



Recruiting for your Indivisible Group

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WELCOME

Welcome to Indivisible's new recruitment guide! Now with even more tips for building your local group! Indivisibles know that recruitment is a key component of building local power and we want to provide you with some foundational skills and resources.

It is not always easy to meet and identify new potential activists, or reactivate your existing list. It's hard, intentional work (like anything that matters). The goal of this guide is to provide Indivisibles with new ideas and the tools you need to build a stronger and bigger membership - in person or virtually! You can do this. We can do this. So, let's go!

What's in this guide:

- **Building a Recruitment Plan:** Every successful recruitment push starts with a plan.
- **Having an Effective Recruitment Conversation:** The number one reason new activists get involved with local groups is because someone asked them. Dig deep on how to make effective asks.
- **Building Inclusive Groups:** Learn effective ways to build a welcoming and supportive group across lines of difference.
- **Recruitment Plan Worksheet:** Put your plan building skills to action!
- **Scripts Worksheet:** Really, what is an Indivisible guide without a call script?
- **Glossary of Racial Equity Terms:** Develop a learning mindset for leading your group.
- **Discussion Guide - White Supremacy in Organizations:** Facilitate an effective discussion about your group's culture and building a truly inclusive group.

How to use this guide:

- **Step 1: Take a full look at the guide to get acquainted with the basic concepts.** Note that it is organized in a way that starts with the fundamentals and then progresses to more advanced concepts. The worksheets at the end will help you implement the ideas.
- **Step 2: Go over these materials with your core group members.** It is so important that you are all aligned on how you're going to proceed.
- **Step 3: Complete the worksheet and make a plan with your recruitment leads.** Then work the plan.
- **Step 4: Start recruiting!** Make sure you follow each step of your plan. Being systematic and intentional about your implementation will make you more likely to hit your goals.
- **Step 5: Keep recruiting!** Remember the organizer's mantra: Always be recruiting. Once you've had your event or activated new members, ask for them to help recruit

even more folks. We need every single activist involved and invested to win in November.

Note: In this guide, we primarily talk about recruiting for a specific event but these strategies can be applied to any type of recruitment.

BUILDING A RECRUITMENT PLAN

First: Analyze your current membership

How many people do you have committed to your Indivisible group right now? This number is not the number of followers you have on Facebook or on your email list, but rather the number of people who act when asked and are enthusiastic about your mission. A quick rule of thumb: we have found Indivisible groups typically have an active, committed membership count of 10% of their email list or Facebook group. If you have 200 people in your Facebook group, your active membership might be around 20 committed activists. Be conservative - it's better to have too many people than not enough.

Second: Set a goal

What are you recruiting for? Once you know your current membership, you can start building your plan. Be as detailed as possible about your group's needs and dreams! Are you getting ready to do a big event and want to see a spike in attendance? Is your overall membership base low and you want to increase your number of regular members taking action? Did a team lead need to step down from a position and you're looking for someone to join the steering committee? Be specific.

Set a number. Once you know what you're recruiting for, set a specific and numeric goal that takes into account natural attrition. Not everyone you reach out to will respond, not everyone who responds will say yes, and not everyone who says yes will show up. We wish every single human was a member of an Indivisible group, but alas, that is not the case.

So, for example: *If you want 40 people to attend an event, you need 80 people to say yes. To find those 80 people you will have conversations with at least 160 people.* We call this "organizer math" and it is an easy cheat sheet to build your recruitment plan. It's all about

doubling your contacts: to get 40 Attendees → you need 80 Yeses → you need to contact at least 160 people.

At first glance, this math might feel overwhelming. Think of this as your blueprint - this helps you avoid the very, very real scenario of expecting 50 people to attend and only having 2 show up. One more note: always remember that most folks need several conversations before they are ready to attend an event, join your group, etc.

Third: Build a Team

Who is making the asks? One person cannot handle all of this work alone so it's important to form a recruitment committee of people who are dedicated and enthusiastic about the work. This team will be responsible for executing the recruitment plan. The ideal people to ask to help you are folks who are already core group members or who you want to become core group members. Ask yourself: who is engaged and always looking for ways to help? Who shows up to most events but hasn't been asked to step up and take on more responsibility? These are your teammates for this work.

