



REMOTELY ORGANIZING AND ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to change the way we live and work. Limitations on in-person and community interactions meant that we had to adapt to remote organizing and community engagement.

Organizing did not stop – it dramatically evolved.

This guide provides recommended strategies and tactics on how to remotely engage and organize your coalition, community partners, supporters, policymakers and the public from a distance.



THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. Be ready to EXPERIMENT. Everyone is adapting to new routines and ways of doing things. Give your organizations and allies a chance to find what works for them. If one tactic you try is not as successful as you might like, think about how to approach it differently the next time around.

2. LISTEN to your community. What are their concerns? How are they working or living? Listen to their lived experiences and stories. Draw upon what you hear and consider options for “where,” “when,” “how” to meet your audiences remotely.

3. KEEP RELATIONSHIP BUILDING. Continue to strengthen your relationships with your allies,

supporters, and coalition members. Check-in with them to see how they are doing and assess where they are with the coalition.

4. CULTIVATE CHAMPIONS. Maintain a reliable relationship with decision makers, supporters, and other important allies who support your campaign.

5. DON'T GET STUCK IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT. Do not put all your effort into digital organizing. Digital organizing can support your campaign, but you still need creative actions, strong relationships, and strategic messaging in the non-digital world to win.

INNOVATIVE ORGANIZING

Instead Of	Think About	Benefits	Ideas
<p>Hosting an in-person organizing or engagement event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting on Zoom. Host your organization and a hundred of your closest friends and supporters for a digital organizing event. Come up with a creative “call to action” that your supporters can easily and excitedly join to support your campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic and visual. It’s easier for participants to tune out during digital events, so make it interesting and engaging. Digital gatherings are not an exact translation from in-person events. You have the freedom to brainstorm new formats. You can be as creative as you want - have people sing songs, tell their story, put up a digital background that you make for your campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create sidewalk chalk art with facts and share pictures during your rally and on social media later. Have people place yard signs in their yard. Take pictures to show on social media. Create a social media takeover. Ask all supporters to add a frame to their social media profile at the same time and give them a toolkit of materials they can post throughout the day. Have your supporters distribute the toolkit to 10 friends. Record the event and post it to your website or to social media.

Instead Of	Think About	Benefits	Ideas
<p>Hosting an in-person information & education meeting with your decision makers</p>	<p>Hosting a virtual information & education meeting with your decision makers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will be educating decision makers about the impact of tobacco in their district/ community and show the broad support your campaign possesses. You can be as creative as you want – have people sing songs, tell their story, put up a digital background that you make for your campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up Zoom calls with decision makers. Create a social media takeover. Ask all supporters to add a frame to their social media profile at the same time and give them a toolkit of materials they can post throughout the day. Have your supporters distribute the toolkit to 10 friends. Use #VoicesAgainstTobacco with the California Tobacco Endgame Center to build a collective tobacco control message across all social media platforms. Record the day’s activities to use later for your website or social media.

Instead Of	Think About	Benefits	Ideas
Holding an in-person Town Hall	Hosting an online town hall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to host a wide range of people online. • Allows you to focus on one tobacco control subject area. • Gives your supporters an opportunity to ask questions of participants such as decision makers, organizations, and media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have participants submit questions beforehand and read these during the town hall. • Have participants share pictures online during the town hall. • Record the town hall to use later for your website.

Instead Of	Think About	Benefits	Ideas
Passing out flyers at an event	Sharing a digital flyer with your supporters, coalition and allies directly through email and social media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual and eye-catching. Use Canva, or other online platforms that can help you design a visually stunning flyer. • People can share the flyer farther and wider online. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a flyer advertising an upcoming online organizing event, town hall, or phone bank. • Share small but powerful details about your campaign. • <i>Disclaimer:</i> if you are a CTCP-funded project, you can use the Tobacco Education Clearinghouse of California (TECC) for free to develop a flyer or any visuals. • Create a Facebook Event so your followers can easily share an event post/flyer with others.

Instead Of	Think About	Benefits	Ideas
Tabling at an in-person event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing digital materials. • Using texting or messaging platforms to share information about your campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual and eye-catching. • Easily reach supporters where they are at any given time. • Allows people to participate in your campaign on their own time (but you can tell them a specific time to do something). • Easily share materials to more people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking participants to share the materials you send with five friends. • Asking people to sign on to a petition supporting your campaign. • Share your petition on social media using a hyperlink or use an email chain website like Mail Chimp for email blasts.

Instead Of	Think About	Benefits	Ideas
Giving public comment at an in-person hearing	Giving public comment by phone, video or through Zoom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives you a space to engage with elected officials. • You can focus on your message and storytelling. • Opportunity for a larger number of your supporters to use their voice to speak on the issue. • Opportunity to connect with a decision maker and get them to see the face behind the issue and the more personal side of your campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your supporters to testify in support of your campaign. • Share with your supporters by email or social media that the hearing is coming up and how they can access it. Make sure to provide the rules of the meeting to supporters beforehand. • Create a minute script on what they should say and how they should incorporate their story into it.

Instead Of	Think About	Benefits	Ideas
Hosting an in-person media event	Hosting an online press call, by Zoom or phone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives you a space to engage with media online where they are at. • You can focus on your message and storytelling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release new data. Share how broad your coalition is.

California Tobacco Endgame Center for Organizing and Engagement
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