# How to use community engagement for Talk shows

## Before Production

Start with one or two of these ideas

### Audit your show
Take a look at your source diversity and set goals based on what you’re missing.

### Get out into the community
Attend an event, virtually or in person. You may be surprised how many ideas can come from one event!

### Work with reporters, editors
Sit in on newsroom meetings (if you’re not already) and invite reporters to sit in on talk show meetings. The cross-pollination will enrich your topics.

### Co-create a special series with a community group or local media
See: WITF’s “Toward Racial Justice” series and WFYI’s “Where Do We Go From Here?” series.

### Host a listening session
Virtual or in-person, if possible. Keep it open-ended and let the community determine and guide the conversation. Then try scheduling regular events. Send thank-you notes and how participants can listen to the related show.

### Use digital engagement tools
Solicit questions and participation via social media, polls, Google forms, texting, etc.

### Set up a voicemail box
Voicemails can be used as clips for broadcast or sources for future shows. Also gives your listeners access to you outside of your broadcast hours.

## During Production

Center the community in the show itself, through booking, hosting, call-screening and more.

### Center lived experience as expertise
Flip the script: Pivot from traditional experts. Invite guests with personal lived experience to weigh in on important issues in your city.

### Book guests who disagree
Convene individuals with different backgrounds and perspectives and give them a space to share and discuss ideas.

### Maximize the voices on air
Try pulling together pre-produced elements, like audio diaries, to give more air time to the community.

### Script with the community’s input
Source questions and talking points directly from the community—from tweets, calls, etc.

### Let your guests drive the conversation
Give your guests space to interact with one another. Invite their responses to one another and to clips.

### Rethink your call screening process
Don’t let the relationship end with the call. Take down contact information, ask them what topics they’d like to hear. Prioritize bringing on air callers who bring a different perspective to the show.

### Host your show on Facebook Live
You’ll reach a new and different audience. You can broadcast the show live as it airs or record it and post later as a video. Invite comments.

## After the Show

The broadcast is the beginning of participation, not the end

### Re-audit your show
Find a strategy and tool that works for you. Continually refresh goals you set for diversity of sources, and keep track as you go along.

### Solicit feedback, and mean it!
When you thank your guests for their time, ask for their feedback on the show. Ask if you can keep in touch. Remember: We ask a lot of our sources. Always say thank you, and share back how their insight impacted the content.

### Write a digital post
Extend the life of your show by turning it into a story. Try this format: Explain the show topic, list the guests and some of their quotes, and conclude by letting readers know how they can share their feedback.

### Start a talk show advisory group
Invite community members and schedule quarterly meetings for feedback. Be conscious of the ask you’re making—share back the content they’ve inspired, and ask your station about compensation for their time.

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