

# Strategic Tactic Guide: Ideas for Earned Media Events

**STRATEGIC VALUE:** Choosing the right earned media event to broadcast your message is a key component of amplifying your issue. **By thinking strategically about the type of earned media event you want to host, you can increase the quality and impact of your media outreach.**

**LOGISTICS:** Before deciding to host an earned media event, consider the following questions to help choose the right event for your issue or needs.

- ***What are your goals?***  
Before planning your event, define what it is you're trying to achieve regarding your issue, and think through how earned media will help you realize your objective. What audience are you trying to reach, and what is it that you are trying to convey to them?
- ***What is the best way to communicate your goals?***  
Once you're clear on your goals and message, plan your event to match with the strongest components of your issue and campaign. Do you have multiple speakers with great stories about your issue? For instance, having several people speak at a long press conference would likely bore reporters, but hosting a town hall meeting would allow several members to share their stories while providing an intriguing visual and frame for a reporter to cover your story.
- ***What are your resources?***  
Lastly, think about what assets are available for your earned media ideas and construct your plan accordingly. Do you have a few members who are impressive public speakers with moving personal stories? A press conference may promote your issue most effectively. Is your issue being discussed in the news? Holding a rally would help attract press looking to cover new angles of a developing story. Or you can invite a reporter to observe you and your team hosting a postcard party to write to neighbors and legislators. Finding the right earned media event to promote your issue can help conserve and optimize limited resources, while also growing a strong media footprint.

**IDEAS:** Now that you know what you need to choose the right earned media event for your issue, look at the different ideas below to kick-start planning for your earned media event.

- ***Press Conference***  
A press conference is the most basic form of earned media event. Identify speakers with the most compelling stories related to your issue, and invite press to come hear them speak about their experiences. Partner with local allies to build a crowd of supporters at the conference, and bring visuals (signage, etc.) to help create a newsworthy picture to accompany the story.
- ***Letter or Petition Drop***  
If you're collecting letters or petitions on your issue, organize a group of members to drop the letters off at the office of a local elected official, and invite a reporter to tag along. Bonus points if you hold a rally in conjunction with the letter drop, and extra bonus points if you can get a meeting with the elected official or their staff while you're there.
- ***Rally or March***  
If your issue has a strong following in your area, consider hosting a public rally or march with local allies and partners. The more people involved, the more likely members of the media are to cover the event. Note, however, that your city may have laws requiring organizers to purchase a permit to host a rally.
- ***Town Hall Meeting***

Create a forum to discuss your issue and highlight multiple voices through a panel discussion or town hall meeting with local community members and leaders, allies, issue experts and elected officials. Invite press to attend and cover the conversation.

- ***Phone Bank or Canvass***

Invite a reporter to come shadow your phone bank or canvass and observe how you educate members of your community about your issue.