

PRSSA



2025–2026

PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Manual

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PRSSA and PRSA Relationship

Initial Creation

PRSSA was established in November 1967 at the PRSA Assembly in Philadelphia, when delegates voted unanimously to create a student Society. This milestone was led by advocates Chris Teahan, Jon Riffel, APR and J. Carroll Bateman, APR. Since then, PRSSA has thrived through the support of PRSA, the PRSA Foundation and leaders like Betsy Plank, APR, Fellow PRSA.

Today, PRSSA works closely with a strong network of 100+ PRSA professional Chapters across the United States. Cultivating a good relationship with your sponsor Chapter offers valuable mentorship and networking, while your PRSSA Chapter can support them through reverse mentoring, volunteering and social media efforts.

PRSSA Benefits from PRSA

- [MYPRSA](#). Your MyPRSA account gives you access to free webinars, case studies, networking tools and the PRSA Member Directory.
- **PRSA Member Directory**. Need a mentor, an informational interview or a speaker? Log in to MyPRSA to access PRSA's directory of 21,000 professionals across all fields.
- [PRSA Associate Membership](#). As a PRSSA member, you can join PRSA as an Associate Member from five months before to two years after graduation for just \$67—a \$200 yearly savings. Plus, you will also receive a free one-year membership in PRSA's New Professionals Section.
- **PR Case Studies**. These Silver and Bronze Anvil award-winning case studies showcase top PR work. Use them to learn about the industry, prepare for competitions or simply enhance your education.
- [Webinars](#). Access PRSA webinars for training and Chapter programming. Along with paid options, PRSA also offers free webinars for PRSSA members.
- [News and Intelligence](#). Access PRSA's database of articles and case studies, PRSA *Strategies & Tactics*, PRSA blogs and podcasts.
- **PRSA Sponsor Chapters**. Every PRSSA Chapter is partnered with a PRSA sponsor Chapter. The professionals at these Chapters can be your mentors, speakers and advisers.

PRSA Benefits From PRSSA

PRSA members can benefit from a successful PRSSA relationship as well. By engaging with PRSSA members, they can gain insights on emerging trends and connect with potential interns. Some Chapters also support PRSA through events and volunteer efforts.

Connect With Your Sponsor Chapter

Every PRSSA Chapter has a PRSA sponsor Chapter. While you may reach out to any PRSA Chapter, the PRSA Chapter that sponsored your charter application is your PRSA sponsor Chapter. You can browse the list of sponsor Chapters on the [PRSSA website](#).

Build a strong relationship with your PRSA sponsor Chapter through your Professional or Faculty Adviser. Start with joint events like speed networking, Q&A panels or workshops, and attend PRSA-hosted events. Some PRSA Chapters also welcome students to write event recaps or blogs—ask how you can get involved!

Connect With Your Sponsor Chapter

If you're not near your sponsor Chapter, try these ideas:

- **Webinars.** Invite PRSA professionals to speak on relevant topics and engage your Chapter in a virtual discussion.
- **Social Media.** Spotlight PRSA leaders, co-host Instagram takeovers or share joint content to raise awareness and engagement.
- **Meet halfway.** Choose a central location for in-person collaboration.
- **Plan a trip.** Attend District Conferences or carpool to PRSA events.

Many professionals are more than willing to assist students but remember that help is not given without asking for it. Be proactive and reach out to your sponsor Chapter.

Faculty and Professional Advisers

Every year, PRSSA Chapters elect one Faculty Adviser and one or two Professional Advisers to serve as their connections to the sponsoring PRSA Chapter. These Advisers are among the most visible role models of the public relations profession and they can help your Chapter access the talent and valuable resources of PRSA.

Chapter Liaison

Your Chapter should consider electing a liaison to attend local PRSA meetings. The liaison will open the lines of communication between your members and the professionals. The liaison can also help solicit financial support, speakers, volunteer opportunities and job leads from PRSA and the professional community.

Interaction Ideas

Help your members tap into professional networking by inviting PRSA members to your Chapter events. Consider these options:

- Offer professional ethics training
- Host tours of media, agencies or corporations
- Develop mentoring programs
- Promote internship opportunities
- Collaborate on public service campaigns
- Provide workshops on résumés, portfolios and interviews
- Offer career guidance through campus resources
- Assist with entry-level job searches
- Support your PRSA sponsor Chapter's events and campaigns

Speakers

Create a speaker calendar by setting a schedule for PRSSA meetings with topics and professional speakers. Early each semester, ask your PRSA contacts if they're available or can recommend others. If you lack contacts, connect with your Advisers and PRSA Chapter President to build a list that can serve as a directory.

Share the calendar with your Chapter's Social Media Chair and PRSA Chapter for promotion. Assign a Chapter officer to handle confirmations, logistics and thank-you notes.

Professional Tours

Give members firsthand insight into different career paths by organizing tours or panels:

- **Media Tours.** Partner with PRSA members and journalists to visit media outlets or host panels where students learn how stories are selected, how to pitch effectively and media relations best practices.
- **Agency Tours.** Collaborate with PRSA members in agencies to explore how agencies operate, giving students insights into this career path.
- **Corporate Tours.** Connect with PRSA members working in corporate PR to hear about their roles, internal communications and stakeholder relations.

