

A GUIDE TO NONPROFIT ELECTION ACTIVITIES AND RULES

Presented by



ABOUT US

Founded in 2005, Nonprofit VOTE partners with America's nonprofits to help the people they serve participate and vote.

We are a leading source of nonpartisan training, materials and other resources for nonprofits doing voter engagement work.

Visit our site to learn more:
www.nonprofitvote.org



2016 STATE PARTNERS

- Arizona: Protecting Arizona's Families Coalition
- Colorado: Community Resource Center
- Illinois: Forefront Illinois
- Maryland: Maryland Nonprofits
- Massachusetts: Mass VOTE
- Michigan: Michigan Nonprofit Association
- New York: Community Votes NY
- North Carolina: Democracy NC
- Ohio: Cleveland Votes (Cleveland) and COOHIO (Columbus)
- Pennsylvania: Greater Pittsburgh Nonprofit Partnership
- Texas: AACT (McAllen) and Neighborhood Centers (Houston)

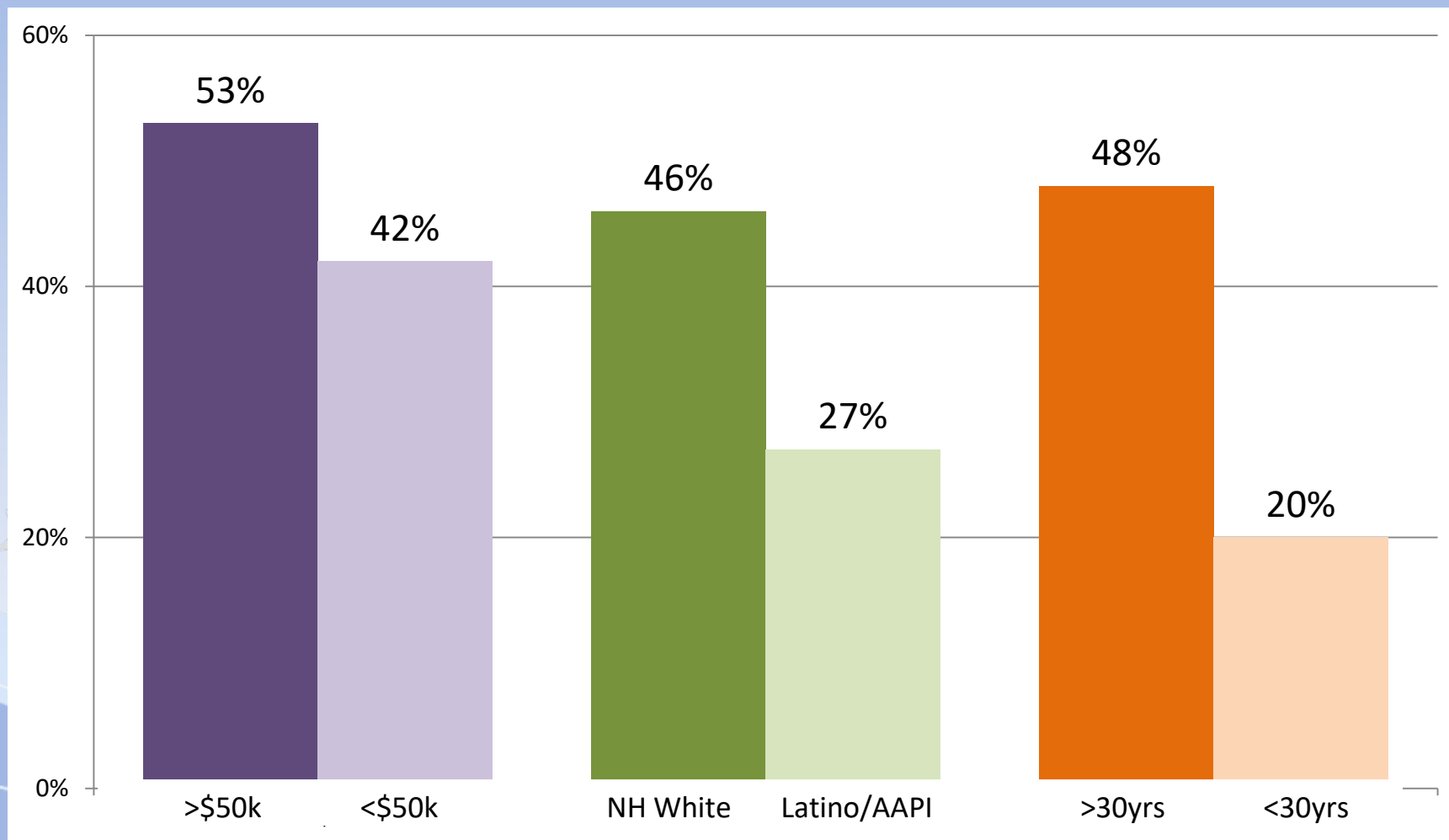


VOTER TURNOUT GAPS

Young voters, lower income voters, Latinos, and Asian Americans turn out to vote at significantly lower rates than older voters, higher income voters, and whites and blacks.

