

Audience & List Brainstorming

Building an audience list can include thinking through already established contacts and stakeholders. By considering recently attended conferences, email newsletters, project stakeholders, focus groups for a project, advocates who reached out, or practitioners you worked with, we're able build an engaged audience together. This brainstorming can include names, positions, or even just organizations that you think could be interested.

Here are a few places—admittedly U.S.-focused—to think through to help in audience brainstorming:

Academic & Research Organizations

- Researchers at think tanks (e.g., Urban Institute, Pew Research Center, RAND, Brookings Institution)
- Staff or members of research associations (e.g., National Association for Welfare Research & Statistics)
- Scholars and academics
- Data organizations (e.g., NORC, Census Bureau)

Nonprofit Organizations

- Membership organizations (e.g., Economic Analysis and Research Network (EARN), Chamber of Commerce, American Medical Association)
- Advocacy groups (e.g., National Low Income Housing Coalition, National Women's Law Center, AARP)
- Civil rights organizations (e.g., National Council of La Raza, Human Rights Campaign, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights)
- Community stakeholders (e.g., local organizations for any places named in your project)
- Service providers (e.g., United Way, community health centers, food banks)
- Community activists, grassroots organizations, and advocates for populations (e.g., Moms Rising, National Fair Housing Alliance, National Head Start Alliance, Children's Defense Fund)
- Charities and philanthropy (e.g., Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, Red Cross)

Federal Government and Executive Branch

- Appointees, policymakers, or grant-makers at Cabinet-Level Departments (e.g., Housing Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Department of Agriculture, Department of Education, Department of Labor, Department of Justice)
- Appointees or policymakers at independent agencies (e.g., Interagency Council on Homelessness, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Federal Housing Finance Agency)
- White House staffers or appointees (e.g., Council of Economic Advisers, Office of Management and Budget, Domestic Policy Council, Vice President's office)

- White House initiatives or Cabinet-level initiatives (e.g., White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics, White House Task Force on Puerto Rico, Office of Engagement, Offices of Intergovernmental Affairs, Office of Civil Rights).

- Funders**
 - Program officers of funding organizations for this project and past projects (e.g., Annie E. Casey Foundation, Ford Foundation, Kellogg Foundation)
 - Philanthropic community organizations (e.g., East Bay Community Foundation)
 - Entrepreneurs (e.g., Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative)

- Legislative Body**
 - Staffers who work in Senator's or Representative's offices
 - Staffers who work for a congressional committee (e.g., Joint Committee on Taxation; Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions; House Ways and Means Committee)
 - Staffers who work for congressional caucuses (e.g., LGBT Equality Caucus, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), House Hunger Caucus)
 - Researchers at the Library of Congress, Congressional Budget Office, or Government Accountability Office

- State and Local Elected and Program Officials**
 - Associations of elected officials or civil servants (e.g., National Governors Association, National League of Cities)
 - Elected officials (e.g., Mayors, Governors, County Supervisors)
 - Staff to elected officials (e.g., a Mayor's Chief of staff, a City Manager or County Administrator)
 - Program directors or practitioners (e.g., program officers at a public housing authority a county welfare director)

- Private Sector**
 - Consultants and consulting firms (e.g., Accenture, Boston Consulting Group, Deloitte)
 - Businesses and startups (e.g., Lyft, Airbnb)

- Your Personal Audience**
 - Colleagues in your department or division
 - Colleagues in other departments, divisions, organizations, or universities
 - Trustees or board of directors
 - Social media networks (e.g., Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook)
 - Friends and other personal relationships

Presentation Worksheet

Presentation Title:

1. What type of presentation are you giving?

- Small meeting
- Department or conference seminar
- Classroom lecture
- Sales pitch/funding request
- Keynote address
- Workshop
- Other

2. Who is your audience?

- Coworkers or colleagues
- Managers
- Scientists/technical professionals
- Salespeople and marketers
- Students
- Mixed
- Other

3. What is the headline message of your presentation?

4. What do you want your audience to do with your conclusions?

5. Craft your opening statement.

6. Craft your closing statement.

7. Outline the sections of your presentation.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

8. What stories can you tell?

9. Images (sketch or describe before searching)

- Graphs & Charts
- Pictures, Illustrations, and Icons
- Videos

10. Anticipated Q&A

1. Q:
A:
2. Q:
A:

Presentation Preparation Checklist

Logistics to arrange with host

- Audience type and goals
- Number in audience
- Location
- Transportation to/from location
- Start and end times
- Audio/visual requirements
- Length and frequency of breaks
- Length of lunch
- Any cultural events to account for (e.g., prayer times)
- Who is introducing and for how long
- Webinar platform
- Sharing slides and fonts
- Length of expected Q&A

Gear

- Computer
- Computer charger
- Projector adapters
- Adapter extension cord
- Presentation clicker
- Batteries
- Power extension cord
- Sound extension cord
- Portable speaker
- Surge protector
- USB drive with presentation backup
- Masking tape
- Dry erase markers or chalk
- Food
- Water
- Throat lozenges
- Microphone (if not provided by host)

Reminders

- Turn off or silence phone
- Remove unnecessary objects from pockets (e.g., keys)
- Make microphone comfortable
- Check clothes and hair
- Relax, breathe, or meditate

Your Checklist to Success

Key takeaways

- What are the two or three most interesting or important findings from your research?
- Why are they significant?
- What surprised you?
- Are there a few statistics that are particularly noteworthy?
- What are the policy implications of your research and findings?

Interview tips

- Be confident
- Take your time
- Speak in lay terms
- Be concise
- Listen carefully
- Don't be afraid to ask for clarification
- Don't feel obligated to answer every question or every part of a question

Getting quoted

- Tell a story
- Use imagery
- Spotlight a standout number
- Bust myths and misperceptions

Problem questions

- "While I'm not an expert on that subject, I can tell you..."
- "It's too early to tell, but it seems clear..."
- "What's important to remember is..."

Keeping it crisp and concise

- "The bottom line is that..."
- "The three most important reasons..."
- "To summarize..."

Putting it together

- Be quick and responsive, even if it's a referral to another source, when a media request arrives
- Think through your key takeaways
- Make the information accessible
- You're the expert, you can drive the conversation
- Say something that stands out
- Practice, practice, practice

Policy Impact Plan Template

Plan for	
Goal	

Identify your key audiences. Who might benefit from learning about your research?

Audience A

Audience B

Audience C

What do you want them to do? What actions might they take after learning about your research?

Plan your time. What's the timing for your outreach? Are there key events to keep in mind? Are you working toward a specific deadline?

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Ma y	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Deliverable 1												
Deliverable 2												

Write your key messages. What is your headline message that will make your audience sit up and take notice? What's new, different, surprising, or challenges expectations?

List your channels and tactics. How can you reach your audiences?

Audience A			
Audience B			
Audience C			

Prepare your messengers. Are there validators, thought leaders, influencers, etc. who can help you carry your message? Are there materials that you need to create to help share your message?

- Fact sheet
- Written testimony
- Policy brief
- Other:
- Media pitch
- Elevator pitch
- Blog post
- Tweet
- LinkedIn post/blog
- Facebook message

Evaluate. How will you know whether your plan was successful? How will you measure outputs and outcomes?
