

COMMUNICATIONS PLAYBOOK

CITIZENSHIP
STORIES IN ACTION



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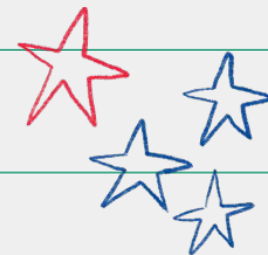
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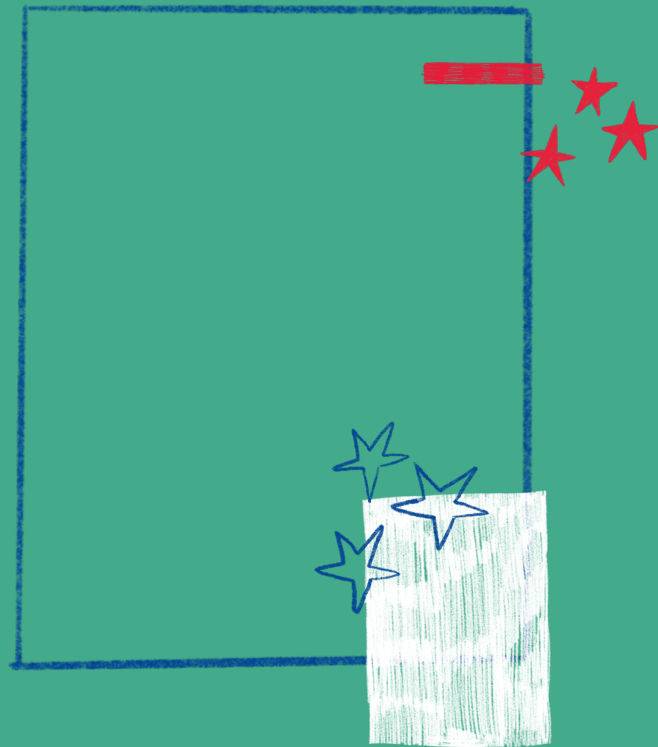


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ABOUT THIS PLAYBOOK

00 Background
00 Partners & Collaborators
00 Campaign Results



BACKGROUND

This playbook was developed as part of the Greater Houston Citizenship Project

From September 2023 to December 2025, Houston Endowment partnered with Dalberg Design and Wellspring Consulting on a community-centered design process to develop strategies for increasing naturalization rates in the Houston metropolitan area. Through the project we engaged hundreds of community stakeholders across Houston through research, co-design workshops, interviews, and learning sessions.

Through this collaboration, we developed three pilot initiatives designed to respond to the needs of eligible-to-naturalize individuals (ETNs) and to highlight the incredible work that local community-based organizations (CBOs) are already doing to support them.

This Communications Playbook grew out of the Communications Pilot. It brings together the key learnings from the Citizenship Stories Campaign and makes resources more accessible for the broader citizenship ecosystem — especially for CBOs that want to promote citizenship and engage their communities in meaningful, empowering ways.

COMMUNITY PILOTS



Community Pilots included both the Citizenship Support Circles and the Navigator Program, which directly served eligible to naturalize (ETN) individuals ([insert link to community playbook](#))

CAPACITY BUILDING PILOT



The Capacity-Building Pilot trained Community Facilitators and Navigators (CF&Ns) to run the Support Circles and Navigator Program collective

COMMUNICATIONS PILOT



The Communications Pilot included both a broader communications campaign to encourage ETN individuals to pursue citizenship and provided materials to recruit and support participants in the Community Pilots

WHO IS THIS PLAYBOOK FOR?



Organizations Offering Citizenship Services

Organizations that provide citizenship-related services and want to learn how to use communication strategies to **amplify their efforts and strengthen their programs.**

Examples: Organizations offering citizenship classes, ESL courses, or application support



Adjacent Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

CBOs that offer direct services to communities that can benefit from citizenship resources and want to **connect their audiences to relevant information and opportunities.**

Examples: Social service agencies, cultural centers, healthcare centers, and faith-based organizations



Communication Professionals and Media Partners

Professionals working to promote and support citizenship efforts through storytelling, campaigns, and media outreach — whether in citizenship-focused organizations or in related sectors.

Examples: Social media managers, and community journalists

GREATER HOUSTON CITIZENSHIP PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN PARTNERS

This campaign was a **collaborative effort** among the communications partners, who brought their insights, experience, and networks to make this initiative successful. The campaign included:

- Tools showcasing the benefits of citizenship and the citizenship journey
- Marketing materials to promote citizenship programs
- Citizenship story videos and social media assets featuring naturalized citizens
- Partnerships with ethnic media to develop community stories to promote citizenship

PRIMARY PARTNERS



DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS



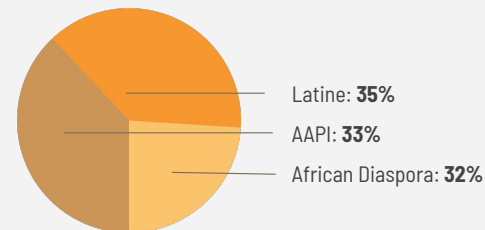
CAMPAIGN RESULTS

The campaign was implemented across a wide range of channels. This mixed-channel approach aimed to reach audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds. By intentionally partnering with channels that serve different communities, **the campaign successfully reached and engaged a diverse range of communities.**