Fourth: MAKE a Plan

Who are you going to invite? Sometimes it might feel daunting to reach out to people you don't know very well and ask them to do something - don't be nervous! Just remember, if you don't ask, they won't come. You likely already have a list of members - an email list, Facebook followers, old attendance sheets. This is where to start. These folks are your "low-hanging fruit" and should be the first you reach out to.

Sit down with your team (virtually or in person, ideally with a cup of coffee or tea) and go through your Facebook group name by name. Assign individual team members to specific people based on their relationships and common threads. Who has the strongest relationship with the person? Who talks to them the most frequently? Who would they recognize? If nobody has a relationship with the person, look for points of interest like local neighborhoods or actions you attended together. Have a star recruiter who is also a teacher? Ask her to reach out to the other teachers in your group.

An exciting resource to help with this is [Indivisible's Every Action platform](#). Through this platform, you can access a list of all the folks in your area who have signed up for the Indivisible email list. This is great because it gives you another place to find folks who have already said they want to get involved - they're just waiting for you to ask them to take action with your group. Another advantage is that Every Action can help you track your membership and new recruits.

Once you've reached out to your existing list, it's time to get creative! Make a list of partner organizations (including other Indivisible Groups) you can ask to share your event. As you

get confirmations, ask attendees to commit to enlisting 5 friends or family members to come with them. The way you build out your network should always be through a lens of equity and inclusion - what groups or communities can you approach? You can find a guide below about building inclusive groups to help you plan a process that is truly inclusive and diverse.

How are you going to recruit them? Use the most direct forms of communication accessible to you. Only have a Facebook profile? Then, after creating the event, follow up with a direct message. If you have an email address, that's all the better - don't be afraid to email more than once. And best of all, phone calls are proven to be the most effective way of getting people to commit. Direct communication allows for a more concrete answer.

Here's, an example tiered recruitment schedule:

- 1) You begin inviting people a month prior to your event. The ideal time to do this is by making an ask at an event you're already hosting and have people sign up on the spot.
- 2) Create a Facebook event and invite all your members.
- 3) Write personal messages to the folks for whom you only have email addresses.
- 4) By now you've recruited some group members to help, so conduct a recruitment phone banking night to call your entire list.
- 5) Your work isn't done. You've put out the initial invite but now you need to follow-up. Write direct messages on Facebook to the folks with whom you only have a social media connection. You'll also want to send follow-up messages, not only to those you've previously reached out to via email, but also to those you've called.
- 6) By 2-weeks out, you've gotten a lot of people to say "yes" - GREAT! But will they come? Not if you don't follow-up. This means more calls, emails and messages to confirm their attendance. Pro-tip: The best way to confirm is by phone. So when you're making your asks of those for whom you have limited contact information, ask for their phone number for your database.
- 7) You have likely gotten a bunch of people who haven't said "yes", but they haven't said "no" either. These are your "maybes" and they stay on your list to contact again, but they aren't included in your target number until they turn into a "confirm". Keep at 'em - lots of folks get a clearer idea of their schedule closer to the date of the event.
- 8) A week prior to the event comes the next round of confirmations. More emailing, messaging, and calling. Confirm that they're attending and that they know all the relevant details (think: parking, bring a lunch, etc.).
- 9) Finally, the day before the event, make your last touch. Tell them you're excited to see them, make sure they have all the information they need.

How to deal with maybes and no's. As we already said, not everyone you reach out to will say yes and that's okay. At the same time, just because someone said no to a past event,

doesn't mean they never want to be involved in the future. Come back to past no's in your recruitment.

When you're making an ask, you will likely get a lot of no's at first. Don't get discouraged - oftentimes you'll have a chance to turn that no into a yes. How do you do that? By knowing the three types of no and using the **hard ask** (which we talk about in a bit) as an opportunity to turn a no into a yes. So, what are the three types of no?