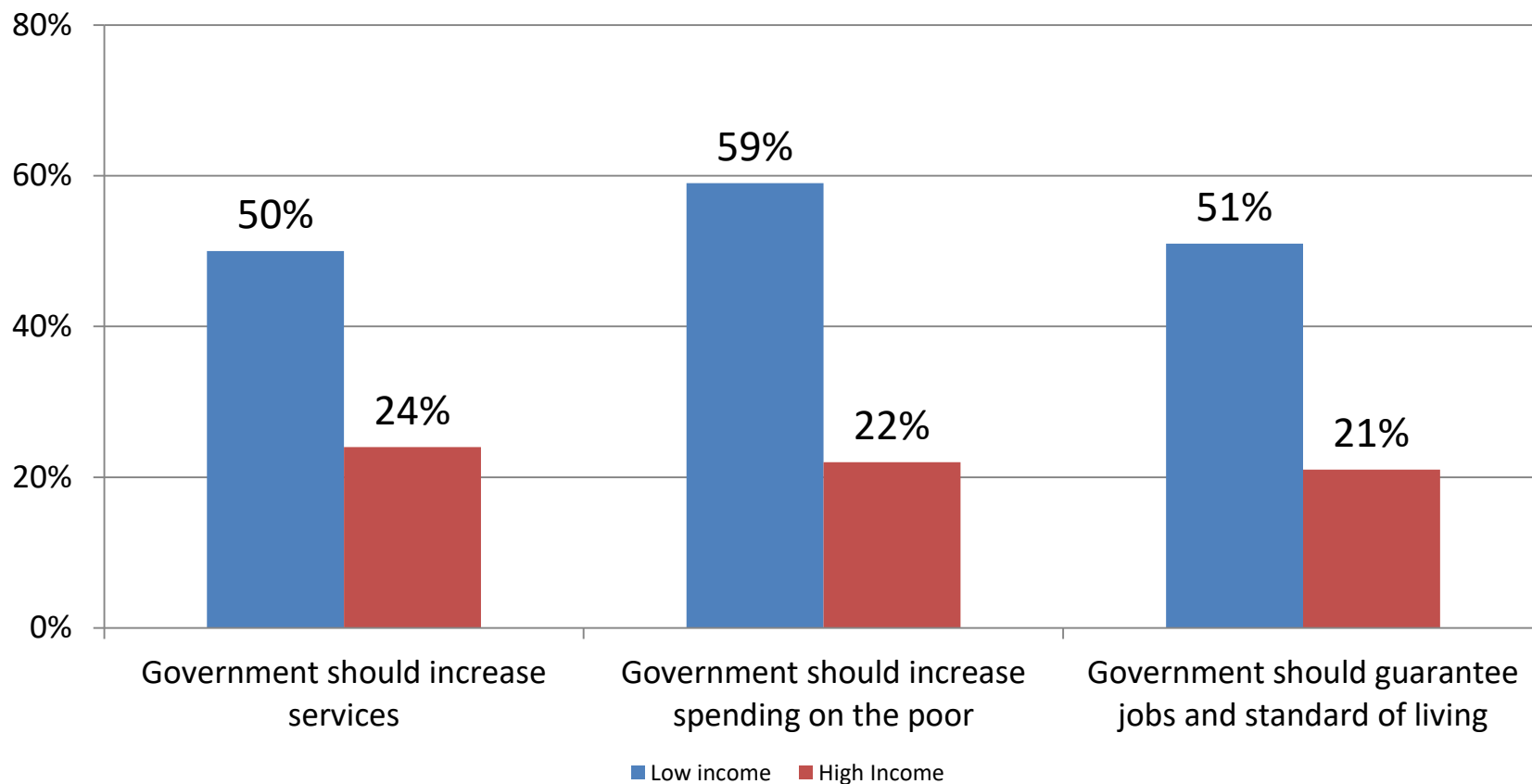


VOTER TURNOUT GAPS



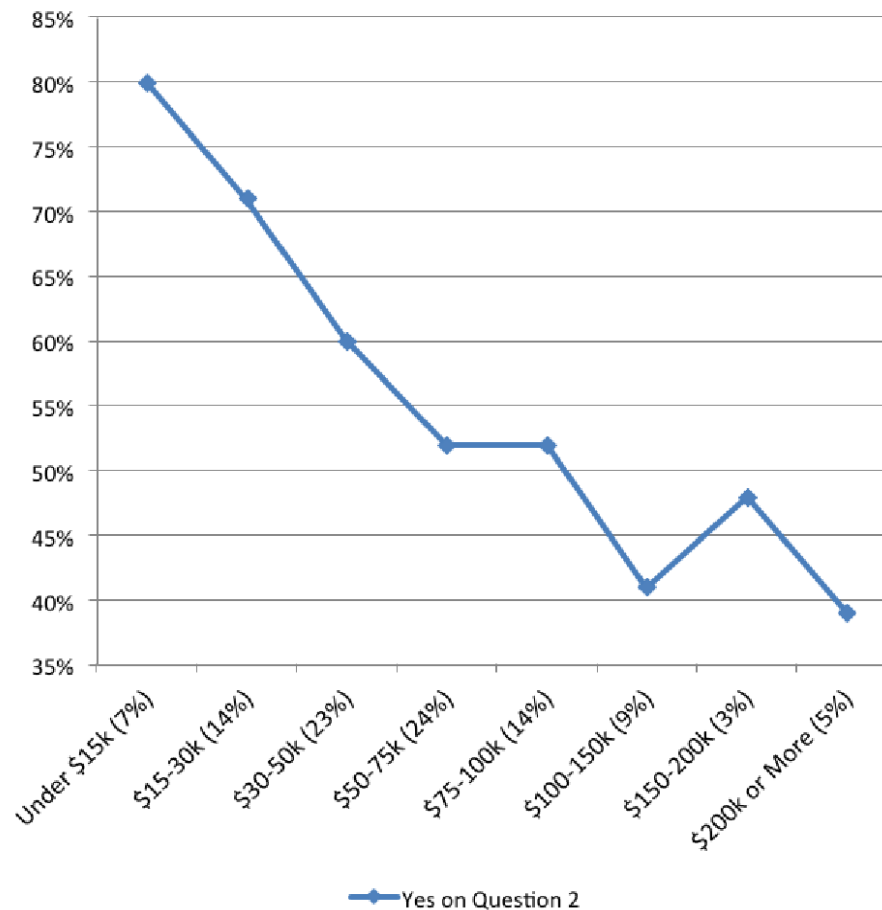
DOES IT MATTER?

