **Acquiring a good Domain (or several)**

Before actually starting to build the website, first you must acquire a domain. These can run really cheap nowadays with domains like [tzm-usa.org](http://tzm-usa.org) costing less than \$10 per year. When choosing a domain it is best to go for something that describes the chapter clearly; an example for Spain would be:

- [movimientozeitgeist.es](http://movimientozeitgeist.es) < The Zeitgeist Movement is translated and the domain extension corresponds to the the country - "es" stands for "Spain"

However, extensions like [.org](http://.org) are fine, and are probably the cheaper ones to register.

- [zeitgeistspain.org](http://zeitgeistspain.org) < Simply the word zeitgeist and the country the chapter is from, is also a decent domain.

There are, of course, other possible domains.

As an extra, you might want to buy two domains and/or get a third one to host your public campaign pages. Something like [zday.es](http://zday.es) is much easier to remember, and to, for example, put in a flyer, than [movimientozeitgeist.es](http://movimientozeitgeist.es). However, with all lesser domains you could also configure them to redirect to the main one, or at a minimum provide a link to it.

**Note:** When utilizing a domain specific for "campaigns," you need to redirect to a specific page of information about whatever you are promoting.

### **Building the Website**

Currently, a template is available from GCA that has most of the content structured and a good level of website functionality. It is relatively easy to manage if you are not acquainted with web development, and it also looks professional with a clean design. Contact GCA for this template ([chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com](mailto:chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com)).

**Preview:** <http://tzmchapters.co.cc/template>

With the template you have three options:

- a. Follow the instructions and use it in your chapter.
- b. Use it as a starting point and expand the functionality, etc.
- c. Develop your own site but keep the template as a main reference for the level of content structuring and functionality it offers.

Naturally each option has its own requirement of web development skill and knowledge.

Feel free to build upon the template or be creative in building your own; however, please maintain the minimum guidelines stated in the "Movement Policies" section near the end of this document.

For a chapter website to be effective, it needs to have several features, including:

- a good professional looking design, along with easy access to information
- a dynamic aspect, i.e., regular content updates, current news, etc.
- some kind of medium where users can communicate with each other, e.g., blog, forum, chat, etc.

### **Important aspects to keep in mind**

- Do not underestimate the power of disruptive users (also known as trolls).

If you are intending to have a forum, blog/comment system or chat, make sure you have people willing to moderate and work to expand the team. The last thing you want is a soapbox of personal attacks, irrelevant material, spam, etc. This not only affects your public image, but also

does a damn good job of quickly “destroying” the virtual community you worked to build and maintain.

- Put yourself in your visitor’s mindset when navigating your website.

You don't want to deter your visitors from learning or helping by having information “gaps” or confusing navigation. Most of the time, the simpler the navigation and page layout, the better.

- The website in itself is not your chapter, it is just a tool.

Your real chapter is your members, and no website -- no matter how good looking and functional -- can help maintain and grow your chapter effectively if you have a non-functional organizational and communication structure between your core group for handling resources and the flow of tasks.

### **Establishing Tools**

Simultaneously, as you work to establish your website, you should also prioritize setting up the base tools that your core group and future active chapter members will utilize for organizing documents, files, tasks, etc.

These tools are fairly quick and easy to set up. Their utility, benefit, and success depends upon the working “mindset” of your core group, and the constructive synergy between you and the group.

### **A Document System**

This is a tool that will be an important backbone of the chapter core and all projects that develop. While it is possible to manage a chapter and its organization without this, there are strong advantages of having a centralized and organized document system.

With a document system like google docs, you can have all of them organized in folders and always find something without having to ask for the link or bookmark it. You can also share documents with several people and work in a collaborative manner with common tasks such as creating forms, spreadsheets, text documents, slideshow presentations, etc.

In order to set up a folder for your chapter just send an email to GCA at [chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com](mailto:chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com) requesting to be added to the “TZM Global Document System.” When added you will receive some instructions on how to use it.

### **A Project Management System**

Setting up a Project Management System (PMS) can be very useful for your chapter, especially as it grows larger, harboring several projects at the same time.

There are dozens if not hundreds of possible solutions in this area; however, Open Atrium has been known and used in the Movement by several chapters and teams for the tools and functionality it offers as well as its ease of use. Open Atrium is an open-source platform designed specifically to make great teams communicate better. It's an intranet in a box with the following features: a blog, a wiki, a calendar, a to do list, a shoutbox, and a dashboard to manage it all. A "tailored" Open Atrium installation package with base examples of chapter and project organization is currently bundled as an extra in the TZM Chapters Template.

**Note:** Do not assume that a PMS is a answer to your organization problems: a good PMS won't save you from poor organization and/or work discipline, or a lack thereof.

### **A File Storage system**

As soon as your chapter starts growing there will be a larger need to have a common place where files are stored and organized. These files may have several ends and purposes; however, most of their use will be to transfer project files and to host files that are frequently downloaded from the chapter site, thus saving you the load from your personal hosting. Having a common file storage system is very easy and there are plenty of choices. Depending on your needs, you can choose what you think will be best for you and your chapter. Some of the more common services used by chapters in the Movement are Dropbox and Mediafire.

## **2.3 - Organizing a Core Group**

As we all know it is not enough to have a group of people who just want to help. There must be a mechanism for them to be able to help efficiently and in an organized way, and with that goal in mind we reach the step where a core needs to be established.

Before going into detail on how to form a core, here are a few important key points:

### **What is synchronous and asynchronous activity?**

Very simply, synchronous activity requires the participants to be at a given place and time working on something together, whereas an asynchronous activity is one that any participant can work on, whenever they wish, at a time of their choosing, regardless of the activity of others.

An example of a synchronous activity is a physical meeting. A gathering of a group of individuals who can discuss topics in a physical meeting (face-to-face) has its advantages. However, gathering "around a table" is not always possible for all who wish to participate due to conflict of schedules, personal obligations and agendas, and so on. Face-to-face gatherings also exclude those who wish to attend and contribute but live at too great a distance from the meeting location.

This is where online meetings come in. Establishing an online presence serves to strengthen the interaction of the team due to the continuity provided beyond the physical meetings. It also allows one to participate discreetly from the comfort of one's home, creating an environment independent of time-space variables and allowing "asynchronous" participation. For example, a member can contribute with ideas at 3 p.m. and another one can continue the work at 3 a.m.

### **What is the "diffusion of responsibility" effect and why is it so important?**

Diffusion of responsibility is a socio-psychological phenomenon whereby a person is less likely to take responsibility for an action or inaction when others are present. Considered a form of attribution, the individual assumes that, either others are responsible for taking action, or have already done so. The phenomenon tends to occur in groups of people above a certain critical size and when responsibility is not explicitly assigned. It rarely occurs when the person is alone; diffusion tends to increase with groups of three or more.

This effect happens more frequently than we might think. Within the Movement, it has manifested in various ways:

- No productivity or follow up after a great idea/discussion because no one took responsibility to "own it" or apply it.
- No follow-up or organizational execution after some great tasks and roles were discussed in the meeting. This can happen whenever the project is managed by two or more persons, or if members reject the "manager role."
- Few replies when mass-emailing and asking for volunteers. It has been discovered that asking individually (or at least giving the impression of doing so) seems to produce substantially more positive results.

Understanding and identifying this effect is critical in activism since it can make a difference between being only all talk and no results or actually taking effective action. You can search and read more about this phenomenon via Wikipedia if you are interested in learning more.

### **Forming a Chapter Core**

When forming a chapter core the following key aspects should be considered:

#### **- Defining the Chapter Coordination and Responsibilities**

First and foremost, when defining the core of the Chapter you must start with Chapter coordination. Without this your Chapter will fall into permanent disorganization because of the simple fact that there is no responsibility on anyone to do any of the core tasks of maintaining and developing the Chapter.

So what does a Chapter coordinator actually do? S/he:

- a) organizes and manages information within the chapter (including reports and meetings)
- b) stays informed of Movement activity, and informs other Chapter tiers and members
- c) supports and provides counseling to project managers within the Chapter
- d) reviews and validates sub-chapters, coordinators and project proposals in the Chapter
- e) ensures the accuracy and integrity of Movement representation throughout the Chapter website and activism
- f) is responsible for the appropriate use and privacy of the Chapter mailing list and other important administrative data
- g) pursues a conflict-free work-oriented environment, and, if necessary, acts as a mediator within the Chapter
- h) manages the Chapter's email address list

**Note:** You can read more about coordination in the "Tips from Coordinators" section in the online version of the guide (website based).

### **- Chapters with sub-chapters**

In larger Chapters with sub-chapters, a coordinator must also focus on supporting and growing them, the development of their projects, and maintaining a good information flow.

### **- Multiple coordinators**

In the case of multiple coordinators, you must ask your team the following questions:

- Who is going to help in the development of sub-chapters?
- Who is going to integrate project management and make sure projects are developing properly?
- Who is going to maintain and keep current the Chapter and sub-chapter websites?
- Who is going to organize Chapter meetings, gather and organize reports, interact with the global movement by reporting and relaying the information back and forth?

As can be seen above, it is important to make it very clear who is responsible for what. Assign someone the task of checking that the items that each person has taken responsibility for are being done, and if not, why not, and what alternative solutions might be available. In other words, this person will have the role of internal group management.

### **- Defining the Linguistic Team**

In a national Chapter, the linguistic team is of fundamental importance, especially in countries where the native language is not English. A lack of available content in a given native language will very likely lead to the inadvertent exclusion of people who might not understand English very well, and content that is incorrectly translated may lead to a lack of understanding, or incorrect interpretations.

It is necessary to identify members who are able to take on the following tasks: helping new members, taking responsibility for setting up and updating tools, relaying information to project participants, making sure translations are progressing, keeping track of the human resources, proofreading, etc.

Usually when Chapters start, this “role” is often entrusted to a single person; however, as the Chapter grows it may be expanded into a 2 or 3 person coordination effort. In this case it is VERY Important to define the sub-role of each coordinator.

To get in touch with the global linguistic team, please email: [linguisticteam@gmail.com](mailto:linguisticteam@gmail.com).

### **- Defining the Multimedia Team**

Unlike the Linguistic Team, it is very likely that this is going to be less a team, and more an area of responsibility which one or a small group of members take on. Very simply, the multimedia aspect has to do with carrying out tasks that are related to graphic design and video and audio editing.

This is important because public image is a large and important part of the Movement as a whole. If you can have professionally produced content in flyers, posters and suchlike, you will immediately be treated with a lot more credibility. Likewise, not everyone in the Movement is a professional graphic designer or knows how to work with such tools effectively. By having this process centralized and easy to copy/adapt you can save a tremendous amount of headache and resources while still looking good.

