Getting Voters Interested in Local Elections

February 23, 2023
Agenda

• Welcome & About Nonprofit VOTE
• Why nonprofits should engage voters around local elections
• Ideas for engaging voters this year
• Guest Speakers:
  • Jane Ruby, League of Women Voters of Chicago
  • Jerome Dillard & Marianne Oleson, EXPO Wisconsin
• Question & Answer session
About Nonprofit VOTE

Founded in 2005, we help nonprofits by:

• Providing resources and building capacity for nonpartisan voter and election engagement

• Developing and evaluating agency-based models for voter engagement

• Encouraging voter participation and active citizenship

• Managing National Voter Registration Day
How we can help

Local/Community-based organizations

• Factsheets and checklists
• Voting in Your State
• Nonprofit Staff Vote
• Printable materials
• Sign up as a community partner for National Voter Registration Day

Regional or National nonprofit networks

• Trainings for your members/affiliates
• Custom toolkits and resources
• Digital infrastructure support
• Technical assistance
WHY?

Why should nonprofits engage voters around local elections?
Local elections matter

Big impact on daily life

but

Low voter turnout
Advantages in local years

• You may be the lone voice reaching out to voters who typically miss local elections
• Bigger reputation boost for your organization compared to state/federal races
• Candidates are more accessible due to the smaller nature of the race
• These races can be won by 100s or 10s of votes, so every voter really does matter!
• Early research suggests “nonprofit voter turnout effect” is more potent in local elections
Challenges in local years

• Less funding and fewer resources for voter outreach
• Lack of information about candidates or races can mean more in-depth research is needed
• Often happen out of sync with other election dates (especially for races in the spring)
3 IDEAS

Three ideas from our upcoming “23 Ways to Engage Voters in 2023” list
Idea #1

Add an election reminder flyer to paperwork or other items distributed to clients or available for pick up in your lobby.
Idea #2

Incorporate reminders and messages about voting into your tabling/events.
Tips for voter education materials

Don’t reinvent the wheel!

• Find nonprofit partners who have done the research and have readymade materials you can distribute
• Reach out to your local/county elections office if you have questions

Use materials to track your reach

• Keep track of how many materials you receive from partners or print yourself
• At the end of the event or week, count the remaining materials
• Subtract the second number from the first one to get an estimate of how many voters you reached
Idea #3

Host a “Ballot and Brunch” event to help people understand the races on the ballot – just don’t tell them who to vote for (even in nonpartisan races)
Guest Speakers

If you have a question for our guest speakers, please put it in the Q&A box
POLICE REFORM
CIVILIAN DISTRICT COUNCIL AND THE REDUCTION OF VIOLENCE

With Adam Gross and Kim Smalls
Wednesday, September 14, 6-7 pm
Virtual Event

CHICAGO, YOU COULD BE VOTING RIGHT NOW
Early voting and registration open in all 50 wards

Call or text the Election Protection Hotline!

English
1-866-OUR-VOTE / 1-866-687-8683

Spanish
1-888-VE-Y-VOTA / 1-888-839-8682

Arabic
1-844-YALLA-US / 1-844-925-5287

Bengali, Cantonese, Hindi, Urdu, Korean, Mandarin, Tagalog, or Vietnamese
1-888-API-VOTE / 1-888-274-8683

MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE
IllinoisVoterGuide.org

WATCH NOW!
49th Ward Candidate Forum

Apply to vote by mail!
Early voting and registration open in all 50 wards