**Ontario Election 2014: Engage Your Candidates this Election!**

**Community or Organization Events**

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| **Pros** | **Cons** |
| * Highlights your organization and the work that you do
* Allows the candidates to see learn more about your work first-hand and meet board members, beneficiaries staff in an informal setting
* Adding to an existing event so relatively easy to organize
 | * The informal setting can mean less control over messaging and interactions with candidates
* If all candidates don’t attend, it might appear partisan. Be clear that you will host the event if 2 or more candidates are available.
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Tip: Piggyback an invitation to candidates to an organizational event such as a BBQ or late afternoon drop in.

**INVITE**

Write to each candidate briefly outlining your organization’s work and your key election messages and invite them to drop into your event.

**FOLLOW UP**

Contact the campaign team to confirm whether the candidate can attend and, if possible, their approximate time of arrival.

**INFORM**

If you intend to have a more formal part of the event (e.g. introducing the candidates to the crowd, presenting mementoes such as children’s art), let the campaign teams know of the timing so all candidates can be there at the same time.

**PREPARE**

Assign board members, staff and clients to meet candidates on arrival. They should be able to give them a tour, introduce them to attendees, ensure they have food and drink if they choose, and make sure they get to any planned events.

**FINAL FOLLOW UP**

Send thank-you letters, including a contact person for further questions.

**HELPFUL RESOURCES**

**Campaign 2000:** [**Election Resource Kit**](http://www.campaign2000.ca/Ontario/2014OntarioElectionResourceKit.pdf)

**On Co-op:** [**Election Toolkits**](http://www.ontario.coop/documents_downloads?search=Enter+Keywords&oldsearch=Enter+Keywords&type=1&category=0&sortby=date)

**Ontario Non-profit Housing Association:** **Election Toolkits**

For more election tools and tips, go to <http://www.theonn.ca/ontario-election-2014>.