Est. Total reach: 5M

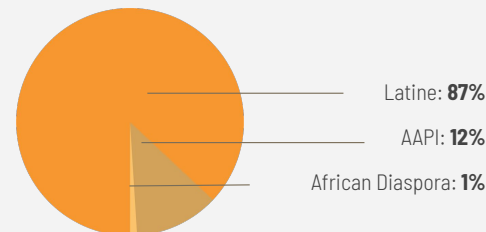
+

Traditional media
(estimated): **3.8 M**



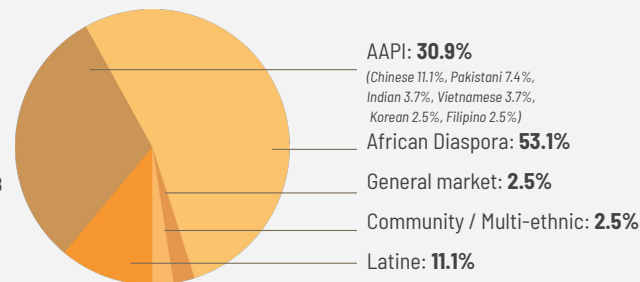
Social Media
Campaign: **153,807**

Approx engagement: **763**
(likes, comments, shares)
Approx click-through: **9,776**



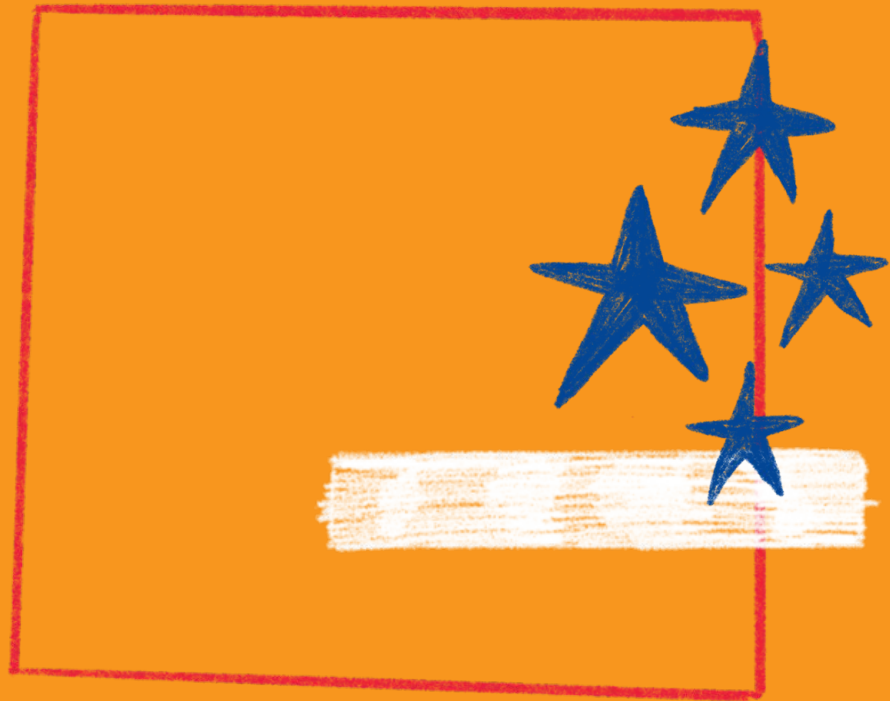
Ethnic Media
(estimated): **1M+**

Approx engagement: **10,798**
(likes, comments, shares)



CREATIVE CONCEPT

-
- 00 Research Findings: Archetypes & Findings
 - 00 Creative Concept
 - 00 Visual Identity & Key Messages



KEY AUDIENCE INSIGHTS AND ARCHETYPES

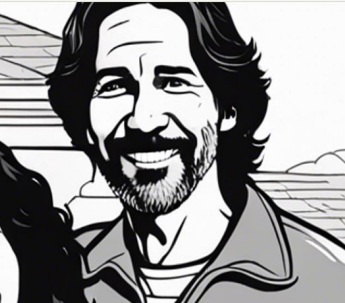
[LINK TO ARCHETYPES](#)

These archetypes emerged from extensive community research, guided the development of the **citizenship stories** and helped shape a **distribution strategy** that reached key audiences through the most relevant channels.



Young Adults
18 - 34 years
Gender diverse

Busy with education, jobs, and enjoying increased independence, Young Adults focus on immediate personal and professional goals rather than long-term immigration processes.



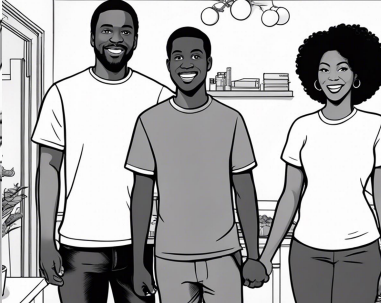
Driven Workers
35 - 64 years Gender diverse,
mostly identify as male

As primary providers for their families, Driven Workers are working hard to secure their family's well-being and needs and consider having permanent residency a significant achievement.



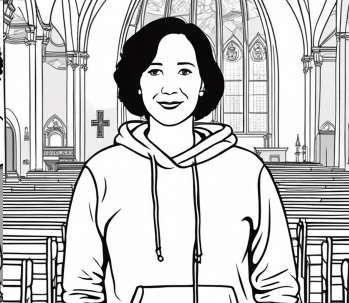
Striving Caregivers
35 - 64 years Gender diverse,
mostly identify as female

As primary caregivers for their family, Striving Caregivers are juggling multiple responsibilities both in and outside the home with the vision to provide the best for their children and focus on their personal development.



Adaptable Refugees
35 - 64 years
Gender diverse

Coming to the U.S marks the beginning of a new life for Adaptable Refugees with access to increased opportunities while navigating complex racial dynamics and complicated, bureaucratic systems.



Willful Elders
65+ years
Gender diverse

Having spent their early years in the country securing a stable future, Willful Elders now have increased control over their time to devote more effort to personal goals.

