

What is a People's Assembly?

A People's Assembly is a gathering of people organized and assembled to address essential social issues and questions pertinent to a community.

What are the goals of People's Assemblies?

The primary goal of the People's Assembly (PA) is to build community and practice democracy. The PA is a fluid, evolving, and adapting foundational element of a community where neighbors grow relationships, organize, and build power. PAs are where communities discuss experiences, issues, and solutions, and where community members share ideas and resources in order to survive and thrive collectively.

PAs could generate self-sustaining responses for a community's needs like a community garden, worker cooperative, childcare network, or restorative justice circle. PAs could also interact with broader social and political issues through movement-building work, organizing issue-based campaigns, or running candidates for elected office.

What are the core principles of People's Assemblies?

Democracy - bottom-up and grassroots; of the people, by the people, for the people; one person one vote; inclusive and representative; for the good of the whole.

Humanity - respect for human life, rights, and dignity; values and practice that prioritize the life, rights, and dignity of the many over the profit for the few.

Equity - values and practice informed by the recognition that in order to pursue equality for all, greater priority & attention must be devoted to the systemically oppressed.

How do we build People's Assemblies?

Many PAs already exist by different names! In communities with an interest to build more/new PAs that include & engage a greater number of a community's residents, here is one example of how it could look:

1. Identify interested organizers - yourself, members of community organizations, other interested community members. Ask around, connect & discuss your shared interests, and whether a people's assembly could benefit your community and advance your interests.
2. Have an organizing meeting to plan out: who you can reach & invite; topics to discuss (key issues or open-ended); assembly format (speakers, break-out groups, activities); goals (resolve a community issue, develop your people's platform); pick a time and place; determine team roles (canvassers, chair, facilitators, note-takers, speakers); other meeting needs (food, supplies).
3. Invite community members, neighbors, family, friends to the PA (flyer, door-knock)
4. Follow your agenda customized for the issues & interests of your community
5. Document key takeaways/conclusions, take pictures (with permission), share your work
6. Ask for feedback, invite folks to your next organizing meeting, review next steps
7. Decide on the next assembly time/location, key items, accountability and updates

Sample People's Assembly Agenda:

This is just one example for a people's assembly focused on discussing a couple key issues and solutions- every people's assembly will be unique & dynamic, and should be customized to meet the needs and interests of your community and the issues you're addressing!

Longer form example agenda (130 minutes):

1. Introductions (10 minutes)
 - a. A community member welcomes everyone, speaks about the context & goals of this people's assembly
 - b. Another community member shares their personal experience relating to a key issue in this community that will be discussed (i.e. housing, displacement)
2. Agenda and Agreements (5 minutes)
 - a. The chair shares the agenda with the group, answers pressing questions
 - b. The chair asks for assembly agreements from everyone (i.e. respect, 1 person - 1 mic, lean in - lean back, land the plane, focus on forward improvement)
3. First Group Breakout - Sharing Experiences (30 minutes)
 - a. The assembly breaks out into groups of 8
 - b. Facilitators lead an activity for people to get to know each other
 - c. Everyone (should they choose to), takes turns sharing personal experiences around the issues of focus in this assembly
4. Break for food, catch up some more, get to know each other (20 minutes)
5. Second Group Breakout - Formulating Solutions, Policies (40 minutes)
 - a. The assembly returns to groups of 8
 - b. Facilitators lead a fun activity
 - c. Everyone takes turns suggesting solutions to the issues shared, and proposes policy ideas that would address the issues
 - d. Group discussion around the ideas shared
 - e. Note-takers document ideas proposed, conclusions
6. Report Back to the Assembly (15 minutes)
 - a. Note-takers from each break-out group report back each group's key ideas
 - b. The chair highlights commonalities, opens up larger group discussion
7. Learnings, Next Steps (10 minutes)
 - a. The chair reviews ideas, decisions, conclusions
 - b. Review next step actions, open up for community announcements, wrap up assembly.

Standard form example agenda (90 minutes):

1. Introductions (10 minutes)
2. Agenda, Agreements (5 minutes)
3. First Group Breakout - Experiences (25 minutes)
4. Second Group Breakout - Solutions, Actions (30 minutes)
5. Report Back (10 minutes)
6. Learnings, Next Steps (10 minutes)

PA

PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

Now, to be clear on terms, self-organization means first and foremost workers directly organizing themselves through various participatory means (unions, assemblies, etc.) primarily at their places of work or points of production, but also where they live, play, pray, and study.
Kali Akuno in Jackson Rising: The Struggle for Economic Democracy and Black Self-determination in Jackson, Mississippi

WHAT IS IT?