### **- Defining the PR Team**

The PR Team stands for “Public Relations”. PR is the area of activity that includes writing, public speaking, and improving the communication/public image of the chapter by brainstorming and proposing activism campaigns for local Chapters to take on.

As with the other teams, the PR team needs someone to organize it and the sooner this person is identified, the better.

The people who initially join this team will be important as, not only will they ideally be better suited than the average active member to the role, but will also develop a system for the handling of mass media by communicating the Movement’s understandings efficiently. Usually people who participate in these roles are involved with marketing, public relations, teaching, sales, customer service, etc.

### **- Defining the Workflow of Human Resources “Teams” and “Projects”**

With regard to the issue of structuring, a very important question is often overlooked, which is:

Should your Chapter have teams with associated projects, or have projects under which several teams work?

Given the nature of volunteerism in the Movement, building a team is really hard work because active members come and go and may return later or not at all (depending on the status of their personal lives), and either they took satisfaction from the work they did, or did not. Having such a team with responsibility for organizing team-specific projects puts tremendous strain on the team's organizer(s), and further, given the nature of some projects, sometimes interdisciplinary skills are required. Analyzing this situation and observing the brief history of teams within the Movement, it seems clear that teams with projects operating "under them" don't seem to work very effectively.

Fortunately, framing projects as catalysts to form temporary teams that come from the resource base or pool (maintained by the teams' facilitators) seems to generate better results. The formula is very simple; it consists of defining an objective and then reasoning, gathering volunteers and organizing tasks, accomplishing those tasks and finishing the project.

In this scenario the role of the team is not obsolete; it is actually quite the opposite. A team from a given discipline serves as a resource base to form multidisciplinary teams that will work on a project. For example, project X requires 1 graphic designer, 1 programmer, and 2 translators. This means that the Media Team organizer will inform all eligible members from his/her database, and will try to secure a volunteer for the role, and this same method applies, in this example, to Development and Linguistics Teams.

*Note: There is an exception to this rule; the linguistic team seems to hang pretty well by itself in either method since the workflow is very standardized (proofread, translate, review and publish). This may indicate that the more simplified and repeatable your workflow, the more successful it may become.*

## 2.4 - Expanding Into Regional Chapters

The goal of a national Chapter coordinator is to help regional coordinators develop Chapters by providing useful resources and a platform for the sharing of ideas and mutual support via regular online meetings. In addition, national coordinators are responsible for passing along information from global meetings on activism that is happening on a global scale, such as global events (for example: Z-Day, Zeitgeist Media Festival, etc) and special awareness campaigns (for example: Why I Advocate, Zeitgeist Media Project, ZeitNews, etc).

Regional/State Coordinators

- Live in the nation/state they are coordinating
- Are very familiar with TZM Materials, the Activist Orientation Guide and Movement lectures, and feel comfortable answering questions about a global, resource-based economic model and why it is both necessary and desirable.
- Have regular access to a computer and email correspondence
- Are actual supporters who are knowledgeable of, and dedicated to, the direction of the movement
- Are solution-oriented thinkers who thrive on collaborative projects and keeping others motivated
- Feel comfortable doing a lot of event coordination in their local area, including screenings, town hall meetings, street and festival activism, etc.

Regional/state coordinators are volunteers who relay TZM information shared from global/national coordinators to members within their respective state/region. They hold meetings (online, in-person, or both), update website content, send newsletters, answer emails from members and other coordinators, sometimes organize local activist events, may assist in the development of city and university sub-chapters, participate in monthly Chapter reporting, may speak on behalf of the Movement at local events and attend national Chapter meetings via TeamSpeak to keep up to date with Movement initiatives (if their schedule does not permit live meeting participation, they catch up via post-meeting recordings).

You know you are ready to expand into a regional Chapter when someone shows an interest in taking on the role, fits the qualifications needed for the role, and is committed to the responsibilities of that role. There may be people who demonstrate an interest in establishing Chapter activity in their area who are, however, not suitable for the role - perhaps because they lack the necessary communication skills, are not sufficiently confident in conveying the aims and ethos of the Movement and RBEM concept, or, perhaps, because they have an alternative agenda that may lead to a conflict of interest. It is important to be discerning when preparing new people for coordination roles as if you do not get the right kind of person this could be potentially damaging for the Chapter, and, in turn, the Movement as a whole.

# 3. Setting up a Regional Chapter

## ***In this Section:***

[3.1 - Overview](#)

[3.2 - Getting Started](#)

[3.3 - Keeping Focus](#)

## 3.1 - Overview

The particularities of a regional Chapter are that it can be formed either as an expansion of a city Chapter, or a subdivision of a national Chapter. It may also be the case that a regional Chapter is set up as an interim measure and as a way to facilitate activity and communication in sparsely populated areas where there are initially too few people in a town to establish a local Chapter, yet sufficient interest spread across the region. This may be a situation more familiar to Chapters in large countries with small populations spread over vast areas with lengthy travelling distances between, such as Australia or Canada. The regional Chapter is structured in a way that gathers city Chapters from the same region, province, district, or state. It also gathers people from a given region who live in cities but have not yet formed a city Chapter.

There are three ways in which regional Chapters are likely to develop:

- 1) From the centre-out, as the number of local Chapters within a country increases to the point at which it is necessary for coordination to be divided according to region in order to spread the workload and facilitate smooth communication.
- 2) From the top-down as TZM gains traction within a country and interest grows to a point at which various regions wish to establish their own activities. These regional Chapters are likely to gradually become more and more localized as interest and activity increase and numbers build in the various localities.
- 3) From the bottom-up, as local Chapters find that, with increasing numbers, networking and collaboration become increasingly useful and a regional framework is established to facilitate this.

It must be noted that, regardless of whether a regional Chapter develops in a centre-out, top-down, or bottom-up manner, it is of paramount importance that communication with national coordination be maintained. Such communication is integral to the healthy functioning of a globally networked movement as it facilitates development of ideas and projects as well as providing support to each Chapter. If all Chapters are effectively networked and supported resources will be equally accessible, thus reducing the workload of each individual Chapter, and all will be equally accountable for upholding the integrity of the Movement.

## 3.2 - Getting Started

In its beginnings, a regional chapter often resembles the processes of a city chapter due to the relatively limited size and geographical coverage. The only major differences are that a regional chapter:

- Gathers members from all the various cities in a region
- Is focused on expansion (creating more city chapters)

More simply put, the regional chapter is basically the first “city chapter” in a region, a chapter that is focused on generating more city chapters around it. Therefore, in addition to reading this section, you are also advised to read the city chapter section as well.

In order to get started, and assuming a chapter does not yet exist in your region, please follow the steps listed below:

### 1. Contact the national chapter coordination

The title is pretty much says it all... If you cannot find, or do not receive a response from, your national chapter, which you should be able to find listed on our official chapter list here: <http://thezeitgeistmovement.com/chapters> then please get in contact with us by sending an email to [chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com](mailto:chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com), and with all likelihood start considering creating a chapter in your own country.

If you indeed manage to establish contact successfully, please follow the instructions provided to you in the response.

### 2. Set up communication tools

Communication tools refer to any virtual medium that provides a platform for exchanging group information. Unfortunately little can be expanded here as development of these platforms is in accordance with the tools used by national chapters since much of the best communication tools for regional chapters are indeed created by national chapters themselves, which differ in their approaches.

However, such communication tools include, at the very minimum, a Facebook page and a blog site where basic public promotion can be take place. Please review “Chapter Website” guidelines at the end of this document if you intend to open a blog or a similar simple website.

Additionally to this, as a coordinator for your region, you must create a dedicated email for that chapter and also a spreadsheet or some document in which you can at the very least keep track

of details of city chapters (their contacts/chapter email, communication medium, coordinators, etc.)

### **3. Organize a development plan or development guidelines and apply it.**

After properly informing your national chapter of your intentions, following the instructions, and setting up communication mediums for your regional chapter, it is time to draft an initial development plan.

This development plan should include, but not be limited to, details such as:

- Writing a promotional email and a some instructions and sending it to all subscribers from your region that may already be subscribed to the national chapter (in some chapters you can easily get hundreds of recipients)
- Using the national chapter Facebook page to promote your regional one
- Feeding your social media with content updates and news from the movement
- Organizing a planning meeting and also small events that you can perform
- Outline a basic workflow of how you plan to organize and gather volunteers to create city chapters
- Investigate what other actions your chapter can join in (please check <http://tzmchapters.net> for more ideas and current global campaigns)

And that's about as far as this guide can take you at the moment. What you do from this point on falls under your creative, planning and thinking skills.

## **3.3 - Keeping Focus**

When it becomes necessary to establish regional Chapters, or when they simply emerge, these have the advantageous alternative of coordinating activities that transcend city boundaries, and help to distribute information from the cities to the national Chapter and vice-versa. However, the objective must always be to create more city Chapters, and even "neighbourhood Chapters" if this is possible, to be able to carry out local activities such as town hall meetings and lectures. The regional Chapters share the same general functions as the city and national Chapters, but these functions will depend of the geography of the region. If it is a small region where the cities are right next to each other, one of the functions of the regional Chapter will be to carry out regional events. However, if it is a large region where cities are far apart, the regional Chapter must focus on virtual projects and on gathering people from different cities in the region to promote the creation of more city Chapters in the region. The regional Chapter should be used as a tool to expand the Movement, either to help a national Chapter to form new city Chapters in the region, or to help a city Chapter to grow and contact more people to form other city and regional Chapters to consolidate a national Chapter.

# 4. Setting up a city or local Chapter

## ***In this Section:***

[4.1 - Introduction](#)

[4.2 - Getting Started](#)

[4.3 - Raising Volunteers & Organizing a Core Group](#)

## 4.1 - Introduction

The Zeitgeist Movement chapter structure is our official communication network worldwide, where the focus is on communication of TZM understandings and goals through voluntary awareness-activism efforts. Official Chapters are recognized as self-motivated groups of individuals who understand the Movement's tenets and views, and advocate the solutions proposed in our materials. These local chapters are focused on on-the-ground awareness projects via coordinated group activity and social interaction.

What makes our structure holographic is that each chapter advocates the same train of thought, reasoning and data-set, taking into account the cultural nuance of the population in that area (i.e. language, dominant political views, lifestyle and values, etc.), and finding effective and fun ways to communicate the train of thought to that area.

