



People, Place, and Power: Research and Data Collection

Be a savvy and respectful explorer. When entering a community or region with a new potential campaign, it's wise to do some homework first. Even with statewide campaigns, getting into the micro-level details of key communities can make or break your success with policy passage and implementation. This research may be done on cities, towns, legislative districts, and even neighborhoods. And the *process* of doing this research can begin to develop meaningful connections in that community. There are three critical types of research and data you will want to gather: (1) People; (2) Place; and (3) Power. Once you pull your facts together, review them carefully with your campaign team. What does this data tell you?

There are many ways to gather the answers to these questions, particularly:

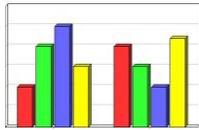
- Online research - you can find some of our favorite resources here:
- Key informant interviews
- Community surveying



People

Who is most impacted by the issue you are working to address? (To the extent you can find out, try to learn about where those people most impacted live, work, learn, play, and pray.)	
What is the data that illustrates the problem you are looking to solve?	
Who is most likely to already be working on your issue?	
Who are the community gatekeepers and opinion leaders, formal and informal, who have the ability to bring others along with them?	
Who are the movers and shakers? Consider: business leaders, award winners, community based organizations' Boards of Directors, big family names, politically involved individual, etc.	
Who are the individuals and organizations that can make or break an issue? (If they're for it, people will believe it is probably a good idea and if they're against it, others will be too.)	

Place



<p>What are the current and trending demographics of the region? Have there been any significant shifts or changes over the past decade or two? How might those shifts influence your issue?</p>	
<p>What are the predictions about future shifts in demographics, employment, etc.?</p>	
<p>Have there been previous efforts in the community related to your issue? What were they? Who led them? What can be learned and leveraged from that experience?</p>	
<p>What are the most significant health issues and health disparities?</p>	
<p>What are the biggest challenges in the community – economic, educational, social, etc.?</p>	
<p>What are the greatest assets of the community?</p>	
<p>What places offer opportunities to meet local residents and have a conversation? (Think about laundromats, hair salons, diners, church groups, school drop-off and pick up points, etc.)</p>	

Power



<p>What is the political composition? Think about: political affiliations (Blue? Red? Blue/red); voting trends and/or changes, etc.</p>	
<p>What is the formal structure of local government – city council, tribal council, school board, etc. Are they elected or appointed? At-large or district?</p>	
<p>Who holds the political power? (Name names and positions!)</p>	
<p>What are the relevant affinity groups and associations?</p>	
<p>Who speaks for and represents particular neighborhoods, communities of color, racial/ethnic and cultural groups, and low-income populations?</p>	
<p>Where will you face opposition and what power does the opposition have with key decision-makers?</p>	