- **Not now.** This is what we call a soft no. The volunteer didn't say they'd never do it - they said that they can't do it at that specific time or place. This is where having multiple asks at the ready comes in handy. If they say no to participating at a particular time, acknowledge the response and then pivot to another opportunity for action. For example, "I understand that schedules can be hectic, we're also having a phone bank next Saturday at 10a, would that work better for you?" This requires you to think ahead and have several actions planned. Remember, the more options for action you have available, the more likely you are to turn that no into a yes.
- **Not this.** This is another soft no. The volunteer declined that particular activity, but that doesn't mean there isn't a place for them in your group. Find out WHY someone is saying "not this" and offer an alternative way for them to take action that speaks to their strengths and interests. If someone isn't keen on phone banking but is super artistic, invite them to your next sign-making party. Then invite them to the action to show off their new sign!. Think creatively, there's always another job to be done and make sure to ask again in that same conversation.
- **Not ever.** Well, this is a hard no - and, that's ok. Don't take it personally, one benefit of identifying the hard no's is that you're cleaning up your list. If the person you're asking says that they aren't at all interested in your group or your actions, simply acknowledge their response, track it appropriately, and call it day. You've got other folks to focus your energy on!

EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT CONVERSATIONS

Getting clear commitments.

Think about a time when you were asked to do something or take some sort of action - what made you say "yes"? When we commit others to action, we are giving them an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to a cause they care about. So why do we sometimes hesitate when making an ask? Sometimes, we worry about burdening

others, or we worry that they will say no and we'll feel rejected, or maybe they'll say yes and then we'll have to commit ourselves!

When we ask others to join us, it is critical that we use clear, concise language. Do not give into the tendency to minimize the commitment, making it seem smaller or less important than it really is. Respecting others means being very transparent about the work ahead, about the support they'll receive, and giving them a choice of whether or not to commit.

One way to apply this best practice, when it comes to event recruitment, is by not only asking someone to attend your event, but to also ask them to take on a task associated with the event. There's always something to do, be it staffing a sign-in table or collecting and entering data. Ask them to get more involved in the overall process so that they are more invested in your cause.

Getting strong commitments requires four steps, this is what we call the **hard ask**:

1. **Connect:** Make the “ask” as specific as you can to the person you are trying to recruit. Identify yourself, tell them what you're doing and why you're doing it, and let them know why you're asking them to get involved. This can be done with only a few words.
2. **Context:** Explain why the action you are asking them to take part in is important right now. Be specific about the challenge and the hope.
3. **Commitment:** Explicitly ask the other person if you can count on them to join you. Don't be vague and use language like “Will you come to the fundraiser?” Rather, be very specific about the date, time, and place. For example:
 - “Can we count on you to join us in _____?”
 - “Will you join me in doing _____?”
 - “Yes! Definitely!” (Great! Confirm the details)
 - “Maybe . . .” (Ask what questions they have and how you can follow up.)
 - “No, I'm sorry.” (Ask why? Give them your contact info in case they change their mind.)
4. **Catapult:** If someone says “yes” then give them the respect of having real work and real responsibility at your action and a real plan to get there. Ask:
 - Can you bring something to the event (i.e. food, posters, etc.)?
 - Can you commit to bringing 2 friends with you?
 - How do you plan on getting to the event? (people with plans are much more likely to attend!)

Confirming and Following-up

We have the responsibility to follow up and do everything it takes to support others in joining us. Most important are “confirmation calls” and the closer to the event, the more important and effective the reminder call will be. Think of the process as a cycle:

1) Start by **recruiting** and getting specific commitments to the action or event. Let them know you’ll reach out to them again closer to the event to remind them.

2) **Confirm** the commitments you got a few days out. Check in and see if the people who committed need a ride, can invite others, or can take responsibility for part of the action. **Confirm** within 24 hours before the action. Provide full details on the place, time and purpose of the action, including any updates on the agenda or attendees.

3) **ACTION!** Lead a motivational action that respects others’ time, but also provides full training, opportunities for relationship building, and purposeful, measurable action. These actions can be as involved as committing to a canvassing shift or as simple as providing a snack for a potluck.

4) **Evaluate & celebrate** the action together. Tally up all measurable outcomes so that everyone can see that they’re part of a bigger whole. Debrief in detail what worked and what should change next time. Then celebrate! Who wants to spend their free time without having fun?! Generate routines for how people in your organization celebrate together, perhaps with food, music or a round of stories from the day.

5) **Thank everyone** the next day for their participation in action. Tell them specifically what impact the action had in the campaign. Lastly, ask for their input on what worked and what could be improved next time.

6) **Move participants to the next level of leadership** where they can help you and your team plan more actions in their city or neighborhood.



BUILDING INCLUSIVE GROUPS

It's More than Just Recruitment

Diversity, equity and inclusion are key concepts that are important to understand to building and maintaining an inclusive group. In this section, we will focus on inclusion but we need to take a moment to understand diversity and equity so that we can achieve the goal of being fully inclusive.

