Ballots & Beyond

Using the Momentum of the 2012 Election to Engage our Communities in Anti-Racist Work

A Toolkit by CATALYST PROJECT
Ballots & Beyond:
Using the momentum of the 2012 election to engage our communities in anti-racist work

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Vision, Strategy & this Campaign

Catalyst Vision

Catalyst Project believes we need to create a new world, where all people are free from all forms of oppression and are able to live in a way that is sustainable and in harmony with the earth. We envision a world based on global justice where everyone has housing, income, food, education, and healthcare. This is no small order and we know that to create this type of global change we need vibrant, massive, multiracial movements that connect the 99% globally with each other.

Catalyst Strategy

We see that racism is inherent in the structures of every institution that shapes life in the United States. As internalized superiority, racism also is trained into white people, even those of us who value justice and equality and are actively engaged in community struggles for social justice. This institutional and interpersonal racism continues to keep communities divided when we need to be coming together; racism obstructs us from building strong multiracial organizations, alliances and movements.

To shift these dynamics and build up strong multi-racial movements for collective liberation, Catalyst Project supports white organizers, organizations and communities in putting racial justice and collective liberation politics at the center of our work to help to build vibrant massive movements for global liberation. We believe that anti-racist leadership can help to protect that visions for liberation from divide and control tactics, and can help us to stay focused on long-term social and institutional transformation instead of short term gains that often come at the expense of communities of color.

We do this in a variety of ways. Catalyst staff is made up of trainers who are grassroots organizers, participating in on-the-ground organizing in front-line struggles for racial justice including post-Katrina New Orleans and immigrant justice struggles over the past decade. This included efforts in Arizona to oppose the implementation of SB1070 which codified racial profiling. We work to build up anti-racist leadership and practice in majority white movements and communities, and support people connecting with each other and building multiracial alliances.

Catalyst’s organizing and political education strategy is intersectional in nature and has been deeply informed by radical women of color feminism that highlights the intersections of race, class, gender and so much more. The works of Andrea Smith, Angela Davis, bell hooks, Arundhati Roy, and many other local, national and international women of color feminists are woven throughout Catalyst’s strategy and programs.
What that means for this project

As an organization that believes global liberation is needed and possible, we recognize that a diversity of tactics will be needed to build the world we hold in our hearts. We neither place all of our hope for change within “the system,” nor do we abandon efforts to engage with “the system” in ways that build up people’s power and highlight contradictions. We believe the electoral system was not designed to represent or serve the 99%, but can be used in ways that do support building grassroots movements. We also see presidential election years as a real challenge to engaging what is important and useful in the national electoral arena, while channeling energy into instead of out of community-based struggles.

The intertwined histories of racism and the voting franchise in this country are critical in determining how we approach electoral work. Systemic racism is at play when we see which groups of people are still legally disenfranchised: undocumented people, incarcerated people, people convicted of felonies (in many states). When we choose to engage in electoral campaigns, whether for candidates or initiatives, we’ve got to ask ourselves how to design campaigns that will contribute to building political power among people who are denied the right to vote, rather than agreeing to further marginalize these communities. Campaigns can allow people to come together across lines of difference and experience, harness energy and common intentions, and build relationships and alliances that lay foundation for community work together. The result at the ballot box should not be the only determinant of a successful campaign.
More than ever, people are calling out the stranglehold that money and corporate interests have on our political system. What can be done within a system so determined by money and corporate influence is extremely limited.

Most elected officials represent a very narrow spectrum, inevitable given the limitations of a two-party system jockeying for position and patrons. We must be rigorously honest with ourselves, publicly, about this reality. At the same time, we can’t dismiss the significance of voting for communities that have been denied the right to vote due to racism. Particularly in the African-American community, the history of fighting and dying for the right to vote is often translated as a legacy for current generations to take up and engage by exercising that vote. Our politics do not center on electoral work, but we must understand and respect the weight carried by having the option to vote at all.

Elections are presented as the only legitimate means of political engagement in this country, and millions of people in the U.S. will be paying some level of attention to the presidential election conversation, and the issues it raises. As anti-racist organizers we can use the momentum of the 2012 elections to have conversations with a broader audience (i.e. not just radical friends, but liberal acquaintances, family members, friends from high school or work) about racial and economic justice.