KEY FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE CITIZENSHIP EXPERIENCE

These factors guided the development of **key messages** and stories that helped **increase awareness about citizenship resources and motivate ETN individuals** to take action toward citizenship.

[LINK TO RESEARCH REPORT](#)

BELIEFS AND PERCEPTIONS (Who I am & what I believe in)	CAPACITY & CAPABILITIES (What I can or cannot do)	RELATIONSHIP TO SUPPORT (How I engage with resources)
● Low sense of belonging ● Perceived value of citizenship ● Viewing naturalization as an long-term rather than an immediate goal ● Belief in their ability to pursue naturalization	● English proficiency ● Ability to navigate bureaucratic processes ● Agency over one’s time ● Comfort with learning	● Trust in information related to naturalization ● Access to financial resources to support their citizenship application ● Willingness to receive community support ● Ability to access aligned support (e.g., in own language, etc.)
“...now I want citizenship. When my brother died, I learned he was applying for citizenship so his children could meet their grandmother in Puebla.” Male, 43, Family Sponsorship, Mexico, ETN	“When they denied my citizenship, I thought to myself, I speak English, I’m not leaving this place without my citizenship approval.” Female, 38, Family sponsorship, Mexico, Citizen	“I started working with (organization) because I want to give back to the community, they helped me too.” Male, 24, Refugee, South Sudan, Resident



**ARCHETYPES
& INSIGHTS**

KEY FACTORS

Informs

DIFFERENT ROOTS. SHARED FUTURE.

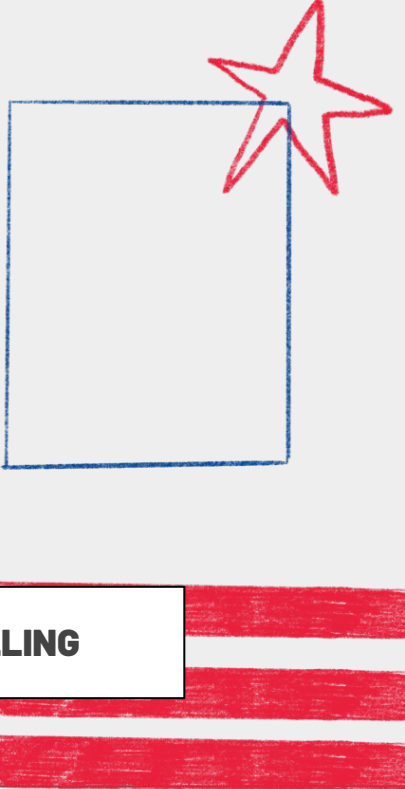
Our unifying **Creative Concept** aims to capture the essence of Houston's diverse immigrant and naturalized citizen stories—highlighting their contributions to society and their role in building a better future for all.

Informs

VISUAL IDENTITY

KEY MESSAGES

STORYTELLING



CAMPAIGN VISUAL IDENTITY AND KEY MESSAGES

VISUAL IDENTITY



KEY MESSAGES

COLLECTIVE SUPPORT

Becoming a citizen is a collective effort. That's why resources are available in your community, through organizations and individuals dedicated to supporting your citizenship journey.

CITIZENSHIP BENEFITS

Becoming a U.S. citizen opens doors for you and your family. It ensures access to the opportunities and safety needed for everyone to reach their highest potential.

URGENCY

Today is the moment to act. You've come so far—there's no better moment than today to become a citizen for yourself, your family, and your community.

CULTURAL CELEBRATION

We celebrate Houston for being a city that embodies innovation, creativity, and growth—thriving through the exchange of ideas and cultures from those who choose to make it their home.

BRINGING IT TO LIFE

We developed the campaign's visual identity in partnership with pilot partners, aiming to create visual cohesion across all campaign assets. A shared visual identity helps unify the different components of the campaign and can be easily adapted to various channels and formats.

Shared graphic language

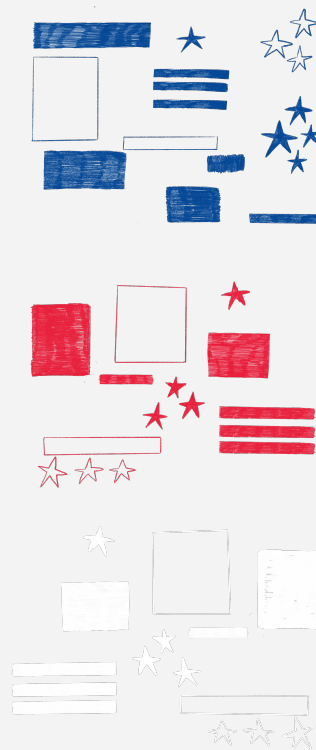
U.S flag mixed with hand made textures

Emotional connection

Highlight community members and their stories

Reliable information

Logos and links of community based organizations



STORYTELLING



00 Citizenship Stories

00 Trusted Messenger Stories

00 Community Stories

1

CITIZENSHIP STORIES

Our research showed that personal stories are a powerful way to connect with communities and reflect their experiences in authentic, emotionally resonant ways.

When people see themselves reflected in others' journeys, it can increase motivation, strengthen a sense of belonging, and build confidence to begin their own citizenship pathway.

Sharing reliable information and resources through the experiences of community members also helps build trust and amplify accurate, relevant information within communities. By grounding information in real stories, organizations can reach people in a way that feels more personal, credible, and accessible.