Chapters function via a network of efforts coordinated by volunteers (i.e. you) who choose to be part of the official structure, and participate by staying in communication with their TZM Coordinator, responding to email requests and organizing awareness events locally.

Note on "official" versus "non-official": While this structure is what we call our "official" platform for activism, it is not necessary to participate in activism in such a way. Some people don't have time, or may want to participate independently. Some may wish to create a group for other purposes (e.g. green movements, transition towns, building a city, access to socializing, etc.). These avenues are open to all, but are not what TZM Chapters are about. Please keep this in mind as you move forward. The current purpose of the Movement is awareness activism, education, and communication of the information in our materials aiming for a global, critical mass of supporters of a scientific value system.

## 4.2 - Getting Started

Ready to get started?

### **I. Does a chapter already exist in your area?**

There may already be a chapter in your area. To find this information, visit [www.thezeitgeistmovement.com](http://www.thezeitgeistmovement.com) and scroll to the bottom of the page for links to countries, states and regions that have Chapters. Click through to see if a chapter may already exist, and, if so, join up with them!

## II. If NO chapter exists in your area:

Contact the coordinator for the next largest area in which you reside. For example, if I want to start a chapter in the city of Los Angeles, California, USA. I would look to see if there was a Los Angeles Chapter first. If the local chapter does not exist, then I would check for a state Chapter for California. If, again no chapter is in existence, then I would contact the USA coordinator about starting a chapter. Your country's Chapter website may have a section entitled "get involved", "start a chapter" or "contact us" via which you will be able to start the process of inquiry.

If you find there is *no* chapter in your region or country, check the global website to find out which global coordinator is most pertinent to your region. Initial questions can be sent to [chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com](mailto:chapters@thezeitgeistmovement.com).

## III. Chapter Purpose:

Our current purpose as Chapters is to engage in awareness-activism at city and local level. If you are interested in creating/coordinating a Chapter in your city, town or region, here are some guidelines to get started with:

- It is recommended to start with at least two people who wish to meet on a regular basis around the tenets of the Zeitgeist Movement, and who wish to engage in awareness activism.
- Coordinators must have an understanding of the [Movement's Orientation Guide](#) or [Orientation Video](#).
- Chapter activities must be relevant to the Movement's aims: Chapters exist to discuss and promote awareness of The Zeitgeist Movement and our shared set of understandings to the public.
- Official Chapters need to maintain a website for facilitating and managing membership and publicising events. We have a recommended Chapter platform, and can help get you online.
- We ask that any website used in an official capacity stay relevant to what TZM is about and the chapter's activism efforts (i.e. no advertising of external organizations, projects or agendas as the website focus).
- It is recommended that Chapters host a meeting at least once a month to organize TZM awareness projects or events.
- Coordinators should participate in the online meeting of their 'next tier' Chapter (i.e. state, province, or international meeting). Usually these take place online in TeamSpeak. Connection information can be found here: [Teamspeak Info](#).
- Coordinators need to maintain communication with the coordinator for their larger area.
- It is necessary to keep networks well-connected. As an official chapter, link back to your parent chapter in acknowledgement of the connection. In addition your chapter's site will be listed on the state/parent Chapter page.

**As a Chapter Coordinator:** You express, through your desire to take on the role, that you are in agreement with the above points regarding the role of a coordinator. Coordinator positions get re-posted as "OPEN" if a coordinator becomes unresponsive to email requests, takes the chapter in a different direction than what TZM advocates (e.g. fighting other causes), and/or the chapter becomes dormant (i.e. there is little to no activity or communication).

#### **IV. Your chapter is started, now what?**

- You need a web platform - work with the coordinator who you contacted initially to create a web platform for your Chapter (if needed)
- Create your next awareness activism event and put in on your Chapter's Calendar! Some examples are:
  - Hand out DVD's or TZM flyers at a festival, market or fair
  - Hold a screening of Moving Forward or Addendum
  - Create a "[Why I Advocate](#)" video
  - Leave cards, brochures or DVDs with public business outlets to make available to customers
  - Participate in the next global event, for example Z-day or the Zeitgeist Media Festival
  - Engage other organizations and movements regarding the Zeitgeist Movement's train-of-thought (through talks, screenings, teach-ins, etc)
- Create content from your Chapter efforts; examples include written articles, photos, and videos posted online. Photos and videos of your events and efforts are important for the sake of demonstrating and recording the activity of your Chapter.
- Bring that content to the TZM meetings you attend (e.g. USA or international Chapter meeting in TeamSpeak) so it can be re-published.
- Being in communication is fundamental to creating a globally networked movement. Therefore it is important to stay in communication with the Chapter coordinator at the next tier up from yourself (usually your province, state, or national coordinator).

#### **V. Chapter Resources**

The following resources are likely to be of use in ensuring your Chapter members are conversant with the aims and ethos of the Movement and fully understand the concept and goal of a Resource-Based Economic Model. It is of great importance that the core team of any Chapter be confident in their ability to convey these concepts and aims as they are likely to interface with the public. The various media resources compiled as an ongoing project also greatly assist in the task of conveying the message of the Movement.

## Educational

- [ZM Orientation Guide](#) (2009 Edition)
- Global website: <http://www.thezeitgeistmovement.com/>
- Lectures, films and interviews: <http://www.youtube.com/user/TZMOfficialChannel>
- TZM USA Website: <http://tzm-usa.org/>
- Republished ZM coordinator articles: <http://zmca.org/articles>
- ZM global radio broadcast: <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/zmglobal>
- Zeitnews technology site: <http://www.zeitnews.org/>

## Media

- Videos, graphics, print, and music for non-commercial use:  
<http://www.zeitgeistmediaproject.com/>
- TZM blog: <http://blog.thezeitgeistmovement.com/>

## VI. Maintaining a Chapter

### Consistency:

It is important to have consistent activism on a monthly basis as a minimum as consistency helps maintain momentum. A calendar is a great tool for this as it enables members to keep up to date with when activities are taking place, to ensure their availability, and to prepare themselves if any preparation is deemed necessary. This consistency also facilitates the integration of activism into an individual's established lifestyle and schedule, particularly for those who are very busy. Consistency and momentum also allow members to feel that development of the Chapter is being made and that steps are being taken that will lead toward positive outcomes. If activity is allowed to stagnate this can have a very negative impact on the motivation and commitment of members.

If a Chapter is slow-moving, or is not increasing in size at a reassuring pace, it can be difficult to maintain enthusiasm. However, it is important not to rush the process of building a solid Chapter, and to instead establish a consistent routine that is fulfilling for those who are committed to their involvement. Do not spend too much time on the measure of "size" when it comes to activism. Start small and engage in actions that are within the means and resources you have available. Let relevance combined with consistency of action take priority over size (\*[see section on Expectations](#)), and allow your Chapter to develop at a pace that is realistic and manageable for your members.

## 4.3 - Raising Volunteers & Organizing a Core Group

The backbone of any Chapter within the Movement is its core team of active volunteers. Regardless the size of the Chapter as a whole, or the region it is based in, the Chapter core

consists usually of a small group of committed activists. You will find that members come and go, attending meetings and events sporadically, or perhaps consistently for a period of time, and then disappear. This is not something to be concerned about as it is the norm in any activist group. Your area of greatest need is your core team, and the need to differentiate between those members who may form your core from other members is of great relevance when it comes to ensuring your expectations are realistic.

### **Raising Volunteers**

It can feel lonely starting out with a new Chapter and the task of raising enough volunteers to help out consistently may appear daunting. However, a few online tools should be of great help to get you started.

You need to establish a virtual presence either via your country's national website, or by establishing your own site (in many cases there is no need to do this as local Chapters enjoy space on their country's national website). It is important to regularly post news and updates regarding your Chapter's activity to this website so that you are maintaining a public online presence. While there is no need to advertise every closed planning meeting your Chapter has it is helpful to at least make monthly posts to the website outlining upcoming Chapter activities and events that would-be volunteers may like to get involved with.

This process of publicising your activity should be replicated on a variety of platforms in order to achieve maximum reach. This means that you will need an active social media presence via Facebook, Twitter, and the like. You may wish to have your own Chapter page for the sake of appealing specifically to those in your immediate area, therefore. Be careful with social media, however, as, although it is a useful publicity tool it is not a reliable measure of a Chapter's activity as much of what happens on social media platforms does not translate to on-the-ground activism. A Chapter's Facebook page, for example, may attract hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of followers, yet yield little in the way of volunteering when it comes to holding actual offline meetings and events. Avoid getting bogged down in discussions that are based in social media as these can become a drain on your limited resources and often bear little relevance to what is happening with your actual, as opposed to virtual, Chapter.

If you have access to a mailing list or are able to set one up this will also prove useful in targeting volunteers who may previously have been dormant supporters of the Movement. It is a good idea to post information to your website and mailing list at least a week prior to the period in which the meetings and events outlined begins so that would-be volunteers are able to make plans to support their attendance. With mailing lists it may be best to provide an outline of a month's activities in one go rather than feeding information in a piecemeal manner that can come across as spamming. You may experience slow progress with building your mailing list if you rely only on your website for sign-ups. It is important to engage in on-the-ground public

interface and outreach via meetings and events, no matter how small to begin with, in order to grow your member base of potential Chapter volunteers.

You may wish to reach out to other nearby Chapters as well, especially if members have previously been travelling in order to attend meetings in a nearby town due to having had no local Chapter activity to engage in. In Australia, for example, a number of local Chapters started as a result of members, having attended meetings or events in cities a few hours' travelling distance from their home, decided to take the courageous next step of reaching out to their own community and setting up a new Chapter. It is often that case that other people in the area are very keen to get involved but were waiting for someone else to be the one to set things up. National or regional Chapter coordinators may even be able to provide you with contact details of people who have expressed interest in engaging with Chapter activity in your area prior to the establishment of your Chapter but who were unable to take on the task of coordination themselves.

Once you have an active online presence and strong lines of communication you will attract a pool of potential volunteers who will contribute to the development of your Chapter. It is vitally important that you do not neglect this member base as remaining in constant communication allows you the momentum to enthuse and motivate your Chapter. It is also important to get into a routine as quickly as possible with your Chapter so that activity within the Movement becomes a part of your volunteers' lifestyle.

### **Core Team**

You will likely find that when there are large events taking place a number of volunteers who are not highly involved in the Movement will help out for a period of time in a more active manner. However, the more committed volunteers who form your core team for planning purposes will be those who endeavour to come to every meeting and are willing to help out with whatever needs doing whether it is of an empowering nature, such as facilitating meetings, or work of a less empowering nature considered grunt work that nobody really relishes doing, such as flyer runs for events.

