



PowerShift Organizing Toolkit

Section 2 – Outreach and Recruitment

This section contains a roadmap to help you to build excitement in your community around PowerShift, and start building an organizing team. At the end of this document you will find some templates for emails and other outreach materials that you can modify and use. Remember, if you have any questions or need any support, the Regional Organizing Coordinators are here to help!

1) Set a goal.

We suggest starting by finding 5 people at your school, your workplace, on your campus, or in your community that you think are interested in joining you in attending PowerShift and organizing to get there. Once you have five, try and get five more people each. That's twenty-five people already from just one person organizing coming to PowerShift! As we keep reaching out that number keeps growing and growing, and so does our capacity to create change!

Sample posters, contact sheets, and canvas-style fundraising forms are available at the end of this package. Check out the Appendices for all kinds of outreach materials!

2) How? Develop a strategy, talk to your allies, build your contacts!

a) How you will keep track of interested members of your community? A good way to do this is by creating an email list or Facebook page to help build support and communicate with people. Collect as many phone numbers as you can – phones are still a really reliable way to get a hold of someone!

We'll help you by coordinating connections through the PowerShift website, but setting up your own organizing structures will help you too. It's best not to try to do this alone! Working in a team is usually more fun, less time-consuming and lets everyone contribute in a meaningful way.

b) Who is already interested? Talk to these people first - this will give your group a strong base of support, help you prepare for wider outreach and build your confidence in your outreach skills.

c) Who are you going to contact next? Think about other social action groups, faith groups, student unions or environmental groups in your area. If you don't have contacts in these



groups, you can find them online or by asking around your networks. Twitter can even be an effective way of finding e-mails or other contact info. Don't be afraid to dream big – tell anyone and everyone about PowerShift!

3) Next, it's time to spread the word far and wide:

- a) **You have a list of people you want to contact** - now it's time to phone, send an email or drop into a meeting to let them know about PowerShift. Check out the Appendices for sample emails, call-outs, a short introduction to PowerShift and more. Try to modify these materials in order to highlight the similarities between PowerShift and the people you are dealing with. Have an ask for the people prepared when you contact them, it could just be to meet for coffee or for them to attend an organizing meeting that you've set up.
- b) **Put up posters** around your community with a contact email or number. Don't forget to hit up community centres, friendship centres, diversity centres, employment and immigration support offices, YMCAs, coffee shops, college and university campuses, resource centres...the list is endless!
- c) **Go to events.** Hit up anti-poverty events and rallies, migrant rights rallies, meetings of a diversity of groups, festivals, movie screenings, green fairs, etc. Bring a sign-up sheet, handbills to leave with interested youth and a canvas form in case people want to make donations. If you're comfortable talking in front of a crowd, have a stump speech ready to go for events like these!

4) Follow-up with people who have shown interest.

Email and/or call all the people who have expressed interest. Make sure you have a clear action for them to do in your follow up (i.e. to register for PowerShift and invite ten of their friends to join the Facebook page).

Out-reaching to Frontline and Marginalized communities

What do the terms frontline and marginalized community mean?

Climate change affects everyone but it doesn't affect everyone equally.

Frontline communities are directly impacted by climate change, toxic development or resource extraction.

Marginalized communities are communities or groups of people whose voices have been disregarded or systematically ignored due to ingrained oppressive norms in our culture. The same factors that make them more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change may also mean that they might not have access to information and decision-making power in the same way that "mainstream" communities do.

In the context of PowerShift, this means we likely need to go beyond online outreach and meet marginalized and frontline communities where they're at.



5) Assess who you have succeeded in reaching and what strategies you could use to reach more people.

- a) If you're succeeding with one strategy but not another, it's OK to put more energy into what works! If you're having trouble, ask your Regional Organizing Coordinator what strategies are working for other communities.
- b) Consider arranging meetings with key leaders in communities you want to reach or who are connected with those communities in order to get their advice on how to effectively engage with groups you may be missing.

6) Keep pushing!

- a) Ask professors of college and university classes to let you give a 5 minute pitch for PowerShift at the beginning of their class.
- b) Post information in community bulletins and newspapers. Many newspapers and radio stations have online community bulletins where you can post events for free.
- c) Things to think about:
 - Are you using language that is simple and accessible (ie. to someone whose first language is not English, someone who is not familiar with "environmental" or "activist" lingo)?
 - Build relationships! Take the opportunity of promoting PowerShift Atlantic to make new connections. What can you offer them? What will they get out of being part of PowerShift Atlantic?
 - Look for someone who is a "community connector", someone who is trusted in their community, who is passionate, and who will pass on information to others in their community.
 - While Facebook, email, twitter are powerful tools for reaching some audiences, they don't reach everyone and there is no substitute for face-to-face communication.
 - Many cities have youth programs, or drop-in centres for immigrant youth, aboriginal youth, at-risk youth. Could you offer to do a workshop on climate justice for them? Ask them to share stories about how climate change impacts their lives. If this interests you, ask your Regional Organizing Coordinator for resources. We have plenty!
- d) A big part of your role is to reach out to potential participants in your community. PowerShift seeks to bring together youth from diverse backgrounds across Atlantic Canada. Your role is to spread the word and assist interested youth from your region get to and participate in PowerShift!