Diversity is the differences among individuals, including race, social economic status, education levels, gender, sexuality, gender, religion, ability, age, marital status, and many other identities. As human beings, we are naturally diverse because even if we identify as sharing the same race, gender, social economic status, and educational level, we do not share the same life experiences of how people may interact with us based on our identities. Bringing people together ensures there is diversity but to be inclusive we have to go beyond diversity. We have to create an environment that respects and welcomes diversity.

Welcoming and respecting diversity means that we create and maintain equity in our groups. Equity (see definition in the next section) everyone has a similar experience and has equal opportunity to contribute and have an impact. In our groups, we create equity by providing each individual member with what they need to fully participate. This may mean having materials in large print, providing meeting materials including an agenda prior to the meeting, and having an option for folks to join by video. If using video meeting option, be sure to use closed caption feature. Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak, do not assume everyone will feel comfortable speaking up so you may need to ask folk directly for their opinion or thoughts.

Inclusion is a core Indivisible principle, but what does it mean in practice? For one thing it means challenging those who work to silence the voices of people who have been marginalized or excluded, both in our current society and historically. Being inclusive is also an acknowledgment of the injustices that have brought us to this point in history. Furthermore, it is an investment in the durability and solidarity of our communities and in the efficacy of our work. And, lastly, it is an outright rejection of the idea that any of us deserves to remain vulnerable or to be left out of the conversation.

This is a particularly important principle for those of us within the Indivisible family who have more social or economic advantages due to our race, class, or gender, for instance, because—whatever our personal beliefs and convictions—we are the ones who have benefited from historic systems of oppression. This is why inclusion becomes incredibly important in the recruitment practices of local groups, because being part of a movement

means including all voices - not just those in our own backyards. Indivisible groups across the country have asked themselves the question, “how do we diversify our base?” - maybe you’ve asked this question as well. **The answer lies not in who you recruit but instead in what type of group culture you’re creating.** Plans to simply “recruit a larger number of people of color” into one’s group, fall into dangerous patterns of tokenization (the definition of “tokenization” can be found in the glossary that follows this section) and it doesn’t answer the need of true inclusion. Our mission is to amplify the voices of the collective, not simply to have certain designated groups “represented”. It’s best to think about all of this as long-term work - employing these tactics constantly and consistently, not only for specific events or actions but also for shaping the culture of your group. So, take stock of where you are and devise a plan that manifests your ongoing commitment building a group that reflects the world you want to see.

So if the best way to diversify your recruitment pool is to build a truly inclusive organization, how do we do that? The following steps are a good place to start:

Step 1: Build an inclusive environment.

When a new person joins the group, make introductions, have them share what strengths they bring to the group or if you have spoken to the person before they came to the group, share what skills and/or attributes that you believe they will bring to the group. This helps to create a sense of being part of the team and a sense of belonging. Be sure to solicit their input in meetings by asking their opinion and follow up questions so they feel heard. When someone speaks, let them finish their thought and do not speak over them.

Step 2: Build a culture of learning.

Having a shared vocabulary and language to discuss race equity and structural racism is an important foundational step to building an inclusive group. You can find a glossary at the end of this packet (developed by Equity in the Center) that can be used to foster a substantive conversation within your group. Other ideas to build a culture of learning include holding educational programs like book clubs and discussion groups.

Step 3: Understand the dominant culture of your group.

How white supremacy show up in your group practices? As defined by Equity in the Center, dominant culture in a society refers to “the established language, religion, values, rituals, and social customs on which the society was built.” The dominant culture has the most power, is widespread, and is influential within a social entity, such as an organization, in which multiple cultures are present. An organization’s dominant culture is heavily influenced by the leadership and preferences of those at the top of the hierarchy.

As a leadership team, you'll need to analyze the dominant culture of your group. Discuss how dominant culture affects individuals in your group, especially those who fall outside of the dominant culture. Using the material at the end of this packet, you should take it a step further by analyzing how white supremacy is showing up in your group and brainstorm ways to counter it.

Step 4: Make it everyone's responsibility to honor, acknowledge, and work towards changing group culture to be better.

This is hard work and we are only experts in our own lives. Therefore, when anyone in your group brings to you an observation or request for change, you should first thank them and engage with them on how things could be better.