It is this core team who enable the Chapter to run in both a horizontal and holographic manner. Distributing tasks and responsibilities as evenly as possible across your core team assists both with facilitating the horizontal nature of the Movement, and with alleviating the pressure a coordinator may feel, particularly when it comes to major events or projects. It is also a good idea to be purposeful in distributing tasks among the core team in accordance with interests and skills in order to provide members with a sense of "place" and "purpose" within the team as well as a sense of responsibility and commitment.

As the core team are the backbone of your Chapter it is important to have strong lines of communication between these members. Although it is unlikely that everyone has optimal interpersonal relations it is of importance to build a sense of team spirit and camaraderie between core members in order that everyone feels valued and appreciated for the work that they do, and has a sense of enjoyment in engaging with the rest of the team.

Various online tools assist with smooth functioning of core team activities. For example, using communication and project-planning platforms such as Open Atrium are useful for core-team communication and development. Using file storage systems such as Dropbox enables the sharing of useful resources. Collaborative documents such as google-docs are also useful for both the transparency they provide and ease of collaboration regardless of time or location.

### **Common Concerns & Pitfalls:**

#### **Stay Flexible:**

Not every chapter succeeds or stays in existence once formed. Sometimes the person who starts a chapter has to leave, or perhaps move on, for various reasons (e.g. health, time, job, or they come to realize they want to support a different group, etc). Finding a new coordinator, point person or core-group is something that is likely to happen in many Chapters, although hopefully not all at once! Part of coordinating is understanding that these changes are natural, and allowing for them since volunteers come and go. The horizontal nature of the Movement is an asset in maintaining flexibility as such a structure facilitates empowerment of the team in fulfilling the necessary tasks of an active Chapter. A committed core team in a healthy, horizontally structured Chapter may, therefore, find stand-ins on either a short-term or long-term basis without difficulty as and when core members need to take time out or move on, or be adaptable to changes within the make-up of the Chapter with minimal disruption of activity.

#### **Disruptive People:**

Do not underestimate the power of a disruptive website or forum user or Chapter member. A person who persists in disruptive action over time is known as a "troll". Unfortunately, not everyone who refers to themselves as a "supporter" or "member" will actually support the Chapter in its activities, or have a relevant understanding of the Movement's aims and ethos. It is likely that you will, at some point, come across a person who will continually disrupt your chapter meetings, forums or websites. This usually takes place through pushing an outside cause, or via attacks on the awareness-raising focus of the Movement, or projection of an unrelated frame of reference (e.g. "this is communism", or "we need to be "voting" on things"), or some other patchwork notion. This is known as "[noise](#)", and our intention is to minimize the noise-level within our Chapter structure that can diffuse the focus of our efforts, and maximize the signal level (educational imperatives to the public).

**Note on being a “member”:**

*By referring to oneself as a “TZM member” it implies agreement (a priori) with the direction advocated. This statement will be useful if you find yourself struggling with a disruptive member. If you intend to have a forum, blog/comment system, Facebook group or chat, make sure you have someone willing to moderate Chapter platforms. The last thing you want is a soapbox of personal attacks, irrelevant material, spam, etc. confusing the message. This not only affects your Chapter’s public image, but also destroys the Chapter community and stops productivity.*

**Note on websites:**

*The website in itself is not your Chapter, it is just a tool. Your real Chapter consists of people. A website, no matter how good-looking it may or may not be, can help maintain and grow your chapter effectively. If you have a non-functional organization within your core group, it will inhibit the way resources are used and tasks are done.*

# 5. Organizing Events

## ***In this Section:***

[5.1 - Types of Events](#)

[5.2 - Finding a Space](#)

[5.3 - Gathering Materials](#)

[5.4 - Promoting the Event](#)

[5.5 - Executing the Event](#)

One of the best ways for a local community Chapter to access multitudes of people and spread the information of the Zeitgeist Movement is through local street activism, community events, community fairs, and festivals.

In every city there are many different types of events that happen throughout the year and many of these events are extremely open and welcoming to organizations that are humanitarian or environmentally-based in their fundamental ideas and basic foundations.

At these types of events it is not uncommon to share the day with other like-minded groups that have a strong desire and commitment to create awareness on a mass scale.

There are three important factors to keep in mind when setting up your Chapter for such events:

1. The other groups that attend these events are already in the right mindset for the information that you have and will be very easy to talk to. Ranging from animal rights and human rights organizations to environmental and political organizations, engaging these individuals in conversation is easy to do and opens the doors to people that will be very receptive to the Zeitgeist Movement.
2. These types of events draw crowds into the thousands that are very open-minded, and, in many ways, have already been looking at many different forms of information on a wide range of topics that are political and environmental in nature. These are not difficult people to talk to. At the end of the day many will take home with them a DVD or a flyer that your group has made. They will research and view the material and many will pass this "new found" knowledge onto their circle of friends.
3. You will be a visual presence within your community. Many members or "sign ups" from your chapter will come out to your booth to meet "their" Zeitgeist team. Many others will want to know how they can get involved. When people read the materials and connect with the message they have a strong desire to "get involved". People want to do something. Yes, they can join the many online forums around the world and speak with others who have connected with the message, but many people want more. They want to take action. This can ONLY be done at the local level!

Your presence as a Chapter within your community, on the street at these events, is the perfect opportunity for others to see the Movement in action. It is also a solid way for people to feel connected to real living, breathing human beings within the Movement. This is something that just can't be fully achieved "online." As connected as we are with our worldwide online Zeitgeist family, nothing beats face-to-face discussion on the issues and concepts that we are dedicated to spreading.

For example, many people have watched the supportive “Zeitgeist Film Series” of documentaries, which in one form or another, and when these people walk by YOUR Zeitgeist booth they will feel an instant connection and they will be brought back to the feelings that they initially had when they saw the movies. Your local Zeitgeist chapter booth will take this massive message of worldwide change and place it right in their backyards. This is where real change will happen: in our own backyards.

Certainly these types of events are pretty generic and will happen in some form or another in most cities around the world. So keep in mind that similar events are duplicated in pretty much any city or town.

## 5.1 - Types of Events

### Chapter Meetings

These meetings have a more serious and binding character, with objectives to be fulfilled and decisions to be made. These usually precede major projects and events that the Chapter might initiate. The advantage of these is that they can develop much more work than a simple gathering where much is said but little is done or documented. Usually these meetings occur when a Chapter core exceeds 2 people and is already active.

### Street Events

When executed properly, these are the most effective. A new Chapter, in particular, can achieve a very effective and quick start by becoming active within their community, by simply “taking it to the people.”

Setting up for a day in a busy downtown center or park with a good level of foot traffic will give you a full day of activism that, even if done daily, will see quite a different stream of people stop by. Simply set up a table in a high traffic area and you will find that people are often ready and willing to engage you in friendly conversation. Many people are simply “out” for the day or out for a walk. They will love the fact that something of interest is presented to them as they walk by, will stop and read your signs and materials, and will engage you in conversation. This won’t happen any other way. It can be done as often as daily, or more realistically once a week or perhaps once a month. Especially for a new Chapter, the feeling of effectively spreading information to completely new people every time you are out on the street -- people who have not even heard of The Zeitgeist Movement or a Resource Based Economy -- will be very exciting, and will be a huge factor in a new Chapter getting set up quickly. Further, you will have that immediate success of achieving what made an individual or small group want to start a Chapter in the first place, which is to “take action”! What is more, the cost is minimal or free (beyond your overheads, e.g., table, flyers, DVDs, etc.).

Another technique (used with astonishing success by the Vancouver chapter) is to set up some A-frame street boards. These stop people in their tracks and are real conversation starters! Many people will stop and read your street boards and then feel more at ease to engage you in conversation. This is much more effective than thrusting a flyer at someone rushing by. Try to have some business cards, flyers or even DVDs available to hand to people that show interest. When in doubt, overstock. It is surprising how quickly you can hand out all of your materials!

Finding a good location to host your own public event at least once a month, will give you a real foundation for your chapter. Usually a high traffic location in a downtown core or common area is best. Chances are there is already a location in your town or city where you have seen other activist groups. Universities or parks could also offer great areas. **NOTE: Check with your town or city laws regarding any restrictions.**

### **Public Exhibitions (Movie Screenings)**

Acquiring a theater or a room with video projection capability is the typical way of setting up a screening. Relevant information and documentaries can be displayed as a way of conveying information, rather than lectures. An example would be to show the movie *"Zeitgeist: Moving Forward"* to an audience that has not yet seen the film. There is also a series of lectures by The Zeitgeist Movement that can be downloaded for free in DVD format. Of course, Movement media material is not the only kind that can be displayed. There are other socially relevant documentaries that can be part of a program, for example *"Collapse"* by Michael Ruppert or *"Future by Design"* by Jacque Fresco. However, it is essential to keep the focus on The Zeitgeist Movement.

If an experienced (and confident) member is planning such an event or even just in attendance, it is a good idea to try to also involve the audience in a Q&A session about the Movement after the screening. Since the questions about what the Movement is, what it advocates, common misconceptions, etc., are quite common, this interaction with the public is very important, and because of this, the member who will answer the questions needs to be well prepared. If more than one member is available for the Q&A, it is fine to either divide the questions between yourselves, each provide some comment following each question, or simply use whatever technique you work most comfortably with.

### **Lectures**

Lectures are formal presentations made by one or more members to inform the public about a particular subject. These lectures generally contain both a visual and an oral element, i.e., speakers often utilize audiovisual tools, such as a PowerPoint presentation or a movie, to make themselves understood and/or to summarize what is being said. Good examples are older TZM lectures: *"Where Are We Now?"* and *"Where Are We Going?"* This format is best used in combination with other formats, since lectures can be a very one-way exchange of information.

## **Town Hall**

Town Halls are periodic public awareness events conducted by regional or local Chapters, typically run indoors in a “hall” setting, with a seated participatory audience. Ideally these events occur monthly. Unlike “one-way” lectures that perhaps have Q&A at the end only as a wrapup, Town Halls are, by design, “two-way”, being interactive from start to finish (beyond opening remarks and introductions). Based on proven effective standards through historic civil rights movements, the aim is to inform the public of the concepts and goals of the Movement and thus raise both awareness and support.

Town Hall meetings are, by definition, open to the public with everybody in a town community traditionally invited to attend. For this reason the meetings are always to be advertised well in advance via a Chapter’s website, and any other form of publicity in which the Chapter may wish to engage. People attend Town Hall meetings not necessarily to voice their own opinions, but, at a minimum, to hear the responses to questions from representatives of the Movement.