HOW TO DEVELOP CITIZENSHIP STORIES

[LINK TO CITIZENSHIP STORY GUIDE](#)

1

RECRUITMENT	PRODUCTION	APPLICATION
You can collaborate with local organizations and tap into your own networks to find people who have gone through the naturalization process and are open to sharing their experiences. Schedule a conversation to better assess whether the participant is a good fit to become a citizenship storyteller. During this initial conversation, invite participants to share: ● How they came to the U.S. ● Why they decided to go through the citizenship process ● What challenges they faced and how they overcame them ● What they see as the biggest benefits of becoming U.S. citizens	Use the interviews to draft the story you want to share. This draft will help you visualize how the story could come to life and identify follow-up questions to ask the storyteller. When developing your story, keep in mind: ● Keep your interview guide flexible so storytellers can share additional experiences they might have missed during the first interview. ● Identify the must-haves in the story to ensure you ask about key details and moments. ● Double-check any specific information shared by storytellers to avoid spreading misinformation, especially if details were unique to their case or if the process has since changed.	Use your main story to create communication assets that highlight key messages or important information. You can leverage images and quotes from storytellers to design different types of materials, such as:  Traditional media content <i>Digital TV channels, radio channels, digital magazine, and print media channels</i>  Social Media Assets <i>Social reels, motion graphics, social media graphics, radio scripts, and posters</i>

WAYS TO AMPLIFY CITIZENSHIP STORIES

1

LINK TO MEDIA ASSETS

CITIZENSHIP VIDEOS



BEST FOR:

Meetings or spaces where people have time and interest to engage with long-format content.

Examples: Citizenship information sessions, ESL classes, and community events

SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS



Reel Example

Graphic Example

Motion Graphic Example

BEST FOR:

Trusted social media spaces managed by reliable organizations or community leaders already connected to their communities, that can help link audiences to relevant citizenship resources.

Examples: CDCs, faith groups, and community networks social media channels

TRADITIONAL MEDIA ASSETS



Digital Magazine Example

Physical Magazine Example

BEST FOR:

Promoting upcoming citizenship services and events that aim to reach broad audiences.

Examples: Citizenship workshops, citizenship services, and ESL or civic classes

2

TRUSTED MESSENGER STORIES

Trusted messengers play a critical role in providing information to communities, as they already have the trust of their audiences, which increases credibility and the likelihood of action.

Trusted partners also help ensure that information is culturally relevant and relatable. They can adapt resources to fit different cultural environments, languages, and communication styles.



HOW TO DEVELOP STORIES WITH TRUSTED MESSENGERS & INFLUENCERS

[LINK TO INFLUENCER GUIDE](#)

2

RECRUITMENT OF INFLUENCERS	INFLUENCER TOOLKIT	INFLUENCER STORIES
Identify influencers through social media and local networks who: • Represent or are connected to the community you want to reach • Create content aligned to campaign values and works within the messaging framework • Show high engagement, not only high follower count	Provide a toolkit with a clear guideline, not a grid or a script. Our Toolkit includes: • KEY MESSAGES: The why behind the campaign (e.g. benefits, urgency) • LANGUAGE: What words to use, and what terms to avoid • CLEAR Call To Action: Direct audiences to trusted Community Based Organizations partners • INFORMATION GUARDRAILS: How to validate information and who to go for question	Collaborate closely with influencers to understand how they work and to identify the best ways to create and revise content together. Make sure you: • Align what the stories would look like based on the content they created. • Provide local resources from CBOs for them to connect their audiences to local support.

TYPES OF INFLUENCERS CONTENT

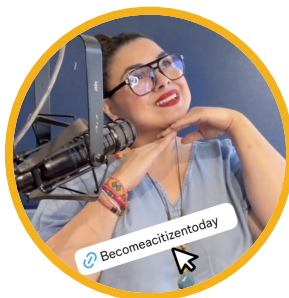
Here are some examples of influencer content that represent different strategies they could use to communicate and connect to their audiences.



TESTIMONIAL CONTENT

Best if: The influencer's lived experience is relatable to the immigration or citizenship journey of their audience.

Try to: Highlight their success and the resources that supported their journey.



LIFESTYLE AND HUMOR CONTENT

Best if: The influencer connects with their audience through everyday content that is not focused on immigration or citizenship.

Try to: Naturally embed and adapt citizenship information within their regular content.



NEWS AND INFORMATION CONTENT

Best if: The influencer already acts as an amplifier in their community and regularly shares relevant resources or important updates.

Try to: Share up-to-date information and encourage their audience to take action.



INTERVIEW-BASED CONTENT

Best if: The influencer does not share the lived experience of eligible-to-naturalize or naturalized individuals.

Try to: Highlight the benefits of citizenship and uplift the stories of community members or organizations providing citizenship support.

3

COMMUNITY STORIES

Community stories strengthen local information networks by tapping into trusted spaces where people already gather, learn, and share. By amplifying the voices and experiences of community members, these stories help connect individuals to nearby resources and services that can support their citizenship journey.

Community stories also play an important role in promoting civic engagement by helping people understand local issues, uplifting community voices, and showing the impact of participating in civic life

STORYTELLING

marrshun · Follow
Original audio

marrshun · 1w
Become a citizen, the TIME IS NOW!

This doctor proudly shares how becoming a U.S. citizen changed her life and could change yours as well. Multiple organizations across the Houston area are helping others on their journey.

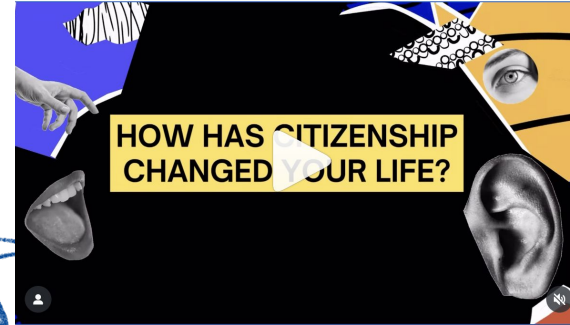
Contact:
USAHello.com

Becomeacitizen.today.com



July 8

Comments on this post have been limited.