We can open up spaces to look at:

► WHAT are the opportunities presented in the local or national election arena to advance racial and economic justice?
► HOW are the things we are hearing from Democrats and Republicans highlighting the racism and classism that are inherent in our social system, and how do we help people to engage with these contradictions?
► WHAT are the opportunities locally and nationally to address the massive disenfranchise-ment of working-class communities of color that we’ve seen through restricting the voting rights of imprisoned and formerly imprisoned people, immigrant and migrant communities, and the recent wave of laws requiring voters to present ID cards at voting stands?
► WHAT additional opportunities do we see locally and nationally for folks to plug into move-ments for racial and economic justice outside of the election system?

Regardless of the outcomes, the 2012 elections are a time when race and class will be in the news and on people’s minds. This is an opportunity to engage with folks wherever they are at and continue to build up anti-racist analysis and engage people with local and national work for racial justice.
Campaign Documents

**Goals:**

We want to increase our community’s capacity to bring together white people who don’t usually have explicit conversations about racism, by providing opportunities and resources for those conversations. This is part of a long-term strategy of directly engaging thousands of white people in effective, accountable anti-racist work. We want to change cultural norms so that conversations and collective action against racism are something that white people do together on a mass scale in connection with multiracial movements.

Occupy has been a window thrown wide, showing peoples’ hunger to come together face to face, to build community-based political power outside electoral politics. 2012 will offer continued chances for anti-racist white people to take initiative to focus and act against institutional racism, in connection with long term organizing in communities of color. This campaign is an initiative of Catalyst Project, but we hope it will provide opportunities to collaborate with organizations in other parts of the country, for example, by bringing speakers from local racial and economic justice organizations to dinner discussions, so participants can learn more about supporting local organizing.

This is an opportunity to keep pushing ourselves and our networks to go farther outside our comfort zones. Within our communities, there are thousands of justice-oriented white people who aren’t connected to any collective efforts for change. The combination of white supremacy and capitalist hegemony that keeps white people from seeing or seeking out multiracial organizing efforts, or any collective action at all, also relies on those of us who are active to stay in tiny and self-referential leftist circles. This effort is towards broadening our circles. Towards this end we hope you will invite not just a circle of ‘radical’ friends, but open up these spaces to a broad community of friends, co-workers, family members and others. This will add more people who we can engage in anti-racist collective liberation politics and practice.

**Strategy:**

Hold dinner discussions on systemic racism, connecting to issues coming up in the 2012 election, and offering participants increased opportunities for ongoing connection with anti-racist work, including Catalyst Project and local racial justice organizations.

Members of our Grassroots Fundraising Team will convene and lead these conversations, and support, established or emerging leaders to hold their own dinner discussion events.
As anti-racist organizers we all have much to learn from perspectives, experiences and conversations on a grassroots level all over the country. In this effort, we want to develop materials that speak effectively to a broad community of white people about structural racism, and to draw lessons for collective liberation organizing from these conversations.

This campaign arises from our program work, but is also a project of our Grassroots Fundraising Team. This is an experiment in a different strategy for directly weaving organizing and fundraising together. For years people in the friend, family and political circles of our community and allies have supported Catalyst’s work by becoming donors. We want to reach out more broadly, knowing that financial support for racial justice organizing is one of many ways that white people at different levels of political activity feel connected to work for change. This is also an opportunity for our Grassroots Fundraising Organizing Team and other dinner hosts to develop skills in bringing together and leading these discussions. We have found these to be so important, challenging, and nourishing— in other words, amazing learning opportunities with the possibility of long term positive impact.

To advance these political goals of supporting more people to connect with racial justice organizing, this project aims to:

- HOLD 10 or more dinners or discussions on collective liberation in the context of the 2012 elections
- IDENTIFY and develop leaders in our network
- CONNECT with 100+ new people – having everyone sign in on a sign in sheet is very important in meeting this goal
- IDENTIFY volunteers & in-kind donations
- PROVIDE meaningful ways for people to support the movement for racial and economic justice, leaving people with at least one next step including connecting to local groups
- DEVELOP new Catalyst donors across the country
- RAISE $3,000 for Catalyst Project – an average of $300 raised at 10 house parties. Ask folks to sign up to be monthly donors or make a significant one-time donation.
Sample Agenda

Here is an example of how the evening could go. Feel free to change this depending on your goals for the evening, the local organizing you are engaged with, local culture, your facilitation style etc.