**Percent in Favor of Policy,
Nonvoters Earning <\$30k vs Voters Earning > \$150k**

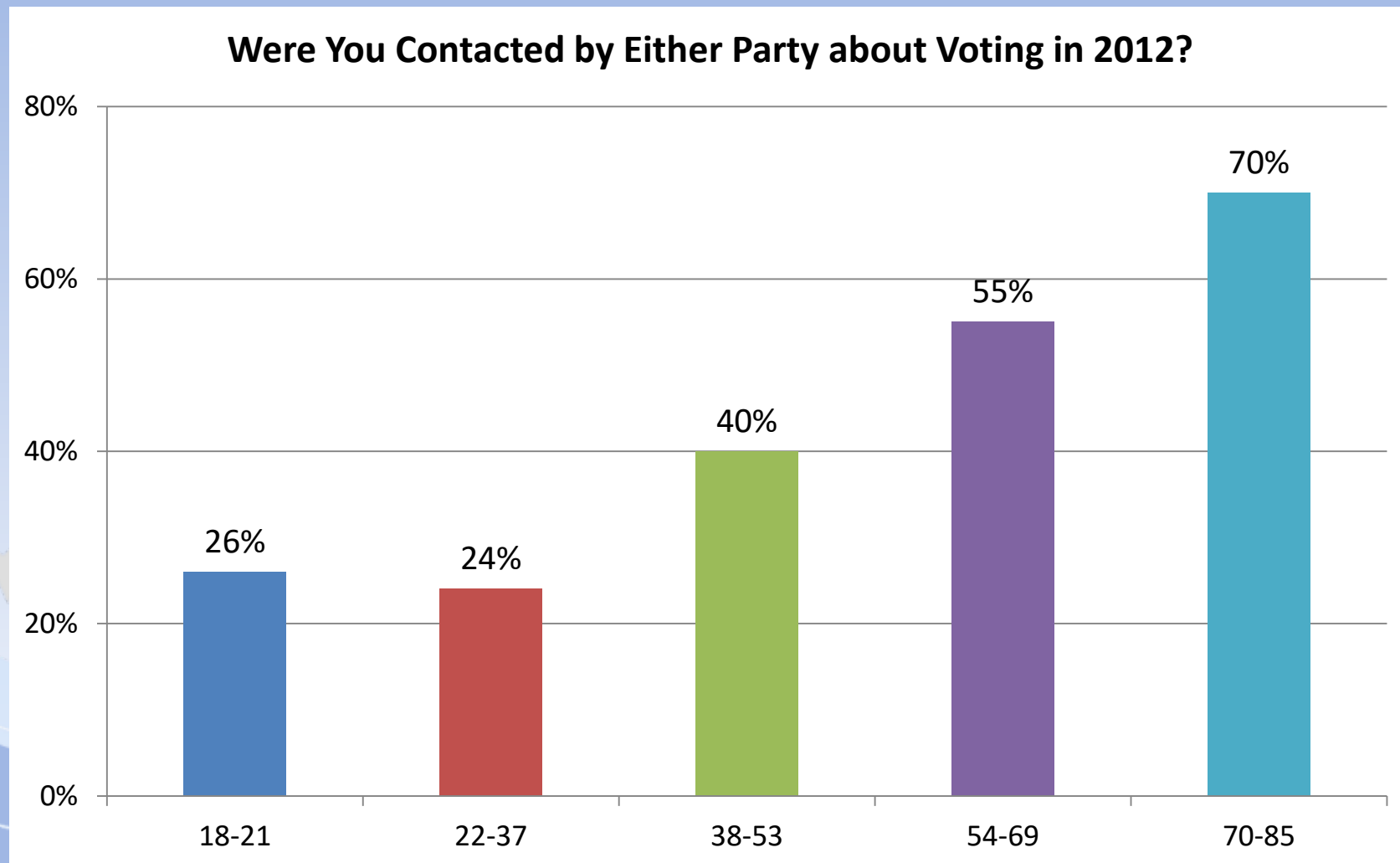


DOES IT MATTER?

As Income Rises, Support for Minimum Wage Drops (Ohio 2006 Midterm -Question 2, CNN Exit Poll)



GAPS IN VOTER OUTREACH



THE POWER OF NONPROFITS

Nonprofit service providers, community-based organizations and the broader civic sector have the power to reach these neglected voters and turn them out to vote.

