



SWE
NEXT
Club Activity Guide

July 2020

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Looking for things to do with your SWENext Club? Want to host events but don't know where to start? From idea creation to execution, this guide will help you and your club plan a successful event whether for outreach, college/career preparation, or community building!



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Creating Your Event

Create Goals

Brainstorm

Build a
Schedule

Determine
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Find Supplies

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Host Event

Whether learning a skill, team building, or helping your community, taking the time to think through and create an event presents a fun and rewarding challenge to clubs.

In order for events to be successful, they require a level of planning and preparation. To the left is a simplified process to use when creating events. The details of this process will be explained in following pages.

This list should not necessarily be followed linearly. Many steps will need to occur simultaneously.

Not all details included in this guide will pertain to every type of event, so be sure to use your best judgement about what needs to happen for your event to work!

Creating Your Event

Create Goals

Every event and activity has an underlying purpose. Determining the goal of your event will help everyone better understand what they are working towards when creating the event. Start by asking these questions:

- Who is the intended audience? What is the goal number of attendees?
- What should the audience gain through this event?
- What can your club gain by creating this event?

Brainstorm

Now for the fun part! What is your event going to look like? How can you add personality and fun into your event? Think about the following:

- What is the theme? Will there be a catchy name?
- What activities will be a part of the event?
- How will everyone be included?

Build a Schedule

To keep everyone on track and to continue to determine details, start by building an outlined schedule of the event.

- What will the date/time be?
- When will each activity happen throughout the event? Will there be multiple activities happening at once?
- If a longer event, how will you keep an energetic page without activities being rushed. Should there be breaks built in? What about snacks or a meal?

Creating Your Event

Determine Logistics & Safety

Perhaps the most important step in the list! Make sure you check with your school/organization about any standard operating procedures that you need to follow. Safety should be your top priority!

Location

- How do you reserve a space for your event? Will this include any fees? Can your event be virtual? Do you need a backup location?
- If attendees from outside your section are invited, how will you make sure they do not get lost finding the location? (maps, signs, etc)

Allergies

- If including a meal or snack, how will you ensure that all dietary restrictions are accounted for?

Youth Protection

- If hosting an event for younger students, make sure to have parental permission form, a photo release form, and an emergency contact form. Many of these forms may be standardized through your school/organization.

Rosters and Communication

- How will you get attendees to sign up for your event?
 - Signups through a survey like a Google form are easy to maintain; make sure to ask for parental contact information as well as attendee's information
- Maintain a constant roster of attendees
- A couple days before the event, send a reminder to all attendees about the event; include maps, consent forms, and any reminders as necessary

Creating Your Event

Emergency Procedures

- For any larger events with outside attendees, determine what to do in case of an emergency like a fire, an intruder, or hazardous weather.
- Brief all volunteers on these procedures

Accountability

- If including outside attendees, create a sign-in and sign-out system.
- Have volunteers continuously check on the number of attendees, especially when working with youth.

Finding Supplies

What will you need for the event? Before purchasing supplies, become familiar with your school/organizations operating procedures regarding purchasing.

Fundraising

- How will you find money for supplies? Consider buying extra supplies and writing a budget for each event.
- Consider including a small attendee fee . To keep your event accessible to all, keep fees as low as possible. Work with your organization on logistics and requirements regarding charging attendees.
- See the SWENext Clubs 101 Guide for potential fundraising ideas.

Donations

- Following organization guidelines, look for companies that might be willing to provide in-kind donations
- Does your school/organization have supplies leftover from another event that you can reuse?

Creating Your Event

Finding Volunteers

Contacting local Collegiate and Professional SWE Sections can be a great start to finding volunteers! SWE's section map can help you locate these sections and their contact information:

<https://swe.org/membership/sections/>

If you would like to collaborate with other SWENext sections, check out the SWENext club map to find any sections close by!

<https://swe.org/k-12-outreach/swenext/swenext-clubs/>

Non-SWE Volunteer Sources

- Non-profit organizations
- Ask your organization or school to send an email to parents and alumni
- Research other local professional organizations (SWE, National Society of Black Engineers, Women in Electrical and Computer Engineering, etc). Many of these organizations are active within college campuses.
- Find local companies and contact representatives

Contacting Volunteers

- Have one club member be in charge of all communication
- Write a professional email; ask your SWE counselor / club advisor to review the message before sending
- Be aware that some SWE sections, especially collegiate sections, may have official Youth Protection guidelines that they must adhere to which might restrict or change how they can volunteer for your event

Creating Your Event

Here are basic email templates to help you get started with contacting professional and collegiate volunteers. Be sure to edit them to make them your own!