6-6:15 - Gathering Time & Sign In
Time for people to arrive, get settled in, start meeting each other and get some food. It may be helpful to have a co-host welcome people with you and help get folks settled. Play some music to help warm the space. Have more than one sign in sheet so that folks won’t have to wait too long for one sheet. Be sure to have everyone sign in—this is key to being able to build up the network of folks we work with.

6:15-6:25 - Welcome
Time to formally welcome people, set the tone of the evening, introduce yourself, Catalyst Project and why you are hosting this event.

6:25-7:25 - Conversation or Program
Pick one of the topics below to help folks connect with anti-racist organizing opportunities locally, nationally, through the elections as well as through local organizing work. Or you could create your own discussion based on your work, or the work of a local racial and economic justice organization. Sample discussions are outlined below.

7:25-7:35 - Pitch
After the conversation it’s important to offer concrete ways for people to support the movement for racial and economic justice. Make a pitch for Catalyst Project. Share a personal story to let people know why you support this work and the impact you have seen Catalyst have. It can be helpful to share a goal of how much money you are trying to raise at the event. Who will pass the hat or donation box? Do you have Catalyst donation forms so people can donate by credit card?

7:35-7:50 - Recap How Folks Can Plug in & Share Commitments
Remind people of the other ways they can plug into the movement for racial and economic justice. Identify positive legislation or candidates if any exist; also share opportunities for people to learn about and connect with local grassroots community organizations. Invite a few people to share something they will be doing after they leave the room to continue working for racial and economic justice.

7:50-8:00 - Closing
Thank everyone for coming and participating. Speak from your heart about why you are involved in the movement for racial and economic justice and why you are excited to be connected with the people in the room. If possible, give a report-back on how much money the group raised. Leave time at the end for announcements for other upcoming events etc.
TIP: Photocopy and/or print extra copies of the third-to-last page of this toolkit for your sign-in sheets.

TIP: Photocopy and/or print extra copies of the last two pages of this toolkit for your donation forms.
Talking Points

Here are some sample talking points for your dinner discussion/community conversation.

This project is....

People in the Catalyst community across the country are coming together to have conversations about racial and economic justice and the elections. As we’ve seen with the popularity of the Occupy movement, the 99% needs to keep building our ability to make change from the grassroots, as our political system is so intertwined with the interests of the 1% that voting alone will not create the depth of change we need. We also have seen within Occupy, as everywhere, the ever-present need to address the forms of divide and control within the 99%, with racism being a central obstacle to us building real unity, and to creating true justice.

This is important because....

Now, when many communities across the US are taking their lead from the Arab Uprisings and from grassroots peoples’ social justice movements around the world, this is an opportune time to take responsibility and initiative. Hundreds of thousands of people across the country are experimenting with direct democracy face-to-face, and taking on the real challenges of how our very different experiences of living in this country can either keep us divided, or be the basis for real strength across differences. We know that politics, meaning how we govern ourselves, is much bigger than elected officials and ballot initiatives and includes the powerful grassroots organizing that many communities are engaged in.

Tonight we want to ask you to....

► DISCUSS and learn together about local and national ways to support the movement for racial and economic justice both through the election process and grassroots community organizations
► DONATE to Catalyst Project because it is critical for white people to work against racism, and to support each other so that white anti-racist efforts are community funded.
► NOTE: If you’ve invited a local organizer from a community organization it would be good to do a split benefit... the reason for donating to the local organization will differ depending on what is most appropriate.
► VOTE on upcoming initiatives and identify if there is an electoral effort prioritized by local racial and economic justice organizers
► IDENTIFY if there are other ways you want to get involved in the movement for racial and economic justice beyond donating and voting. For example, think of three people in your life with whom you want to share your thoughts coming out of this conversation, and ask them to join you in carrying this work forward in whatever way that means for you.
Sample discussion topics

**Immigration**

Framing:
In 2006 we saw massive marches in all major cities in the US in support of immigrant rights. Since this time we have also seen increasingly dehumanizing legislations pass in states across the US that codify racial profiling and criminalize immigrant families.

