



ListeningWorks

An Action & Support project from Youth on Board
for community leaders and movement builders

ListeningWorks is a project of **Youth on Board**. It is a response to the hate and division of our current political climate and is addressing the problem by training and supporting movement builders and community leaders to utilize proven healing and support strategies to strengthen their social movements and deepen their community engagement work.

How are we doing it?

Since 1994, **Youth on Board** has used our signature **Action and Support model** to support young people and adults to work together. We hold out the perspective that all humans are born and capable of good, that people need to be listened to in order to listen, and that we must welcome and engage divergent perspectives to solve the problems we face today. Utilizing **radical listening and vulnerability, restorative justice and social emotional learning**, we put these perspectives into practice by training leaders to deeply listen and communicate, process their feelings, and understand the effects of oppression on all people. What results are meaningful relationships that support and nourish, addresses and resolves conflict, and builds movements across differences.

What we are up to!

We're **building an intergenerational network of movement builders and community leaders** dedicated to long-term movement building by **transforming** healing and support systems for staff, leadership and membership and **deepening** their community engagement with a relational and love-centered approach. To date, we have trained over 300 organizers in Massachusetts and nationally!

Learn more about our Action & Support model and what partnering with us entails below!

APPLY HERE.
Due Date: June 14, 2018



Youth on Board

Since 1994, Youth on Board has supported strong youth-adult partnerships in order to put young people at the center of the decisions that affect their lives. For more information, visit www.youthonboard.org



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Principles of Action & Support

All people are good and born fully loving, intelligent, and connected.

All people get hurt by others and oppressions like classism, racism, adultism and sexism.

All people can heal and regain their full ability to connect, love, and take on any challenge.

Three Support Strategies That Heal

1 Appreciations

Allow us to focus on what is good about the people around us and ourselves—a major counter to a society that is set up to make us feel bad and focus on the negative. Practice giving and receiving them!

Tips for Appreciations

- ❖ Appreciate someone without putting yourself down.
- ❖ Say your appreciation directly to the person who is being appreciated.
- ❖ Be as specific as possible.
- ❖ You don't have to know someone really well in order to appreciate them.

Ways to Appreciate

- ❖ **I Love OR Like You Challenge:** Depending on the relationship, challenge yourself to remind the person you love or like them and what about them at least once a week.
- ❖ **Appreciation Tracker:** Keep a simple and small tracker with names of colleagues, family and/or friends. Aim to appreciate them at least once a week.
- ❖ **PopCorn Appreciations:** Reserve 3-5 minutes at the open or close of a meeting for anyone to speak forth an appreciation of anyone else (including themselves!).



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2 Listening Partnerships

Enables the healing process by allowing people to connect on a human level and build trusting relationships while showing and process how they're feeling.

Setting Them Up

- ❖ Find a partner
- ❖ Decide how much equal time you will share (e.g., 5 mins each)
- ❖ Decide who speaks and listens first
- ❖ When time is up, switch!

Tips for the Listener

- ❖ Listen with warm, kind eye contact and attention
- ❖ Do not offer advice
- ❖ If needed, encourage the talker to share more
- ❖ Maintain confidentiality
- ❖ Ground the speaker when their time is up.

Tips for the Speaker

- ❖ Speak from the heart and focus on how you feel
- ❖ Dare to trust that the listener cares about what you have to say

3 Support Circles

Provide consistent space and time for social and emotional support for a group or organization

Practical Uses

- ❖ Support for leadership
- ❖ In response to crisis
- ❖ Support for particular constituencies (e.g., immigrants)
- ❖ Support people thinking about particular topics (e.g., climate change)

Setting Them Up

- ❖ Decide how often and how long you'll meet
- ❖ Gather interested people depending on the constituency or topic
- ❖ Choose people who can listen to others
- ❖ Listen to people while they think through arrangements they'll need to make in order to attend.

Putting Support into Action in the Community

Support strategies are not limited to deepening relationships within organizations, they can also be brought to the community to strengthen the organizing work.

DEEP CANVASSING

creates sustained and meaningful connection at the door that allows effective two-way dialogue in order to figure out what is relevant to people and builds authentic relationships.

LISTENING PROJECTS

bring the healing properties of listening to communities, provide a practical platform to increase engagement and can inform and often reorient organizing work based on the needs of the community.

HEALING CIRCLES

are rooted in the tradition of restorative justice and can incorporate music, art, and other forms of creative expression that reveal our humanity and allow people a communal entry path towards healing.



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Partnering with ListeningWorks!

Looking for ongoing assistance in building emotional support within your organization and as a means of organizing? Over the next year, **ListeningWorks is providing technical assistance to organizations interested in Action & Support**. We've already identified a local MA cohort comprised of

- ❖ [Indivisible Mystic Valley](#)
- ❖ [Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center](#)
- ❖ [Generation Citizen MA](#)

And now, we are expanding to create a second cohort of organizations across the nation and invite you to consider working with us!

Here's How!