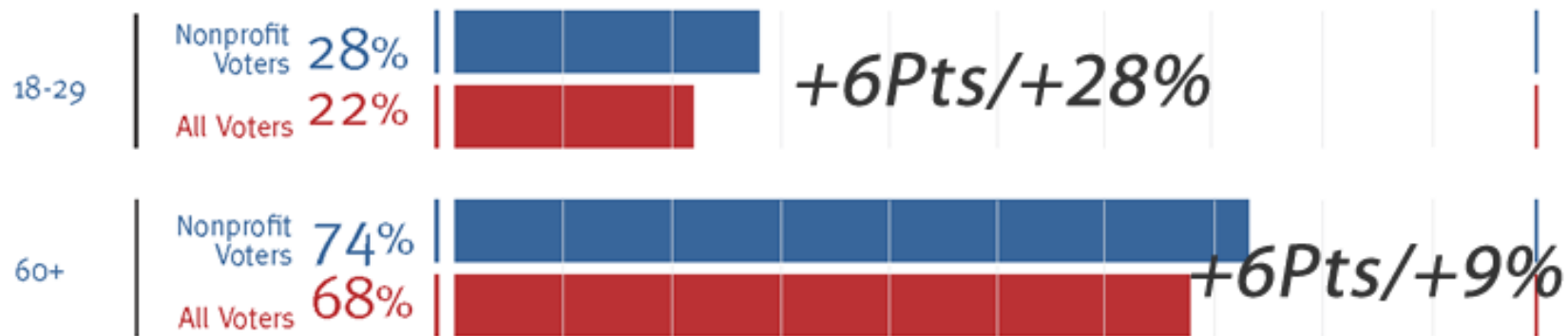


NONPROFIT ASSETS

- Frequent face-to-face and one-on-one contact with clients/consumers
- Trusted messengers
- Deeply rooted in local communities
- Cultural competency
- Mission aligned



