How to Create a
Clean Air Organization in Your City

Hello! Emily here from [Clean Air Club](). I've gotten so many requests to chat about how I started Clean Air Club, how to translate this to other cities, and so on, that it made sense to write this up. I hope that my experience helps make yours a bit easier. Every city deserves clean air at all of its arts events. Until city governments require that, organizations like ours will be necessary. Good luck, and if I could give just one piece of advice, it would be to **just go for it**. Everything else will follow.

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How to Create a Clean Air Organization in Your City:

1. [Branding]()
2. [Financials]()
3. [Gear]()
4. [Legal]()
5. [Logistics]()
6. [Online Presence]()
7. [Organizational Structure]()
8. [Outreach]()
9. [Science]()

1. Branding

Come up with a name to represent your organization. <u>Please do not use the "Clean Air Club" name</u> (I believe that this would cause confusion regarding affiliation, funding, donations, and partnerships). Just pick a cute name for your city, and stick with it.

Create a logo! Ideally this is something easily recognizable on posters at any size. [Canva](#) is a free resource to create nice logos. Make sure you save both opaque and transparent versions of your logo for partners' use.

Select your fonts, colors, etc., and stick to these. You may also want to think about what the "tone" of your organization will be – will it be stern? Snarky? Cheeky? Neutral? I think consistent tone is important in establishing who you are and what kinds of people will want to be involved in your project.

Write a 1-sentence summary of what your organization does. For example, Clean Air Club's is:

> *"Clean Air Club provides free air purifiers to Chicago artists and touring musicians so their shows are covid-safer."*

Fee free to use that, if you wish!

Write a 1-paragraph summary of what your organization does. Again, feel free to copy whatever is on the Clean Air Club website (except for the branding itself, i.e. logo + name). Both of these blurbs will be useful to send to media, potential partners, etc. to describe what it is that you do.

Get some cheap stickers printed with your logo to place on your purifiers.

2. Financials

A. Getting Money

There are two main sources of funds, from what I've seen: crowdfunded donations and grants.

Start a GoFundMe as soon as you can to begin collecting donations. Just write up a description of your organization's mission and what your target financial goal will allow you to purchase. Then, individually text or email this link to everyone you're close to with a *personal* ask for their support. Don't just post it on your stories.

Once the organization is up and running, you may also want to **apply for grants**. I am not an expert in this, and you should speak with a grant-writer. These are much larger quantities of money and they are harder to get. There are some grants available specifically for musicians, artists, and the disability community, so you can start there.

B. Keeping Track of Money

It's very important that you **keep track of all of your incoming funds and expenditures**. I recommend a simple excel spreadsheet or google spreadsheet that has the following basic elements:

Clean Air Club - Expenses			BALANCE:	5.41					
	Outflow		Total:	4784.07	Inflow			Total:	4789.48
Date	Vendor	Items		Cost	Date	Source	Notes		Amount

[Image description: screenshot of 3 rows of a spreadsheet titled "Clean Air Club - Expenses." It is divided into Outflow and Inflow. Each of the two has a column for Date, Vendor, Items, and Cost.]

This helps you keep track of where your money is coming from and where it's going. It also allows you to post periodic financial updates to those who have donated or otherwise follow your organization. **Financial transparency** is extremely important for the integrity of all donation-based organizations.

C. Storing Money

I highly recommend opening a free, separate checking account into which all donations go and out of which all purchases are made. It is unwise to mix the organization's finances with your own finances.

3. Gear

You will need to research what gear makes the most sense for your organization. For what it's worth, Clean Air Club uses:

1. Smart Air's Blast Mk II Mini purifier
2. BlueAir's 411 purifier
3. Smart Air's QT3 portable purifier

We are also looking into far-UVC right now and will update this document with what we decide on.

You may want to **reach out to specific manufacturers** and try to get either an ongoing discount on gear or direct donations. It's always worth an ask!