HOW WE DEVELOPED COMMUNITY STORIES

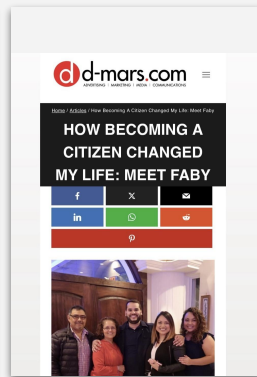
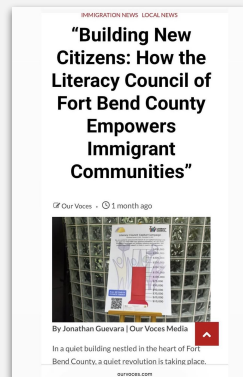


A. MEDIA BRIEFINGS	B. LOCAL MEDIA FELLOWSHIPS
We partnered with <u>Houston Community Media</u>, a diverse network of ethnic media outlets in Houston, to host two media (or press) briefings to engage local media outlets. The briefings featured local citizenship service providers and Greater Houston Citizenship Project partners with two key goals: • Share timely and accurate information about the naturalization process • Raise awareness about nonprofit citizenship support services <u>Sample media briefing announcement -></u> To support these events, we developed collateral material, including statistics about citizenship and citizenship resources, information about the speakers, information packet on the citizenship campaign, and list of resources and organizations. Results: Diverse ethnic media outlets produced 20+ stories in multiple languages related to citizenship and nonprofit resources	We partnered with Houston Community Media to provide fellowships (financial stipends) for local journalists to develop stories related to citizenship. We supported fellows by providing: • Briefing sessions, assignment questions, and prompts • Onboarding materials, such as background information on citizenship and citizenship resources • Connections to nonprofit organizations, civic leaders, naturalized citizens

TYPES OF COMMUNITY STORIES

Here are some types of content developed by developed by Houston area media outlets and fellows.

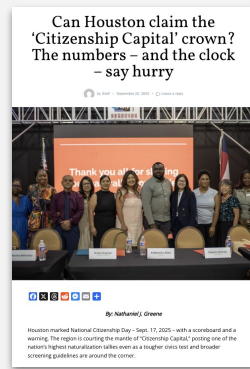
3



INTERVIEWS:

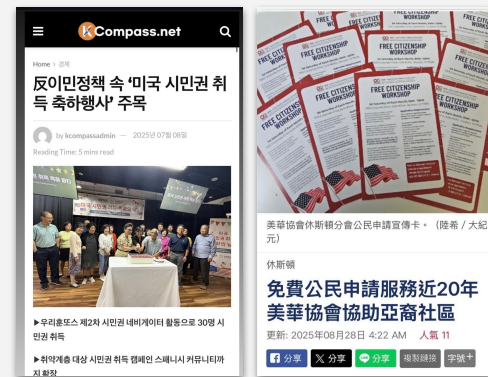
BEST FOR: Establishing trust and relatability by sharing stories of individuals and organizations within the community. These interviews help audiences see themselves reflected in real experiences and connect them to reliable organizations or community leaders who can guide them to relevant citizenship resources.

Community members and Community Based Organizations



NEWSWORTHY STORIES

BEST FOR: Providing timely updates on current events, ongoing efforts, and useful resources that audiences can apply in their daily lives. These stories help keep communities informed and engaged with what is happening around them.



REPORT ON EVENTS

BEST FOR: Highlighting and promoting citizenship services and community events aimed at broad audiences. Sharing event coverage increases visibility of the work that is happening, demonstrates community impact, and encourages audiences to seek out similar events and services in the future.

DISTRIBUTION

- 00 Campaign Planning
- 00 Distribution Strategy
- 00 Measurement



USE THIS CHART WHEN PLANNING YOUR DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY

[LINK TO CHANNEL GUIDE](#)

PLANNING

Who is your <u>audience</u> ?	What do you want your campaign to <u>achieve</u> ?	How much <u>time</u> do you have?	What <u>assets</u> can you use?
Demographics: Age, location, gender, and cultural background. Channels: Where your audience already gets information (e.g., social media, radio, community events). Behaviors: How they engage with information — do they watch videos, read posts, or attend in-person events?	Reach: How many people you want to inform or make aware. Engagement: How you want people to interact with your content (e.g., likes, shares, sign-ups). Action: What concrete next steps you want your audience to take (e.g., attend an event, start their citizenship process).	Quick Response: Timely communication around urgent updates or opportunities. Long-Term Communications: Ongoing storytelling and community engagement. Event-Based: Campaigns built around specific events, deadlines, or milestones to create a sense of urgency.	Culturally relevant assets: Use visuals and languages that reflect your community's identity, values, and lived experiences. Relevant messaging: Craft messages that speak to your audience's motivations and barriers, encouraging them to take action. Capabilities to adapt assets: Choose materials your organization can easily update or customize for different audiences or events.

WHAT CHANNELS WORK BETTER?

WHAT TOOLS CAN YOU USE TO MEASURE RESULTS?

USE THESE GUIDING FRAMEWORKS TO BUILD YOUR DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY

[LINK TO CHANNEL GUIDE](#)

DISTRIBUTION

What channels work better? Select the mix of media channels that best match your audience and goals, your organization's capabilities and budget. No single channel can do everything.