TURNOUT BY AGE

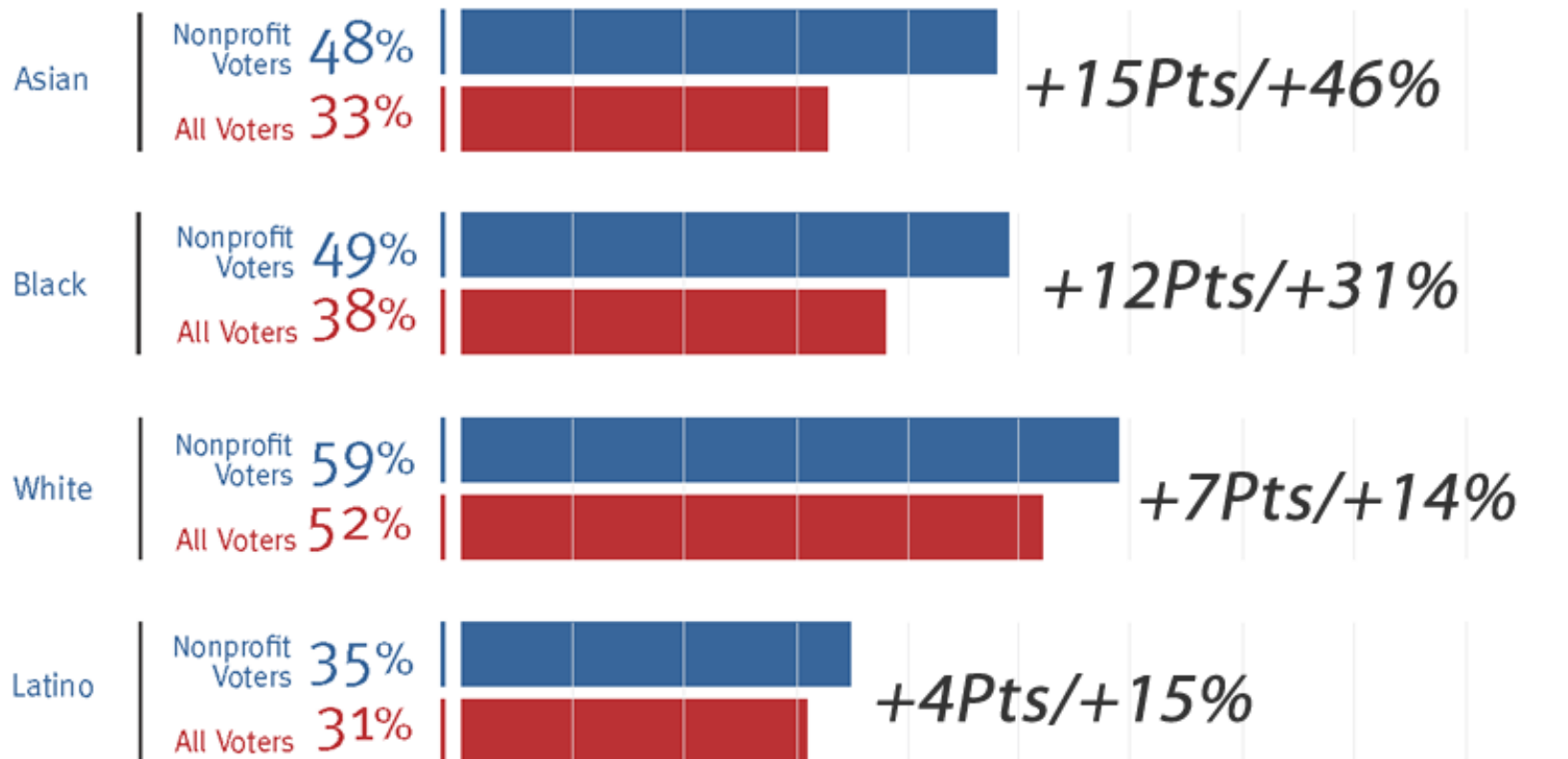


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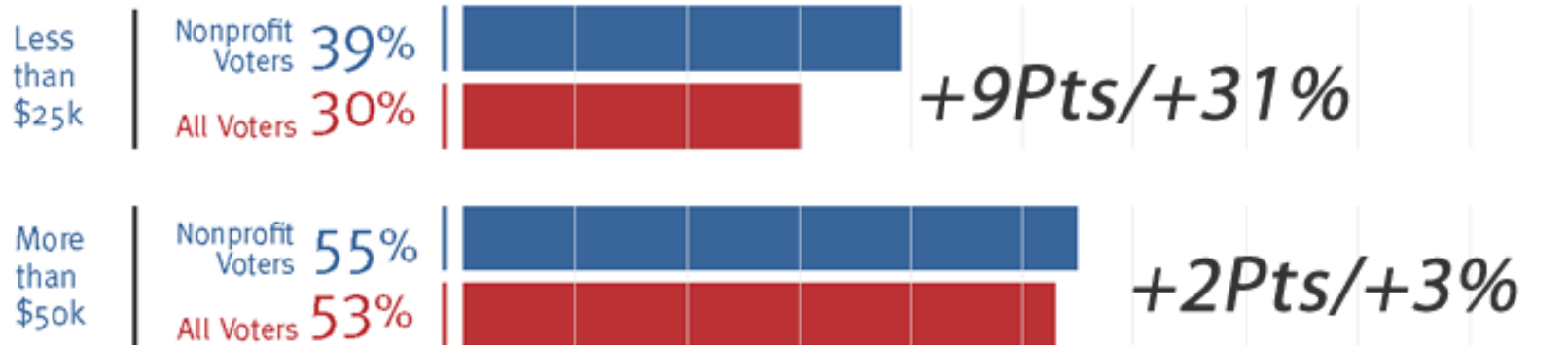


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TURNOUT BY RACE AND ETHNICITY



TURNOUT BY INCOME



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MAKING THE CASE

1. It Strengthens Social Ties

Voting helps to strengthen our social ties, and feeling part of a close-knit society is in turn linked with greater quality of life and longevity, according to Stanford researchers.

at the University of Michigan. "There is also some evidence that talking about politics may help kids become better critical thinkers and help parents build communication patterns with their kids."

2. It's Linked With Reports Of Greater Health

A 2001 study in the *American Journal of Public Health* shows that people are more likely to self-report "fair" or "poor" health in states where there's below-average voter turnout. "Socioeconomic inequality in political participation (as measured by voter turnout) is associated with poor self-rated health, independently of both income inequality and state median household income," Harvard researchers wrote in the study.

3. It's Good For Mental Health

Among people who are at risk, voting could help to lower stress and even ward off future mental health conditions. Specifically, researcher Lynn Sanders, Ph.D., an associate professor of politics at the University of Virginia, noted that, "I think that people who are on the wrong sides of the disadvantage divide, measured according to anything — health, income, quality of community, or job status — those are the people who stand to benefit most."

4. It Sets A Good Example for Kids

Children may not be able to actually cast a ballot, but they can see their parents vote, which could help to open dialogue about issues affecting society today. "Parents don't realize

the satisfaction, according to research conducted by Tim Kasser, Ph.D. and reported in *Political Psychology*.



STAYING NONPARTISAN

THE ONE RULE

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization may NOT *support or oppose* a candidate for public office or a political party.

A 501(c)(3) may not:

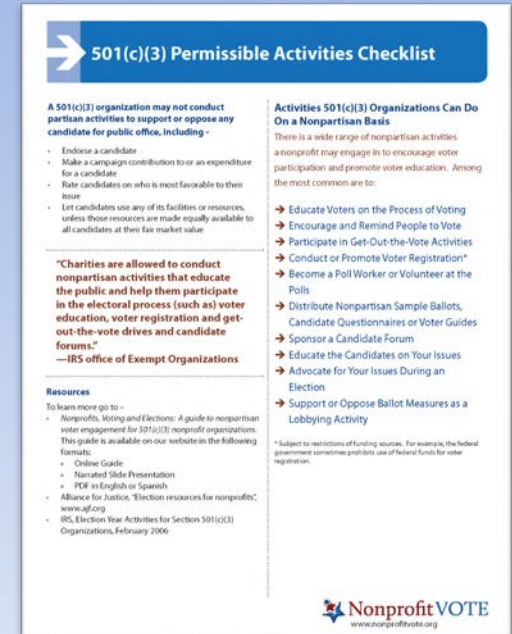
- Make an endorsement
- Donate money or resources
- Rank candidates on a single issue



WHAT NONPROFITS CAN DO

Nonprofits may conduct nonpartisan voter engagement activities designed to educate the public and help them participate in elections

- Voter Registration
- Voter Education
- Get Out The Vote (GOTV)
- Candidate Engagement



501(c)(3) Permissible Activities Checklist

A 501(c)(3) organization may not conduct partisan activities to support or oppose any candidate for public office, including -

- Endorse a candidate
- Make a campaign contribution to or an expenditure for a candidate
- Rate candidates on who is most favorable to their issue
- Let candidates use any of its facilities or resources, unless those resources are made equally available to all candidates at their fair market value