Register for one of our webinars on **May 24th & June 7, 2018** to learn more about ListeningWorks! From them, you'll get a taste of our Action & Support model and learn about how to apply to be invited to a one-time two-day training at a city or state near you, as well as how this avenue can lead to a long-term partnership for the duration of July 2018-March 2019.

Long-term ListeningWorks Partners will benefit from:

- ❖ One-on-one support from ListeningWorks staff to point person(s).
- ❖ Tactics to help build an internal support system for members of your organization.
- ❖ Training in developing and employing effective listening skills.
- ❖ Technical assistance in implementing actions that center community support and listening.
- ❖ Access and support from a national intergenerational network of organizations implementing Action & Support.
- ❖ Central training in Action & Support model for all key staff person.

ListeningWorks Selection Criteria - Priority is given to organizations that:

- ❖ Have a commitment to unifying divisive communities.
- ❖ Serve or have youth leadership.
- ❖ Have time, structure and capacity to implement Action & Support.



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Point-person(s) Expectations:

- ❖ Participate in at least one hour-long monthly support call or video session to meet with ListeningWorks staff, which can include personal check-ins, goal-setting, feedback & troubleshooting. **We strongly recommend more than one call in the first two months of partnership.**
- ❖ Participate in monthly group support call or support circle for all partnered organizations and any additional calls needed to help design a culminating event or actions involving entire cohort of partnered organizations.
- ❖ Take the lead in integrating components of Action & Support model within organization and as a means of community engagement, participate in:
 - All three support tactics: Appreciations, Listening Partnerships & Support Circle
 - At least two community action tactics: Healing Circles, Deep Canvassing and/or Listening Projects
- ❖ Participation in short formal evaluations administered by ListeningWorks.
- ❖ Develop culminating civic action plan with approval and feedback from organization.

Organizational Expectations:

- ❖ Commitment to formal partnership with ListeningWorks from July 2018-March 2019.
- ❖ Provide support to point person(s) to access staff people and resources needed to do job well.
- ❖ Willingness to integrate the action & support model within organization, such as integrating support circles.
- ❖ Design and align a community action based on action & support model with *ListeningWorks'* cohort-based week of action in October 2018 and another post-election week of action in November 2018.
- ❖ Leadership of organization make themselves available to check-ins with ListeningWorks staff no more than three times.

Amount of Award -- We will award \$5,000 to each partner organization depending on the budget of your organization and it is contingent on meeting all partnership expectations.

Timeline

Recruitment & Application

May-June 2018: ListeningWorks Webinars

May 24, 2018: ListeningWorks Two-Day Training Application is **LIVE***

June 14, 2018: ListeningWorks Two-Day Training Application is **DUE**

June 18, 2018: FAQ Webinar & Follow-up Calls with Applicants



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Recruitment & Application Continued

June 19, 2018: Invitations to ListeningWorks Two-Day Training Sent

July 12-13, 2018: National ListeningWorks Training #1

July 14-15, 2018: National ListeningWorks Training #2

***Note:** The two-day training is not limited to organizations interested in a long-term partnership; however, organizations must submit an application and attend one two-day training to be selected for the cohort and receive long-term technical assistance.

Partnership & Technical Assistance

July, 16 2018: National Cohort Selected*

August, 2018-February 2019: Duration of Technical Assistance

***Note:** Time until the end of July will be given for organizations to accept invitation into cohort.

Community Engagement

October, 2018: Week of Action (National cohort)

November, 2018: Week of Action (National & MA cohorts)

Feedback & Next Steps

February, 2019: Reports, Evaluations & Reflections

March, 2019: All partners develop civic action plans; project wrap-up



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FAQs

How is the award distributed?

Qualified partner organizations will receive up to \$5,000 upon successful completion of their partnership with ListeningWorks. Once the formal partnership begins, there will be an initial disbursement of \$2,500 and the second disbursement of \$2,500 will be received no later than March 2019, assuming all expectations are met.

What are the Weeks of Action?

We know that the internal transformation of organizations naturally lends itself to how they support and engage the communities they serve. So, in response to the divide in this country, all ListeningWorks partners (MA and National) will participate in their designated week of action and then both cohorts will come together around election time in November 2018 for a final combined week of action. In short, each cohort participates in just two weeks of action--their cohort-based one and then the combined week of action in November 2018. Lastly, to clarify, by “week of action” we are not committing each organization to doing something each day or in collaboration with other partner organizations, though it is certainly welcome!

In the week(s) of action, do we utilize community action tactics learned from the Action & Support model?

Yes. All our actions are rooted in deep listening, healing, empathy and connection. They serve to support and bridge the community which is the point of Action & Support. You do, however, have creative control over how you use these actions so long as the purpose behind them is not lost.

What is a Civic Action Plan?

ListeningWorks partners will receive support to develop a civic action plan after the community engagement phase of the project. Civic action plans will allow you to 1) summarize key findings and learnings from your community engagement efforts and how these learnings will affect, redirect or otherwise influence your organization work and approach, and 2) allow you to lay out a strategic plan for how you might continue to utilize Listeningworks community engagement tactics in the future.

