

American Solar Energy Society Chapter Handbook

Established in 1954, the nonprofit American Solar Energy Society (ASES) is the nation's leading association of solar professionals and advocates. Our mission is to enable a 100% renewable energy society. ASES meets once a year for the National Solar Conference, publishes the award winning magazine *SOLAR TODAY*, and coordinates the annual National Solar Tour. ASES is a member of the International Solar Energy Society, the largest international solar organization, with extensive membership in more than 110 countries. For a complete listing of the Board of Directors, staff, and programs please refer to the ASES website, www.ases.org.

What is an ASES Chapter?

For more than forty-five years regional and state Chapters have played a significant role in furthering the mission of ASES, to promote the deployment of solar and renewable energy technologies.

Each ASES Full Chapter is an independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization affiliated with ASES. Each allows ASES members and others to participate in educational seminars, exchange information, and promote solar energy use at the state and local level. Each has its own membership and dues structure, its own board of directors, and its own vision, mission and programs.

While ASES and the Chapters are related, membership in one does not confer membership in the other. An individual may belong to as many chapters as they wish.

In 2016 there were 34 Chapters in more than 41 states, including nine student Chapters. For a complete listing of Chapters please refer to the ASES website: www.ases.org/chapters. ASES Chapters are part of the national Solar Citizen movement.

The three levels of ASES affiliation are: ASES Full Chapter, Associate Chapter, and Student Chapter.

Benefits of being an ASES Full Chapter

- Chapter's link on the ASES website
- Chapter's major events posted in Solar@Work biweekly eNewsletter
- Chapter listed in every issue of the award winning *SOLAR TODAY* magazine
- Chapter Caucus at the National Solar Conference
- Chapter Caucus representative discount on National Solar Conference registration fee
- Participation in ASES Chapter Combined Membership 30/30 program (\$30 to chapter, \$30 to ASES)
- Participation in the monthly Chapter Leaders' phone call with information sharing on best practices. Chapter mentorship available.
- Chapters get a \$5 discount on ASES Basic memberships, a \$10 discount on ASES Professional memberships, and \$50 discount on full Business memberships (\$300 instead of \$350). This can be passed on to the member or used by the Chapter as an administrative fee.
- ASES chapter logo on Chapter website and materials

Revised August 2, 2017

- Opportunity for Chapter Press Releases to be distributed on the ASES virtual press room: PR Newswire and ASES email blasts to distribution to 50,000+
- Opportunity to share content via *SOLAR TODAY* and ASES social media posts
- Opportunity to list events in event listing on ASES bi-weekly e-newsletter, Solar@Work
- Upon request, complimentary *SOLAR TODAY* magazines for distribution at Chapter events (3 weeks advance notice required.)
- Chapters represented by two dedicated seats on ASES Board of Directors (elected at large or appointed) [come back to this]
- Access to local mailing lists -- the ASES membership list including subscribers to *SOLAR TODAY* available at no charge to promote chapter membership or events. The only requirements are that the list be used only for the use for which it is given to the chapter, not be duplicated, and that the chapter list be available to ASES for similar promotion
- Access to Solar Citizen campaign monthly conference calls (tbd) (forming)
- Access to National Solar Tour monthly conference calls (April-October).

Requirements for a Chapter to maintain active status

- File the annual report with ASES by the due date
- Keep ASES Headquarters informed of the current current email addresses and phone numbers of all the chapter officers and chapter mailing address
- Attend the annual chapter caucus at the National Solar Conference, or attend the chapter call during the caucus
- Provide a link on the chapter website back to ASES website, www.ases.org
- Cash ASES checks within 3 months
- Reporting on ASES Membership to and from ASES required within 30 days.
- Provide 30/30 ASES Chapter Combined Membership file updates (if applicable) every month
- 100% of Chapter Board members maintain their ASES membership
- 10% of Chapter members maintain their ASES membership with a minimum of at least 10 ASES members
- Maintain 501(c)(3) non-profit status in good standing
- Include ASES on your mailing list (email and postal)
- Hold events or otherwise show that you can have ongoing presence in your chosen community
- Provide contact information to be included on website and in chapter leader email list serve to info@ases.org

Suggested Minimum (but not required) Practices

- Attend at least every other chapter conference call
- Get in touch with new members in a timely manner and follow through on requests for information from the public about solar and prospective members in the area as soon as possible.