College Student

Dear **[Speaker's name]**,

My name is **[insert name]** and I am **[position]** of the **[SWENext Club Name]** at **[School/Community Organization Name]** in **[City]**. The Society of Women Engineers (SWE) is a national organization that strives to connect and empower women in engineering and other STEM disciplines. SWENext is a SWE program designed specifically to bring together K-12 students with like-minded interests, educate and expose students to career opportunities in STEM, and to provide STEM-specific academic resources like scholarships, mentoring, etc. We are contacting you to see if you would be interested in coming to one of our meetings and engage us in a hands on activity or talk to us about STEM in college. We have outlined below some potential ideas for hands-on activities and discussion topics. We are eager to learn more about STEM at the collegiate level as we prepare to apply to college and for our futures in STEM!

Thank you very much for your time. We look forward to hearing back!

Best regards,

[Sign name]

Professional

Dear **[Speaker Name]**,

My name is **[insert name]** and I am **[position]** of the **[SWENext Club Name]** at **[School/Community Organization Name]** in **[City]**. The Society of Women Engineers (SWE) is a national organization that strives to connect and empower women in engineering and other STEM disciplines. SWENext is a SWE program designed specifically for pre-collegiate students that aims to bring together K-12 students with like-minded interests, educate and expose students to career opportunities in STEM, and to provide STEM-specific academic resources like scholarships, mentorings, etc. We are contacting you to see if you would be interested in coming to one of our meetings and engaging us in a hands-on activity or talk to us about your STEM industry. We have outlined below some potential ideas for hands on activities and discussion topics. We are eager to learn more about STEM and your experiences with STEM on a professional level as we prepare to think about potential college majors and our future careers!

Thank you very much for your time. We look forward to hearing back!

Best regards,

[Sign name]

Creating Your Event

Advertise

How will you find attendees? Who are your attendees?

- Create a standard set of promotional materials to use across all platforms including social media, websites, posters, and flyers
- If hosting an outreach event, reach out to local non-profit organizations involved with K-12 education such as FIRST Robotics, Girls Scouts, or local school systems
- Ask your school/organization to help you promote the event on their websites, email blasts, and social media pages

Host the Event

All that hard work pays off! Take time to enjoy the event!

- Consider giving a feedback form at the end so that the event can be improved in future years
- Thank anyone who volunteered with a personal thank you
- Come together with your SWENext club to discuss what went well and what you learned which can help if you host another similar event in the future.



Events: Career/College Prep

What do you want to be when you grow up? What opportunities exist for you in the future? Taking steps towards preparing for college and careers can help you gain a better idea of the variety of possibilities that you may choose. Be aware that there may be restrictions on events due to youth protection regulations. Here are some ideas for events that you can host or participate in with collegiate and professional volunteers:



Collegiate

- Q&A Panel
- Majors fair (find students from various universities to come and represent their majors)
- Speed mentoring
- College tour / visit
- Participate in a local SWE section's general body meeting
- Have volunteers lead a fun STEM activity or team building exercise

Professional

- Career day or monthly career talks
- Ask a school counselor or teacher to give a workshop on writing resumes or the college application process
- Company tour / visit
- Workshops that teach a fun or professional skill
- Virtual discussions with women across all fields (STEM and non-STEM!)

Events: Career/College Prep

Collegiate and Professional volunteers serve as fantastic mentors! Hosting a Q&A panel or a speed mentoring event can be fun and high energy, and can be held virtually! Which event you host will be determined by the number of volunteers. Here is a list of potential talking points for these events:

College Applications

- If you could tell your past self anything, what would it be?
- What were your priorities when applying to college?
- What is something no one tells you when applying to college?
- How do I know that a school is the right one for me?
- What did you do to prepare for college?
- How can I find scholarships?
- What is the best way to organize my time when applying to college?
- What are some options that are alternatives to a traditional college path? (gap year, service academies, etc)

College Experiences

- What is your favorite part of being a student at [University]?
- Why did you choose your major?
- Why did you choose [University]?
- What are you involved with at [University]?
- Did you ever work / study abroad / do research?
- What has been your favorite class so far?
- Where can I go to find out more information about [University]?
- What are the biggest differences between high school and college?
- What influenced you in high school to become who you are?