In terms of **managing gear**, create a spreadsheet that gives each purifier a number (like "Purifier 001"). Then label each purifier or other piece of gear with your organization name, the purifier number you've assigned to it, and your contact email. Make sure that you also keep records of when each purifier was purchased and therefore what date the filter will need to be changed. I'd also recommend purchasing a couple extra cables for any purifier that has a detachable cable in case of loss. These things happen!

You do not need a lot of available **storage space** for the gear. As you'll see in the Logistics section of this document, the purifiers are mostly out and about in the world rather than waiting in your basement for the next booking.

4. Legal

A. Minimizing Liability

It is important that you do not inadvertently expose yourself to liability as you are trying to make a positive difference in the community. This means you should never make claims like the following:

> "You won't get covid if there's an air purifier."
> "You'll be fine at [your org name]'s shows!"
> "Air purifiers protect you from covid."

None of these statements are true, though they may be comforting. The reality is that there is risk inherent in everything we do. So the best course of action is to *always stick to the science* when describing the ways that your interventions are likely to help the community. For example, it is scientifically-backed to say that air purifiers reduce the chances of covid transmission in indoor spaces. So it is fine and even encouraged to publicize these amazing scientific facts. Just do not make guarantees that you cannot keep, and always emphasize that each person has to make decisions that are best for *them*.

B. Agreements with Partners

There are two basic things that you will want in writing when you loan out a purifier: one, that you will get it back; and two, that their liability does not become your liability. If you contact Clean Air Club, we will send you the contracts we use. We are not lawyers, but you are welcome to use the same contracts if you wish. See the "Logistics" section for how to manage these forms.

C. Branding

You may want to consider trademarking your logo as well as creating an LLC or other corporate or non-profit legal entity under which to operate your organization. This helps separate it from your personal finances as well as your personal liability. Neither of these steps is necessary, but it is worth mentioning.

5. Logistics

Your biggest obstacle will likely be **handling the logistics** of processing gear requests and getting the purifiers from point A to point B (and C and D and E……). Clean Air Club uses Airtable to manage these logistics, though early on we used Google Calendars. It depends on the number of purifiers in your library and the number of bookings per month.

It helps to have a gear request form available on your website / social media to streamline the requests. This can be done through Google Forms or Airtable. Here is Clean Air Club's request form for your reference.

Once a request has been approved, you should email the new partner with:

1. Information about their confirmed booking
2. A link for them to sign your loan agreement forms
3. Your organization's logo files for them to use on flyers

All of this can be done manually or automated through Airtable.

Overall, the purifier transportation logistics depend on the partners/artists themselves. The purifiers go out into the world on their first booking, and then all future bookings are picked up by the artists. So the purifiers go from artist to artist, and Clean Air Club itself is rarely involved in dropping them off / driving them around the city.

If you're using **Google Calendar** to manage these bookings, create a new "Calendar" for each purifier. Then schedule each booking on the calendar corresponding to the purifier that is being loaned out for that booking. Eventually, you will be able to view them all in rows and quickly see which purifiers are available on which day.

Once this gets unmanageable, you may want to switch to **Airtable**. On Airtable, Clean Air Club has a separate tab for each of the following:

1. A list of the purifiers
2. A list of all people we interact with for Clean Air Club
3. A list of all purifier requests (submitted through a custom Airtable form)
4. A list of all purifier bookings (with both grid view as well as timeline view – *timeline view is essential and is what makes Airtable worth the expenditure*)
5. A repository of everyone who has signed our contract (which includes a custom Airtable form for gathering signatures)

This allows us to quickly process requests and manage bookings all in one location.

You also need to develop **a system for notifying partners where to pick up their purifier**. We are working on automating that within Airtable (another reason Airtable is amazing for this).

Otherwise, you can do it manually. A few days before each booking (for each purifier), send an email that cc's both the person who currently has it and the person who will have it next. Then instruct them to work out a time for pickup amongst themselves.

When an artist does not have a means of picking up the purifier, you can put a call out for **volunteer drivers** to shuttle the purifier from one booking to the next.

6. Online Presence

Once you establish your organization name, **establish accounts** on the following sites and upload your logo as your profile pic:

1. Gmail
2. Instagram
3. Twitter

In addition, you may want to **create a website**. Clean Air Club uses [GoDaddy](#) for domain name registration as well as website creation.