What is an ASES Associate Chapter?

In cases where the organization does not meet the requirements to become a Full Chapter of ASES as listed above, and where an organization is located in an area not already served by an existing ASES Full Chapter, ASES makes available an Associate Chapter level.

Benefits of being an ASES Associate Chapter

- Associate's website link on the ASES website
- Major events posted in Solar@Work biweekly eNewsletter
- Listed in every issue of the award winning *SOLAR TODAY* magazine
- Invitation to Chapter Caucus at the National Solar Conference (no discount available)
- Not required to be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit

Minimum Requirements for an ASES Associate Chapter

- Have at least 4 people be members of ASES. Have at least 1 designated as a LEAD at all times.
- Link ASES.org from their local site or Facebook page, or whatever they use to show themselves, and we link to them at ASES.org
- Sign a short letter which commits the affiliate in everything they do, to reinforce the ASES Mission: to enable a 100% renewable energy society
- Attend chapter conference calls
- Write at least one update per year about their group, for print in the magazine and/or on the website.

Chapter Activities

The activities that a chapter chooses to undertake are a local decision. ASES experience and community of volunteer mentors are available to provide information to assist in development. Many local chapters publish a newsletter and sponsor regular educational meetings or seminars. A number of chapters also sponsor technical conferences and solar fairs/events for the general public. Quite a few are also involved in advocating policy within the limits of 501(c)(3) IRS rules, usually at the state level. Chapters are encouraged to participate in the annual ASES National Solar Tour and increase the adoption of sustainable energy technologies in the built environment.

Forming a new Chapter

As previously noted, ASES chapters are independent organizations. Prospective ASES Chapters should first check to see if there is an existing Chapter in their geographic area. In order to become a chapter, a local organization must first be created and incorporated as a 501(c)(3), and then submit a petition to the ASES Board of Directors.

The petition shall include the following items:

- Signatures of 10 new or existing ASES members who reside in the chapter boundaries requesting that a chapter be formed. ASES can supply names of current ASES members in your area.
- Bylaws of the chapter including a clear definition of your geographical boundaries. However, organizations are not limited to conducting business only within their chapter territory.

- Copy of Articles of Incorporation
- Copy of 501(c)(3) Federal Income Tax Exemption letter
- Primary contact information, and at least one backup contact information
- Proof of existing activity. Examples include newsletters, event notices, meeting minutes.

The above documents are then submitted to the Board Chapter Representatives who present them to the Board of Directors for a vote at the next scheduled meeting. In the event that the geographic boundaries of the application include an area of an already existing chapter, approval from the current Chapter needs to be secured before the application can be presented to the Board.

Student Chapters

See ASES Student Chapter Handbook. [ASES Student Chapter Handbook](#)

Chapter Deactivation

ASES may at its discretion deactivate a Chapter if the Chapter:

- Is inactive for a 12-month period (e.g., no public activities, no updates to its website, etc.)
- Does not report on its activities to ASES (through the monthly conference call, via email, or other means)
- Does not submit an annual report to ASES
- Does not respond to ASES attempts to contact for 6 months and all attempts to contact the chapter fail

or

- Does not display the ASES logo on its website

ASES will make reasonable efforts to notify the chapter of the potential deactivation.

The ASES Chapter Representative(s) would make a recommendation to the ASES Board that the Chapter be declared “inactive.” If the Board approves the recommendation, the members of the Chapter are notified through their last known contact information to ASES that the Chapter is no longer active, and that they may join another Chapter.

All documentation of the Chapter, including its bylaws, mission statement and annual reports are retained at the ASES office. If someone steps forward at a later date to re-activate the Chapter they would follow the procedure for formation and approval of an ASES Chapter. If they wish, they can use the same mission statement and bylaws of the old chapter.

For any further information or any questions please contact: info@ases.org