"Charities are allowed to conduct nonpartisan activities that educate the public and help them participate in the electoral process (such as) voter education, voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives and candidate forums."
—IRS office of Exempt Organizations

Resources
To learn more go to -

- Nonprofits, Voting and Elections: A guide to nonpartisan voter engagement for 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. This guide is available on our website in the following formats:
 - Online Guide
 - Narrated Slide Presentation
 - PDF in English or Spanish
- Alliance for Justice, "Election resources for nonprofits", www.afj.org
- IRS, Election Year Activities for Section 501(c)(3) Organizations, February 2006

Activities 501(c)(3) Organizations Can Do On a Nonpartisan Basis
There is a wide range of nonpartisan activities a nonprofit may engage in to encourage voter participation and promote voter education. Among the most common are to:

- Educate Voters on the Process of Voting
- Encourage and Remind People to Vote
- Participate in Get-Out-the-Vote Activities
- Conduct or Promote Voter Registration*
- Become a Poll Worker or Volunteer at the Polls
- Distribute Nonpartisan Sample Ballots, Candidate Questionnaires or Voter Guides
- Sponsor a Candidate Forum
- Educate the Candidates on Your Issues
- Advocate for Your Issues During an Election
- Support or Oppose Ballot Measures as a Lobbying Activity

* Subject to restrictions of funding sources. For example, the federal government sometimes prohibits use of federal funds for voter registration.

NonprofitVOTE
www.nonprofitvote.org

**Being
Nonpartisan**

VOTER ENGAGEMENT TACTICS

- ✓ Voter Registration
- ✓ Candidate Engagement
- ✓ Ballot Measure Advocacy
- ✓ Get Out the Vote
- ✓ Partnerships

Voter Registration and Engagement Timeline for Nonprofits and Human Service Agencies

2016

**January –
February**

- ☐ Designate a Staff Lead—an internal champion who will coordinate your voter engagement efforts
- ☐ Establish buy-in and support from your Executive Director and senior staff

March – May

- ☐ Create a voter engagement plan, including goals and a timeline
- ☐ Review the voting rules and deadlines in your state
- ☐ Identify potential partners to help provide training or resources

June

- ☐ Kick off your voter engagement programs
- ☐ Plan and execute summer voter registration events
- ☐ Develop a system for returning completed voter registration forms
- ☐ Meet with your local elections office to establish a relationship
- ☐ Train and motivate staff and volunteers who will interact with voters
- ☐ Gather materials and resources to raise program visibility and engage voters

July

- ☐ Continue summer voter registration events
- ☐ Inform your community and supporters about your voter registration and voter education activities

August

- ☐ Prepare your fall voter education and get out the vote plans
- ☐ Make sure 100% of eligible staff is registered and ready to vote

September

- ☐ Intensify your voter registration and pledge campaigns
- ☐ Celebrate National Voter Registration Day on September 27, 2016

October

- ☐ Continue intensive voter registration and voter pledge efforts through your state's registration deadline
- ☐ Include get-out-the-vote and voter education activities, primarily during the final 2-3 weeks before Election Day
- ☐ Promote early voting and vote-by-mail opportunities

**November 8 –
Election Day!**

- ☐ Create visibility and opportunities to celebrate with ideas like an Election Day party
- ☐ Identify and prepare staff who can answer clients' voting questions
- ☐ Give staff time off to vote

**November –
December**

- ☐ Review, debrief, and evaluate your voter engagement efforts



VOTER REGISTRATION



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
4	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
5	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
6	31						



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
6		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
10	28	29					



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
10			1	2	3	4	5
11	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
13	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
14	27	28	29	30	31		



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
14						1	2
15	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
18	24	25	26	27	28	29	30



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
23	29	30	31				

Plan



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
23				1	2	3	4
24	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
25	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
26	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	26	27	28	29	30		

Plan



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27						1	2
28	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
29	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
30	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
31	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
32	31						

Good



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
32		1	2	3	4	5	6
33	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
34	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
35	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
36	28	29	30	31			

Better



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
36					1	2	3
37	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
38	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
39	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
40	25	26	27	28	29	30	

Best



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
40							1
41	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
42	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
43	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
44	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
45	30	31					

Best



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
45			1	2	3	4	5
46	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
47	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
48	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
49	27	28	29	30			



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
49					1	2	3
50	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
51	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
52	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
53	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

STARTING VOTER REG

- **When:** For the Nov. election start in July or Aug. Ramp up your activities as you near the deadline.
- **Conduct a pilot** of your registration efforts



KEEP IN MIND

- **Combine:** Combine your voter registration work with a “Pledge to Vote” ask
- **Updating:** Some people are already registered. Others may need to update their registration with a new address or name change. Ask “Have you updated your registration since you last moved?”



I PLEDGE TO VOTE
OCT. 6 & NOV. 3

PRIMARY ELECTION
TUESDAY, OCT. 6

GENERAL ELECTION
TUESDAY, NOV. 3

CALL 1-888-OUR-VOTE (687-8683)
IF YOU NEED HELP CASTING YOUR
BALLOT DURING EARLY VOTING
OR ON ELECTION DAY.