In general, I advocate for a **value-add approach** to all social media and online presence: post things that leverage *your expertise*, and therefore *add value* to the site you're on. I believe this has been one of the chief things responsible for the rapid growth of Clean Air Club.

Make sure, as much as possible, that you have **consistent branding** across your online presence(s) and across all of your posts. Stick to the fonts and colors you've chosen for your branding.

When you're starting out, it helps to follow a bunch of small- to mid-sized organizations whose values align with yours. You can also send personalized messages to each one of them explaining who you are. The key here is real, meaningful connection that is not for anything other than genuine connection. Any attempts at "social climbing" etc. are quite transparent and give off a bad vibe.

7. Organizational Structure

You will need to decide whether you are going to run this organization on your own (with volunteers here and there helping with specific tasks), or whether you want to share executive decision-making with other people. Both have their pros and cons.

The advantage of **doing it mostly yourself** is you can make the organization conform entirely to *your* vision. You also do not have to spend any time in strategy meetings, figuring out what next steps are, etc. This is a huge time and effort saver, and may be worth it for someone who just likes to get things done without a lot of shared decision making. The disadvantage, of course, is that you are doing everything! If you can get good at asking for help when needed, this mitigates it to some degree, but the reality is that this path is a lot of work.

Doing it in collaboration with others on a non-hierarchical basis has the benefit of community, a shared and therefore reduced workload, and a group of people with whom to actively strategize and bounce ideas off of. The downside is that there is more process work that goes into group decision making, and this process work is very important if the group is to be healthy and empowering for all members. You will need to be more intentional and explicit about your organizational structure, principles, grievance procedures, and so on, in a group setting.

Whichever route you take, I encourage you to **make use of visual mapping to lay out the structure of the organization**. What are the different pillars, and which skills are required for each pillar? Who do you know who might have the relevant expertise in each pillar? Organization mapping can simultaneously be social mapping. Below is a screenshot of the Miro board that Clean Air Club used in the beginning stages of the organization development:
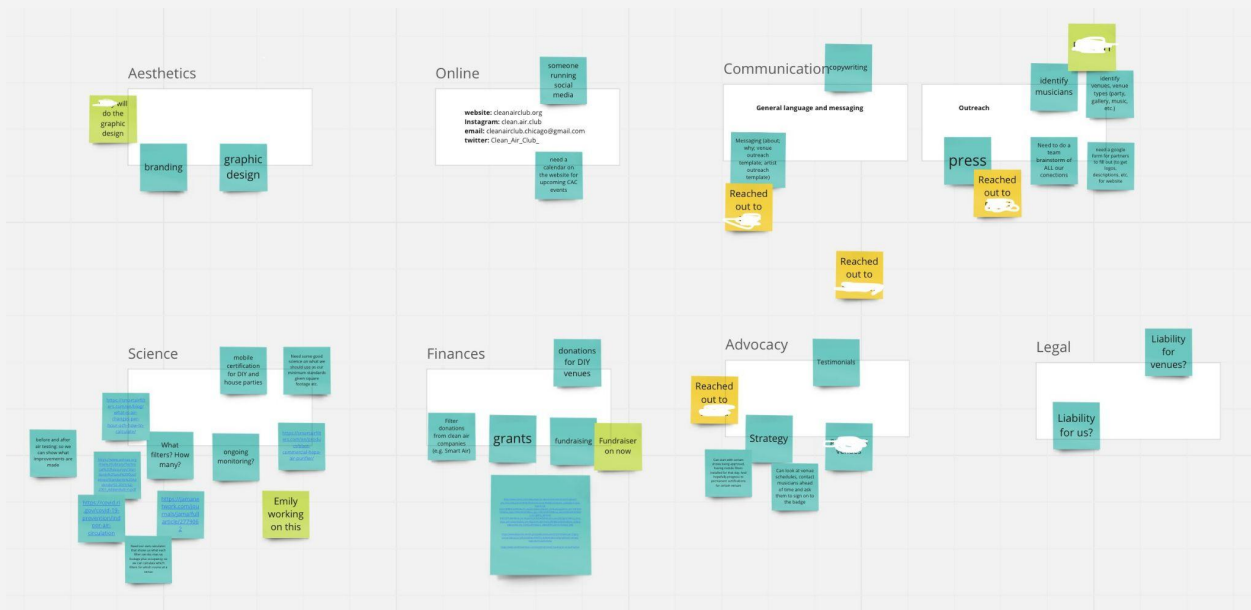
[Image description: screenshot of a Miro board which looks like a virtual bulletin board. There are teal, green, and yellow sticky notes all over, arranged on white squares. The white squares are titled Aesthetics, Online, Communication, Science, Finances, Advocacy, and Legal.]