Examples of this are SB1070 in Arizona and HB56 in Alabama. National versions of these laws also exist in the form of “Secure Communities” or SCOMM, which allows local police to work with ICE to racially profile, criminalize and deport immigrant communities.

These anti-immigrant bills play on racist fears that immigrant families are to blame for the current economic crisis. But it is becoming increasingly clear that the war economy (we spend more than half of our national budget on the military industrial complex) and the refusal of the wealthiest individuals (the 1%) to pay their fair share of taxes is the real reason our cities are bankrupt and our public schools are closing down.

There is also a false idea that white communities are not immigrant communities. We each have family stories of migration and many of us have moved from one area to another and have personal stories of migration as well even if that is within the borders of the US.

Discussion:
► **ASK** folks to take a minute to share some highlights from their own or their families’ histories of migration with someone next to them. Ask for a few common themes to be shared with the larger group.
► **ASK** why did people migrate? What were the opportunities and obstacles they faced? How did race and/or white privilege play out for them? (Make sure to lead the discussion in a manner which allows people to self-select whether and how to share, particularly on this topic where peoples’ ancestors may have been stolen and enslaved, or migrated due to religious persecution, genocide, or extreme economic oppression)
► **ASK:** Can we see connections with the conditions that undocumented people face in our community?
► **ASK:** What opportunities do we see for advancing the struggle for migrant justice (also called immigrant rights) locally and nationally? What are the opportunities in this upcoming election? What are the opportunities presented in local grassroots organizing?
Vision of the world we want to live in

Framing:
We often focus more on what we are fighting against. Elections are frequently a strong reminder about what we do not want... more cuts to social services, right wing candidates, laws that play to the demands of corporations instead of community needs.

Rarely do we have space in our lives to think about what we actually WANT to see in our families, our communities, our schools etc.

Take a moment to reflect on the kind of world you want to live in and share your thoughts with someone next to you.

Discussion:
► ASK: Who can share a couple of highlights about the kind of world we want to see?
► ASK: Do we see any opportunities for this in the electoral realm? What opportunities do we see for this in our communities, families, cities/towns? What organizations are doing work to build the people power we’d need to make these changes possible?
► NOTE: it would be helpful to have identified some examples of legislation to support or vote against.
Limits & complications with relying solely on elections:

Framing:
In this country, we are told that elections are the only “real” way to make change. There is a very strong push to discredit other forms of political activity, and other strategies.

There are many areas where racism affects electoral politics. The U.S. has always had racist legislation—legislation that is designed to have a differential impact based on race (like immigration quotas by country) or to encourage enforcers to use race in discretionary enforcement (racial profiling). Racism also affects who is legally permitted to vote, who is in fact discouraged, whose votes are not counted, and who is considered deserving or undeserving of the vote.

In the past year 34 states have passed laws that require voters to show photo ID. This will result in thousands of voters being turned away from polls, especially impacted are youth, the elderly, working-class communities and communities of color. [Note: for more information on this search Kock Brothers Fund Voter Suppression For Minorities].

Struggles focused on changing racist laws (like Jim Crow) have been key features of racial justice struggles. While electoral victories alone have never solved the larger problems that led to those racist laws being passed and implemented, but

Discussion:
► ASK: What lessons can we learn from the civil rights movement (and other movements) about how changing laws is important and more effective when part of a more comprehensive strategy for social change?
► ASK: What effects do the role of money and corporate influence in U.S. politics have on who is elected and which laws get passed? How does racism play roles in this?
► ASK: How might our elections system look different if laws were developed with the interests of the 99% in mind?
THE ECONOMIC PYRAMID

1% of the population controls 43% of the net financial wealth

19% of the population controls 50% of the net financial wealth

80% of the population controls 1% of the net financial wealth


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Racism and the 1%

Framing: share the Economic Pyramid (included in PDF, it’s nice to draw it on a large piece of paper)

The pyramid [on the next page] of wealth distribution shows there is a dominant idea that wealthy people got their wealth through hard work, but it’s important to talk about how the wealth that the 1% has was created through exploitation. Much of this wealth was created by the theft of land, labor and resources from communities of color around the world and within the US. This theft of land, labor and resources has happened over generations to communities of color and is current and ongoing. While a small group of mostly white people have accumulated massive amounts of wealth, the communities of color that have been exploited in this process have accumulated generations of debt and trauma.