OCTOBER 6 & NOVEMBER 3
POLLS ARE OPEN 6:30 AM – 7:30 PM

democracy
NORTH CAROLINA
Of, by and for the people

Call 1-888-OUR-VOTE or
visit: www.ncvoter.org to:

- Check your registration
- Find your polling location
- Other voting assistance
- Review NC voting law changes

I PLEDGE TO VOTE
★★ IN ★★
2015

First _____ Middle _____ Last _____

Street Address _____ Apt. or Unit _____

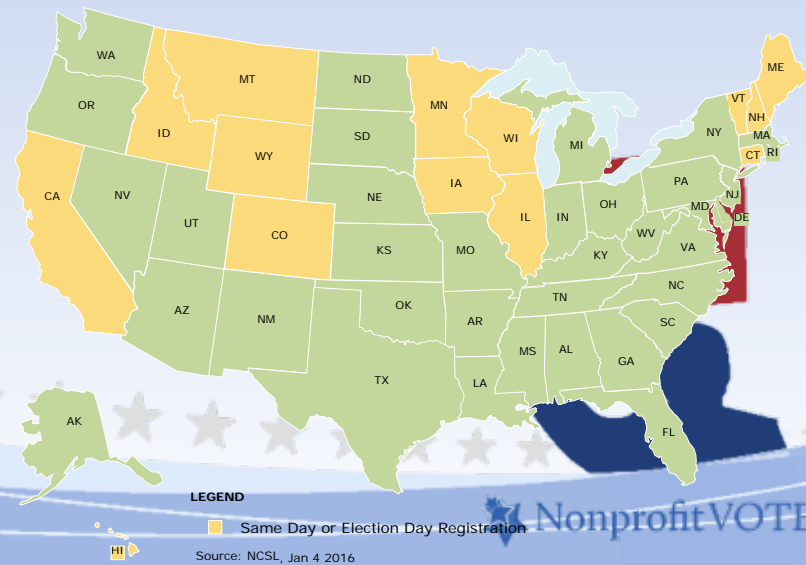
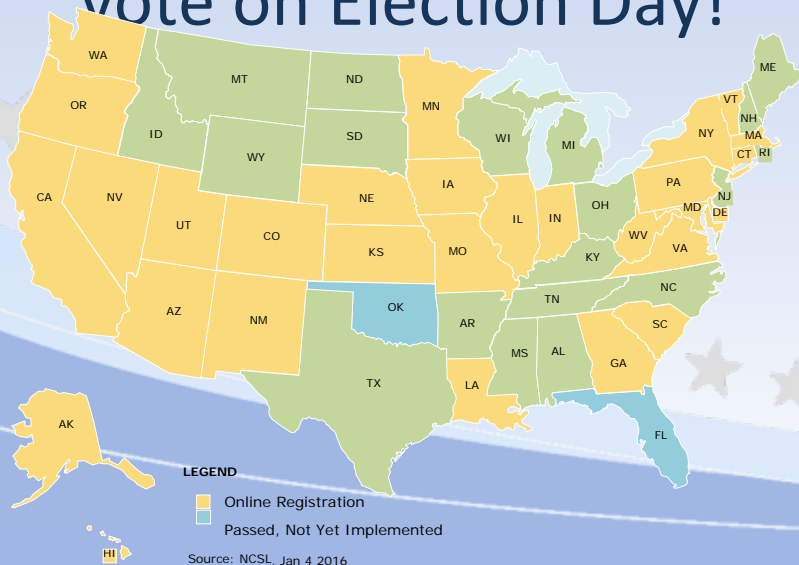
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Type: ☐ Mobile ☐ Home ☐ Work

Email Address _____

KEEP IN MIND

- **Online:** Online voter registration is now available in 26 states. Any voter with a valid state ID can register to vote or update their registration online.
- **EDR:** In some states people can register to vote on Election Day!



KNOW YOUR DEADLINE



A calendar for October 2016. The header is a blue bar with a star icon and the text "October 2016". The days of the week are listed as Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat. The dates are arranged in a grid. The 10th is highlighted with a dark purple circle. The 15th, 17th, and 31st are highlighted with light blue boxes. The 1st, 8th, 22nd, and 29th are in grey boxes. The 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th are in white boxes. The 3rd, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, and 31st are in white boxes.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
40							1
41	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
42	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
43	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
44	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
45	30	31					



NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

- September 27th is National Voter Registration Day!
 - www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org/
 - www.celebratenvrd.org



NVRD!

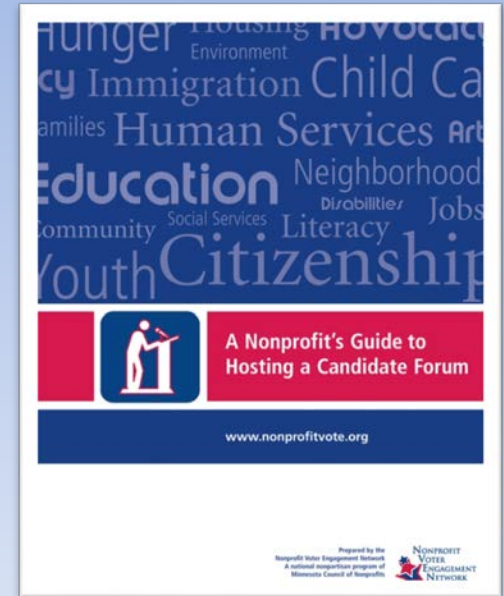


CANDIDATE ENGAGEMENT



THREE WAYS TO CONNECT

1. Candidate Forums & Appearances: Sponsor or co-sponsor a candidate forum on a local race
2. Candidate Questionnaires
3. Sharing Your Research



RESOURCES

Visit the Resource Library on our website for more information and the following recommended resources:

