

Communications Guide

Education and Outreach Work Group

City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity

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Introduction

Getting climate communication right is becoming increasingly important for at least three reasons. First, the issue and timing are both critical. The impacts of climate change are accelerating, and delaying meaningful action to reduce carbon emissions increases the probability of harmful impacts. Second, climate change remains abstract, remote, and distant for many Americans, most of whom are focused on their more immediate needs. Third, influential political and economic actors are organizing solidly against actions to reduce the carbon emissions driving climate change.

Eco America, Connecting on Climate

An informed and engaged public is critical for adopting policies and practices that will address climate change and racial inequity. To accomplish this, community members need to be able to identify reliable sources of information that can inform their actions. As we witnessed during the pandemic, when messaging is inconsistent or unclear, it breeds confusion and mistrust, which can lead to inaction or resistance to change. In addition, how issues are framed affects who listens and how they respond.

As the body charged with “overseeing the public engagement process”, the Education and Outreach Work Group (EOWG) is responsible for developing educational and promotional materials for the Climate and Equity Plan. Extensive research by social scientists and others provides information on how we can effectively communicate with people to motivate change. Instead of relying on individual opinions or preferences, we will make use of evidence and science-based information to inform our work. The Appendix at the end of this document provides links to some helpful resources.

This Communications Plan provides guidance to enable clear, consistent, and accurate communications that build trust and recognition. The attached toolkits and sample language will make it easier to create presentations, plan content for small group discussions, and develop communication materials.

When speaking or communicating as a member of, or on behalf of, the Milwaukee City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity (CCTCEE), or the Education and Outreach Work Group (EOWG), individuals and groups are encouraged to follow these guidelines.

This is a working document, subject to modification.¹ The Marketing and Education Team of the Education and Outreach Work Group is responsible for its content and implementation. It may be amended in consultation with the full Work Group, ECO staff, the city contractor hired by the city to develop the final Climate and Equity Plan, or others affiliated with CCTCEE/ EOWG. To enable this process, it will be maintained in the Shared Drive and accessible for reference and review.

Communication Goals

The Marketing and Education Team will create, and collaborate with others in creating, communication content and materials that enable a diverse cross section of city residents and stakeholders to be:

- **Informed** – about climate change/ climate justice and the benefits of the Climate and Equity Plan
- **Connected** – through community organizations
- **Engaged** – in collaborating with the city to implement strategies
- **Inspired** – to promote the plan and its implementation

¹ These guidelines build on the Branding Guidelines that were distributed in 2021. The goals above were approved by the CCTCEE on 2/16/22 as part of EOWG’s presentation.

Whether creating press releases, social media graphics, email blasts, or content for presentations by the Outreach Team, communications developed by the Marketing and Education Team will endeavor to answer these questions:

- What is the Climate and Equity plan, and why is it important?
- How does it relate to me/ my community? How can it make our lives better?
- Who is leading this effort? Where are we in the process?
- How can I be involved?
- Where can I find more information? Who can I contact?

Objectives

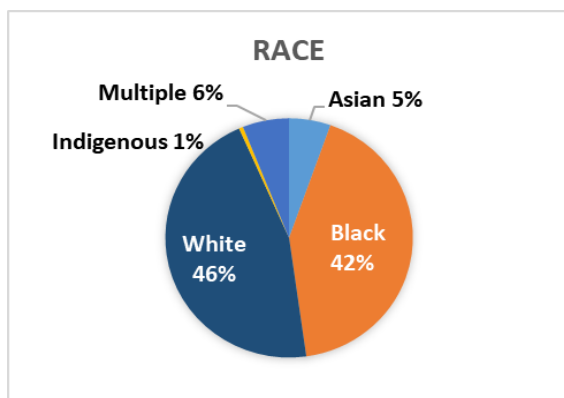
The EOWG Marketing Team will devise and monitor measurable targets for the following objectives:

1. Provide access to educational materials about climate change and climate justice:
 - E.g. create an online “library” of resources.
 - Offer educational resources, provide access to training materials, and promote opportunities created by partner agencies.
2. Collaborate with the contractor to develop effective public information and promotional materials including needs, features, and benefits of the Climate Equity Plan. Share information about evidence-based research on effective climate and equity messaging.
3. Create content, and design promotional materials, for use by the Outreach Team and others, including Power Point Presentations, brochures, flyers, and signs.
4. Deploy communications through multiple channels (online, print, broadcast, presentations, etc.) to reach a representative sample of Milwaukee residents.

