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**I Will Ride: An opportunity in
transportation to learn, grow and lead.**

CHAPTER STARTUP GUIDE

“I Will Ride” Chapter Startup Guide

Introduction

Born in the heart of California’s Central Valley, I Will Ride was founded by college students who support options in mobility and transportation, and the development of California’s high-speed rail system. I Will Ride members believe that this significant investment in the state’s transportation infrastructure, mass transit, and transit oriented development will offer regional connectivity, economic opportunity, and an environmentally-friendly alternative for transportation into the 21st Century.

These students recognize that High-Speed Rail will provide a safe, affordable, and fast train service from Northern to Southern California through the Central Valley. They can imagine the opportunities to explore California, as a passenger; working or relaxing in comfort, visiting family and friends, and accessing cultural and entertainment venues.

I Will Ride members participated in the California High-Speed Rail Authority’s historic groundbreaking ceremony in January 2015 with Governor Brown and other officials. Additionally, they have spoken to state legislative committees, members of Congress, local governments, and the media to add their voices to the discussion regarding the need for California to build the nation’s first high-speed rail system.

After graduation, former I Will Ride college chapter members are working in a variety of industries including business, communications, and other technical professions. And, some former members have become chapter mentors after graduating. Additionally, former college members and supporters have formed an I Will Ride professionals group to continue to stay engaged in the conversation about high-speed rail and related topics.

Examples of people who have started their own chapters:

“Supporting I Will Ride was easy, because this state needs less congestion, more transportation options, and cleaner air. The most rewarding part of participating in a chapter of I Will Ride is the fact that I had the opportunity to network with so many officials. In fact, one of the individuals I met through I Will Ride wrote me a letter of recommendation that I attached to my White House Internship Program application.”

- Michael Lomio, former member of I Will Ride, UC Merced

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“I formed the Fresno City College chapter of I Will Ride in order to help my peers understand the economic benefits Fresno and the state will see as a result of such a transformative project. This experience has led me into a student position with the California High-Speed Rail Authority. As well, I have been given the opportunity to work alongside small businesses and large firms alike, allowing me to network all along the way. This work also likely played a role in my admittance into UC Berkeley’s Haas School of Business as a transfer student.”

- Nicholas Kennedy, founding member of I Will Ride, Fresno City College

Opportunities

Being a member of an I Will Ride chapter provides three opportunities to its college members:

1. **Networking with professionals** – meet people who are involved in the fields of engineering, transportation, environmental planning, communications, and federal, state, and local public policy
2. **Tours, Speakers, and Events** – chapter members will be provided opportunities to participate in tours, events, and meetings regarding high-speed rail and other transportation-related topics.
3. **Internships** – opportunities to learn about and compete for internships.

Joining the I Will Ride movement is an exciting opportunity to learn about, explore, and participate in the conversation about transportation technology and investment in mobility for future generations in California and the nation. Former and current I Will Ride chapter members have benefited greatly by connecting themselves and their schools to the ongoing development of the high-speed rail and its partners. Below is a guide on how to establish a chapter on any college campus as well as to connect yourself to this project and your community.

Simple Steps to Start Your Own I Will Ride Chapter

1. Draft and Write a Purpose for Your Chapter

Each chapter must start with a purpose. The general purpose of I Will Ride is to be a *student-led public transportation advocacy group focusing on high-speed rail, mass transit, and transit-oriented development*. Under this general statement of purpose, each campus and city will need to develop a different set of goals specific to their region.

As an example, in Fresno, several I Will Ride chapters have focused on the goals of educating the community and student bodies on how this project not only positively impacts California, but is also

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a catalyst to revitalization activity in downtown Fresno and the Central Valley. This group can also provide the community with status updates on project construction.

The chapter at University of California, Berkeley provides another example. This chapter focused on emphasizing how high-speed rail will help alleviate the current transit problems facing the Bay Area. Chapter members advocated that high-speed rail and surrounding transit districts will allow for more efficient and environmentally sustainable transportation.

As you to start to map out your I Will Ride chapter, you and your potential members should answer these questions:

- a) What do your chapter members seek to learn about high-speed rail and other transportation-oriented projects?
- b) What are the potential benefits and challenges of high-speed rail and other transportation priorities in your local community and the state?
- c) What are the interests and issues of your student members related to the field of transportation (such as engineering, urban planning, technology, right-of-way, etc.)?

After you answer and expand on these questions, you will be ready to write your purpose. You should create a generalized statement for your purpose, and a more detailed one for yourself.