The differences within bottom layer have real impacts— we are not trying to lump it all together—but no one below ruling class has the same access to institutional power that the 1%, including corporations have.

We need to be challenging the ways that all of us below the 1% are being set up to fight each other over crumbs instead of demanding that everyone’s needs be met.

Discussion:

► ASK: What comes up for you/what does it feel like looking at the pyramid?
► ASK: What roles did racism play in creating this pyramid?
► ASK: Where do you hear racism being used to distract attention away from the reality of economic inequality that this pyramid represents?
► ASK: How does the 1% scapegoat communities of color and blame them for everyone’s economic insecurity?
► ASK: How can we help our ourselves, and our family, friends, co-workers truly understand that the big banks and corporations of the 1% are at the root of our economic inequality instead of blaming communities of color and immigrants?
**ORGANIZING TOOLS**

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**Tips on How to Plan a House Party**

**Why throw a house party?**

- HAVE face-to-face and group conversations, and build community
- SPREAD the word about opportunities to contribute to and engage in the movement for racial and economic justice
- RECRUIT volunteers
- IDENTIFY emerging anti-racist leaders or people you’d like to work with in the future
- BUILD Catalyst Project and the multi-racial movement for collective liberation
- WORK with other groups and individuals
- CREATE a “buzz” about the issues
- HAVE a good time!
Sample week-by-week plan:

First week [if you are planning to collaborate with another group or organization]: Make list of groups; call/meet up with group leaders. Together: Set goals and responsibilities; draft invite and agenda; discuss how you want to co-facilitate; get ppl plugged in; decide how to make the pitch; review goals

Second week: Find a co-host to work with, set date and location, send out a “save the date,” make a list of tasks to share/delegate

Third week: Identify and contact food/drink sources; send out full invitation via mail, email and Facebook; identify 5 initial volunteers and ask them to contribute; check in on progress of volunteers; check in with the group you are collaborating with

Fourth week: Finalize details re location, food, background music, etc. (on a minimum timeline, at this point there may be between one week and a month or so before your event comes up)

The week before: Confirm everything with everybody is on track; reminder calls; confirm volunteers’ tasks are done

Day Before: Pick up food/drinks; reminder text messages to people you invited as well as to volunteers

Day of: Set up before event; sign in at door; donation materials organized; get face time with everyone if possible; recognize and thank volunteers

Follow Up: see #8 on the previous page, after the event; also, do your own evaluation, with any partners, on how you did with goals and logistics.

TIP: Before choosing the location, think about accessibility, and if you haven’t already asked people before this phone call, make sure to ask them if questions of physical access would make it more possible for them to come. This could include: wheelchair accessible room and bathroom, scent/fragrance-free space for chemically injured people, interpretation including ASL, childcare, helping arrange rides.
Tips on How to Plan a House Party

1. **Consider teaming up with another person or organization**

   This can help reach out to and engage a broader group of people, and cultivate current and future collaboration.
   
   ► CREATE a list of individuals/groups that you’d want to team up with.
   
   ► CONTACT them to share the idea and ask if they’re interested in being involved and how they would like to be involved (endorsing the event, helping to publicize it, host it, co-facilitate, sending a speaker, providing volunteers, etc.).
   
   ► IT’S always helpful to be clear from the beginning about how much responsibility you are inviting them to take on. Clarity about dividing tasks is really helpful.

2. **Set Goals**

   Primary goals
   
   ► PROVIDE meaningful ways for people to support the movement for racial and economic justice
   
   ► SUPPORT people to locate their place in the struggle
   
   ► DEVELOP Catalyst supporters and donors across the country

   Secondary goals
   
   ► SET a goal of how many people you want to invite and how many you want to attend
   
   ► SET a goal of the number of people you want to get signed up to receive Catalyst emails, mailings
   
   ► SET a goal of how much money you want the event to raise. You can break this down further by setting a goal for how many one-time and/or monthly sustainer donations you want to collect.

3. **Plan Out the Logistics**

   It’s important to nail the logistics of the event. Here are the steps:
   
   ► START planning early.
   
   ► SET the date as early as possible
   
   ► AS soon as you have the date, set your location. Having a location in a central place is key. Consider if the space is accessible to public transit.
   
