IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

JXN PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY PROJECT

M4BL

FREEDOM THIS WAY!

BUILDING A PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

A PEOPLE'S GOVERNANCE TOOLKIT

DEDICATION

To the ancestors who gave their lives—which were fueled by hope, faith, and an unshakable love for our people—so that one day liberation would not just be imagined, but lived.

With special tribute to the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement and Baba Mayor Chokwe Lumumba, who brought the People's Assembly to life in Jackson, Mississippi, proving that co-governance, self-determination, and direct democracy are not theories, but practices we can build and live.

To Project South's Southern Movement Assembly, whose work has carried the assembly model across the South and made it a living, breathing tool for organizing our communities.

And to Makani Themba, Natt Offiah, Brian Kamanzi, and Rukia Lumumba, who poured their time, heart, and vision into shaping this toolkit. Their dedication ensures that the work of our ancestors continues—with precision, with purpose, and with love.

CONTRIBUTORS

JACKSON PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY (JXN PA)

The Jackson People's Assembly (JXN PA) is a vehicle for democratic social organization in Jackson, Mississippi. It's rooted in the belief that everyday people should shape the conditions of their own lives. Beyond elections or legislation, the JXN PA enables people to make direct decisions about the economic, social, and cultural life of their community.

ELECTORAL JUSTICE PROJECT (EJP) OF THE MOVEMENT FOR BLACK LIVES (M4BL)

The Electoral Justice Project (EJP) of the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) continues the legacy of social movements fighting for the advancement of the rights of Black people through electoral strategy. We recognize that voting alone will not change the conditions plaguing Black communities, and we believe that Black people deserve a loving and strategic political home to spark transformational political change.

THE RISING MAJORITY

In 2017, M4BL and allied organizations formed Rising Majority, a coalition that brings together labor, youth, abolition, immigrant-rights, climate-justice, feminist, anti-war, and economic-justice forces to amplify our collective power and to build alignment across our movements. Rising Majority now has a Vision for 2050 and a 10 year strategy focused on building social, narrative, governing and economic power.

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WELCOME

Welcome to the People's Movement Assembly Toolkit for Co-Governance, a collective effort of the Movement for Black Lives' Electoral Justice Project, the Jackson People's Assembly, Rising Majority, and Black Voters Matter. It emerges from a shared conviction: Our people not only have the right, they also have the power to control resources, shape policy, and determine the conditions of our own lives.

This toolkit is designed to move us from being governed to becoming decision makers, from spectators to architects of our collective future. Inside, you'll find practical ways for everyday people to build governing power inside, outside, with, and when necessary, against the state. Through modeling true democracy, strategically engaging the electoral terrain, and building durable community infrastructure, this toolkit helps equip our communities with all they need to fully participate in and transform the process of governance.

GOALS

The People's Assembly Toolkit is designed to prepare and empower participants to:

- ☆ Organize effectively
- ☆ Build strong and sustainable foundations
- ☆ Understand and navigate power dynamics
- ☆ Engage political systems with clarity and purpose

This guide serves as an essential resource for advocates, nonprofit leaders, faith communities, and everyday people in communities where we have grown accustomed to being ignored and skepticism about politics is real and understandable. This is a long game where, together, we are building governance processes in which every community member can participate meaningfully in the decisions that affect their lives.

GLOSSARY

This glossary is provided to define terms used throughout the toolkit. Through shared definitions, we can achieve shared understanding.

PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY: is a type of governance in which residents of all walks of life, not just "leaders" and people of wealth, take part in making the policies and other decisions that shape their lives.

CONSENSUS: A way of making decisions such that the group tries to reach full or wide agreement. The goal is for as many people as possible to agree.

COMMUNITY BUY—IN: When community members talk, share ideas, and agree on issues. This helps people feel ownership over the plan and take responsibility for making it happen.

CONVENE: To bring community members and partners together on purpose to talk about a set plan or topic during a certain time.

