

Engaging Diverse Audiences in the Sustainable Neighborhoods Program: A Best Practices Guide

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Neighborhood Ambassador Program for engaging renters & multi-family dwellers

An Ambassador Program (like Community Connectors) uses ambassadors to spread news and generate excitement and engagement. This can be a successful approach for reaching renters and multi-family dwellers.

Program components

- **Public commitment** – share your commitment publicly with a group
- **Modeling** – model behavior and actions you seek from others (e.g., Leave No Trace, charismatic leaders say “I do this...” and they show and share their passion)
- **Monthly education**

Program best practices

- **Step 1: ID existing neighborhood networks** – What networks exist, and which are we not a part of (e.g., schools, churches, dog parks, sport/recreation programs, apartment complexes)?
- **Step 2: Determine where the networks connect** - Where do neighbors naturally gather? Where do they socialize and network with each other? Where are there intersections across these?
- **Step 3: Determine barriers and opportunities** – Barriers may be lack of awareness, language, inconvenience, lack of time. Opportunities could be social benefits, environmental impacts, leadership. Think about how you design the program in ways to cultivate other benefits, such as an opportunity for people to gain skills in leadership, expand social networks.
- **Step 4: ID strategies for connecting with new networks** – Examples include casual conversations, events, newsletters. Tailor the message to the specific network/community, addressing unique barriers, benefits, and values, as well as literacy level and language. Make it personal (e.g., personalized information about their building) and specific (e.g., specific behavioral changes desired).
- **Step 5: Leaders recruit their peers** – This refers to peer-to-peer connections for recruitment. E.g., rather than a nonprofit leader recruiting people who they’ve never met from these networks, people who are IN the networks are doing the recruiting – think neighbors recruiting neighbors, tennis partners recruiting tennis partners, etc.

Best practices for recruiting & working with property managers

Develop messaging tailored to property managers’ barriers and incentives - what’s in it for the property manager (e.g., leadership, financial benefits, tenant retention, won’t take too much time)?

Go to them.

Communicate ease of participation.

Anticipate varying receptivity based on personal interest and capacity.

Keep them engaged.

Working within the network of an apartment community is the most impactful.

Provide support (e.g., print materials, on-site tenant presentations, property-specific strategy, engagement event support, tenant outreach toolkit, regular communication).