

Running a branch

Training

Centre
Rebuilding the centre ground

This guide shows how to start a branch, what you can do to help it grow, and your long-term aims.

Registering as a branch or a society

To register as a branch, you will need to inform a Director who will then run a vote with our team. You will then be informed whether your application to create a branch has been successful.

For student societies, you need to contact your Student Union or check their website for details on how to register a society with them.

Getting a logo

Once your branch is approved, you will then need to ask for a logo for use by your society or branch. This logo can then be used on all graphics and social media content released by you as a branch. To get a logo made for your branch or society, contact info@centrethinktank.co.uk.

Building a branch executive

Before you start a branch, ensure you have a few people interested in joining, including some who would like to hold roles. We would suggest having around ten signed-up members who want to join the new branch.

The first step is to request a set of graphics for each of the positions you need to fill within your branch from our Director.

Once you receive them, you can see how to schedule and post the graphics by using our “Running our digital campaign” guide.

The list of available local, regional, state, and student branch positions can be found in our “Internal workings” and “Students internal workings”.

You will then set up the branch alongside other individuals in your area. To fill these positions, the first step is to speak to those who are local to you, are also politically active, and may want to fill one of the positions.

You can then announce each of your new team members and that your new branch is running.

Planning your social media strategy

When you start up a branch, you will be given an email address for the branch by the Director. You can use this email address to start social media accounts on Instagram, Bluesky, X (formerly Twitter), and Facebook.

For more information about how to post on social media, look at our “style guide” and our “Running our digital campaign” guide.

Growing your grassroots

Once you have set up the foundations for your branch, the next step is to grow your grassroots. This means building your membership base, getting the word out about the new branch, and increasing the number of supportive members of the public in your area.

For student branches, you can promote your branch at freshers fairs. Items you can purchase to hand out can include wristbands, keyrings, bookmarks, stickers for your campaigns, bottle openers, and badges. You may also consider purchasing a roller banner with our logo on it.

Running events

Events are a good way to meet up with members of your branch and to get others involved. Event formats can include:

Running a panel event either in person or online.

Interviews with local or national politicians, academics, or activists.

If you decide to run an event, check the individuals you would like to invite to the event with the Director first.

You should then post about the event beforehand on social media. You can also inform local papers, speak to local groups, and ask your Student Union to promote the event.

After the event, you can post photos of the event. However, before taking any photos, you need to make it clear to everyone who will be in the photo that they will be used on social media.

Your short and medium-term aims

As a branch, you are there to represent us at a student, local, regional, or state level and to grow our support in that area. This can include:

Running campaigns on local issues that align with our policy goals.

Hosting events. For larger events, you can ask supporters or other members of our networks to speak.

Lobbying local Members of Parliament and councillors in your area on our papers and policies.

Gaining positive press coverage for your campaigns and activities.

Increasing membership and donations in your area.

Your long-term goals

In the long term, branches should aim to become financially self-sufficient using membership fees.

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