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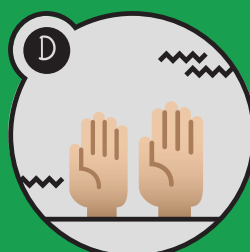


The primary goal of the People's Assembly (PA) is to build community & practice democracy.

These ethical values are at the root of what guides a PA.

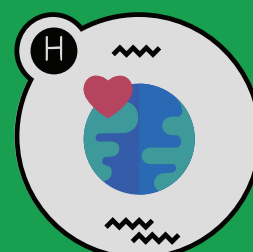
WHAT ARE THE GOALS?

WHAT ARE THE CORE PRINCIPLES?



DEMOCRACY

Of the people,
by the people,
for the people.



HUMANITY

For the many
over the profits
of the few.

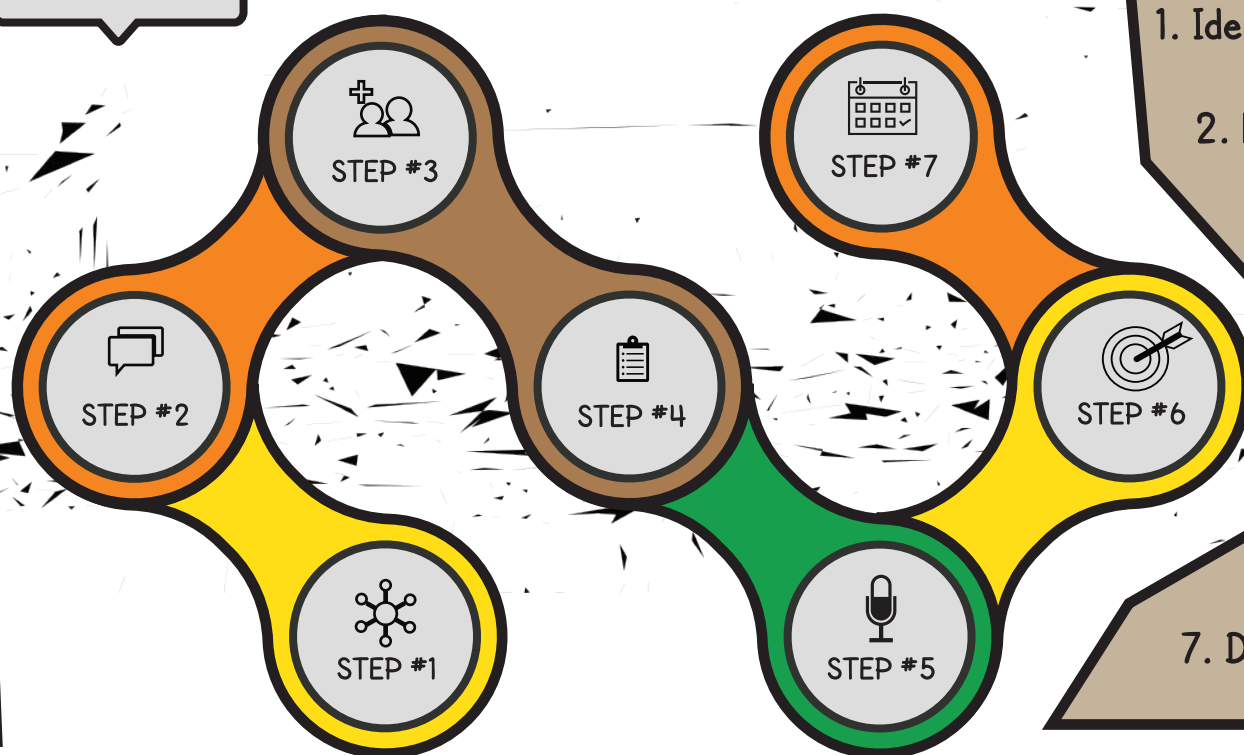


EQUITY

Equality for all by
giving priority to
the systematically
oppressed.

HOW DO WE BUILD A PA?

Many PAs already exist with different names.



1. Identify interested organizers
2. Have an organizing meeting
3. Invite the community
4. Follow your agenda
5. Document
6. Ask for feedback
7. Decide on the next assembly