BUZZ GROUP: A small group of people who meet for a short time to talk about a specific issue.

BIAS: To prejudice or favor another person, group, or issue when compared to another, in a manner that is considered unfair.

CO—GOVERNANCE: When community members work together with policymakers to make decisions that determine a jurisdiction's policies and practices.

ELECTORAL JUSTICE: Making sure elections and voting are fair, open, and help all people have a real say in government.

PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY: An ongoing process whereby people and community groups from different backgrounds come together to discuss and address issues in their community. Assemblies follow formal processes for listening to participants and making decisions. This often includes bringing recommendations or formal input to their local governing body.

WHAT IS A PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY?

A People's Assembly (PA) is exactly what it sounds like: people (usually community members) coming together to share ideas about where we live and what needs to change; ultimately, we decide what we will do about it together. PAs are about finding our strength in numbers and the power we build when we work together to achieve common goals.

ABOUT PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLIES

PAs happen all over the world. Some are very large and take on national issues. Some, like ours in Jackson, are focused on local issues. One of the first PAs took place in Lowndes County, Alabama, in the 1960s, and there have been many assemblies in Jackson and throughout the South ever since.

One of the largest assemblies is the Southern People's Movement Assembly, which holds regional gatherings (known as PMAs) across the South. The Jackson People's Assembly (JXN PA) was initiated by the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement in coalition with Jackson residents and community groups. JXN PA is where community members build community, vision together, and make their voices heard.

There are also opportunities for political education and other forms of collaborative learning, but PAs often prioritize listening and gathering resident input as a basis for collective decision-making and action. Participatory democracy is their guiding principle.

PAs are not simply gatherings where issues are discussed. The gatherings, or assemblies, are just one part of the process. PAs are both a process and infrastructure to support ongoing community participation before, during, and after assemblies take place.

Sometimes PAs are created to form an alternative power structure where decisions are made and implemented without interaction with government agencies.

Others work directly to influence government agencies, and some are a part of the government structure. Some PAs are a hybrid in that they put forward policy changes (usually at the municipal level) while also advancing independent initiatives, like mutual-aid projects. The nature of a PA, whether it's inside, outside, or against the state, has to be determined by the community in which they exist and the goals, strategies, and visions that the community is hoping to achieve. The goals, strategies, and visions may also be informed by a power analysis or multiple power analyses: processes through which we understand where power is and how to shift it toward our communities. PAs are open to all who abide by their community agreements, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, gender, disability, criminal-system experience, etc.

WHY CONVENE A PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY?

Reimagine Democracy

We can reimagine democracy and people's power, bridge the gap between people and their representatives, and ensure that community members are more informed about issues that impact their communities. PAs are created to form an alternative power structure that operates through a system of direct democracy. Most importantly, PAs are open spaces where we welcome and invite the principled participation of everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, gender, disability, incarceration, etc., because we believe authentic democracy requires that all our people are heard.

A Community United Will Never Be Defeated

A PA is a place where we build our strength in numbers, and collectively develop a political analysis of our current situation and the systemic root causes of community issues. It is from that foundation that we make decisions together.

Building Power

It may feel intimidating to think about the ways our communities can build power, especially when our experiences with power often involve other people, institutions, or communities making decisions on behalf of us and without us. When we talk about building power through PAs, we are talking about a form of power building that emphasizes staying close to the ground/rooted in our people, sharing power, and collective decision making. It won't always be easy, as power can come with conflict, political or personal differences, and other challenges. But when we believe in the vision put forth through our PAs, these challenges become worth navigating through and resolving.

Community As Developer

Most importantly, the PA is a process of political education and development in and of itself. It weaves theory (what we think will happen) with practice (what we actually do) so we get to test our ideas` and apply what we learn to make the process better.

