

UNA LASER Ideas for Branches

Each UNA Branch decides what activities it is going to do to be a 'critical friend of the UN' and then it keeps doing them. Each branch should make manageable aspirations and keep to them. Here are some ideas that branches have tried. This is a living document in which we would welcome your help with further ideas.

1. Finding Participants

- (i) Publicity – such as in
 - (a) Traditional: local library, local paper, newsagent, charity shops, Council newsletter
 - (b) Electronic: Nextdoor, Council (and other local organisations') electronic newsletters
- (ii) Contacting appropriate local people (by email, telephone, letter, visiting, tapping on the shoulder):
 - at local events, such as of like-minded organisations
 - university, college or school relevant faculties (eg heads of Geography);
 - local council members
 - large local employers, especially if in UN Global Compact
 - like-minded organisations (eg Rotary, Global Justice Now, Friends of the Earth)
- (iii) Social media (also Meetup, Eventbrite, etc)
- (iv) UNA-UK members and supporters (via UNA-UK supporters' list)

2. Governance support

- (i) Someone from another branch or LASER covering role (eg shared treasurer)
- (ii) training from – or shadowing of – another branch
- (iii) financial support for training (eg at NCVO)
- (iv) LASER team to review structure and local opportunities, with current officer(s)

3. Types of activities

- (i) Large Public meetings (evenings or week-ends)
 - (a) Live or virtual (eg zoom)
 - (b) On own or with another branch or branches
 - (c) With another organisation interested in chosen issue (eg Oxfam, a local political party)
 - (d) Can find free or cheap venues (such as churches, mosques,, libraries, museums, community centres, gudwaras, universities, House of Commons, Town Hall), perhaps linked to speaker
- (ii) Small meetings in members' homes: morning, lunch (bringing own packed lunches) or evening
 - (a) To draft campaigning letters
 - (b) To share info on a current issue
 - (c) To discuss relevant book or person
 - (d) Fundraising – such as picture auction for UNHCR
- (iii) Lunchtime or evening meetings in pub special rooms (perhaps people can bring sandwiches)
 - (a) With speaker(s)
 - (b) With members of the group contributing
 - (c) To discuss agreed issue / book / person
- (iv) Working with local schools
 - (a) Go (in pairs or threes?) to speak on current campaign or issue – eg run an assembly
 - (b) Organise MUN events – GA, SC, committees, etc - supporting material available from LASER
 - (c) Organise local schools' competition (eg debating a current UN priority issue)
- (v) Lobbying local MPs and/or Councils on current UN issues (eg COP 28)
 - (a) Send letter/email
 - (b) Visit MP's or councillors' surgery – NB photo for local media
 - (c) Election hustings (local and national)
- (vi) Organise major annual event
 - (a) Film Festival (focusing on UN issues)
 - (b) Annual prestige lecture (sponsored by local firm of similar interest – eg law, trade, food, health, employment, environment), possibly with local college / university / library