



reel**to**real

WATCH ENGAGE ACT

PBS Wisconsin's Reel to Real works with libraries, schools, non-profit organizations, associations, civic groups and more to spark conversation and explore issues affecting our communities. Impact and learning are the key goals of Reel to Real, along with community engagement, local involvement and action.

a collaboration of



UW-Madison School of Library and Information Studies and the South Central Library System



Films and conversations about topics that matter

Reel to Real is simple, it's designed to use film and conversation to spark dialogue in communities around issues and ideas that help us grow and learn - and it's free.

Every quarter the engagement and content teams at PBS Wisconsin will curate a collection of local and national films, documentaries and lectures dealing with topics such as race and racism, social justice, history, the arts, education and civic engagement. Together with tips and suggestions for pairing films with local subject experts, community Q&As, and panels, PBS Wisconsin also provides tips for hosting live, virtual or hybrid events.

Planning Your Reel to Real Event

CHOOSE A FILM

Select a video from our curated collection.

PREVIEW THE FILM

Make sure the content meets your organizational or event needs, and that there are no content surprises. We find that watching the film, with planning partners, can help you develop ideas for partners, experts, etc.

FIND YOUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Community partners are a critical piece of successful events and forums dealing with substantive issues. Partners provide authentic, credible reach for promoting your event, and ensures the subject matter and experts represent the entire community not just the perspective of the planning team.

The best time to build a partnership is, of course, at the front end of a project to create ownership and ensure the event is designed with authenticity and a representation of diverse input.

Community Partners Can:

- Provide expertise or experts on the discussion topic
- Contribute their experience in fundraising, event planning, publicity or evaluation.
- Act as facilitator
- Provide staff or volunteers to help support the event
- Help distribute invitations and build awareness

Where to Find Partners?

Every topic is unique giving you the opportunity to continuously build relationships with different organizations over time. Some places we recommend starting: local campuses of University of Wisconsin System, local colleges/universities, local historical societies, schools, professional organizations, other non-profits with similar or complimentary missions, state or local agencies and governmental departments, Rotary and other community and civic groups.

Build Your Event Experience Together.

You and your partners should discuss each organization's objectives, designing an experience that serves all of your audiences, and better – finding ways for unique audiences to interact and learn from one another. It's OK to have different reasons for wanting to partner, and it's possible to design impactful events that serve more than one audience, and address more than one issue

CHOOSE YOUR EVENT FORMAT

PBS Wisconsin can support live, virtual or hybrid events, but it's important to determine early how and where you'll host your event. We will provide compatible files for downloading into the platform or file type you need, and we have professional broadcast engineers and technologists who are able to help us troubleshoot challenges.

Live: PBS Wisconsin can provide digital files, DVDs or other media for live events, along with assets for promoting your event digitally and old-school print.

Virtual: Video conferencing platforms such as Zoom are making community engagement barrier-free for more people and making it easier to bring in experts without the cost of travel. PBS Wisconsin has been hosting and producing virtual events and digital engagement experiences for audiences of up to 25,000 users, we are available to consult with your team on best practices for building and hosting successful virtual forums.

Partner with PBS Wisconsin: Want to use our proprietary public media platform OVEE and have us co-host an event with you? Pitch us your idea, or reach out to consult with our engagement team. We do a limited number of co-hosted virtual events every year, we'd love to hear about yours.

WHERE IS YOUR EVENT?

Make sure you're considering things like access and comfort/safety when selecting a physical venue for your event. Some places may feel inviting to you, like a local church or a college auditorium, but may feel unwelcoming to some communities – this is a great discussion for partners.

Some things to consider when choosing a venue:

- Is the location easy to find?
- Is it physically accessible to people with mobility challenges?
- Arrange a walk-through of the venue with partners and technical support teams
- Does the venue have projection and sound capabilities, or will you need to bring in equipment?
- Is the room the right size for your event?

- Is there access to a kitchen and/or child care?
- Is it served by public transportation?
- Is there enough parking?

FIND A DATE AND CONFIRM

Many events require a panel/presenter, facilitator, venue, and time to promote – make sure you and your partners include all of these factors when considering dates and times. To save yourself work, and time, coordinate all of the 'content participants' availability first, then finalize dates and times. We advise setting end times for events, and running a pretty tight show to be respectful of your experts/panelists and the venue, and we find audiences appreciate structured ends.

PLAN THE LIVE ENGAGEMENT

Film is an excellent conversation starter, and the format of your post-viewing activity can vary depending on topic, guests, and your own preferences. Your intended vision for the event should guide the format, along with the topic matter. We have experimented with many forums: Panels of local experts speaking to the issue; single local expert presenting and taking questions; facilitator-led audience Q&A with experts taking questions; town-halls, etc

The most important part is ensuring your partners have a voice, and an opportunity to bring their own experts and perspectives to the table. And remember – it's important to spark these conversations, they are all unique.

INVITE YOUR AUDIENCE AND PROMOTE THE EVENT

PBS Wisconsin advises asking people to register, and using an invitation platform such as Eventbrite to manage your promotional push. Share this link in all of your social and digital channels, print the URL on posters, include the link in newsletters. Ask your partners, your panelists/experts and your staff to promote the event. Using an invitation tool allows you collect email and participant information, follow-up after with surveys, build your database, and make communicating with and reminding your audience.

AUDIENCE RESOURCES

Many of the films curated by PBS Wisconsin will focus on issues and topics of community concern, topics that will create a demand or opportunity for more information to be available, and often partnerships will develop around an issue. Consider making additional resources available post-event for the audience, posting relevant resources to a website, emailing the attendees links afterwards, inviting relevant organizations to “table” at events, etc.

IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT REEL to REAL

- PBS Wisconsin and our funding partners make these films available free of charge, it is not permissible to charge admission or fundraise using any of our content. It is permissible to seek funding/support for events from local businesses, foundations, etc. Our goal is to make all of our content barrier-free.

- All film and video content provided by PBS Wisconsin will come with a “must destroy” clause meaning once your event is over you need to delete or destroy the file/media, and provide simple verification back to us.
- PBS Wisconsin will include short pre and/or post-film messages thanking audiences and you, and letting folks know about upcoming opportunities to engage. We request that you run files in their entirety, as many also include information on how audiences can find additional resources on topics.
- Some of our curated projects will include audience surveys we use to refine and improve our outreach and our content, we request you distribute provided surveys or survey links to attendees.

AFTER THE EVENT

Reach back out to the audience who registered, thank them, provide additional resources, survey links and INVITE them to engage with you again by promoting a future opportunity. And of course, thank your partners, panelists/experts, volunteers, facilitators and any funders and share evaluation feedback with all of them.