

Reasons to Believe Chapter Guidelines

Updated June 2019

Chapter Mission

Reasons to Believe (RTB) chapters exist to connect the ministry of RTB with communities around the world, encouraging and equipping fellow Christians for productive dialogue that invites doubters and skeptics to follow Jesus Christ.

Chapter Vision

By 2022, RTB chapters will increase RTB's presence and partnerships by working with the outreach team to host events and build strategic relationships. Specific goals include:

1. Hosting 1–2 events annually with an RTB scholar or visiting scholar
2. Forming relationships with organizations and churches in their communities that lead to new or expanded ministry partnership
3. Supporting RTB's name acquisition goals
4. Hosting ongoing community gatherings for Christians and non-Christians to dialogue about science-faith issues

Chapter Formation

1. Persons interested in forming an RTB chapter should contact chapters@reasons.org. Chapters will be chartered and approved via the Chapters Manager (RTB CM).
2. Each person seeking to organize an RTB chapter will fill out and submit a chapter officer application and affirm adherence to the RTB Statement of Faith (SOF) and Position Statement (PS). Once all required forms are submitted, the RTB CM will schedule a phone or video interview with applicants.
3. In order to be considered active, chapters must have a minimum of two officers: a chapter president and at least one supporting officer.
4. Chapters will receive notification of approval upon completing the chapter application process, including appropriate forms and an interview with the RTB CM.
5. Chapters should divide the work of the chapter among both/all officers. Chapters can designate specific titles for supporting officers (Vice President, Secretary, Promotion Officer, etc.) or use the general title of Chapter Officer. Chapters may add as many supporting officers as needed.
6. For consistency, all chapters will be designated as "RTB [City, 2-letter postal abbreviation for state] Chapter" or, in the case of a regional chapter, "RTB [region, 2-letter abbreviation] Chapter." For example, RTB Waynesboro, PA Chapter or RTB Orange County, CA Chapter.
7. After being approved, chapters must submit content for their web page on RTB's site. Please contact the RTB CM for these specific requirements.
8. A Google account will be created for each chapter. The Gmail address will be the main point of contact for the chapter and will be published on each chapter's web page along with the Google Calendar.

RTB Chapter Officer Requirements and Duties

1. Chapter Officer Requirements
 - a. Commitment to RTB's mission and core values
 - b. Familiarity with and adherence to the RTB Chapter Guidelines
 - c. Familiarity with and adherence to RTB's Statement of Faith and Position Statement
 - d. An understanding of and the ability to share a brief overview of RTB's creation model approach.
 - e. Subscription to all regular communications from RTB
 - f. Familiarity with the content of at least three RTB books: *Always Be Ready*, *Navigating Genesis*, plus any other RTB book or booklet of choice
 - g. Participation as a current (present-year), regular donor to RTB

2. Chapter Officer Duties:
 - a. Complete the chapter officer requirements, as stated above and described on the Officer Application either before taking an officer position or within the first 60 days after being selected.
 - b. Serve the chapter under the direction of the RTB CM and, if a supporting officer, under the direction of the chapter president.
 - c. Encourage participation in RTB chapter and outreach events.
 - d. Encourage financial support of RTB, as appropriate.

3. President's Duties:
 - a. Fulfill the above duties/requirements.
 - b. Serve as the primary liaison between the chapter and the RTB CM, providing any reports and documents requested by the RTB CM.
 - c. Preside over all chapter activities or assign another officer to preside in your absence.
 - d. Oversee recruitment of new officers and provide references for them to the RTB CM.
 - e. Review and sign, under the guidance of the RTB CM, all agreements or contracts involving the chapter.
 - f. Manage chapter finances in collaboration with one other officer and the RTB CM.
 - g. Submit quarterly reports to the RTB CM listing average attendance, content covered in meetings, and any support needed from RTB HQ.

Recruitment of Officers

RTB Chapters are responsible for the recruitment of new officers who meet the chapter officer requirements or can fulfill them within 60 days of submitting the chapter officer application. New officers are to be vetted by the current officer team, with final approval from the chapter president. Approved candidates need not be interviewed by the RTB CM. However, a reference letter/email from the chapter president must be submitted to the RTB CM for each new officer.