Within your group's steering committee, identify people to lead this work. Larger groups with the capacity to form broader Resource Groups (the definition of 'Resource Groups' can be found in the glossary below) should do so, and invite members who are interested in digging deeper to be involved in creating this change.

Step 5: Name race equity work as a strategic imperative for your group.

Build buy-in across your group on why and how race equity work connects with your broader group mission and vision. The more group buy-in you build, the more it will feel like the responsibility of everyone to do the hard introspective work.

Step 6: Build relationships with people doing the work outside of your community.

Look for opportunities to show up and volunteer your time doing whatever is most needed. If you know someone who volunteers with an organization, ask to join them, and do what is asked of you, no matter how small, with energy and respect for that particular organization's mission. Once you've made inroads, keep going back and make friends with other people in the organization to build a trusting and mutually respectful relationship. Remember, if you do the small things, people will ultimately trust you to do the big things

[For a glossary of terms related to inclusion, click here.](#)

RECRUITMENT PLAN WORKSHEET

Current Universe

How many active members are in your group (ie: folks who typically act when asked)?

How many inactive members can you engage (ie: social media, attendance lists, email lists, etc)?

Working Backwards

What are you recruiting for? *Options include: an event, your membership base, a leadership position. NOTE: be as specific as possible.*

Recruitment Goal

How many folks need to be confirmed to take action to hit your completed goal? (Hint: multiply your new member goal by 2)

How many people do you need to ask to get that many people scheduled? (Hint: multiply your new member goal by 2 again)

How many people do you need to contact to make that many asks? (Hint: multiply your new member goal by 2 again)

Who will you recruit? (Remember: be specific about the people and groups you want to reach out to and how)

Recruitment Steps

Make a Plan and Assign Roles

Who will be in charge of email contacts?

Who will be in charge of social media posts and contacts?

Who will be in charge of running the recruitment phone bank?

Who will attend the recruitment phone bank?

Who will be in charge of the first round of confirmation calls?

Who will be in charge of the second round of confirmation calls?

Who will be in charge of the final round of confirmation calls?

WORKSHEET: CREATING YOUR SCRIPT

Along with your recruitment team take time to write your recruitment call script. Make sure to include all 4 C's and an ask (look above). Don't worry about getting it exactly right; your conversations will each be different anyway – they should be conversational, not overly scripted or formal.

YOUR SCRIPT:

Hi, my name is _____, and I'm a leader with _____.

1) Connection: What experiences and values brought you to this movement and what motivates you to do this work? What experiences and values are important to them and what values do you share? What resources do they have and what will get them to say yes? *For example: "I'm working with Indivisible because I'm personally invested in healthcare for all and we're trying to pass legislation that will get us closer to realizing this goal. There are also several other issues we're committed to - what issues do you most care about?"*

2) Context: Connect your story, their story, and your shared values and goals to the work you're doing. Explain what your group is working on: what goal you're trying to achieve, how you plan to achieve it, and what actions you're taking to achieve it (and why you think it will work). Get them invested - then tell them what you need to be successful. *For example: "I absolutely agree that Immigration is a pressing issue - this is why we've been canvassing, phone banking and contacting our local representatives. These things have certainly moved the needle, but the more calls and contacts we can make the more likely we'll be successful in getting key legislation passed."*

3) Commitment: Pivot from explaining what you need to making an ask to get what you need! Your ask should be specific, persistent, convey urgency, apply social pressure, and tiered. Make your ask airtight so there's no way they can say no - and if they do, see if you can change up your ask to turn that no into a yes! *For example: "There's a vote coming up in 2 weeks, which is why we're hosting a phone bank to garner more support from our community next Saturday, March 23rd from 11a to 3p. Can I count on you to join us?" If they say no, "I understand that schedules can be difficult to navigate. We also have a way for you to call from home, at your own convenience. Can we count on you to make 100 calls over the course of the next week?"*

4) Catapult: Recap what you asked and what this person committed to! What follow-up questions will you ask to make sure they follow through on their commitment? Remember to give them a sense of real responsibility for their part of your campaign's success. *For example: "Great! I'm so excited that you'll be able to join us to make calls for Rep. Beserra. You'll be a key part of making sure the upcoming vote goes our way. Can we count on you to bring along a friend?"*