DEVELOPING A PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

GETTING STARTED: BUILDING A TEAM

It seems obvious to say people are what make PAs, but it truly is the people in the room—the hugs, the conversations, the way people feel heard—who draw people in and keep them coming back. A good team will strive to build collaborative spaces where all kinds of people feel welcome. Most provide food and childcare to support busy parents; they also include activities for children, as well as space for youth to discuss and develop their own proposals. A team rooted in community will make sure meeting spaces are accessible to elders and differently abled people, and accommodate people who are more comfortable communicating in a language other than English.

A strong PA has a diverse cross-section of people, with a special emphasis on communities that are often marginalized or left out in most decision-making processes. That's why it's important to start with a core team with strong ties to the communities you are organizing, assembled of members who share the vision of creating a welcoming, participatory space.

You might start by identifying key communities whose participation is important.

- ☆ Who can best reach them?
- ☆ What do we need to know to practice effective outreach?
- ☆ Which languages will folk need to speak to engage them?

A strong team will be rooted in the community enough to answer those questions, or know where to go to get the answers you need:

- ☆ You may need to train your team in how to convene 1:1 meetings and small group listening sessions to listen to and recruit community members to the project.
- ☆ If you're canvassing neighborhoods (which we highly recommend), your team should be trained for that. It's a win-win when the team feels confident engaging with residents.

Remember to delegate and share responsibilities among team members. This is our opportunity to model co-governance from the start. Sharing leadership is not always easy. We can struggle with anxiety around what might go wrong when we're not in control. However, when we share responsibilities, we also learn to trust and respect each other as we help each other test and learn new skills. This is what building collective power is all about.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION: LISTENING AND LEARNING

Now that you have a team and a sense of whom you want to engage in the PA process, it's time to do some listening:

- What do people care about?
- How do they get their information?
- How are they navigating current conditions?
- What dreams and aspirations do they hold?
- What histories/herstories are they willing to share to deepen your understanding of the landscape and context in which you are organizing?

Whatever questions you choose (and know that your team will be fine-tuning them as you go along), listening is where all good organizing begins. Your conversations don't have to be with pastors or public figures. There are all kinds of people who have good insight into their community. The more community perspectives you gather, the better.

In any session, be sure to leave with at least:

- The contact information of all attendees
- A sense of what they care about/what motivates them
- A clear assessment of their willingness to participate in the PA process

Don't be afraid to ask them directly. A big part of organizing is making "the ask" (or invitation) to join the work.

Follow-up is critical at this stage. Make sure your team keeps track of your contacts and that you are incorporating what you learn into your PA organizing plans. Once you've engaged a representative number of community members and are clear about your direction, you can start organizing to convene a PA.

BUILDING THE BASE: ORGANIZING AND OUTREACH

Now you are ready to develop a strong outreach plan using the information gathered in the listening sessions. A comprehensive outreach plan will include media (encompassing social media), direct contact through canvassing and phone banking, faith-based and organizational outreach, and outreach at schools. Identify local events where you can pass out flyers or have an info table (make it stand out). Senior communities often welcome guest speakers to share opportunities with residents. Some buildings have newsletters and post event notices in communal spaces. Of course there are various spots offering opportunities to engage, like:

- ☆ Grocery stores
- ☆ Farmers markets
- ☆ Shopping centers
- ☆ Clubs

IDENTIFYING YOUR BASE AND ENGAGEMENT APPROACHES

Name of group/ individual/ constituency	What they care about	What they need to engage (i.e., training, political education, build trust, childcare, etc.)	Information/ research needed to best engage them Interventions

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK

1. Who else is organizing/building power in your area? What do you know about them? Can you build together?

2. Reflecting on what you identified above, what kind of events and activities will you need to do to draw them in?

3. What are your next steps to complete to move forward?
   - ☆ In the next 30 days:
   - ☆ In the next 60 days:
   - ☆ In the next 6 months:

BUILDING OUT A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

PAs are interactive spaces, and our communications strategies should reflect that. If possible, set up social-media accounts specifically for your PA so that it isn't associated with any one organizational partner. Use the information gathered in your listening sessions to identify what your priority constituencies care about and the platforms and media outlets to prioritize. There is no single outlet or platform that reaches everyone. On a platform like Facebook or TikTok, the messenger can determine who sees what's posted, thanks to the algorithms these platforms employ. It's important to develop a diverse network of folks committed to amplifying your posts so that you reach a broader audience.