If the chapter president position becomes available, the current officer team must agree on who shall fill the position, and this individual must be interviewed by the RTB CM before taking office.

Chapter Membership

Chapters that choose to have formal membership will be responsible for setting the requirements, including the collection of membership dues. Below are suggested requirements for chapter membership:

1. Agreement with the RTB Statement of Faith and acknowledgment by signature
2. Participation in and assistance with chapter events
3. Subscription to and perusal of all RTB communications
4. Availability to assist chapter officers with regular duties

RTB Statement of Faith and Position Statement

The RTB Statement of Faith (SOF) expresses the doctrinal conviction of every member of the RTB staff, board of directors, and chapter officers. The RTB Position Statement expresses distinct views on specific science-and-faith issues that anyone who represents RTB is asked to reflect. Officers must affirm their agreement with the SOF and their willingness to reflect the PS while representing RTB. If an officer takes issue, in good conscience, with any part of these statements, the concern or question should be submitted to the RTB CM. Each case will be reviewed and responded to by the RTB scholar team.

Chapter Goals and Operations

RTB recognizes that chapters differ in size, locations/venues, and culture, and that this can make standardized operation and measurement of success difficult. The information below expands on the goals and presents ways chapters may operate, as they are able:

1. Annual events
 - a. All chapters are required to host 1–2 outreach events per year. The number of required events will be based on the capability of the chapter and size of the officer team.
 - b. Annual events should be designed to reach an audience larger than that of regular ongoing meetups, using a member of the RTB scholar team or a visiting scholar.
 - c. Outreach events must be coordinated in collaboration with the RTB outreach team.
 - d. Events can include an in-person presentation or live video presentation.
 - e. Name acquisition is essential for any chapter outreach event.
 - f. Promotion will be a joint venture of the chapter and RTB’s outreach and marketing departments.
2. Forming Relationships
 - a. Chapters are requested to take initiative on forming relationships/partnerships that can lead to speaking events/opportunities in their area.
 - b. Chapters should partner with the RTB outreach team to identify potentially strategic partnerships.
 - c. Primary targets should be host churches and ministries with mission and values similar to RTB’s.
3. Name Acquisition
 - a. Chapters will assist in name acquisition through their regular meetups and annual outreach events. Names will be collected through communication cards or by digital means and shared between RTB and the chapter.
 - b. The goal is to collect 10% of attendees’ names per event.

- c. Chapters will be encouraged to help with the RTB book table at large events in their area, especially by encouraging attendees to submit a communication card at the book table.
 - d. Chapters may host booths/book tables at other (non-RTB) local events to spread awareness of RTB and collect new names of interested persons.
4. Ongoing Gatherings
- a. Chapters should build and maintain community by hosting gatherings/meetups (e.g., coffee shop discussions, monthly meetings/events, study series, field trips).
 - b. Gatherings may be more informal than annual events and can cover a wider range of topics and include more organic conversation.
 - c. Gatherings can target Christians for equipping purposes or non-Christians in an environment that invites open conversation for the sake of evangelism. The target audience will be decided by the chapter leadership.
 - d. If a chapter chooses to have ongoing live presentations, chapters must use approved speakers. Contact the RTB CM for the Speaker Request Form. Chapter officers and previously approved speakers are not required to submit the form.

RTB Chapters may pursue other types of events and activities not mentioned above if such activities support the mission and vision of RTB chapters. New activities should first be proposed to and approved by the RTB CM. All approved activities should be promoted on the chapter's Google Calendar and reported to RTB via the quarterly report.

Social Media

RTB chapters are strongly encouraged to maintain social media presence including, but not limited to, Facebook (pages and/or groups), Twitter, and Instagram. Chapters that create social media profiles must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Profile names should include "RTB" or "Reasons to Believe," the area/name, and the word "chapter" so as to avoid being confused with the home office (i.e. RTB Chicago Chapter or Reasons to Believe Chicago Chapter).
2. Use the RTB logo in profile pictures.
3. Update at least once a week by sharing content from RTB_Official/scholar pages, posting content from reasons.org, and promoting chapter activities.
4. Posts should be relevant to science-faith topics and should reflect the core values of RTB, including those stated in 1 Peter 3:15–16.
5. Content and links from non-RTB sources are allowed if relevant to the chapter but should be posted in moderation so as to not overshadow RTB content.

