

DEMOCRACY IS FOR PEOPLE



A Public Citizen project

Tips and Ideas to Turn People Out to Your Meeting

The following is an extensive list of ideas to help promote your local meetings and events building towards the passage of a constitutional amendment and other key democracy reforms. Please feel free to use whatever ones work for you.

Reaching out to your friends and networks

Make an invitation list: Your event can be a gathering of close friends and family; a gathering of neighbors, co-workers, and colleagues; a mass public event; or a mix of all of the above. If you want to expand your attendance list, make sure to ask friends who've said they will attend to think of names of people to invite!

Remember that not everyone you ask will be able to make it: Soccer practice, family trips, and work can always come up for even the most dedicated defender of democracy. Or, sometimes they are just tired and don't have the motivation to go out. Whatever the reason, people who want to come may still not come. So, to have the best chance of a big event that can make a splash, you'll need to **invite about two or three times as many people** as the number you want to attend.

Spread the Word

Make invitations: These can be as simple or as fancy as you'd like. We recommend including a few key pieces of information at the top, such as: the purpose of the house party; the date, time and place; directions to the party; an encouragement to RSVP (include your contact info here), as well as to bring friends.

Send out invitations and follow up: You can send out invitations via e-mail, Facebook, drop invites in mailboxes at work, or even send out paper invitations. The key here is **follow up** - make sure people have received the invite and ask them to RSVP.

Timing: Opinions vary on the best time to send out invites, but a good rule of thumb is about 4 weeks out, 3 at the most – well enough in advance so people can plan for the event and mark it on their calendars, but not so far out that folks will forget about it.

Some creative Ideas for inviting people to your event:

- Put a short invite in your church/synagogue/mosque/community-center newsletter
- Drop flyers in colleagues' mailboxes at your place of work or pin up notices at cafes.
- Create a Facebook page for your effort and share it!
- Other great ideas you come up with! This is all about creativity, after all!



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Follow Up! Some great organizer once said, to paraphrase, that ‘95% of organizing is follow-up.’ Sending out e-mail blasts is a great start, but without personal follow up from you or someone coming to the event, it’s less likely folks will show up. So, make sure you give yourself some time to follow up with your invitees to let them know how important it is that they show up and what a good time they’ll have! If you’ve got a notable guest speaker or a local official lined up, then it might be good to ask them for assistance with this.

Calling: The single best way to reach people for follow up is either in person or with a phone call. E-mail is fast and efficient but doesn’t capture people’s attention the same way, and can be less personal than a one-on-one conversation. Plus, remember - not everyone is connected to the Internet!

So, make sure you include some time to call people once the invites have gone out, as well as a week or so out before the event, to make sure folks are coming. These calls can be very brief, friendly reminders – no need to pitch everyone on the whole event plan right there; a sneak preview and a friendly ask will do.

E-mail can be a great tool to build excitement for the event – you can share updates via e-mail to invited guests on the group’s plans, who’s coming, and what action you will be taking. There are great online tools and services, such as Evite and PaperlessPost, which can help you do this as well.

Reaching Out to the Public

We also encourage you to more broadly invite the general public to attend your event, since we want to make a maximum splash with this nationwide week of actions! This will both increase your numbers and breadth of your event, and it provides a chance to educate the public about the issue of *Citizens United* and let people know that there are folks out there organizing to overturn it, even if they weren’t aware of your event before. Here are a few ideas how to reach out to the public:

Flyers: We’ve designed a template flyer with you, to use as you like. You can fill in key information and copy and post your flyer in community centers, coffee shops, religious institutions, and local stores. You can also go to events where there are like-minded people and pass out copies of your flyers at these events.

Organizations: Invite organizations that you know share our vision to overturn *Citizens United*, such as environmental groups, labor, civil rights, healthcare, faith-based, and legal on with their membership.



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E-mail Lists, Event Websites and Listings: You can share your invitation with e-mail lists, newspaper event listings and post it to websites, such as craigslist.org and indymedia.org that have event listings.

PSAs: Many local radio stations will let you come in and record a brief public service announcement for your event. Be aware that for PSAs and for event listings, there are often deadlines a few weeks in advance.

Media: You can inform your local media that you are holding a house party and perhaps they will cover the event in advance or after it happens. Let us know if you need any help with this. We will do our best to provide you with a sample press release.

Social Media: You can create a Facebook event page for your event, tweet or blog about it. If you Tweet, make sure to use hashtags that are trending on Twitter if you can, plus #FightBigMOney and #GetMoneyOut to link your event up to the broader movement. Retweet posts by @Democracy4 ppl (Democracy is for People's Twitter handle). The more synergy we can get Retweeting and sharing the more people we'll reach!

Your own ideas! You know your community best. Your own ideas on outreach will often work the best.



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