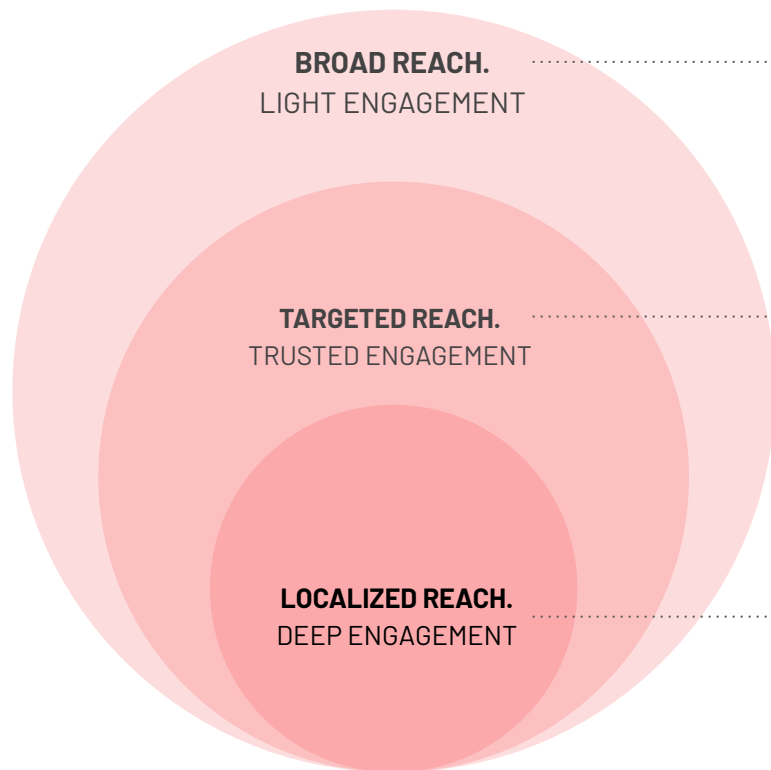
Broad Reach:	Targeted Reach:	Localized Reach:
High-level awareness (e.g Traditional Media, Paid Social)	Specific community reach (e.g Ethnic Media, Local Influencers, Paid Social)	Trust based engagement (e.g CBOs, Community Events)

What tools can you use to measure results? Measurement helps you understand what worked, what didn't, and how to improve next time based on:

What tool you can use to track results? Use tools like:

- **Sign-up forms or surveys** to track participation
- **Unique links or QR codes** to measure engagement by channel
- **Google Analytics or social media insights** to monitor traffic and reach

This framework shows how and when you can leverage **different channels** to reach and engage your audience



Earned or paid media traditional channels

Build general awareness and visibility among large audiences through mass and paid media channels.

Ideal for awareness and legitimacy.

Examples: Radio, TV, and Print (Newspapers, Magazines)

Social media paid ads and local influencers

Reach specific audiences through trusted messengers and organizations that have already earned community trust and can connect people to reliable information and resources. **Ideal for consideration and action.**

Examples: Micro and Macro Influencers, Paid Social media Ads, and CBO, local groups, and community leader channels

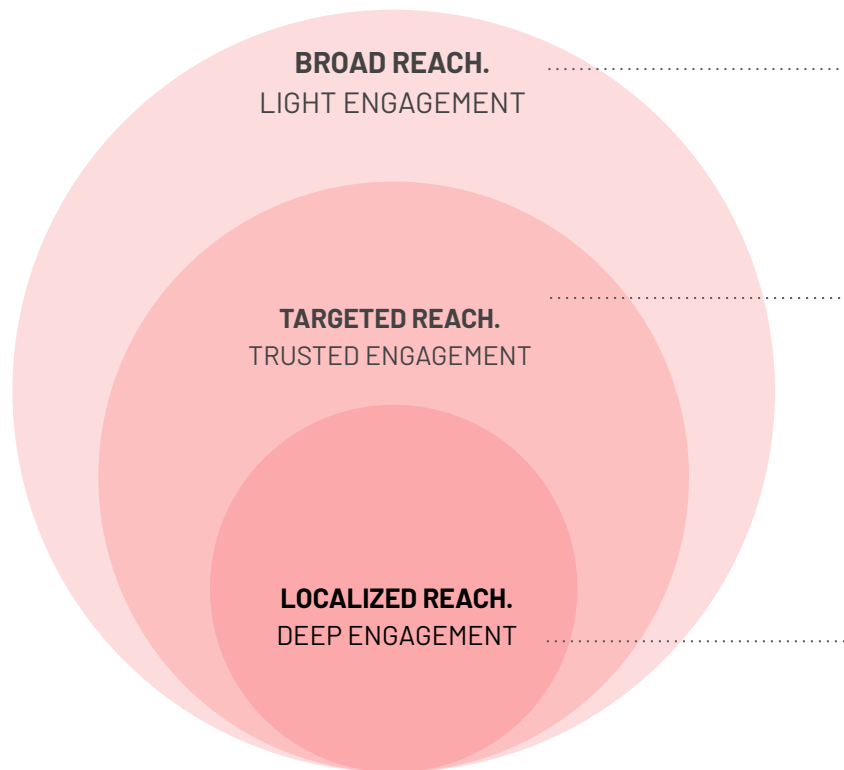
Community events and in-person sessions

Engage directly within communities – intervening in local spaces and providing in-depth information and support to ETNs.

Ideal for building trust and enrollment

Examples: Community events (flyers, canvassing) Direct outreach (Email, phone, Whatsapp, word of mouth), and Local newsletters

This framework offers guidance on **what you can measure** across each channel



Earned or paid media traditional channels

Reach and impressions: Approximate channel reach and total impressions

Action: Clicks on unique links, survey responses (for example, "How did you learn about this program?")