RTB Chapter Benefits

1. Free RTB resources, on occasion, for chapter use
2. 10% discount on RTB materials for chapter members
3. 20% discount on RTB materials for chapter officers
4. 40% discount on RTB materials that will be used in chapter meetings or other outreach activities
5. On occasion, participation in group phone/video calls with an RTB scholar
6. If an RTB outreach event is being held in the vicinity of an active chapter, chapter officers and members may have the opportunity to interact with an RTB scholar for an informal meet & greet or Q&A session.

Disbanding Chapters

In rare and unfortunate circumstances, a chapter may lose its affiliation with RTB. If a chapter is operating outside of the Chapter Guidelines or not staying active, RTB will first take steps to reconcile any issues with the chapter officers. If no solution or agreement can be reached, the chapter will lose its affiliation with RTB. Each situation will be handled on a case by case basis, but below are a few examples of what can lead to the disbanding of a chapter:

1. One year of no activity
2. One year of failure to submit quarterly reports
3. Violation of RTB's core values
4. Hosting events with speakers not approved by RTB's outreach and/or scholar team

Operating Income and Revenue

1. RTB will provide each chapter with a stipend of \$200 per fiscal year (July–June) for operational support and outreach endeavors. This money will be deposited into a chapter account at RTB and held until requested by the chapter president or other approved officer. Stipends do not carry over into the next fiscal year. Stipends can be used in any of three ways:
 - a. A chapter may be reimbursed for purchases made to support chapter activities. The chapter president or other approved officer must submit a receipt with a description of the purchased item(s) and how it serves the chapter. The RTB CM will evaluate the purchase and, if approved, a check will be sent to the purchaser. Receipts must be submitted within 90 days of the purchase. To ensure the reimbursement is approved, advise the RTB CM of the purchase before making it.
 - b. The stipend (or a portion of it) may be used to purchase RTB resources for the chapter (e.g., books, booklets, study guides, DVDs). The chapter president must submit a request via email to the RTB CM with a list of desired resources. All resources will be sent to the chapter president. Shipping costs as well as the discounted cost of materials will be deducted from the stipend.
 - c. RTB can pay vendors directly, via check, for chapter costs (i.e., venue fees, food services, etc.). A request must be submitted via email to the RTB CM that includes a description of the cost, as well as an invoice and payee information.
2. Chapters *may* collect dues (non-tax-deductible) from members, whether annually, quarterly, or monthly, if additional funding is needed for normal operations or outreach events. The amount of the dues, if any, shall be agreed upon by the chapter officers. Every effort should be made to keep membership affordable to all. A member's request for exemption from paying dues shall be considered and approved on an individual basis by the chapter officers. Dues will be managed by the chapters—not by RTB.

RTB Chapter Donation Policies

1. Money and/or in-kind gifts given directly to chapters may be accepted but are not tax-deductible.
2. Tax-deductible donations to RTB for individual chapters will be accepted in the following circumstances:
 - a. RTB will accept and receipt donations directed for immediate (current year) approved use by a particular chapter. Donations should not be specified as to how the chapter can use the funds but simply designated for individual chapter use. The gift must meet the tax-exempt purpose of RTB and be reviewed by appropriate RTB ministry personnel, including the RTB CM.
 - b. RTB retains the right to allocate these funds as the RTB CM and executive team deem appropriate, if unused by the chapter.
 - c. Restricted donations may be accepted and used in the same manner as chapter stipends.
 - d. All restricted donations to chapters will be held and managed by RTB until requested by the chapter.
 - e. All donations must be made to and received by RTB through current donation channels. RTB will receipt in accordance with IRS policies once the donation is accepted.
3. Chapters may not apply for federal tax-exempt nonprofit 501(c)(3) status.
4. Chapters are discouraged from opening bank accounts unless necessary for efficient operation. If a chapter chooses to open a bank account, the officers are responsible for maintaining it. RTB is not liable for the management of individual chapter bank accounts.
5. Current RTB donation policy is on file at RTB headquarters and is available upon request.