You can use the table below to identify priority constituencies and how you will engage them. Think about different age, class demographics, and cultural backgrounds. Are faith-based communities a priority? Youth? Are there podcasts or YouTube channels with large local followings?

Whom do you want to reach? Don't forget decision makers, stakeholders (like business owners), and residents of various backgrounds. All of them should be hearing about the PA process.

Organization/ constituency	What's our goal with this constituency? What are we trying to communicate?	How are we listening to them?	What/whom do they read, watch, listen to, and engage with?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

1. What language(s) and/or modifications for accessibility should be factored in? Will you need closed captioning? Signing? Interpretation?
2. Right to the City has developed an excellent resource on building language justice in our organizations and coalition spaces.

Find it here.

3. What are good images for conveying your message(s)?
4. Who are good messengers for conveying your message(s)? What kind of support will they need to be effective?
5. What are the opportunities for your base and others to talk back to you and each other? Your website? Your social-media platforms?

Once you identify this information, you are ready to develop a concrete communications plan complete with strategies, tasks, and timeline. Strategies are about how you will reach your folks. Tasks are the activities you will undertake to advance your strategies. The timeline should provide a clear outline of when tasks will get done, and by whom.

Here is a template to get you started.

For PAs, consider strategies that reach your target audience where they are, within your budget.

POTENTIAL TACTICS MIGHT INCLUDE:

1. Social-media posts + ads
2. Earned media (build a press list, draft and send a media advisory with key information on the PA, etc.)
3. Radio + podcast ads
4. Local ads on popular streaming services
5. Wheatpasting in key neighborhoods
6. Collaborations with local content creators/social-media influencers whom your target audience trusts

HOLDING A PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

LOGISTICS AND PREPARATIONS

Identify an accessible site with enough space for food service, good sound and lighting, and a large-enough space to allow people to sit at smaller tables with plenty of room to wander around for icebreakers and other exercises. Be sure to scout the site to ensure that people with mobility challenges or those who use a wheelchair can easily maneuver around the site, including the restrooms and entrances into the building. It's always a nice bonus if the site is a supporter and has a good community reputation. Rotating locations to different neighborhoods is also a great way to build with different organizations and connect in neighborhoods that don't often get to host events.

1. **Check sound and power configurations, and make note of anything you will need to bring** — like extension cords, special connectors, wireless speakers, or even your own sound system. If your meeting is hybrid or a speaker is joining virtually, make sure the internet connection can support your plan. (Consider an ethernet connection for speed, reliability, and security.)

2. **Food is important, especially for evening meetings.** In fact, any time we gather, we should offer some nourishment and hydration. We recommend serving food at the beginning of the meeting or starting food service early so that folks can grab food, caregivers can settle children down, and we can start our program on time. Do make sure you order enough food and are mindful of important food preferences, like not serving pork and having vegan options. People are appreciative of the care and consideration.

3. **Plan for childcare and active space for young people.** PAs should offer more than a space for watching children; they should engage young people in their own version of the discussion, provide opportunities to be creative, and if they are willing, share a report of their conversation with the entire group. Be sure to assemble a trustworthy team (depending on how many children you expect will be present, and their age range) and a good stash of art supplies and other fun tools. Kids often enjoy drawing their vision of the kind of community they want, together or individually. Their ideas are usually more creative and inspiring than those of many adults. It's also great public-speaking practice when they present their ideas and are heard and applauded by their larger community.

