

CAMPUS ELECTION ENGAGEMENT PROJECT FELLOW

Engaging Students Who Cannot Vote



Created for students.

There's lots of ways for everyone to be civically engaged! Even groups who cannot vote like undocumented students, international students, those under 18 years of age and individuals who were formerly incarcerated* can get involved in the community. Here, we'll talk about a few ways to be engaged that are open to all.

Campaign-Related Volunteering

- Those who cannot vote in the upcoming election can still **support the candidate who best represents their values and interests by volunteering with their campaign.** Through time and actions rather than a vote, volunteers are able to rally support for a candidate. Volunteering can also provide insight into how politicians think and elections work, making volunteers competitive for careers in politics. Check out our [Student Volunteers resource](#) to get started.
- There are many opportunities to **volunteer with issue-based groups**, like Greenpeace or The Heritage Foundation, whether at a local, state or national level. Issue-based groups are concerned with specific problems rather than a political candidate. However, they still tend to endorse candidates whose beliefs align with theirs.

Civically-Engaged Organizations

- Those who cannot vote can also **get involved with local civic engagement organizations.** Civic engagement is work that makes a difference in one's

*A note on formerly incarcerated individuals: States differ drastically on this subject. Some states allow currently incarcerated individuals to vote, some states do not allow currently incarcerated individuals to vote but automatically restore their rights after release, and other states require additional action prior to restoring the right to vote. When working with formerly incarcerated individuals, make sure that individuals know what their state laws are.

CAMPUS ELECTION ENGAGEMENT PROJECT FELLOW

community. From the neighborhood association to the local political party organization, there are many groups that participate in the community's political discussion. To start, look into local Facebook groups, check out your city's website for upcoming events or ask around at the library, farmers' market or community center.

- **Help out at registration drives and get out the vote events** by working with Campus Election Engagement Project on your campus or with one of [our partners](#) like the League of Women Voters. Many partisan and nonpartisan organizations host registration drives around election season. Check out their websites for more information.
- **Reach out to the local election office to see if they need poll worker volunteers on Election Day.** Most polling places need volunteers to help facilitate the voting process. Some states may require you to be a registered voter, so call your local election office to check or look for more information [here](#).

Peer-to-Peer Engagement

- Sometimes electoral engagement can be as simple as **talking to friends**. For example, international students can share what political engagement looks like in their home country. These discussions can help encourage deeper thought about the nature of civic and political life. Read more about civil dialogue [here](#).
- Those who cannot vote are still directly influenced by the election outcome, so non-voting students can **encourage their peers to vote** over social media or in person.

Encourage Your Professors

- Encourage your professors to **offer voter education seminars or registration events** during class. Here are some tips for [registering students to vote](#).
- Professors may also be interested in **hosting class discussions and activities** on issues, candidates and civic engagement. Direct them to our [faculty resources page](#) for more information and helpful resources.

Create Change on Campus

- Students can make a big impact by **participating in student organizations**. By starting or partnering with civic engagement coalitions, students can bring about change on campus.
- Students who are **involved in student government** can use their position and legislative abilities to implement projects like having classes cancelled on Election Day, getting a polling place put on campus or by recommending that professors incorporate voter registration language into the syllabus.

Getting Engaged From Home

- There are many ways to **get involved virtually**. While classes are happening, students can lead voter education seminars or civic engagement discussions during online classes and/or student organization meetings.
- **Social media** offers a great opportunity for spreading awareness about the importance of voting. Host Instagram lives, open your story up for questions, start Twitter threads, join Facebook groups or get involved in the conversation on voting through your preferred platform.

Run for Office

- **Being in an elected position within an organization or campaign can amplify your voice**. If you are a part of a civic engagement organization, volunteering for a campaign or are involved with a student organization on your campus there may be elections for positions within the organization or campaign.