Events: Career/College Prep

Career Preparation

- What did you do in high school/ college to help you understand your career goals?
- What is your engineering field? What are potential jobs in that field?
- How did you know you wanted to be an engineer?
- How did or didn't your major lead you to your career?
- What is your field and how has STEM played a role in its development?
- How does your career incorporate multiple fields? How does it incorporate non-STEM fields?

Mentorship / Resources

- Who can I go to for advice and resources?
- How have mentors played a role in your life?
- What are the benefits of finding mentors?
- What are some qualities / factors to consider when looking for a mentor?
- How can I make the most of a mentorship as a mentee?

Internships / Co-ops

- What is the difference between an internship and co-op?
- How do you find work opportunities while in college?
- What are the benefits of taking part in these opportunities when it comes to finding a professional career?
- What is the best way to prepare my resume and prepare for potential interviews?
- What is a career fair? When should I start going to career fairs? What is the benefit of going to career fairs?

SWE Experience

- What is your favorite part about SWE?
- What is your favorite SWE memory?
- Why did you join SWE? How does it benefit your career/ college experience?
- How do you help support SWE's mission?

Events: Outreach

Engineers work to serve communities by designing solutions to challenging problems. As a SWENext section, there are many ways that you can be a positive force for change in your local community.

STEM Events

How can you share your passion for STEM with your community? Here are some ideas to get you started!

- Visit a local school to talk about STEM or lead a demonstration
- Volunteer at a local nonprofit organization's summer STEM camp or weekend workshop
- Host a workshop or YouTube video series teaching a new skill
- Run a social media page highlighting fun STEM facts and activities
- Help build a garden or recycling program at your school to help with sustainability efforts
- Organize a hackathon or other competition

Volunteering

Helping your community through SWENext does not have to involve STEM! Check out some of these ideas to see other ways to impact your community.

- Host a food, clothing, or disaster relief drive
- Raise money for a local nonprofit organization or cause
- Volunteer with a soup kitchen, battered women's shelter, nursing home, animal shelter, or Special Olympics

Check out these links for some activity ideas!

<https://swe.org/k-12-outreach/swenext/swenext-clubs/middle-school-club-resources/>

<https://swe.org/k-12-outreach/swenext/swenext-clubs/elementary-school-club-resources/>

Events: Outreach

Looking to host a STEM day for younger girls? Check out this basic outline for a half day event.

Outline

7:00 - 8:00 : Volunteer check-in and set-up

8:00 - 8:30 : Check-in and light icebreakers

8:30 - 9:00 : Introduction, ground rules, large group icebreaker

9:00 -10:15 : Activity #1

10:15 - 11:30 : Activity #2

11:30 - 12:30 : Lunch and outside games

12:30 - 1:45 : Activity #3

1:45 - 2:00 : Closing remarks

2:00-2:30 : Attendee check-out

2:30- 3:00 : Volunteer clean up and check-out



In the schedule above, each activity includes a 10 minute introduction and lesson, and hour guided activity/design challenge, and 5 minute clean-up. Consider adding more time to the end of each activity for students to present their work. Discuss what went well, what did not go well, and how they might want to improve if they repeated the activity.

If there is a large number of attendees, split the attendees into groups and have each class running at the same time, with the groups rotating through each activity during the day. This will require a larger number of volunteers.

Events: Team Building

Not all events have to be serious! SWE represents a supportive family across the globe. Start becoming part of this larger network starting by building a community within your club!

Social Events

Sometimes the best activities are ones that let us relax and have fun!

- Plan a holiday potluck and celebrate together with good food. (If club members are from different cultures, ask for members to share a cultural dish of their choice!)
- Organize a study break during finals week with snacks and activities like arts and crafts or facials.
- Does your club enjoy the outdoors? Plan a picnic, hike, or maybe even go canoeing!
- Highlight a SWENexters of the Week and celebrate one another.
- Introduce your pets over a video call!

Teamwork Activities

From classic icebreaker games to building challenges, teamwork activities can teach members more about themselves and other club members!

- Is there a skill everyone wants to learn? Maybe a programming language or basic circuits? Have a “skill of the month” where SWENexters take turns to teach the club, or have members research a STEM field they are interested and present to the club!
- Although sometimes cheesy, simple activities like making spaghetti towers aid in learning communication skills. Start each meeting off with a quick icebreaker or challenge!
- Work with your school’s science teachers to do a large lab activity. **Exploding pumpkins** is always a fun way to kick off Fall holidays!



Questions? Comments? Concerns?

**Reach out to:
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Follow us on Instagram!

@swenext