4. **Incorporate music and culture.** We don't want PAs to be boring or traumatic spaces; schools, doctor's offices, and government buildings are all spaces where our people have been and continue to be traumatized. When we bring art and culture into our gatherings, we bring a sense of "home" into the space. Little touches—like flowers, tablecloths, pictures of community people and inspiring ancestors, good food, and upbeat, family-appropriate music or performances—make a big difference. Jackson PAs always have a DJ, and most gatherings feature some kind of performance by a poet, singer, or other artist.

5. **Set up the room for maximum participation.** Round tables are great because everyone can face each other, but any table with eight people or fewer will allow folks to engage.

Use wall space to set up chart papers with relevant facts and even engaging trivia. It's also good to give people an opportunity to move around between stations and offer their thoughts, perhaps using Post-Its and markers, or drawing pictures together in their group.

6 **Scan for accessibility issues and make needed accommodations.** It never hurts to take another look at the site and make sure it will be comfortable for people of various ages, genders, abilities, and language needs. For example, will people using wheelchairs and walkers be able to navigate the space easily? Is there a safe space for childcare? Is there enough space for people to keep a safe distance from one another, as needed? It is also important to double-check the participant list to see if anyone requested accommodations. Did anyone sign up for translation or interpretation? Is there an access plan?

7 **Offer a warm welcome.** Be sure to have name tags and sign-in sheets, and to warmly welcome every attendee. Anyone staffing the reception table should be well-versed in what's going on so that they can answer questions and steer people in the right direction. Hold an orientation so your team is fully briefed and feeling confident.

8 **Prepare for the unexpected.** Security is a must these days. Make sure there is trained security on the premises respectfully monitoring the gathering. It's also good to keep a well-stocked first-aid kit and have at least one team member present who's trained in managing emergencies.

FACILITATING PARTICIPATORY SPACE

There are many ways to facilitate assembly spaces. Some have more traditional meeting formats. Others break the mold. For example, JXN PA held a Community Love Fest, a day of family fun without a policy agenda. Residents could move between gardening and other home-improvement demonstrations, a live brass band, games, food, other live music, and art stations. One station gave residents a chance to write love letters to Jackson, including ways they wanted to see the city improve. There was also an exhibit imagining Jackson's future that included examples of innovation from around the world addressing key challenges like road repair.

Of course, live music and second lines don't lend themselves well to focused discussion. Usually, PAs are organized with conversation and decision-making at the heart.

CLICK or SCAN to find a sample logistics checklist and run of show (basically, a detailed agenda beyond the program)

Facilitating a gathering of diverse people, many of whom don't know each other well, takes some intentionality. Our goal is to build community, trust, and eventually, power in this process. Our agenda and facilitation methods must keep that in mind.

1. **Have an opening ritual.** Whether it is a prayer, a poem, a song, drumming, pouring libations, or some combination of practices, rituals center us. They remind us of why we gather, and they root us in our history of organizing and struggle. If prayer or some form of faith-based expression is aligned with your community culture, this is an opportunity to build relationships and engagement across faith traditions by rotating who participates.

2. **Offer community agreements and set expectations for how we will be with one another.** It's good to have a set of agreements already available (translated as necessary) so that people will know what to expect and act accordingly.

3. **Ensure that people have a chance to meet each other in informal ways.** Icebreakers are exercises designed to get people to talk with one another. Often, PAs are too large for everyone to introduce themselves. Name tags help, but we want to support people in feeling connected.

One fun exercise is to have people (who are physically able) move around the room to music. When the music stops, they talk with the group of people they're in closest proximity to and discuss a question. The questions can be fun, like: What's the best thing you ate lately? Or related to the agenda: If you had a magic wand, what would you change?

Another fun exercise, called Buses, has people gathering according to how they identify with the grouping posed by the facilitator. Sibling order is an example. Oldest siblings can gather in one group, and so can middle, youngest, only, etc. You then give groups a few minutes to look around and see who is where, and connect with their group and talk about it. The facilitator can make light observations and then move on. More ideas for helping attendees connect can be found in the Resource section.