Who should be the point person(s)?

We strongly recommend that they be someone who has attended our ListeningWorks training. We also strongly recommend that there be two point persons, and not one, so that a supported team of two is taking this project on and not just an individual.



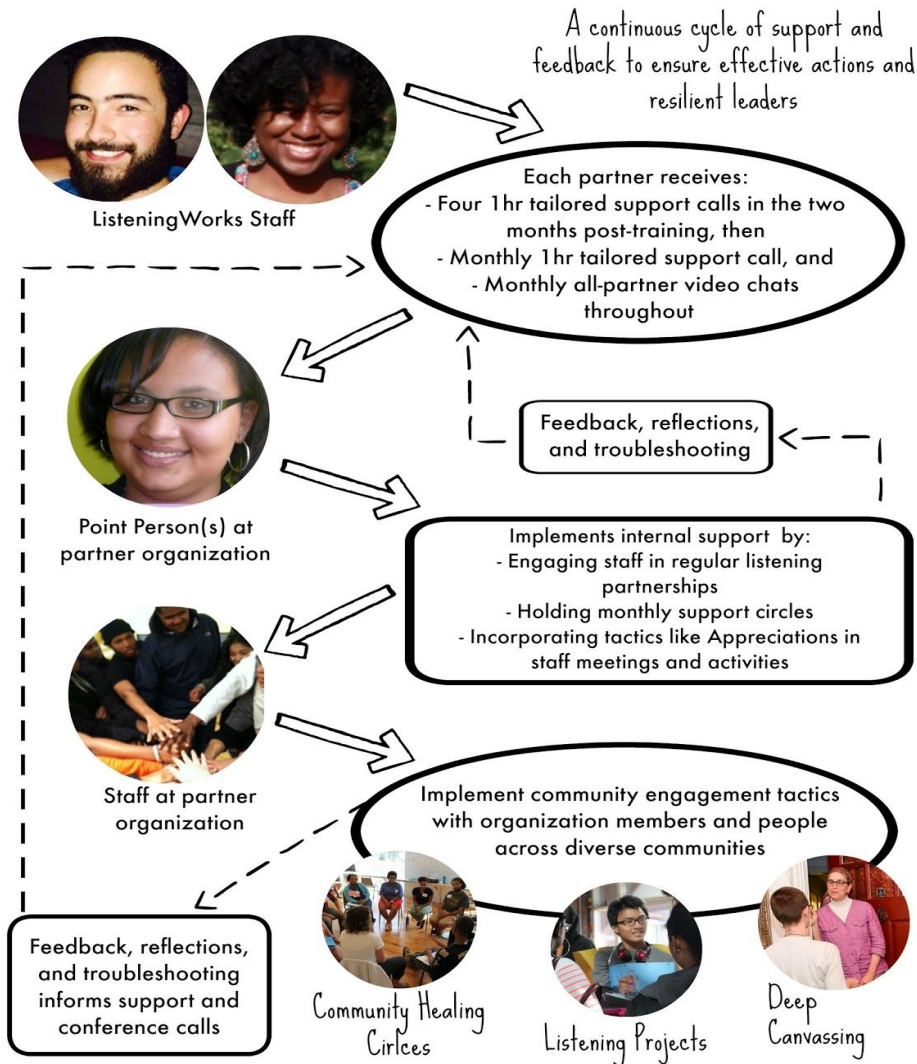
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What does technical assistance look like?

Below is a visual representation of the technical assistance we'll provide. Though there are expectations of both the partner organization and the designated point person(s) listed in the application, there is also a lot of flexibility when it comes to what technical assistance looks like and the frequency of it depending on your goals for our partnership. Please note that the concentration and frequency of technical assistance will happen mostly between August 2018 and through January 2019. After January 2019, we'll likely stick to just monthly calls/meetups as we transition out of the partnership and allow for you and the organization to fully own our action & support model.

Action & Support Technical Assistance





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What if I can't make a call?

Depends on the call. If it is a one-on-one call, we can reschedule and we expect that this will not happen frequently, if at all. If it is a monthly support call with all partnered organizations, that is a much harder to miss. We'll take people's schedules into account when coordinating a call and ask that you prioritize it. There's also the possibility of asking a colleague to take your place in a call.

What if I want you to come in and train staff in my organization?

We always encourage folks to bring as many people as they can from their organization to attend our trainings, view any webinars we do and to attend events where we model Action & Support in the community so that they can experience our model for themselves! If not selected to be a partner through the specific grant through the Einhorn Family Charitable Trust that made this opportunity possible, anything beyond the scope of our funded partnership requires payment for ListeningWorks' services, which includes going to an organization to host an action & support training for them and technical assistance for curriculum design and development. **If selected as a partner through the Einhorn grant, there will be a central training for all key staff people from each organization.**