   ► PLAN for maximum accessibility: wheelchair accessible space including accessible bathrooms, ask people to RSVP for translation, childcare, rides or any other needs if you are able to arrange these things ahead of time
   
   ► IF necessary, line up food and supply donations.
   
   ► MAKE any necessary visuals like welcome signs, flip charts, donation signs etc.
4. Outreach for Event Turnout
   ► SEND out a “save the date” as soon as possible so folks mark it before their calendars fill up; you can follow it with a more thorough invitation later
   ► TOSS your net wide; remember the “rule of halves” (if you contact 100 people, then 50 people may say Yes, and 25 may show up)
   ► IN addition to your own circle of friends, family, co-workers etc. consider inviting people from the Catalyst database who are in the area (Catalyst staff Ari or Clare can forward your invite to people from the Catalyst database)

5. Volunteer Development and Turnout
   ► ASK several people to contribute in some way—for example, someone could make food or dessert for the event, another person could bring or play music, someone could help to greet people as they enter and get them to sign the sign in sheet
   ► THINK about everything that needs to get done, and which tasks (or group of tasks) you can ask someone else to take on
   ► USE people’s strengths, or help them practice areas where they want to grow

6. Prepare the Fundraising Ask
   ► WRITE an outline or script early on and practice saying it out loud a few times beforehand
   ► PRACTICE your pitch in front of a friend and get feedback
   ► TIME it, make sure it’s not too long or too dry to put people to sleep. A two to five minute pitch should be enough.
   ► SHARE your fundraising goal with the audience, and ask for a range
   ► ENCOURAGE people who are able to donate more to do so, because we have different levels of access to money and the goal is for the community as a whole to raise a certain amount

7. The Event Itself
   ► REMEMBER your goals and keep them in mind throughout the event
   ► SET an agenda with times for the event and stick to it
   ► HAVE a volunteer coordinator to help orient people to their volunteer tasks so that you are free to host and facilitate
   ► HAVE fun!

8. After the Event
   ► SEND thank you notes/calls
   ► SEND the sign in sheet and donations raised to Catalyst Project
   ► DEBRIEF with collaboration partners
   ► EVALUATE goals and outcomes
   ► CELEBRATE!
Sample Email invitation

Subject: [DATE] : Beyond the Ballot House Party

Hi [NAME],

On [DATE], I’ll be hosting a Beyond the Ballot dinner discussion/house party/etc, and I’d love to have you there. Come for [dinner and] discussion about how we can be a part of building a better, healthier, more just and equitable country.

Beyond the Ballot House Party
date
time
location
other logistical info

Why come to this party?
Regardless of your take on the 2012 presidential election, we can definitely say it is sparking a lot of conversation and activity around race and class in the US. Join me for a discussion about opportunities to support the growing movement for economic justice both within and beyond the electoral process.

Catalyst Project
This house party is a collaboration with Catalyst Project [insert hyperlink], a center for political education and movement building based in the San Francisco Bay Area. My connection to Catalyst is [YOUR CONNECTION TO CATALYST].

Catalyst does anti-racist work in majority white communities with the goal of supporting multi-racial social justice movements. I will invite you to make a donation to support their work.

Friends Welcome
Feel free to bring friends, family and colleagues you think would like to participate. Please rsvp, and let me know there are ways to make the space more welcoming for you, like translation, childcare, wheelchair accessibility, etc.

Sincerely,
[Your name and optional group affiliation]
Sample call reminder script

Hi, is __________ there?

Hi! This is __________ and I'm a volunteer with Catalyst Project/other group name (if the person you’re calling isn’t already a personal acquaintance).

How are you?

1 I’m calling to remind you that [enter date and time] is the Beyond the Ballot house party and I really want to encourage you to come.

We’ve seen how the elections are already throwing issues of racial and economic justice into sharper focus. We’re going to create a space to explore visions of equity within and beyond the electoral process, and explore root causes and anti-racist organizing opportunities.

We’re also going to invite you to support Catalyst Project.

2 Will you join us for the house party?

If Yes: Ask:
Do you have any friends you want to bring along?
Will you or anyone you’re bringing with you need accommodations like transportation, childcare, translation, a wheelchair accessible space etc?
Remind them of the location, start time and any other relevant logistics.
Give them your contact information in case they have questions between the call and the party.