There are no specific rules or guidelines for holding a town hall meeting. If the turnout is large, and in a particular case the objective is to give as many people as possible an opportunity to speak, then the group can be broken down into smaller discussion groups. Each group, in that case, appoints someone to summarize discussion of their group. The flexibility of the meeting format allows for either maximum public participation via discussion or for comprehensive Q&A with an informed panel where it is desired.

## **Large music festival style concerts**

The bottom line: these are just plain FUN, with typically young and happy attendees numbering into the thousands, and all locked in for a full day (sometimes 2 or 3 days) just wandering around and VERY open to talking about social issues and initiatives such as the Zeitgeist Movement.

Costs for such events vary. It depends on the length of show, the acts performing, and the size, location and notoriety of the festival. In all cases, as a non-profit making Movement you may find you are eligible for “non-profit” prices when it comes to renting a stall or booth. It may even be possible to negotiate even better rates through taking the time to emphasize the Movement and its tenets, the fact that we are all volunteers, and so on.

Regarding where you are located within a venue, typically vendors, artists and information booths are set a good distance from stages in order to give the event attendees a break from the music. If given a choice between close to or far from the stage, it is always best to select a location farther back; your vocal cords will thank you for it! Keeping such a distance allows the vendors the relative quiet they need to talk with interested visitors at their booth.

With regard to what you will need to make the event a success for your Chapter, usually you will need to bring your own "kit". It is, therefore, highly recommended to have the necessary equipment on standby, that way there are no surprises. It is also important to ensure sure you understand your contract with regard to what is included. For example, many large events will supply the basics, such as a tent or rain cover, a couple of chairs and a table. It is very important to ask questions of the event organizers so that you have all the details well beforehand, and no surprises present themselves on the big day.

Keep in mind that many of these events -- especially the larger ones -- can be booked up to six months in advance; therefore, leaving your booking to the last minute will probably cause you to lose out. These events fill up fast as they are very popular, and for very good reason; they are fun and offer the kind of mass attendance that makes talking to hundreds of people very easy!

### **Local Community Street Festivals**

The cost of these events is typically very low, and may even be free. Usually you need to supply your own tent, table and chairs. Attendance at these types of events can push into the many thousands, depending on your location. For instance, the Car Free Vancouver event draws over 160,000 people across four locations, all on a single day! The 2011 Car Free Festival marked the Vancouver Chapter's 4th year at this event and, to quote them, it "is always a total blast!" Other similar annual festivals happen in most large cities. Google "<your town> festivals"; you may be surprised at how many you find!

### **Local Film Festivals**

When they happen in your city, these are very worthwhile events as they are based around films that are usually thought-provoking and socially relevant. If set up in advance you might be able to have "*Addendum*" or "*Moving Forward*" shown on their program.

### **Conferences**

A conference is a gathering -- typically sponsored by a corporation or the like -- of focused adults and/or professionals who meet to discuss something of common interest around a given theme, for example, the environment. It can last several days and usually includes multiple meetings, presentations, workshops and exhibitions. Typically, large numbers of attendees visit from afar for these multi-day events. Prices can be quite expensive just for general admission, let alone an exhibitor fee, and thus viable only for special events like Z-Day (see below).

Zeitgeist Movement Chapters may be involved in conferences in two different ways. It may, firstly, be the case that members from your Chapter are invited to present at a conference held by a similar like-minded organization or coalition of organizations. In this case awareness of the Movement's aims and ethos, and the RBE model will be achieved with relatively little organization beyond attending the conference and, of course, preparing the presentation. If a Chapter plans to hold a conference themselves, or in collaboration with other Chapters, this is considerably

more work, but is a viable option for Chapters with the collective resources to do so. It may also be a highly appealing event that brings in Chapter members from around the country, or even from overseas, as well as members of other organizations or members of the public. Any well-known speakers may prove to be a major drawcard at such events and bring with them a potentially large following of people receptive to the Movement's message. It is certainly worth maintaining a professional and collaborative relationship with other organizations as the potential of such events to result in a good level of ongoing interest in the Movement's aims is very high.

### **Annual Z-Day**

This is the original annual awareness event of the Movement, intended to be intellectual and educational in its approach. The hosting city for the "main" global event varies (New York City in 2009 and 2010, London in 2011, Vancouver in 2012), it is held in the mid-March time period, and local Chapters are invited to participate in remote parallel fashion. As your local Chapter grows it is important to continue to build on this annual event. Your event should include a number of activities and/or a combination of several types of events, such as street action, screenings, lectures, and Q&A. For more information and to register your local event, visit <http://zdayglobal.org/>. Many Chapters are likely to start with smaller events such as screenings with Q&A, building up to larger events such as, perhaps, full-day conferences, as the Chapter develops in resources and capacity.

### **Annual Zeitgeist Media Festival**

As the newest Zeitgeist event added to the list of annual global events, this is one you do not want your chapter to miss out on! It is artistic and celebratory in nature, and is a great opportunity to offer a fun day of music, arts and information to the general public in an open festival format. Similar to Z-Day (but in the Northern hemisphere's Summer months), there is a "main event" hosting city (LA in 2011), and local chapters are invited to participate in parallel fashion. For more information and to register your local event, visit <http://zeitgeistmediafestival.org/>.

## **5.2 - Finding a Space**

In most cases, a theater or a hall will be enough for your event. If you live in a big city, there should be numerous spaces available, usually in the form of a lecture theater or concert hall. If you live in a smaller city, often the premises of a church, theater, library, or any other public building can also be used. It is always good to book well in advance and ensure that any necessary audio/visual media materials are also provided through a rental agency or the like, if the Chapter or venue does not have immediate access to them.

Due to the somewhat controversial nature of what the Movement advocates, lack of comprehension and/or fear from people/organizations is not uncommon. Because of this, communication is crucial. Instead of trying to describe in detail what the Movement is about, it is advisable to focus on just the basics, stated in a generic way: that we are an organization that advocates sustainability to help society shift to a more ecologically and socially sustainable way of living. If the conversation is kept somewhat soft and ambiguous along these lines, the chances of disagreement will be decreased.

## 5.3 - Gathering Materials

Obviously, money comes into play when it comes to acquiring materials. Here are some basic tips on how to acquire resources, taking into account what the Movement stands for.

### **Do not ask for money, ask for resources**

An important thing to consider when you are working in a team is providing necessary materials together. Instead of setting a budget, think about how to provide resources for the event. For example, if you need a place to run the event, ask your community if someone could provide it for free or for a small monetary compensation. Agree to bring food and beverages instead of buying them before or selling them during the event. There are many ways to work together, and in some cases it is amazing how everyone can contribute with something to the event without spending a lot.

### **Be very transparent**

In some cases, the previous situation may not work as well as expected. If you are in need of a monetary budget, try the following: always calculate the cost beforehand, and set it as your goal for contributions by the community or team.

If you are receiving cash directly, keep a record of who contributed what. Reimburse any funds which turned out not to be needed. If the contribution is provided via the Internet, use a "chip in" widget where everyone can see both the goal and amount collected. Be as transparent as possible when indicating all expenses.

### **Funding through government funds/grants for culture or other**

Why not use the system to do something good? Since you are already paying taxes and contributing to funding pools, such as education and culture (in many, although not all, countries) and other government resources, you can apply for funding or a grant. If you put together a good plan and submit it to the local organization that deals with the financing of educational and cultural events, there is the possibility of being sponsored. In this case, you must be fully transparent. It is also important to prepare your submission well in advance as many grants take several months to process. **NOTE- To get grant money in the U.S. you may need to set up a non-**

*profit organization (NPO) with 501(c) status, which is tedious, time-consuming, and may require the use of an expert attorney on a regular basis just to run it! This model may well apply to other countries - you may need to do some checking around.*

### **Sponsorship and cooperation with like-minded organizations**

Contact local organizations or corporations that are developing technologies or promoting social directions that are consistent with TZM goals. If you explain the purpose of the Movement, and of an event in particular, they might be interested in sponsoring or participating in the event. You can also offer them a station to present their products/technologies. However you should make it clear that the event does not focus on promoting a commercial product or on selling anything.

## **5.4 - Promoting the Event**

There are many ways to carry out the promotion of your event. Try to be as creative as possible and ask your community/team about any opportunity they might have to get free promotional tools and/or materials.

### **Social Networking**

Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, MySpace, or other popular virtual spaces in your region, can be used to promote your event in the most far-reaching way possible without turning yourself into a spammer. Use it to the maximum, but with discretion, and always respect the virtual environment that you are using. This option should be considered essential.

### **Word of Mouth**

It is said that word of mouth is the most powerful form of advertising, as people trust their friends far more than a soulless advertisement, for example. Furthermore, it is free. Ask your friends and the community to spread the word about the event to their friends, who, in turn, pass it on, etc. Combine this with the power of social networks and you can get decent results. This option should be considered essential.

### **Online Classifieds**

In this regard, originally in the U.S. but now going global, nothing is more effective than sites such as Craigslist or Gumtree, which are known to get results, are free, and have sub-websites for just about every major city worldwide. Various countries have their own equivalents which may be more widely used. Consider publishing your advertisement a week or two before the event and then refreshing it a day or two before. When it comes to ticketing for your event [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com) provides a service to both supply tickets (free service for free tickets; service charge for paid tickets) for your event and advertise it, while enabling you to gauge the general level of interest.

### **Local newspapers (print or online)**

This can be considered the old fashioned way to advertise, but can still be effective. Of course Chapters should try to get the cheapest adspace possible. Your best bet is a socially conscious newspaper with decent local circulation. On a related note, getting advertisements into public transportation it is also quite efficient.

### **Press Release**

A press release is a written communication directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something ostensibly newsworthy, such as your event! Typically, they are e-mailed to assignment editors at newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television stations, and/or television networks. Now, one might think that this is an expensive proposition, but there exists a whole cottage industry of affordable press release publishing websites, and many of them offer their basic service for free or at a minimal cost, for example pr.com. There are sites that will then push this press release out to many more online news feeds, sparing you the labor of this tedious task, again for a nominal cost, for example pressreleasepoint.com.

### **The Zeitgeist Movement means** *(calendar, news and/or mailing lists)*

The Zeitgeist Movement website allows you to use various tools to advertise events to registered members and site visitors. As far as a national Chapter's website goes, the event can be advertised on the calendar, posted in the news section, and also sent via newsletter. The same probably goes for your local chapter website, if it has been developed with these basic features included. This option should be considered essential, especially your Chapter website.