General Statement Examples

Fresno City College Example:

“The purposes of this organization are to educate the student body of Fresno City College about the California High-Speed Rail Project and create awareness around its benefits to our city and state.”

UC Berkeley Example:

“IWR Berkeley exists to inform the UC Berkeley student body, as well as the larger Berkeley community, that high-speed rail is ongoing and will have numerous benefits across the Bay and California as it continues to transform our state.”

Specific Statement Examples

Fresno City College Example:

"I Will Ride at Fresno City College exists to connect and educate the student body, young professionals, and the community on the benefits of the California High-Speed Rail. We do so by showing the impact and opportunities high-speed rail is creating in our downtown revitalization efforts; engaging young professionals and students in high-speed rail internships, job

opportunities, networking; and by participating and curating events in our community focused on education and engagement.”

UC Berkeley Example:

“From BART to AC Transit, Berkeley and the Bay Area are no strangers to being connected through mass transit. However, many “Berkeleyans” do not yet know that their own backyard will be a world class terminus for the United States’ first high-speed rail system. Through events and media campaigns, I Will Ride serves to educate our Cal community about the future of connecting our state and rally this enthusiasm for high-speed into tangible support for clean transportation projects more generally. Members also get connected to internship and job opportunities related to the project.”

By creating a general statement, you are telling your audience why you exist. By creating a detailed statement, you are communicating a purpose to your chapter members. Everything you do should fall under the umbrella of your detailed purpose. It can exist as a living document where the details are altered, added, or removed. The reason it is created is to give you guidelines on where to start and what to do.

2. Logistics: Starting Your Own Chapter

Each college has different policies on starting a club, so it is important to look them up before following this guide. Below is a general outline of what most schools require while starting a club.

1. Gather names and emails of four to five enrolled students that are interested in being members
2. Assign titles: President, Vice-President, Secretary, etc.
3. Register and submit an organization form with proposed name and purpose (Documentation may vary by campus, but many universities and colleges will require an organization form or registration process)
4. Meet with Student Life Coordinator or Activities Board (or appropriate office at your school)
5. Draft a constitution (bylaws). Note that specific bylaws may be required by your college or university. Contact the student outreach team (below) if you need sample from other chapter(s).
6. Secure a club advisor (faculty)*
7. Advertise your club’s first meeting (Campus flyers, campus newsletter, social media, other)

**A club advisor is a faculty member that agrees to participate and reside over the schools requirements for your club. The responsibilities differ from school to school, but the minimum requirements are typically for the advisor to be familiar with your school’s club standards and to participate in club meetings at least once a month. Finding an advisor can be simple or challenging. Keep in mind that not all academic concentrations apply to the work of high-speed rail and not all instructors support this project. Asking faculty members you already know to be potential candidates to serve as the club’s*

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advisor is a great place to start, but do not be afraid to make new connections. Eventually you will find the right person.

Below is a list of disciplines that are connected with this project:

- a) Engineering (Civil, Electrical, Environmental, etc.)
- b) Urban Planning
- c) Economics
- d) Communication/ Public Relations
- e) Political Science/ Policy
- f) Business
- g) Public Policy
- h) Marketing/Design/Graphics
- i) Government
- j) Architecture
- k) Environmental Sciences (Biology, Ecology, etc.)

3. Chapter Finances and Funding

Each college-based chapter of I Will Ride is independently funded. Check your school policies regarding club bank accounts. Typically, the treasurer will be the officer depositing, withdrawing, and keeping records of funds. You will need the bank account to begin any fundraising. All the money that comes to the chapter through fundraising should be processed through this channel.

Fundraising

There are several different ways to fundraise from selling food to silent auctions, but be aware of what is beneficial for your group and fundraise smart. You are representing a project that many companies see value in but the general public may not. Your source of positive reinforcement for the project can be resource for them so use it to your advantage. If you are creating an event that will get visibility, ask for sponsors and create tiers for sponsor donations. Fundraising can create benefits and challenges for a chapter and its members. If you have questions, feel free to contact Darren Rose on the student outreach team below.

4. Recruitment: How to Get Members to Join Your Chapter

To have a club you have to have members. To have members you have to have a strategy.

I Will Ride Chapters usually start with a handful of people who are interested in a common interest – high-speed rail. For your chapter to thrive and continue, you will need to expand beyond the start-up group. Familiarize and take part in your school's resources that could assist you in club growth. And keep in mind that the best form of recruitment is connection.

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Below is a short list of ways to recruit members to your chapter/club.