If No-- Engage with them a little – ask them why, share with them why you feel this is an important time to be looking at racial and economic justice work, etc.

3 OK, thank you for your time and have a great day!

TIPS
- BE friendly and conversational.
- LISTEN actively to people and don’t interrupt when they are talking.
- KEEP good records on each phone call. It may be helpful to track your outreach using a spreadsheet.
- ONLY count definitive yeses as a “yes” – anything else is a “maybe” or a “no.”
- SPEAK from the heart. Use language that feels right for you, and that will meet your people where they are at.
Suggested Ingredients of a Pitch

**Introduce yourself and thank people for being there**

Briefly recap what has been discussed or shared at the party. You can ask folks to raise their hands if they learned anything new or heard anything that inspired them.

**Give context of current political moment**

We have seen more and more conversations shifting farther to the left in recent months. We are seeing ever more people in the U.S. identify as part of the 99%, and see international connections with working-class and poor communities. Regardless of what you think of the 2012 presidential election, there are a lot of people thinking and acting around it, and we want to utilize this momentum in a way that builds the multi-racial, multi-class movement for collective liberation.

**Share your story to personally connect with audience/group**

Share a brief story about how you personally became involved with Catalyst, why you’re motivated to work on issues with an anti-racist, anti-imperialist framework. Instead of giving a laundry list of Catalyst Programs, talk about WHY you feel anti-racism is so important. Tell people about the work that you and your group have done, about any future campaigns you’re planning, how Catalyst is involved and/or supportive, and why this work is important for your community. And tell folks about why this work is needed right now.

Explain how Catalyst’s mission is connected to such gatherings and/or your social justice work. Catalyst Project is a center for political education and movement building based in the San Francisco Bay Area. We are committed to anti-racist work in majority white sections of left social movements with the goal of deepening anti-racist commitment in white communities and building multiracial left movements for liberation.
Make a specific ASK and start HIGH

Ask for more than your real goal.

► REFER to your fundraising goal to determine size and types of ask. Create a target goal based on number of attendees.
► DECIDE beforehand how many monthly sustainers you want this crowd to produce.
► ENCOURAGE people to donate a suggested amount, on a sliding scale, and encourage those who have the means to donate more.
► WALK people through giving... This could sound like: “Put your fists up in the air if you heard something tonight that inspired you. I want to invite you to join me in making a donation to Catalyst Project. Now reach down into your pockets or into your bag and take out cash or a checkbook to make a donation that is meaningful to you. We also have credit card donation forms if you don’t have cash or a check with you. People are coming around with a donation boxes, donation forms and pens for you.” Continue talking to people as they are making donations, giving them encouragement and more information about Catalyst, why you are involved etc.

Pass around a hat or two with donations forms and pens.

Thank people again for their time, dedication, and donation

Immediately (before people leave) count to see how much was raised.

If you reached your goal, then announce it since it was a group achievement! If, you didn’t hit your goal yet, state current level and ask for more in order to reach your goal. It’s ok to pass the hat twice.

Thank people for contributing to Catalyst’s anti-racist work, and for showing up for racial justice!
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address (street, city, zip code)</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>E-mail</th>
<th>Interested in Volunteering?</th>
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“Because of the anti-racist training and mentorship I received in the Braden Program, I have been able to bring my heart and mind, humility and leadership to my work building the capacity of local grassroots immigrant organizing efforts, while developing tools and vehicles to mobilize white communities around racial justice work here in Phoenix.”

— Leah Jo Carnine, Anne Braden Alum, Phoenix, Arizona
YES! I would like to support Catalyst Project by becoming a monthly sustainer!

Name: ................................................................. Email: .................................................................

Address: ......................................................................................................................................................

City, State and Zip Code: ..................................................................................................................................

Phone Number: ............................................................. It’s best to contact me by: □ phone □ email □ postal mail

Please charge my credit card monthly: □ $15 □ $25 □ $40 □ Other $ ..........................................................

Credit Card Number ...........................................................................................................................................

Expiration Date: .............................................................................................................................................. 3 Digit Security Code: .................................................................

I would like to support Catalyst with a one time gift of: ................................................................. □ Check □ Credit Card

I would like to donate my frequent flier miles to Catalyst Project □