### **Universities and other educational institutions**

Another very important audience is students. Students tend to be generally quite receptive to skeptical information about the current "system," and may find it interesting to participate in your event. Be sure to communicate to universities within a reasonable time-frame before the event and see if they are willing to allow you to distribute promotional material for your event on campus. Otherwise, you can ask permission from the student council to post some posters in the appropriate designated areas, and you can also distribute flyers in front of the universities.

### **Street Actions**

Engaging in street actions leading up to an event like a lecture or a screening can be effective. With the typical activism set-up of an information booth or stall with some A-frame posters placed around, you can quickly get some interested people to come in, have a quick chat, and leave with your event flyer in hand.

### **Local Media**

The local media can be a great way to promote your event. Write a personal letter to ALL institutions involved in reporting local events and do not forget the independent media. If you

succeed in getting them to write an article about you, this will help greatly in spreading the word, as well as getting interested people to come to your event.

## Materials for promotion

### Business Cards

These are effective and cheap for quickly and readily handing out (or leaving behind) your contact information and/or website address. The usual size is around 85x55mm. Websites like [vistaprint.com](http://vistaprint.com) offer very good deals on bulk order business cards. *NOTE: Always have some cards on you ready to go!*

### Flyers

These are good because they contain relevant event information and other details as well as contacts, and are fairly cheap to make. The size is dependent on the information you want to have, however DL size (100x210mm or 3.9x8.3") or US standard A4 size (8.5x11") is frequently used. You can also go for "3-fold" flyers; these are better for larger quantities of text and are best used in lectures when people are waiting for the speaker, or for takeaways afterward. They may also contain a notice for a future event, thus presenting an effective way to promote.

Distributing flyers on the street without any direct contact with people, or any explanation is not advised at all. In these situations the flyer usually ends up in the trash without getting any attention whatsoever from the person who received it. The best way is to have people come to you and pick them up because of their own interest.

### DVDs

DVDs ostensibly contain, for example, one or more of Peter Joseph's full length films (*Zeitgeist*, *Addendum*, or *Moving Forward*), and/or one or more of his many lectures to date. They are typically handed out *during* an event, not in promotion of one. See the Appendix for more information and tips on DVDs.

### Posters

Posters can come in all sizes. The A3 size (297x420mm or 11.7x16.5") is recommended for being cheap to produce and yet big enough to be noticed. The bigger the poster the more visible it is; however, the higher the cost is as well.

### Street Boards

"Street Boards" are a larger variation of posters. These are large prints like A1 (594x841mm or 23.4x33.1") set on one or both sides of "A" shape platforms, which sit right on the street or, optionally, on a table. An alternative to the A-frame approach is to simply attach a street board print to a flat panel, such as a section of thin plywood, or lightweight (pink) rigid foam insulation panel, and hang it.

If printed on paper, laminating these street board prints serves to weatherproof them and make them more durable. Alternatively, consider printing your image on vinyl. Here again, [vistaprint.com](http://vistaprint.com) offers very reasonable prices on these (although they are called Vertical Banners).

### **Banners**

A large vinyl banner, also known as a highway banner (approximately 3'x15'), is relatively expensive but can also be very durable if handled well. They are great as a background banner with a logo and website for your street stalls, or at the entrance of a venue.

## **5.5 - Executing the Event**

The most important thing is for you and all participants to enjoy and learn from each other, while also engaging your audience in a positive and educational manner. Here are some small tips and recommendations for your event to flow as smoothly as possible:

### **Have some support material available**

In a TZM event there should be an adequate amount of business cards, flyers and/or DVDs to distribute to your visitors, with the intention that they assimilate more information later, in their own time.

### **Collect media material**

Whenever and wherever possible, film and photograph the events so they can be released, showing others what the Movement does and encouraging further participation.

### **Members**

It is very important that the members who are present have good communication skills in order to share the ideas advocated by the Movement.

### **Scheduling and Flexibility**

Arrive extra early on the first day, in order to leave plenty of time for any last minute preparations. Be prompt thereafter; visitors may arrive early and if they do not see anyone, they might leave.

Once up and running, during event hours, while there is no need to set a strict schedule, it is imperative that the stall or booth is manned at all times by at least one member, if for no reason other than security. Aside from this you can informally agree how the booth will be run. For example, if three members are present, perhaps two can attend the booth and the third can take a walk about around the venue handing out flyers.

Give yourself enough free time during the day for meals and bio-breaks, etc., with some kind of rotation scheme. After all, it is a matter of gaining experience and exchanging information, not a test of time-management or endurance.

### **Ensure the event site is appealing**

Ensure you have, and maintain, a friendly, welcoming, clean and stimulating environment in which to exchange knowledge. We want visitors to feel welcome, not annoyed or scared of approaching.

### **Ensure the integrity of all information**

Ensure the Movement information being delivered by you and your team members is accurate and reliable, and that it is being properly communicated to your visitors. Make sure that all visitors understand that the Movement is more interested in solutions than in problems.

### **Food & Beverage**

As the Movement always advocates the use of personal resources over feeding the monetary system, free-sharing is an option that serves well for the provision of food and beverages at events while, at the same time, discouraging unnecessary commercialism. Assuming it is allowed by the venue, consider bringing your own food and drinks for the event, and, where possible, encouraging attendees to do likewise. The free-sharing option, aside from most likely being cheaper than the food sold by other stalls at the event, can lead to pleasant interactions and a breakdown of barriers, contributing, in part, to the process of cultural mindset shift.

One exception to this recommended alternative to monetary exchange is situations in which it is necessary to generate a small profit from the sale of food and drink in order to pay for the event.

### **Take Notes about the Event at the end.**

Upon its conclusion, consider jotting down notes of what went right and what went wrong during the event; a basic archive log. Based upon this, consider what might be improved next time and share it with other active members so they can also learn from your experiences and insights.

# 6. Organizing Project Teams

## ***In this Section:***

[6.1 - "Your idea, your project" concept](#)

[6.2 - Guidelines](#)

[6.3 - Project Methodology](#)

[6.4 - Devising a Project Structure](#)

[6.5 - Organizing Volunteers](#)

**Note:** Some content presented in this section is taken and adapted from the "The Citizen's Handbook" by Charles Dobson.

## 6.1 - "Your idea, your project" concept

The Zeitgeist Movement is a movement based on volunteer efforts by members; most of these volunteers have to deal with their own busy lives, which naturally include studying, working, family, friends, etc. There is no one in the Movement who is providing a full-time service or being paid to do so; even the most stressful responsibilities are being sustained by the sheer effort of the people who volunteer to fulfil them.

If you have an idea for a project in the Movement, then you automatically position yourself to become the person responsible for it, rather than the Chapter coordinators or other project managers. Of course you are free to state that you cannot organize it or you don't have the time; however, you have to be aware that is very unlikely that someone else will develop it, and emotional reactions about this won't lead you anywhere.

The reason such an obvious point is being stated here is because there has been an unfortunate tendency for some members to assume they can dump all of the hard work they propose on the already stressed-out coordinators, claiming that they should do it because it is "their job." Naturally this was never the case, and this is nothing more than an unfortunate lack of understanding of how the Movement operates.

To reiterate a recurring theme of this document, most coordinators do what they do because they perceive a need or a gap, or had an idea and worked towards it from their own initiative by stepping up to do it. As a member of a Movement based on voluntary contributions, you are no different. To wit: your idea, your project.

## 6.2 - Guidelines

Good managers and coordinators are the key to large-scale community organizing. They do not tell other people what to do, but help others to take charge of what is needed. They do not grab center-stage, but nudge others onto the stage. They are not interested in being "The Leader", but in trying to help people become their own leaders. They recognize that only by creating "more leaders" can an organizing effort expand.

For the sake of simplicity, a leader can be defined as a proactive member instead of a reactive or passive one.

### **Create an example**

The best way for a leader to show what they mean, and to make sure others have an accurate reference point, is to create an example. Human beings are known to learn a lot from imitating one others' conduct or actions. For more elaborate projects, a proposal document that clearly

articulates your idea also helps others to visualize it. A basic proposal template is provided in a later section.

This way you reduce the chance of having two people thinking they are working on the same thing when, in reality, they are not.

### **Divide up and delegate work**

Divide tasks or projects into bite-size chunks, then discuss each chunk and agree upon who will take it on. Make sure everyone has the ability to carry out their task, then let them carry it out in their own way. It is important to have someone check on progress; people do not feel good about doing a job if nobody seems to care about whether it gets done.

Failure in this area (of dividing and clearly delegating) will most likely lead to disappointment or worse, mainly due to the “diffusion of responsibility” effect.

### **Appreciate all contributions, no matter how small**

Recognize people’s efforts in conversations, at meetings, in newsletters, etc., and thank them accordingly. Although in a true egalitarian sense no one should feel the need to either deliver or receive thanks because we are all working as “one big team” so to speak, showing gratitude and appreciation is natural, and is helpful in providing a little ego and confidence boost to the recipient.

### **Welcome constructive criticism**

Accepting criticism may be difficult for some, but members need to feel they can be critical without being attacked. Do not confuse constructive criticism on a given issue with personal attacks.

### **Help people to believe in themselves**

A good manager/leader builds people’s confidence so that they can accomplish what they have never accomplished before. The unflagging optimism of a manager energizes everyone.

It is vital to inspire trust as people are unlikely to not help those they do not trust. Always maintain the highest standards of honesty. Good managers have no difficulty in airing doubts about their own personal limitations.

### **Remind people of a higher purpose**

People often volunteer to serve some higher purpose. If you want to start, or organize, something, you should be able to *articulate* this purpose, to hold it up as a glowing beacon whenever the occasion demands.

Whenever something positive is achieved, celebrate it as an example of what can happen when people work together for a common good; it helps the group to feel good about their efforts.

In order to enhance this “articulation in front of others” and build confidence in yourself going forward, consider pursuing training in public speaking (for example Toastmasters International).

*Note that this is not a requisite but a bonus feature.*

### **Avoid doing most of the work**

Don't try to run the whole show or do most of the work. Others will become less involved, and you will burn out.

### **Be informed and inform**

Keep yourself and others informed. Once there is a development in a project, this update should be transmitted to all pertinent team members, especially those who are counting on you for something, within a suitable time-frame. Simultaneously, the simple act of making weekly or bi-weekly reports, depending on the level of activity of the project, can be crucial to keeping it on track towards success, not only for the project in question, but also for others who depend directly or indirectly on it.

Basically, the simple act of keeping everything as updated, and everyone as informed as possible, facilitates a more dynamic and motivating work environment for all involved. It also adds to members' sense that they are valued when they are kept informed and asked for updates on their own progress.