This allowed Clean Air Club to really hone in on the inner workings of the organization. It also allowed for an itemization of tasks that really helps in keeping things well-paced and never overwhelming.

8. Outreach

A. Artist Partners

You may decide that you want a handful of **official "artist partners"** of your organization. These artist partners are people or bands who align with your covid safety values and who therefore want to commit to having some or all of their shows purified by you. It helps, especially at the beginning of an organization's existence, to have these kinds of partnerships.

In addition to steady artist partners, I recommend reaching out to specific local bands who have upcoming tours and shows and asking them if they'd like to borrow a purifier for it. Again, personalized DM's and emails are the best. If there's a big band coming through town that you know prioritizes covid safety, reach out to them ahead of time, explain what your organization is, and offer purifiers. I have had a lot of success with all of these strategies.

Lastly, follow the social media accounts of all of the local bands in your city.

B. Comrades

There are many covid-safety organizations - local, national, and global - that want to know about the work you're doing. Once you've established your online presence, reach out to them and **introduce yourself**. Always prioritize the local organizations! These are the people in your community who share your values.

As you establish more of an online presence, put out a **call for volunteers** whenever you need assistance with things. The key here is to put out *very specific* asks. Here are some examples:

> "Is there someone who is good at AirTable and can help set it up for us?"
> "Is there someone who is willing to drive a purifier from A to B?"
> "Is there someone with graphic design skills who wants to make a poster for us?"

You're much more likely to get enthusiastic participation when you set people up for success.

C. Media

Once you've provided purifiers at a number of shows, start **getting in touch with media**. Once again, start *local*. Contact the neighborhood newspaper; the local music podcast; the city show report. Introduce yourself, tell them what you've been doing and what the community response has been, and make yourself available for an interview if they're interested.

If they do want to do a story on your organization, they will likely want to interview you. Make sure you are prepared for this interview. Likely, it'll be over the phone and they will record it. I

highly recommend developing a document of "talking points" that you can use as a reference during the interview. Your talking points should be brief and include the important elements of:

- Your organization
- Why your organization is necessary
- What you've accomplished so far
- What the community response has been
- What your plans are going forward

If the media wants to do an in-person interview, don't be afraid to insist on covid precautions. Your safety is more important than publicity for your organization.

9. Science

It is very important that you **spend *a lot* of time researching and becoming familiar with the scientific studies** that support the efficacy of whatever intervention your organization is focusing on. If you're using purifiers, you need to be able to explain in detail how they work and how *well* they work. Same goes for far-UVC or any other technology. People will look to you as an expert on this technology and it is important that you can deliver on that expectation. Other scientific concepts you should become familiar with include "air changes per hour," "equivalent air changes per hour," airborne transmission, and the difference between exposure and infection.

It is also important that the claims you make about your intervention's efficacy are accurate *for the specific use cases of your organization*. For example, if you say that a purifier is 95% effective at removing Covid from the air, then you need to have selected the right strength and number of purifiers for the cubic-footage of the venue you are purifying to make that true. [This calculator](#) is a good way to figure out how effective your air purifiers will be in a given venue, as is this [explainer](#). If you don't have enough purifiers to filter a large venue to your satisfaction, that's ok. Just make sure it's clear to your audience that you are adopting a harm-reduction approach (where every mitigation helps, even if it's not as impactful as you might hope given the size of your purifier library).