Target audiences

City of Milwaukee residents form the primary audience.² As the “owners” of the Climate and Equity Plan for their city, they will be most affected by failure or success in adopting and implementing it.

To meet EOWG’s goal of reaching out to a representative sample of the population, keep this census data³ in mind for city of Milwaukee residents:



Population: 577,222 (229,277 households)

- **Ethnicity:** 19% Hispanic or Latino
- **Income:** 25% living in poverty⁴
- **Employment:** 64% of those 16 years or older
- **Education:** 87% high school or higher; 25% bachelor’s degree or higher
- **Internet access:** 74% of households

² This does not preclude reaching out to Milwaukee County residents, or surrounding areas.

³ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/milwaukeecitywisconsin>

⁴ The Black poverty rate is 33.4 percent, the highest among the nation’s largest metropolitan areas, and almost five times the white rate. [The State of Black Milwaukee...](#) UWM Center for Economic Development, Marc Levine, 2020

According to the EPA, climate change disproportionately impacts "underserved communities who are least able to prepare for, and recover from, heat waves, poor air quality, flooding, and other impacts."⁵ In alignment with the CCTFCEE's goal of addressing racial and economic inequity, communications will target not only those who have the greatest opportunity to effect implementation of the Climate and Equity Plan, but also those who will be most affected by its implementation.

While special attention will be given to creating communications that speak to the needs and interests of underserved communities and people of color, it is important to remember that there is diversity within groups and communities.⁶ The primary audience includes audience sub-sets, determined by demographics or other defining characteristics. Three different perspectives provide insight into how they may be approached:

1. **Groups defined by demographic characteristics** are listed in [the Stakeholders Assessment](#), located on page 16 in the Appendix. It lists some of their key concerns, and possible [avenues for approaching](#) each group. As noted in the chart, it is important to include translation and interpretation services in communications and events so that diverse members of the community are included. Providing access to information and materials where people live and work helps to overcome barriers due to access.
2. **The social networks** with which different groups are affiliated are listed in our [Outreach Network](#). Understanding these networks is a work in progress and is influenced by our connections in various communities. For example, middle class professionals are heavily represented on the CCTFCEE and other [formal networks](#) connected to government organizations and environmental groups. Some other demographic groups, however, are more invested in [informal networks](#) connected to religious organizations, neighborhood associations, and local influencers.
3. **Core Audiences clustered by attitudes** toward climate change, are defined in the [chart on page 17](#). Recommendations from the Yale Climate Communications Study are used to cluster these groups into three major categories. **It identifies the two core audiences we will direct our attention to** and suggests appropriate [messaging](#) for each group.

Communications occasionally address a dual audience. For example, email blasts may be sent to elected officials, non-profit organizations, and community partners asking them to promote CCTFCEE events among their constituents or clients. In this circumstance, keep the final or end target audience in mind, and provide context for the sponsoring party.

Whenever possible, messaging should take the target audience's interests into consideration, based on interviews and first-hand information. Some key questions to ask in formulating communication pieces include the following:

- Who is the core audience for this communication? Who may I be leaving out?
- What are their concerns? What misinformation or myths may be prevalent among this group?
- Who are the trusted messengers? How can they be engaged?
- What is the specific and do-able call-to-action we want to promote?

⁵ [EPA Report Shows Disproportionate Impacts of Climate Change on Socially Vulnerable Populations in the United States](#), September 2021. The report details the disproportionate effect on communities of color and low-i.

⁶ Levine points out, for example, that neighborhoods of concentrated poverty include many professional Black households with incomes in excess of \$100,000 per year.