Engage your PRSA Chapter for contacts and planning support, and involve PRSSA students in coordinating these events.

Mentoring Program

A mentoring program offers invaluable experience for both students and professionals. To build or improve your Chapter's program, follow these steps:

- **Identify and Match.** Gather interested students by experience, year and goals. Work with your Advisers and local PRSA Chapter to find professionals eager to mentor. Often, PRSA members recruit fellow practitioners to participate.
- **Set Expectations.** Clearly define program requirements for both mentors and mentees to ensure commitment and avoid misunderstandings.
- **Encourage Student Initiative.** Encourage students to make the first contact and set mentoring goals. This builds networking skills and ensures engaged participation.

- **Host a Kick-Off Event.** Organize a reception or meeting for mentors and mentees—consider aligning it with PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Month in October—to foster comfort and strengthen connections. Mix individual and group meetings to maintain momentum.
- **Evaluate Regularly.** Check in with participants to assess progress and address any concerns.

Mentoring Fair

Many PRSA Chapters host mentoring fairs—like job fairs—where employers meet students to discuss internships. These events help students practice interviewing and give professionals a chance to recruit talent.

Internship Opportunities

Partner with your school's career services and local PRSA Chapter to identify potential internships and companies interested in communication roles. Many companies don't offer internships simply because they haven't been asked—use your PRSA network to explore possibilities and encourage firms to create positions.

If no one in your Chapter can take on managing an internship, encourage the company to post it on the [PRSA Jobcenter](#) for broader student access. For more info, contact the [Vice President of Career Services](#).

Public Service Projects

Collaborating on public service projects is a powerful way to strengthen the PRSA-PRSSA relationship while serving the community. This real-world exposure fosters mentorship, teamwork and professional development. If your Chapter has a Student-run Firm, consider involving it in pro bono work to provide structured support for these projects.

PRSA Monthly Meetings

Encourage your Chapter members to attend local PRSA Chapter meetings and events. Building relationships with PRSA professionals can open doors and ease the transition from student to professional.

In addition to monthly meetings, explore other PRSA events like networking mixers, happy hours and professional development sessions. If students are unable to attend the full event, volunteering (such as helping with check-in) is a great way to meet professionals, make a strong first impression and become part of the community.

Best Practice Examples

ADPR Connection — University of Georgia

Joint PRSSA + AdClub Networking Event

Purpose: Connect advertising, PR and communications students with PRSA Georgia professionals.

Features:

- Prep blog and “Land The Job” boot camp prior to the event
- Luncheon, workshops, mixer and career fair
- 100+ professionals from 50+ companies
- Headshot booth

Impact: 600+ student attendees. Free for both students and professionals thanks to sponsors.

Hosted by PRSA Pittsburgh

Hosted by PRSA Pittsburgh

Involvement: PRSSA Chapters apply for regional awards.

Opportunities:

- Networking with professionals
- Awards for student scholars
- Career and mentorship connections

Result: Strong PRSA-PRSSA ties, enhanced transition to professional world.

Agency Tours — University of Florida

In Partnership with North Florida PRSA

Activities:

- Agency visits + PR panel (corporate, nonprofit, agency, private)
- Résumé and portfolio workshops

Takeaways:

- Hands-on look at different career paths
- Casual networking with professionals

PRSSA/PRSA Relationships Beyond the Chapter Level

PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Month (October)

Strengthen your Chapter's connection with local PRSA professionals through a joint meeting or social.

How to Get Started:

- Discuss the initiative with members.
- Select ideal October dates.
- If your Chapter doesn't already know, find your sponsoring PRSA Chapter (via the PRSSA website).
- Reach out to your Professional Adviser or PRSA Chapter President.
- Propose a joint meeting or social (or join an existing PRSA event).

Pro Tips:

- Set Chapter goals for Relationship Month early (e.g., host at least one event).
- Use Relationship Month to kick off or deepen a mentorship program.
- Meet with your sponsor Chapter at ICON or connect via social media.

Dr. F. H. Teahan Award for Outstanding PRSSA/PRSA Relationship

Does your Chapter have a strong relationship with your PRSA sponsor Chapter? [Apply for the Outstanding PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Teahan Award* for a chance to win.](#)

- \$300 for your PRSSA Chapter
- A plaque for your Chapter + a trophy for your PRSA sponsor Chapter

What Makes a Strong Relationship?

- Joint programs or meetings
- PRSSA members attending PRSA events
- Internship opportunities
- Mentorships and advisory councils
- Shared communications or newsletters
- Mutual recognition or awards

Applications for this and all other Teahan Awards are due at the end of April. Check the PRSSA website for the exact deadline and application materials.

Connecting with New Professionals

The PRSA New Professionals Section is a great bridge between PRSSA and your post-grad future. These members are recent grads — often former PRSSA members — who understand your journey and are ideal mentors.

Why Connect?

- Expand your network
- Gain career insight
- Relatable mentors who've just been in your shoes

How to Start:

- Reach out to recent PRSSA grads now in PRSA New Pros
- Ask your PRSA sponsor Chapter for a list of New Pros
- Ask your Advisers for local intros
- Invite a New Pro to speak at a Chapter meeting or panel
- Start a mentorship program pairing PRSSA members with New Pros
- Explore resources at prsa.org/newpros
- Connect with the New Pros Section on social media



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