Classroom Visits

Prepare a brief presentation for a classroom setting. It does not need to be extensive. Just briefly discuss who you are, why your chapter exists, and why other students should get involved. Remember that you are the classroom's guest, so please be respectful to the students and instructor by not taking up more time than you have been given. Target classes/majors that are pertinent to the development of the high-speed rail, such as engineering. The connections and job opportunities your chapter can provide will give students more incentive to join.

School Events

Some schools hold events in which clubs can participate. Find a clever way to draw attention to your booth that also makes a connection to high-speed rail and transportation. Try to be knowledgeable about the high-speed rail project in this environment. You will likely be approached out of genuine interest for the project and those people will have questions that they hope you can answer. Others will come argue about the project. Though a good debate can be healthy, understand that some minds do not want to be changed. Be aware that there are moments to engage in conversation and there are moments you should choose to diffuse the conversation by agreeing to disagree. If there is a question you do not know how to answer, do your best to refer them to where the information can most likely be found.

Social Media

This is a great connection tool that is helpful for recruitment. Follow the accounts connected to your school as well as the people that are talking about the high-speed rail. Make connections and use the tools each social media outlet provides. A well-established account can have a significant impact on recruitment. The I Will Ride coordinators will assist your chapter in developing social media assets and may provide content occasionally as well.

Examples:

1. Chapter members are encouraged to post on their own profiles about activities and participation in events using the I Will Ride hashtag: #iwillride.
2. Some chapters have established distinct profiles for their chapters or posted on other transportation-focused or education-focused profiles.
<https://www.facebook.com/I-Will-Ride-305794976108093/>

I Will Ride Curated Events

One of the best ways to reach students and your community is by curating events of your own. We will go further in detail on events shortly, but for every event you facilitate you should have

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a plan for recruitment. This could look like members focused on conversations with students, mandatory email collection for attending the event, and so on. Get creative and find out works best for your school.

If you have an idea for an event, feel free to contact the student outreach team member (listed below) for your area. Your local contact can assist you as a liaison or coordinator at an event. Or, help you with ideas for speakers or event ideas. I Will Ride liaisons and coordinators will assist your chapter with event logistics and scheduling, but the day to day work of organizing a successful event takes a group of dedicated chapter members.

Curating Events

A huge part of what you will do as a chapter is participate in, and curate events. This is a great way for you to make connections with your community, student body, local business, and government agencies involved in the project. Educating, networking, and fundraising are your main goals for every event you curate. Go through each goal to decide what kind of event you want to do and how you would like to it. Again, each city will benefit differently with the coming of this project so find a need and get creative.

Education

Ask yourself what the commonly held opinions of the high-speed rail are in your community. Are they consistent with the facts of the project? Are there negative or positive connotations attached to these opinions? What related topic would be the best to address right now and how should you deliver it? Determine other transportation projects related to high-speed rail that will be of interest to the student body and community.

Networking

Connect with the businesses that are working with the high-speed rail. Showing your support for the project is showing support for their work, which may lead to professional opportunities, educational tours, and access to project-oriented events. If you are interested in making contact with a business that is working on high-speed rail, contact your local student outreach team member below for ideas and assistance.

Emails and Business cards

Create an email account with "IWillRide" followed by the name of your school.
Example: IWillRide@__mail provider__.com.

Gmail offers different tools like online storage through Google Drive, and live document sharing and editing which assist with group projects.

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Business cards are not required, but you may find them useful. You can find online companies who print and ship for a good price or even free at times. Refer to I Will Ride coordinators for assistance with design.

5. Social Media: Leveraging for Your Chapter

This is a free and valuable tool that you should take advantage of. There are many different outlets, but we are most active on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. You can easily create an account or chapter page by using I Will Ride combined with the name of your school. On Instagram and twitter, it looks something like @IWillRidefcc or @IWillRideberkeley. Use these outlets to connect with your fellow students and community. And be sure to tag posts and photos with #iwillride to share your information and post with others.

Be sure to store all email and social media information and passwords in a safe place. That way, you can pass it on to the next chapter president when the time comes.

Have Questions?

For support, contact our student outreach team for guidance on chapter start-up questions, event planning, speaker requests, and assistance by contacting:

- Statewide Coordinator – Kit Powis, 415-243-4770 or kit.powis@hsr.ca.gov
- Assistant Statewide Coordinator/Central Valley (including Palmdale) – Darren Rose, 559-917-3652 or rose.strategic@gmail.com
- Northern California – Brett Salmi, 916-384-9700 or brett.salmi@hsr.ca.gov
- Southern California – Kevin Alvarado, 213-443-7450 or kevin.alvarado@hsr.ca.gov