



ROMANIAN COMMUNITY CENTER | CHICAGO

Starting a Chapter

Guide for Chapter Leads

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Introduction

ROCO Chicago offers a space for the community to express itself artistically, academically, in business, and through arts and culture. We are a modern center dedicated to engaging and supporting our community and accelerating Romanian businesses in Chicago. ROCO has minimal staff and works with hundreds of volunteers. [Learn more](#)

What is a Chapter

The Purpose of a Chapter

Help, provide resources to, and support outside volunteers who organize events, programs, and clubs. The role of a ROCO Chapter is to:

- engage our community in a specific area of interest (e.g. sports)
- connect with and support outside volunteers
- decide which events and programs they “sponsor”
- coordinate interested volunteers that run events and programs under the ROCO umbrella
- meet regularly to create a certain cadence
- organize at least one event/activity per year

Definition: What is a Chapter

A ROCO chapter is a group of volunteers with a common background and expertise who are passionate about a certain subject of general interest to the community and have agreed to work together to strengthen the fabric of our community.

What a Chapter looks like

- has a structure with at least 5 members, including 2 chapter co-leads (or a lead/co-lead)
- the chapter members meet regularly, at least once a quarter (pref. once a month)
- they work together to plan the activities of the chapter, and
- they make joint decisions on the activities of the chapter
- the chapter sponsors at least one event (or program) per year dedicated to our community
- the chapter has a shared/central means of communication (WhatsApp)
- chapters are open, so new members can join at any point throughout the year
- Chapter leads can change/elect/nominate a new (co)lead anytime during the year

Who can join a chapter?

Chapters are open structures so anyone can join a chapter as long as they are interested in the chapter specific area of activity and want to volunteer.

This being said, the Chapter Lead has the flexibility of defining an internal process for new people who want to join the chapter (this process cannot be prohibitive to new people and must be approved by the Executive Director).

Chapter Activities

- Chapter leads (or delegates) are the main point of contact for any new event/program in their area of expertise
- the members of the chapter create a schedule of events and communicate it with the Executive Director
- The chapter members will approve projects that belong to a certain area (e.g. sports)
- The chapter members take on the responsibility of delivering all approved projects (with the support of the core team & staff)
- chapters are also responsible to help identify volunteers for projects in their area of expertise

- the chapter can sponsor (and run) clubs, programs, or events at ROCO

Chapter Leads

A successful chapter starts with a committed volunteer Chapter Lead and Co-Lead. The ROCO staff and Core Team of Volunteers, and the Executive Director work alongside chapter leads and chapter members to help the community organize itself in the Chapter's area of activity.

- Chapter Leads/coleads are elected by the chapter members and they must accept the responsibility to run the chapter for a period of 1 year. If there is a no co-lead, the Chapter Lead must select a co-lead within the first month of taking over.
- A chapter lead must nominate a new chapter lead 3m before their leadership term is up

Chapter Leads Tasks and Responsibilities

The chapter leads (together) are responsible for “moving things forward”.

Administrative Responsibilities

- Appointing a chapter secretary or acting as the secretary her/himself
 - Create meeting agendas before the meetings
- Calling regular chapter meetings
- Announce the meeting to everyone involved. This includes:
 - Adding the meetings to the calendars of all involved
 - Announcing the meeting on all communication channels (email and chat)
- The chapter lead will sync up with the Executive Director periodically (at least once/per quarter)

Program Responsibilities

- Connect and respond timely to all incoming requests for the chapter
- Coordinate and engage with all chapter volunteers
- Work with Program Directors and One-Time Event Coordinators
- Collect all the email of the program volunteers