4 **Make time for visioning.** Visioning is good practice for creating the world we want to see and opening ourselves up to possibility. It can be as simple as a guided visualization where you ask people to close their eyes or soften their gaze, and offer a few prompts to help them imagine what they'd like to see. Groups can discuss a specific issue and draw a picture of their ideas together (e.g., schools that serve our families, real safety, health care that actually cares, etc.). Grounding in vision helps us be more creative and solution-focused when we start to talk about the problems. You can also ask people to write a short phrase about their vision on Post-Its to place on chart paper; you can use specific prompts, such as: How will we make decisions? What makes me most excited about my vision if it were to come true?

5 **Hold the space lovingly and support those who are taking up too much space in stepping back, and those who are quiet in stepping up.** Make sure to include small-group work and other opportunities that help less verbal people participate more, and more freely.

6 **If you have translation and/or interpretation, make space for the language access team** to explain what they are doing and let attendees know what the team will need to support the gathering.

7 **Make sure you have a clear map of the process you are holding, and the desired outcome.** Will there be presentations that inform the discussion? How will you handle questions? Are there decisions to be made? What do participants need in order to move forward? What's the best-case scenario for the session? The not-so-great outcome? What must you pay attention to/listen carefully to, to ensure that people are heard in a fair, caring way and that whatever they say gets synthesized into the process? What are gaps in people's understanding of the issue, and possible solutions? Do you need to identify a short video or other learning resource to help inform the conversation and help folks imagine possible solutions?

8 **Stay present in our mind and bodies.** Does the agenda include movement or breaks, so folk aren't seated the whole time? Is the subject matter hard enough that it may require more intentional breathing? What are people saying with their posture and their facial expressions? The Resource section has more tools for ensuring that people move as part of the meeting process.

9 **Build consensus and get commitments.** Be sure to have at least one person responsible for documenting everything—especially decisions and commitments that

are made. Make sure to mark and celebrate every decision. We need to keep the joy flowing and lift up our victories, no matter how small.

When things feel "stuck," strategic questions can remind people of what they do agree on and help them get clear about any issues or tensions they may wish to talk about. Below are examples of questions that can help shift the conversation. It's also important to note that sometimes a short break and/or an opportunity to move our bodies can also lead to a breakthrough. Discussion of certain items can also be continued in another meeting. It's important to move forward together whenever possible.

RUNNING A VIRTUAL ASSEMBLY

Sometimes we are not able to meet physically and must rely on virtual platforms. Gatherings on virtual platforms mostly follow the same script as those held in person but without the same energy and focus we feel when we are together in person. This means we have to bring the energy through music, a tighter agenda, and opportunities for small-group engagement and interaction.

1. **As a general rule, start on time and don't go beyond 90 minutes** if at all possible. Do include music and cultural performances, and make sure everyone on the program has an internet connection that's strong enough to keep them engaged. It's also good to include interactive polls using Zoom or other tools to allow everyone an opportunity to participate.

Challenge	Question(s)	Possible Interventions
Some attendees believe that a popular proposal will be harmful to their neighborhood. Their neighborhood tends to be ignored by policymakers. They fear the same bias is happening in the PA.	What should we know about this situation? What would be fair and feel safe for you? For the group to discuss: Are there good alternatives to the proposal?	Encourage entire group to stay curious and listen to dissenting folk. Have a "fishbowl" with two dissenting members and take a few clarifying questions from the rest of the group. Small group discussions re: possible alternatives followed by "popcorn" debrief.
Group is stuck on discussing problems and struggling with identifying and committing to actions to address the problems.	Do you remember a time when people changed things? What can we learn from it? What might be our first steps toward changing things?	Hold conversations in pairs or triads followed by "popcorn" debrief.

2 **Test technology.** Confirm that you have a stable connection and test your devices before the meeting.

3 **Encourage everyone to turn on their video.** Of course, some people are not able to turn on their video. We are always grateful for people showing up as best as they can. However, the meeting can feel more like community when we can see each other's faces and bring our energy to the conversation.