### **Keep Focused**

Some skills are useful for the success of a certain project or purpose, and there are others that are essential; concentration, or focus, is one of these essential skills.

The ability or discipline of concentration in the execution of a task is very powerful. One of the worst mistakes that can be made in this regard is to overload a volunteer. Piling on too many projects at the same time only serves to diffuse their concentration or focus; this, in turn, could trigger a loss in momentum, or even worse, the loss of the member. It is prudent to check, on occasion, that active members are not feeling overloaded or overwhelmed. If you find out that they are then it is important to take steps to provide support and correct the balance, or consider assigning the task to someone else.

### **Be Patient**

This point simply cannot be stressed enough. Refer back to the Getting Real with Expectations part of the Basics section above. You cannot demand top-level dedication or performance from someone who is volunteering with their free time.

Losing patience only makes things worse to you and to others: patience is not just a virtue, it is a necessity.

## 6.3 - Project Methodology

A project is defined as comprising the following features: it is contemplated with a goal or outcome in mind, devised or planned strategically, then executed, either within a specified time-frame, or treated as ongoing.

Project management is defined as the discipline of planning, organizing and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives.

The Project Methodology is comprised of 8 simple phases which must be accomplished in their respective order to ensure the eventual success and maximization of the project's objectives

These "phases" are similar to the Scientific Method:

**Phase 1** – Identify new problem/adopt new idea

**Phase 2** – Research

**Phase 3** – Planning

**Phase 4** – Resource calculation and acquisition (including human resources)

**Phase 5** – Delegate tasks, then set target milestones and/or deadlines against them

**Phase 6** – Put into action, then periodically check up on the task progress and address/solve any problems encountered (depending on the problem severity you may need to return to phase 2/3)

**Phase 7** – Review overall project progress (If the project goals are not being completed in timely fashion you may need to return to phase 2/3)

**Phase 8** – Finalizing/archiving.

## 6.4 - Devising a Project Structure

### **Stating the objective and rationale**

To assure clarity of a given project in terms of stated goals and processes there is an established and recommended proposal template, the minimum requirements of which are as follows:

**Name of project:** *A consistent name is required.*

**Member(s) responsible:** *To inform who is/are the manager/s of the project. Contact details should also be included .*

**Objective:** *What is/are the intended outcome/s of the project?*

**Rationale:** *What are the reasons highlighting the need for such a project?*

**Description:** *What is the general plan or process of development of the project in order to achieve the desired objectives?*

The project document should attempt to describe the fundamental attributes: *What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?*

Having your objective and rationale clearly stated will help bring more volunteers on board, ensure that they will understand it, and make them more proactive.

### **Emphasis on Planning (phase 3)**

Planning (tasks, functions, workflows) is a process often underestimated when approaching a project. However, this is absolutely crucial, if not the most crucial step in a project, since the act of planning plays a large part in determining the future success of the project.

A common saying in time management is that *"Every minute in planning saves 10 minutes in the implementation/action."* The realization of a solid plan, with clarity and vision, is half of the success of a project.

The keys to a successful plan can be summarized as:

- (1) Define tasks and/or components
- (2) Define the specific objective(s) of different tasks
- (3) Set priorities
- (4) Calculate resources required

The plan should be as clear and simple as possible so that anyone, for example a new volunteer, can understand it.

## **6.5 - Organizing Volunteers**

With a document describing the project and some organizational details, the next step is to get volunteers to produce positive results. While some different techniques may be used depending on the context, a very basic process is as follows:

1. Schedule a meeting in which interested members can discuss the project and make suggestions, fill in details, and address other important issues that pertain to the project.
2. Make sure some specific roles and/or tasks are assigned to specific volunteers.
3. Over time, keep track of the work being done, send reminders if necessary, and, if warranted, talk with each volunteer individually to make sure he/she understands their task at hand. If any uncertainty exists, have them describe their task to you as a check.

# 7.

# Maintaining Progress

## ***In this Section:***

[7.1 - Getting the most out of Meetings](#)

[7.2 - Keeping People](#)

[7.3 - Common Problems and Hazards](#)

**Note:** Some content presented in this section is taken and adapted from the "The Citizen's Handbook" by Charles Dobson.

## 7.1 - Getting the most out of Meetings

### **Facilitate**

An important role within a given chapter at any level is the ability to facilitate at meetings, either physical or online. The facilitator's role is to facilitate the process of the meeting and assist with attaining optimal outcomes for all involved in decision-making processes. A good facilitator is particularly helpful when a group is trying to deal with new or difficult issues. In the main, a facilitator helps people persevere as they confront the inevitable confusion and frustration associated with trying to integrate different views and approaches with their own. The more people who learn to facilitate, the better. If you accept the role of facilitator you must be neutral. You should also use the following techniques.

### **Watch group vibes**

If people seem bored or inattentive, you may have to speed up the pace of the meeting. If people seem tense because of unvoiced disagreements, you may have to bring concerns out into the open.

### **Make sure everyone gets a chance to speak**

Invite quiet people to speak. If necessary, use the clock, for example: *"We have fifteen minutes left. I think we should hear from people who haven't spoken for a while."* Another way to get quiet people to speak is to initiate a round, in which you move around the table, with everyone getting a few minutes to present their views.

### **Encourage open discussion**

Try to encourage people to speak up if they seem reluctant to disagree with a speaker, for example: *"On difficult issues, people may well disagree. Does anyone have a different point of view?"* Another way to encourage open discussion is to ask participants to avoid using critical language for a period of time.

### **Draw people out with open-ended questions**

Open-ended questions require more than a yes/no answer. Some examples may be:

*"We seem to be having trouble here. What do you think we should do?"*

*"Could you say more about that?"*

*"What do you mean when you say...?"*

### **Inject humor**

Humour is one of the best ways of improving the tone of meetings. It makes meetings seem like friendly get-togethers.

## **Paraphrase**

When you paraphrase, you try to restate, briefly, the point that someone has just made, for example: *"Let me see if I'm understanding you correctly..."* If paraphrasing doesn't convince a person that he or she has been heard, you may have to retrace the discussion, repeat what was said verbatim, etc.

### **Learn to deal with difficult behavior:**

**Flare-ups** — When two members get into a heated discussion, summarize the points made by each and then turn the discussion back to the group.

**Grandstanding** — Interrupt the one-person show with a statement that gives credit for his or her contribution, but ask the person to reserve other points for later.

**Broken record** — Paraphrase the contribution of someone who repeats the same point over and over. This lets the person know they have been heard.

**Interrupting** — Step in immediately, for example: *"Hold on, let Margaret finish what she has to say."*

**Continual criticizing** — Legitimize negative feelings on difficult issues. You might say, *"Yes, it will be tough to reduce traffic congestion on Main Street, but there are successful models we can look at."*

### **Identify areas of common ground.**

Summarize differences in points of view, then note where there is common ground. For instance, you might begin with, *"It seems we agree that . . ."*

### **Suggest options when time runs out.**

Identify areas of partial consensus, suggest tabling the question, or create small groups to deal with the matter at their convenience.

### **Consider a round at the end of the meeting.**

Going quickly around the whole group at the end of the meeting gives people a chance to bring up matters not on the agenda. You can also use a round to evaluate the meeting. With more than ten people, though, a round can become tedious.

## **7.2 - Keeping People**

People join community groups to meet people, to have fun, to learn new skills, to pursue an interest, and to link their lives to some higher purpose. They leave if they don't find what they are looking for. Groups need to ask themselves more often: What benefits do we provide? At what cost to members? How can we increase the benefits and decrease the costs? Here are a some ideas on where to begin.

**Stay in touch with one another**

Regular contact is vital. Face to face is best. If you have the ability to meet, getting together at someone's house is more sociable than meeting in a public place or hall, and is usually more conducive to getting things accomplished. That said, if a central rendezvous location, such as a restaurant or bar, is logistically preferable, that is fine too, although it might be a bit noisier.

**Welcome newcomers**

Introduce them to members of your group. Consider appointing greeters for large meetings and events.

Help people find a place within the organization. For example, if a member shows "fired up" but unfocused motivation, an appealing approach is to say, *"Tell us the things you like to do and do well and we will find a way to use those talents."* The next most appealing invitation (which also encourages self-management) is: *"Here are some of the things we have to do, but how you get them done is up to you."*

In summary, make it a point to invite newcomers to become more autonomous and proactive. If the same people do everything, newcomers feel excluded.

**Pay attention to group process**

Most volunteer groups do not give adequate attention to how they work together. Decision-making methods are not determined explicitly, nor are roles or healthy behaviors. To address this, some groups make process itself a topic of discussion by appointing a "process watcher."

**Act more, meet less**

The great majority of people detest meetings; too many are the Black Death of community groups. By comparison, activities like tree-planting draw large numbers of people of all ages. Therefore, it is perfectly acceptable to schedule your meetings only when a certain project or event needs to be planned. Such "on-demand" meetings are a natural way to ease into regularly scheduled chapter meetings, if and when you decide such regular meetings are needed. The Chapter can still meet up regularly for social events, screenings, workshops, and streets-based activism, etc., without feeling overburdened with the formality of meetings.

**Keep time demands modest**

Most people lead busy lives. Don't ask them to come to meetings if they don't need to be there. Keep expanding the number of active members to ensure everyone does a little, and no one does too much. Work out realistic time commitments for projects.

**Do it in twos**

We suggest working in pairs. It improves the quality of communication, makes work less lonely, and ensures tasks get done. Ethnically mixed pairs (such as English and Chinese) can maintain

links to different cultures. Gender mixed pairs can take advantage of different ways men and women relate to one another. Various other pairings can be experimented with.

### **Provide social time and activities**

Endless work drives people away. Schedule social time at the beginning and end of meetings. Turn routine tasks into social events. Some activist groups might form a group of friends and sometimes plan meet-ups or dinners.

*Note - if formal topics are on the agenda, it is in everyone's best interest, and makes for a more productive meeting, if drinks and other libations are placed on hold until after the meeting.*

### **Provide skills training**

Many people step out of private life in order to learn something they enjoy. Providing training, and/or weaving training into activism, is one of the best ways to get and keep people.

## **7.3 - Common Problems and Hazards**

This section aims to draw attention to the common hazards or problems that a chapter may face, based on problems that have occurred in the Movement. Pay attention, better safe than sorry!