Social media paid ads and local influencers

Reach and impressions: Views and impressions across posts or videos

Engagement: Likes, comments, shares, saves, and reposts

Action: Clicks on unique links that lead to sign-ups, resources, or event pages

Community events and in-person sessions

Reach: Number of people approached or engaged in person, and total event attendance

Engagement: Number of people who received materials or interacted with staff or volunteers

Action: Sign-ups captured at the event and people who follow up or reach out to organizations afterward

TOOLS & TEMPLATES

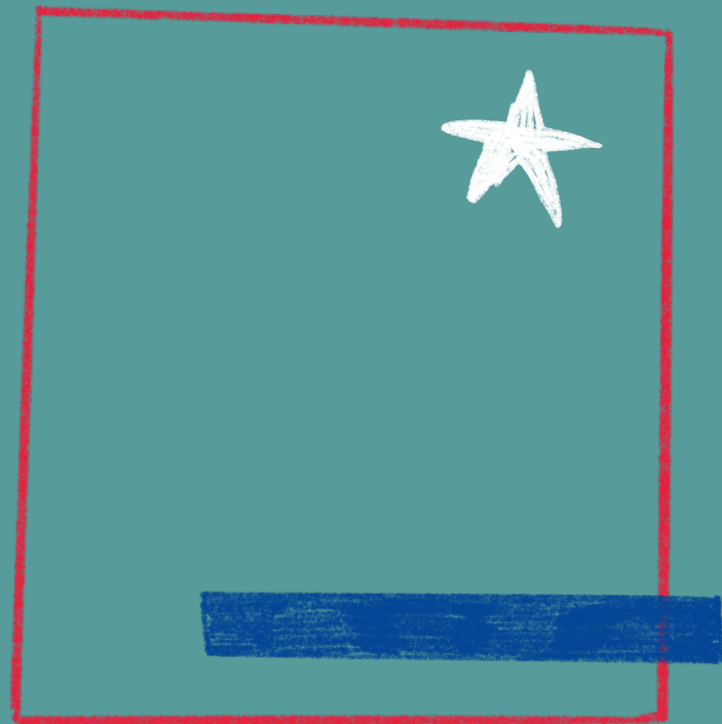
00 Colors, Graphics & Fonts

00 Editable Templates

00 Citizenship Toolkit

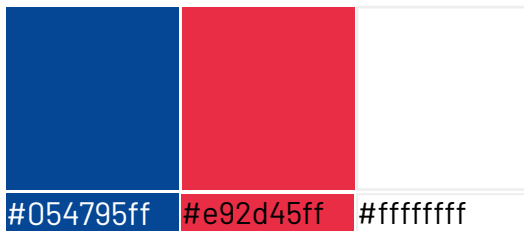
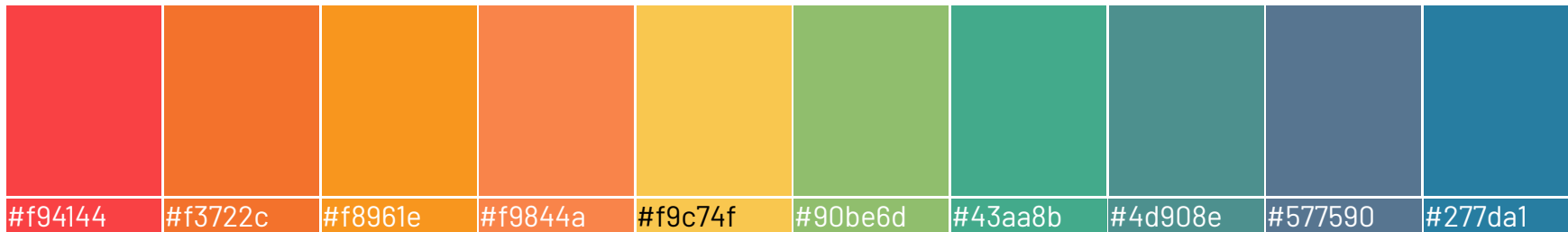
00 Campaign Assets & Toolkit

00 Distribution Toolkit



COLOR PALETTE

This color palette reflects the rich cultural diversity of Houstonians, and is meant to be a versatile foundation that can accommodate specific shades tailored to various cultural contexts and needs.



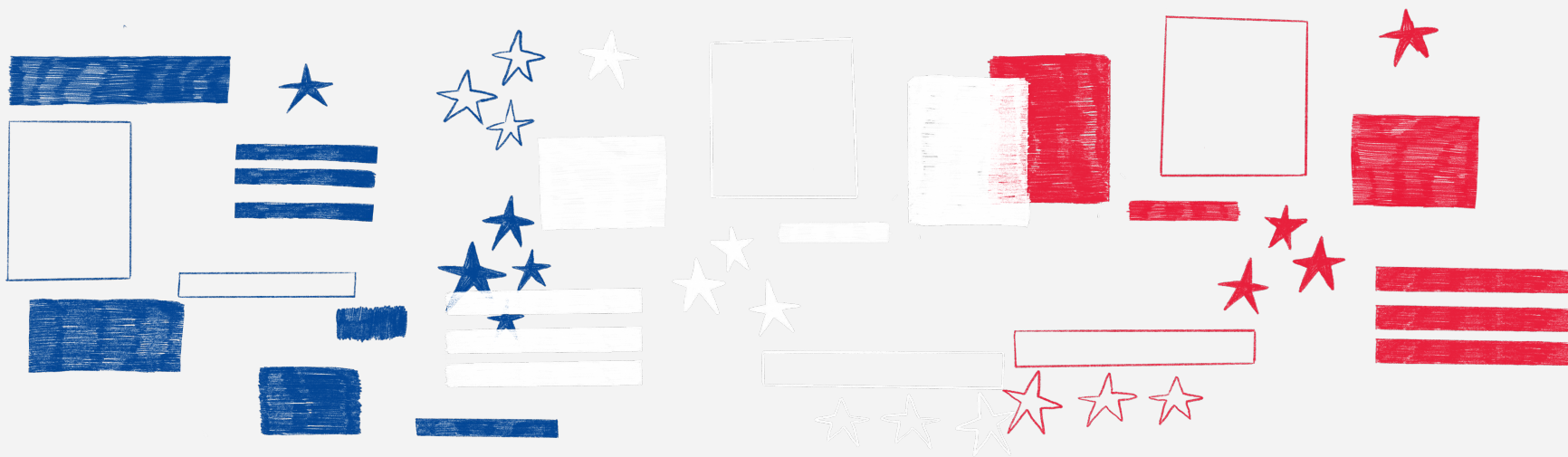
Incorporating **official U.S. flag colors** can help build credibility and connect your resources to the broader theme of citizenship, reinforcing **cohesion and trust** across assets and channels.

