

## **Story Projects and Listening Projects**

### *Methods for Engaging Diverse Communities*

Including and engaging diverse stakeholders is central to building community resilience. We all have a stake in our climate future – how do we ensure that everyone’s concerns and solutions are heard? Enter: storytelling. Stories are how people connect; they are the inspiration that bring people to action. To build understanding of local climate impacts and promising community solutions, one strategy is to ask community members to simply share their story.

### **Why is Storytelling a Job for Public Health?**

In addition to being an effective tool for including and engaging stakeholders, storytelling can be used to spread key messages about climate change. When conveying climate change to the public, communications scholars have found that stories, especially those about our health, are effective in motivating people to action.

### **Where to begin?**

Tips for meaningful engagement:

- Go to the community, don’t require them to come to you
- If you’re hosting an event, plan to offer accommodations for people with disabilities and people with small children.
- Consider how you might integrate the project into an existing meeting, community event, or initiative.
- Ensure that the time and location is best suited to fit the needs of the community (e.g. working hours, other community events, religious holidays, etc.)
- Consider different communication methods such as oral storytelling, written stories, or capturing group dialogue.
- Identify major languages spoken in the community and if a translator will be needed
- Provide storytelling examples for community members to help them better understand the purpose and goal of storytelling.
- Identify community partners and leaders who can help promote and build support for the project.

Below is a collection of storytelling projects – most of the examples selected for this resource relate to climate and health and many of the projects are from here in Oregon - click on the links to see more!

Model	Steps	Examples
<p>Host a film Screening to facilitate a community conversation. Use the event to raise awareness about the issues and gather community solutions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Select a short film that will catalyze conversation</li> <li>(2) Secure a facility and equipment needed for the showing – perhaps a partner will “sponsor” the event</li> <li>(3) Develop a set of questions to help facilitate dialogue after the screening</li> <li>(4) Advertise the event widely through existing community networks and channels that reach a diversity of community members.</li> <li>(5) Plan to record the conversation and let participants know that their conversation will be recorded.</li> </ol>	<p><a href="#">Wisdom of the Elders: The Wisdom Project</a></p> <p><a href="#">TED Talks on Climate Change</a></p> <p><a href="#">Our Children’s Trust</a></p>
<p>Survey stakeholders with open-ended questions and use the responses to develop “Story Portraits” that highlight community priorities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Choose 2-4 questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your main concerns when it comes to climate change?</li> <li>• How do you think climate change might impact your community?</li> <li>• Do you think your community is changing in response to climate change?</li> <li>• What makes a community resilient?</li> <li>• How would you like to see your community take action?</li> <li>• What are the opportunities that come from climate change?</li> </ul> </li> <li>(2) Create a list of diverse contacts and</li> </ol>	<p><a href="#">Oregon Climate and Health Program’s Story Project</a> (<i>integrated within the technical report</i>)</p>

	<p>ask if they are willing to respond to the questions through e-mail, phone, or in-person.</p> <p>(3) Ask each participant to recommend additional contacts who can help to broaden the types of responses received (based on their expertise, background, experience, etc.)</p> <p>(4) Collect stories and work with partners to select quotes that tell a powerful story. Confirm that the participants are comfortable with sharing the selected quotes and confirm their appropriate title, etc. Oregon Climate and Health Profile Report (integrated throughout the technical report) Oregon Climate and Health Program DRAFT Tool</p> <p>(5) Consider taking photos of participants who contributed quotes. Use the photos and quotes to illustrate different community concerns and solutions. These can then be integrated into educational and communication materials, presentations, etc.</p>	
<p>Host a set of speakers to share their “climate story” – ask them to talk about their personal motivation for taking climate action and celebrate community success stories</p>	<p>1. Identify a diverse set of speakers who can speak on behalf of their experience in climate change such as students, activists, politicians, farm workers, educators, tribal leaders, researchers, etc.</p>	<p><a href="#">Fortified: True Stories of Climate Action</a></p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Secure a time, location, and equipment needed to host the event such as a university conference hall or community building.</li> <li>3. Advertise the event through existing community partners and reach out to community groups not previously worked with to reach a more diverse audience.</li> <li>4. Record the event to be posted online to be shared with people unable to attend in person and have the project reach an even wider audience.</li> </ol>	
<p>Conduct interviews with community members and document their stories through video or photos</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify people in the community whose health, finances, or livelihood has been disproportionately burdened by the effects of climate change to share their story (e.g. migrant farm workers, senior citizens, people from a community of color, non-English speakers).</li> <li>2. Develop a set of questions to help capture the interviewee's background and the effect that climate change has had in their life.</li> <li>3. Record visual representations of the interviewee through video recording or photos.</li> <li>4. Combine interviews into a report, video, and/or presentation that can be shared with the public.</li> </ol>	<p><a href="#"><u>Coalition for a Livable Future's Equity Stories Project</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>More than Scientists: The people behind climate science</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Minneapolis Story telling toolkit</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Climate Change in Atlantic Canada</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Colorado Health Story</u></a></p>

<p>Host a community discussion where people can share their concerns on climate change with neighbors and other community members</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invite people from both communities considered 'at risk' and 'not at risk' to disproportionately experiencing the negative effects of climate change to attend the event- the idea is for those 'at risk' to express their concerns to others in the community who may not be as affected by the issue.</li> <li>2. Create questions to facilitate discussion where community members from diverse groups can learn from each other about their personal concerns about climate change adaptation.</li> <li>3. Advertise the event through existing community groups as well as through flyers and social media to reach people not already involved in community groups.</li> <li>4. Hold the event in a meeting place more conducive to equalizing talkers and listeners (e.g. circle groups).</li> </ol>	<p><a href="#">Gentrification Listening Project</a></p> <p><a href="#">OPHI's Climate Change and Health Community Conversation</a></p>
<p>Hold a climate change awareness bus tour</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify areas within the community that have already or will likely face negative impacts from climate change to be included in the bus tour.</li> <li>2. Select stops along the way where community members, activists, and politicians can speak to their concerns and efforts.</li> </ol>	<p><a href="#">Beyond Toxics: Environmental Justice Bus Tour</a></p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. End bus tour with a chance for participants to reflect on what they learned and next steps that can be done to initiate change.</li> </ol>	
Create an online Story Bank	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a space through your organization’s website where people can anonymously contribute their story to share with the public.</li> <li>2. Promote participation through organization listservs- ask other community organizations to forward the site to their colleagues and represented community base.</li> <li>3. Ensure contributors understand that their confidentiality will be protected.</li> <li>4. Stories can later be used to contribute to news reports, create health media messages, or community presentations.</li> </ol>	<a href="#">EPA: Climate Justice in Action</a>  <a href="#">Utah Health Story Bank</a>

Please help us build this list: share story projects you or others in your community are involved in. Email: [EMILY.A.YORK@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:EMILY.A.YORK@dhsosha.state.or.us)

### Further Resources

For more storytelling resources, check out [Climate Access](#). If you need help developing and sharing a story, try: [Rhode Island Conservation Summit Storytelling 101 Planning Sheet](#)

For information on effective ways to communicate with people about climate change, see: [Talking Climate](#) and [The Preparation Frame](#).

For updates and new resources visit Oregon’s Climate and Health Program website at: [healthoregon.org/climatechange](http://healthoregon.org/climatechange)