### **Special Interest Groups**

Be friends with other activist groups, even consider holding collaborative events together, but avoid forming complex alliances or become dependent on them. Many, although certainly not all, other activist groups exist as a result of the current monetary system and, intentionally or not, are stuck in that paradigm; thus some of their philosophies are fundamentally rooted in premises rather different, and perhaps even contrary to the Movement's global RBEM approach.

Sadly, it has been experienced in some cases that some such parties "target" chapter members as recruits to their cause and to ignore ours in the process. In this regard we must ensure that we always focus on *our* solutions and not become sidetracked by theirs, and stick close to the well-established concepts and principles of The Zeitgeist Movement. This does not, of course, preclude learning from other organizations, however; it is simply a matter of maintaining a balance whereby collaboration and learning do not turn into working on behalf of another organization and/or replacing elements of the Movement's core tenets with theirs.

Chapters may also receive some less-than welcoming responses from the activist community, some fearing a loss of their own members or a slowing in new recruits, and others being so strongly identified with their own organization or agenda as to reject all others rather than look for common ground or collaboration.

## **Interpersonal Conflicts**

To simplify, always refer to The Zeitgeist Movement to resolve conflicts, since we have strong common goals. Keep the strategies simple. Struggles for "power" can arise, so always strive to maintain a kind disposition and professional manner. If a conflict arises **AVOID DISCUSSING IT IN PUBLIC**, *especially* in a forum. Resolutions and discussions should happen in private or in virtual meetings moderated by a third person. Remain professional and never do anything extreme or emotionally charged.

## **Challenges to Privacy**

Be aware that most core tenets of the Movement are open to potential abuse, or at least, misappropriation, in cases where a dissatisfied individual or group may take issue with an individual, group, plan or project. The core tenet of "transparency", though vital to the horizontal functioning of the Movement, is potentially prone to misuse with the challenge that there should be no privacy, that all matters great and small should be out in the open and voted/acted upon "democratically" across the membership, and so on. It is important to recognize when matters need to be dealt with out in the open, or whether they do, in fact, require some privacy, as in some instances of conflict resolution. Do not allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate public debates through the hijacking of the concept of transparency. Everyone is entitled to some personal privacy, especially with regard to feelings, opinions and decisions about another person. Where this line is (that is, what fairly constitutes a legitimate larger scale issue vs. just a misaligned personal agenda) is a judgement call on your part. When in doubt however, again, always seek advice from the Movement.

## **Extremism**

This is a movement/community for all. Do not isolate your group by restricting activism to certain groups of people. Do not associate yourselves with alcohol, drugs, offensive behavior or fear doctrines. Always keep the group open to all sorts of cultures and people of all ages. Be positive and focused on solutions. Tell people a message of hope and offer solutions that are empirically verifiable and demonstrable.

## **Too little fun**

Long-term activists have fun when they get together. People who take themselves too seriously can turn any task into a chore. Getting together should feel more like recreation than work, no matter how serious the issue. Those who understand this level of involvement stress the importance of having fun as equal to completing the many tasks at hand.

## **Too much emphasis on organization and too little on mission**

Hoping to become more organized, many small groups create little bureaucracies that drain everyone's energy. Often so much effort goes into maintaining the organization that there is little left to pursue the reason for creating the organization in the first place. Keep administrative tasks to a bare minimum.

**Too many meetings and too little action.**

Most people would prefer to act on something concrete rather than sit at a meeting wrangling or trying to "reach consensus". Some meetings are usually necessary, but try to keep the frequency down, the time short, and the number of participants small.

A related problem is too much criticism and too little creating. Every advocacy group needs to generate options for action. To do this well, participants need to switch off their "voice of judgement", and surrender to some brainstorming. Unfortunately, when people get together for a meeting they usually switch on their "voice of judgement" in preparation for decision making. If they remain in this critical frame of mind, they will generate few options for action; nothing will get done, and no one will have any fun.

**Too many people**

Because of the emphasis on getting more people involved, many people feel that large groups are better than small groups. This is a mistake. A working group should not exceed nine people. This is the upper limit of what sociologists call a primary group. A small group does not preclude working with others under the umbrella of a larger group; nor does it preclude communicating with larger numbers of people through email networks, special events and annual conventions.

**The wrong people**

Because building an movement involves working with others, most people assume they should welcome anyone interested in joining. However, this impulse can lead to rapid decline. Few are willing to admit what is obvious in any group: some people are assets and others are liabilities. While every group can handle a small portion of people who are very angry, very combative, very controlling or very lonely, as the ratio of these people increases, level-headed, friendly, competent people begin to leave. As the imbalance increases, even more leave the group. In order to avert this you must be mentally prepared to take charge at the outset, at the first sign of trouble, especially with negative people. For example, for an obvious angry troll, a tacit and polite response here might be, *"It sounds like you're not entirely in line with what the Movement is doing here. Perhaps there are other organizations that are more in line with your views."*, or an alternative that is comfortable for your own temperament.

**Too little contact**

It is hard for people to maintain a working relationship when they only see one another once a month. As your group becomes more active, once a week may be better, not only because it is more frequent, but because it fits into the way people schedule other activities. If regular face-to-face contact is difficult, regular phone calls, email or online communication such as TeamSpeak, may work as a substitute.

**Too little time**

The greatest barrier to participating in public life is the shortage of discretionary free time. In surging market economies people spend most of their time working and consuming, leaving little time for friends and family, and no time for civic involvement. In declining market economies these same people may have time but not money, not even for gas or a bus fare. Again, this is an inherent condition of the present “wage-slave” Zeitgeist that we all must deal with.

**Too short term**

If a group has coalesced around accomplishing a particular end, participants need to realize that keeping up the pressure over an extended time-period is essential. Expectations of quick victory need to be tempered with the understanding that opponents to change are most often successful just because they hold out longer. They know that if they don't budge, most activists will become discouraged and retreat back into private life. Groups need to maintain their enthusiasm and recognize that if their cause is just, they will indeed prevail. As Gandhi said: *“First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.”* But it takes time.

**Objectives outmatch resources**

Groups of nine or less can often support themselves on personal resources. However, as group size increases, a shortage of money and time usually leads to spiralling decline. Without paid staff there is no one to look after organizational housekeeping, and no one to train, manage and reward volunteers. As people disappear, many active members burn out trying to do more and more themselves. A lack of resources does not mean giving up. It does, however, mean inventing clever ways to use time, connections and skills.

In summary: limit group size, make sure members enjoy one another's company, have fun, avoid over-stretching resources, and don't get sidetracked or put off by any issues that arise.

# 8. Movement Guidelines

## ***In this Section:***

[8.1 - Chapter Websites](#)

[8.2 - Street Activism](#)

[8.3 - Protests](#)

[8.4 - Fundraising](#)

## 8.1 - Chapter Websites

### **Every national chapter website should contain:**

- A link to the global website somewhere on the page ([www.thezeitgeistmovement.com](http://www.thezeitgeistmovement.com))
- An "about" section that mirrors the global website in terms of the information it contains
- A contact form or a visible email contact available on the site.
- A section with additional content such as lectures, podcasts, documents, etc.
- A page for subchapters and basic information on how/what to do to create a new one (can be as simple as posting a basic description and referring to a specific email address)
- Have links to the orientation guide and video conspicuously visible on the site.
- Copyright must contain a "Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike" License (check the global site copyright for example).
- At least one way of conveying important updates and/or upcoming events (blog, calendar app, mailing list, etc).
- Logo and site name must clearly identify the movement.
- Design must look decent.
- No ads or pop-ups.

### **For other chapter websites or any similar virtual medium, the following requirements apply:**

- A link to the global website and or the official national chapter website somewhere on the page
- A contact form or a visible email contact available on the site.
- At least one way of conveying important updates and/or upcoming events (blog, calendar app, mailing list, etc).
- Logo and name must clearly identify the movement.
- No ads or pop-ups.

## 8.2 - Street Activism

Street activism itself should be as objective, calm and friendly as possible, and the Movement's message should be conveyed with integrity and clarity. For example, one could seek to convey the information and describe concepts such as cyclical consumption, the scientific method, RBEM, etc.

In general, always cooperate with the police. Their stigma aside, they are there to protect you. If you chat with them in a friendly way some of them may even have heard of, and/or advocate for, the Movement.

## 8.3 - Protests

The Zeitgeist Movement is a social/educational movement and it does not engage in any protest or demonstration as a means to convey the central message. This is simply inefficient and does not address the root problem. In other words, it can be noble but does not go far enough. Thus, as emotional and exciting as “high energy” protest actions may seem, they should not be carried out *on behalf of* The Zeitgeist Movement.

That said, the Movement is encouraged to be present at peaceful and socially relevant protests. The conduct displayed by members representing the Movement must be of an informative and educational posture, not one of protest or sarcasm. A suggested strategy is to set up information stalls in peripheral areas, at a safe distance from the central protest action. This can be supported by a mobile team of activists that roam the area and calmly approach people, talk to them, hand out flyers, etc.

If someone who happens to be a Movement member chooses to join in the protest in and of itself, as an individual in their own right, they should make sure they are not identified as a Movement activist, and be aware that they may not be representing the Movement at that time. Specifically, one should avoid using promotional material of the Movement such as t-shirts, posters, banners, etc. Neither should one make reference to the national/global structure, and never communicate in the first person plural “we”.

In the event of physical violence, any Movement activist should get away from the scene and should also avoid participating in any verbal violence towards any particular group.

## 8.4 - Fundraising

As a global rule, the Movement operates on the basis of time dedication and not monetary dedication. No chapter is allowed to solicit direct, open donations. The phrase “open donations” refers to ongoing donations gathered without explicit purpose for the money raised. For example, donations gathered to “support the Movement”, is too vague and open-ended, and affords no transparency. However, a process of gathering donations on the basis of meeting a particular need during a particular time-period with the express purpose of “hiring a venue” for an upcoming event, for example, allows people to fully understand where their money is going, and this transparency, therefore, facilitates their informed decision regarding whether or not to donate.

Overall, The Movement deliberately operates on a personal contribution, volunteer model. However, there are two basic exceptions to the restriction on monetary transactions. Since the websites cost money to run, simple merchandise is respectable to offer. The Global Website, for example, offers a single shirt to help offset the administrative and hosting costs. Each Chapter is

allowed to also offer a custom shirt or similar. However, any "excessive" merchandising will be shut down if it presents a case for abuse. Such decisions are made by international/global admin consensus.

The second exception is when a specific temporal project is required which needs funding. Typically, it is expected that such funding will come personally from an individual or set of individuals working with the Chapter directly. In the event that this cannot happen, a fully transparent temporary donation system can be put into place to meet the needs of that project.