4 **Assign roles and tasks, including setup and reception, as if it were an in-person meeting.** It helps to have a team to handle the many tasks that need to happen (often simultaneously) in a virtual meeting. There should be at least one chat monitor, a security point, timekeeper, a greeter (someone to make sure people feel welcomed entering the space), and a tech lead (someone to monitor and address emerging tech issues, including participant support and preparing for any breakouts).

5 **Focus on moving the agenda with compassion and care.** Many of us have a lot to say. Political scientist James C. Scott observed that oppressed people have more to say because they don't have the same symbols and structures of power to say it for them as privileged people do. So, it's crucial to have compassion, move with care, and (sometimes humorously) keep the agenda moving forward.

Scan to view a sample virtual meeting run of show

BEYOND GATHERING TO BUILD POWER

we are each other's harvest
we are each other's business
we are each other's magnitude and bond

— GWENDOLYN BROOKS

The real power of the PA process is in how we make change together. The gatherings, the discussions, the visioning, and the learning are all to prepare us to be effective advocates: organizers who can wield power collectively to improve community conditions and build the world we are dreaming. How do we make that transition from listening to community to activating community to move powerfully in the direction of its interests? We start by ensuring that we use our communications infrastructure to stay connected with our base, articulate clear, concrete opportunities for action, and keep pushing. The following steps are offered to support you in developing concrete, actionable campaigns.

This is not a recipe, as every PA process is unique. However, incorporating these practices into your work will provide a strong foundation for whatever the assembly chooses to do.

1. **Conduct a power analysis or any assessment that helps you get clear about the best entity to target to achieve your campaign goals.** Remember that there are many sources and forms of power available to us beyond voting. Consider your community's economic power, cultural influence, connections with those who have access and influence with key decision makers, etc. Understanding these various power will help focus your organizing approach. **Some helpful tools are here.**

2. **Develop a clear workplan that outlines organizing and power-building goals** and the tasks and activities you will take to achieve them. Consider any necessary training, tactics, and political education required to move the PA agenda forward and incorporate this into your planning. We want to ensure that the community can confidently lead the organizing work ahead.

3. **Identify ways of making actions creative and fun.** Dress up? Funny signs? Drumming and good music? Whether it's a march, a sit-in, or calling parties to contact officials, we need to develop them so that people will want to come back.

4. **Track and report back on progress and changes in conditions.** Examples: Did a policymaker change their position because of campaign pressure? Has membership increased?

Where are missteps and lessons to share? Progress is inspiring, but being honest about setbacks helps members connect in a deeper way.

5

Thank your people often. Maya Angelou said, “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” We are the architects of the world we want to see, and we get to start creating it in how we treat one another. Create a culture of gratitude and care by recognizing hard work, rewarding consistency, and providing small incentives for recruitment and other key activities. For example, one group gives out homemade crowns to members who recruit more than 20 people and celebrates leaders’ hard work as a regular agenda item at their meetings.

As poet Gwendolyn Brooks eloquently writes in her poem, quoted above, we are each other’s harvest, magnitude, and bond. PAs remind us that our freedom dreams become more possible when we recognize our collective power and act on it. Thank you for your work to make a difference in these wild times. We hope this guide will be a helpful resource in your efforts. Additional resources are linked below.

LET’S GET FREE.

SCAN or CLICK to view Resources

PEOPLESPOWER.INFO

OUR PARTNERS

- Atlanta's Peoples Campaign
- BLM LA Grassroots
- Equity And Transformation (EAT)
- NC BLOC
- Florida Rising
- SURJ
- Black Voters Matter
- PowerSwitch Action
- Popular Democracy
- RTTC
- GGJ Action
- People's Economy Lab
- Central FL JWJ
- Seed the Vote
- NAACP Legal Defense Fund
- Center for Economic Democracy
- People's Advocacy Institute
- Malcolm X Grassroots Movement