Use **strategic accent colors** to add visual interest and reflect cultural diversity while maintaining cohesion across all campaign assets.

To ensure **optimal contrast and readability**, use lighter shades for backgrounds and darker tones for text and key elements.

GRAPHIC ELEMENTS

One of the main elements that ties all the materials together is the flag texture created for the campaign. In this folder, you'll find a selection of textures and basic compositions that can be integrated into different communication materials to maintain a cohesive visual identity.

[SEPARATE FILES ON PNG](#)[PSD ELEMENTS](#)

FONT USAGE

Barlow

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww
Xx Yy Zz 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Barlow Semi Condensed

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx
Yy Zz 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Barlow Condensed

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 1
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Barlow Black For Titles

DIFFERENT ROOTS, SHARED FUTURE

Barlow Semi Condensed Medium for Body Text

We are here to support you on your
journey to Citizenship

Barlow Condensed Black For CTA

JOIN NOW

EDITABLE TEMPLATES:

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS



SOCIAL MEDIA SQUARE



SOCIAL MEDIA HORIZONTAL



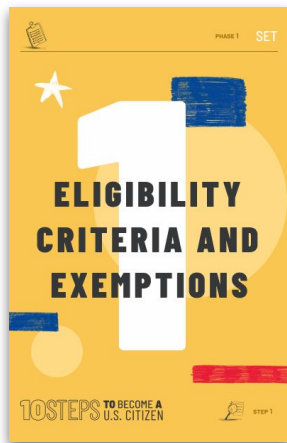
SOCIAL MEDIA VERTICAL

EDITABLE TEMPLATES: POSTERS & FLYERS

**EDITABLE TEMPLATES**

CITIZENSHIP TOOLKIT: JOURNEY AND BENEFITS TOOLS

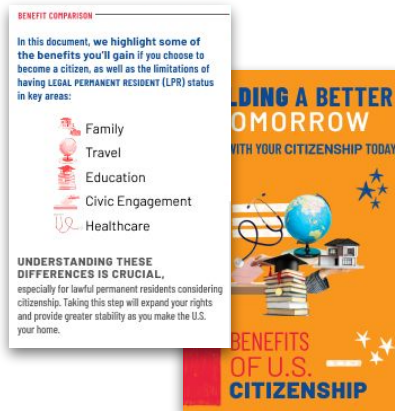
(All these tools were translated and available to orgs in:
English, Spanish, Vietnamese, French, Swahili)



(workbook)

CITIZENSHIP JOURNEY

Booklet with more space
for notes and bigger fonts.



BENEFITS TOOL



(one pager)

**BENEFITS TOOL +
CITIZENSHIP JOURNEY**

Cost effective one-pager with bigger
fonts and space for notes.

(The Citizenship Journey and benefits are merged in one tool)

CAMPAIGN TACTICS & ASSETS:

LIBRARY OF RESOURCES

CITIZENSHIP STORIES

LIBRARY VIDEO STORIES:

Maria Tran, Vestine, Gustavo, Maria Hayde, and Norma

LIBRARY SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS:

Reels, static images, and motion graphics

LIBRARY OF TRADITIONAL MEDIA ASSETS:

Static images and radio scripts

TRUSTED MESSENGER STORIES

INFLUENCER TOOLKIT:

Key messages, citizenship benefits, Call-to-Actions, and information guardrails

TEMPLATE INFLUENCER CONTRACT:

Work agreement template

EXAMPLES OF INFLUENCER CONTENT

Reels and stories

COMMUNITY STORIES

MEDIA BRIEFING:

Guest list, invites, agenda, and media recap

HCOM FELLOWSHIP:

MOU template and sample of content

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY STORIES

DISTRIBUTION:

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND MEASUREMENT TOOLS



PLANNING

CITIZENSHIP STORIES DEVELOPMENT

Interview Guide and Storyboard

CAMPAIGN TIMELINE TEMPLATE

Guide + example



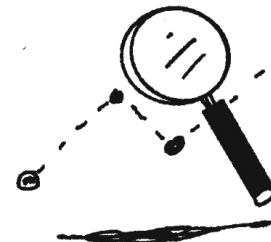
DISTRIBUTION

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT:

Social media assets, sample captions, Calls-to-Action

SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR

with some template messaging



MEASUREMENT

CAMPAIGN TRACKING DASHBOARD

(template)

CAMPAIGN TRACKING DASHBOARD

(example)

**THANK
YOU!**

