

Campus Libraries and Student Electoral Engagement



Campus libraries are key institutions at college and universities. Students use them to congregate and study. They're gateways to intellectual resources. They provide research help for students, faculty, and staff. But beyond preparing students for academic success, they can also prepare them for civic success, helping them vote as active citizens. Here are some ways your campus library can make this happen, and you may think of others:

- **Integrate electoral information into Library Orientation:** Because students are so saturated during the first few weeks of class, many libraries have started doing their major outreach several weeks after classes have actually started. This is perfect timing to simultaneously invite them to register to vote (or reregister on campus) and give them information on voting rules and timelines. You could also hold events or give out information coordinated with [National Voter Registration Day](#), held the fourth Tuesday of each September.
- **Tabling (Registration and Materials):** Create tables that stand out with colorful election-related posters. Include both paper and electronic ways for students to fill out their voter registration. Use CEEP [voting-rule guides](#) and [nonpartisan candidate guides](#) to give students key information. If possible, have someone (perhaps student volunteers) at these tables during peak traffic periods, so that they can answer questions.
- **Nonpartisan Candidate Guides:** Beyond handing out at tables, you can also promote Campus Election Engagement Project's [nonpartisan candidate guides](#) by blowing them up as posters and posting them in key traffic areas of the library. If your head librarian has access to campus-wide email, your library can also distribute them campus-wide electronically.
- **Connect Interested Campus Stakeholders:** Schools often have students and faculty who'd like to promote their campus's nonpartisan electoral engagement efforts, but don't know who else on campus is working on this. Because libraries are key public venues serving so much of the campus community, you can connect people who you think might be interested with your existing nonpartisan election engagement coalition.
- **Election Bookmarks:** Libraries are places for reading, so create bookmarks with key election-related important dates and websites. These could include registration deadlines and links to sites for registration rules, early voting dates, and Election Day reminders. If there is an on-campus or near-campus polling place, make sure students are aware of it. If funding is available, you can also give away free swag, like highlighters with election reminders.
- **Mock Voting Booths:** Talk with your local election commission about getting a mock polling booth set up in the library so you can walk students through how to use the machines. Make sure to include candidate guides and info on relevant laws at these demonstrations, along with registration opportunities, if registration is still open.
- **Election-Related Book Displays:** Beyond CEEP's candidate guides, you can display election related books or articles as ways of spurring student interest. You can also help students navigate government databases to search election-related information.
- **Co-sponsor and Promote Related Workshops:** This could include media literacy and how to determine real from fake news, how to meet your state voting rules, and how classes [can create their own nonpartisan candidate guides](#).