- Our upcoming webinar April 28th
- *A Nonprofit's Guide to Hosting a Candidate Forum*
- “Forum Checklist on a Timeline”
- “Working with Candidates” Factsheet
- “Candidate Appearances” Factsheet



BALLOT MEASURES



BALLOT MEASURES

- Activity on ballot measures is lobbying. It's influencing the passage or defeat of a law, bond measure or constitutional amendment – *not* the election or defeat of a candidate
- 501c3 nonprofits may work for or against a ballot measure as a lobbying activity



RESOURCES

Visit the Resource Library on our website for more information and the following recommended resources:

- Our upcoming webinar May 12th
- “Nonprofits and Ballot Measures” Factsheet



Resources

VOTER EDUCATION & GET OUT THE VOTE



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
36					1	2	3
37	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
38	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
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TWO KINDS OF VOTER EDUCATION

- Education on the process of voting
 - Inform clients and constituents of the date of the election, polling place hours, where to get help voting, early voting opportunities, etc.
- Education on candidates/offices and issues
 - Pass out nonpartisan voter guides or a sample ballot



GET OUT THE VOTE

- **Create visibility:** Make the election visible at your agency
- **Promote Early Voting**
 - When and how to vote early in person
 - Help applying for a mail ballot
- **Promote Election Day voting**
 - Big push in final week and last 2 days
 - Remind/offer help voting during services, at events, over the phone



ON ELECTION DAY

- **Give staff time off:** To work at polls or do nonpartisan GOTV
- **Ask if you voted:** Ask everyone if they voted or need help voting
- **Celebrate Democracy:** Make Election Day special. Have a party.



ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS

- **Find allies:** a non-partisan group doing voter engagement work, an advocacy partner or a voter engagement training partner
- **Meet with your local election office**
- **Consider opportunities:** around ballot measures, candidate forums or Get-Out-The-Vote activities.



Step 6

PARTNERS FOR WHAT?

- Training
- GOTV and Voter Education
- Advocacy campaigns and ballot initiatives



RESOURCES

- Factsheets, Guides, Toolkits and more available at www.nonprofitvote.org

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- ☐ Give staff time off to vote

November – December

- ☐ Review, debrief, and evaluate your voter engagement efforts

 Nonprofit VOTE



Getting Started with Voter Engagement A CHECKLIST

GET STARTED

Before you begin, think about why this work is important. Take a look at our "Benefits of Voting" factsheets and make a list of the benefits of voter outreach work to your organization, your community, and the individuals you serve. This might include advancing your issues, building clout, or empowering your clients by promoting engaged and active citizenship.

CAPACITY

- ☐ Get buy-in from your Executive Director or other leadership
- ☐ Choose a staff lead who can involve and motivate other staff and volunteers
- ☐ Consider ways to involve the people you serve in your election activities
- ☐ Identify assistance and resources from a community partner and your local elections office

Featured resource: Voter Participation Starter Kit for Nonprofits and Social Service Agencies

KNOWLEDGE

- ☐ Understand the guidelines for 501(c)(3)s on how to stay nonpartisan
- ☐ Learn about voting in your state – important dates, how to register, early voting options, etc.
- ☐ Find out what's on the ballot in your locality and state for the upcoming election

Featured resource: Nonprofits, Voting and Elections: A Guide to Nonpartisan Voter Engagement

PLANS

- ☐ Choose your target audience – clients, constituents, staff, your local community, or others
- ☐ Select appropriate opportunities for engagement: as part of daily services, in classes, at trainings or events, as a project for a youth group, or incorporated into community outreach
- ☐ Create a specific timeline for your plan

Featured resource: 2016 Voter Registration and Engagement Timeline

VOTER REGISTRATION

Decide on your approach. Some nonprofits actively register voters, while others focus on promoting registration by announcing deadlines, making forms available, or helping voters register online. If you plan to conduct voter registration make sure to:

- ☐ Familiarize yourself with your state's voter registration procedures, how to obtain and return forms, online registration (if available), and guidelines for hosting a registration drive
- ☐ Set concrete and attainable goals and tie them to deadlines
- ☐ Target pre-existing opportunities – at your nonprofit and in the community at citizenship ceremonies, graduations, or other events
- ☐ Create a schedule for tabling opportunities in the waiting room, lobby, and at events
- ☐ Enlist volunteers and staff to enhance your efforts

Featured resource: Voter Registration Toolkit and free poster, available in English and Spanish

ENGAGING CANDIDATES

Plan at least one activity that engages local candidates on your issues.

- ☐ Identify a race that's important to your community – city council, mayor, state representative, Congressional representative, or others
- ☐ Choose from five main candidate engagement options: Candidate Forums, Candidate Appearances, Sharing Research, Candidate Questionnaires, or Asking Questions at events
- ☐ Be familiar with nonpartisan guidelines for candidate work, which requires equal treatment of all candidates in the same race

Featured resource: Connecting with Candidates

BALLOT MEASURES

The majority of states ask voters to weigh in on laws, referendums, constitutional amendments, local bond issues for public programs, and other issues.

- ☐ Find out if any ballot measures, amendments, or other questions are on the ballot

(continued on back)

 Nonprofit VOTE
www.nonprofitvote.org

Resources

 Nonprofit VOTE



info@nonprofitvote.org

617.357.VOTE (8683)

www.nonprofitvote.org

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Julian Johannesen

julian@nonprofitvote.org



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www.nonprofitvote.org



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