Messaging and Content Creation

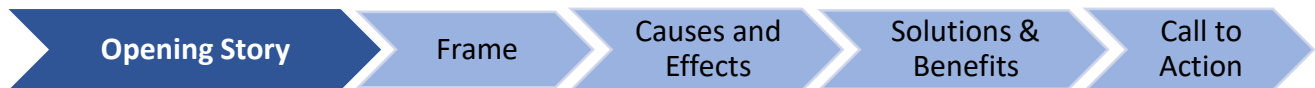
Trying to cover too many ideas dilutes the audience's cognitive resources and introduces ambiguity over the key message. It turns a straight-line narrative route into a garden of forking paths. It can only reduce the space you devote to hammering home the key idea.

Say One Thing Well, [ABC Copywriting](#)

Creating effective communications to promote and advocate for social change is challenging. This challenge is heightened by the fact that the Climate and Equity plan seeks to address two critical and intertwined social problems – both of which are complex issues requiring multiple solutions. The temptation is to create complex messages to cover all the bases. However, this is not an effective strategy. Keep the following in mind:

Compelling messages are simple, consistent, and memorable.

Effective messages are also structured to tap into the audience's experience and build connections with existing knowledge.⁷ The recommendations below are based on decades of research and testing for communications that are effective in moving people to action. This sequence is effective in creating written communications and presentations:



Structure the message for impact:

1. Open with a story or anecdote about local examples of climate change relevant to the audience
2. Move quickly to framing around shared values
3. Use metaphors and visuals to explain climate change.
4. Highlight solutions and personal / community benefits
5. End with a clear, specific, and actionable call to action

1. Open with a Story

Stories are one of the greatest tools we have for engaging communities on complex social and environmental issues, in ways that can drive belief and behavior change. People are far more likely to remember information if it reaches them in the form of a story.

Annie Neimand, [How to Tell Stories About Complex Issues](#)

The word “story” is used figuratively. A photograph, reading, testimonial, video, or audience discussion can tell the story. The key is to provide a touchpoint that resonates with the audience and elicits a personal and emotional connection to the topic.

⁷ Traditional forms of persuasion often rely on the “problem -> solution -> benefit” format. It assumes that the listener or audience will make decisions based on logic or, barring that, it activates feelings of fear to grab attention and motivate action. However this approach has proven ineffective, if not counterproductive.

Stories fill several purposes, helping the audience to:

- Focus their attention
- Make an emotional connection
- Relate the topic to their own knowledge or experience

Stories can surprise, inspire, or simply reinforce the topic. **Follow these guidelines:**

- The story should **reinforce the framing and message** of this communication.
- **Focus on local impacts** of climate change or economic disinvestment. Success stories (obtaining a job in clean energy, accessing transit services, or reducing home energy costs) are also possible.
- **One story** -- of one character -- is more impactful and better retained than multiple stories.
- The character is usually a person. If it is a place, connect it to people.
- If using the story of an actual person, get their written permission to tell their story and let them know how it will be told and to whom. Make up a pseudonym or just use their first name. (Follow the guidelines below for using photographs.)
- Effective stories are **brief** and provide sufficient detail to establish context and character. Using the subject's own words can be effective, if kept short.
- The arc of the story follows: character > conflict > resolution. Occasionally, the resolution is not provided, and the audience is asked to help create or imagine it.
- Stories are **reinforced through repetition**. Refer to it throughout the presentation.
- Stories, photos, and other materials can be added to the Shared Drive for quick reference.

*Open with a story that is **personal, local, and concrete**.*

Avoid falling into the trap of opening with scenes of global climate destruction. This sends the message that climate change is distant in time and place -- or that it is beyond our control -- which is not conducive to action and undermines the sense of personal agency.

2. Frame around Shared Values

Concentrate your communications efforts on an overarching frame—one that works across multiple contexts and groups.... One of the strongest predictors of what people believe is the number of times they have heard it. Thus, repetition is powerful, and consistent framing is critical for large-scale social change. [Frameworks Institute](#)⁸

Frames are unconscious mental constructs that work beneath our awareness and shape the way we see the world. Frames are activated and reinforced through language, which explains in part why employing certain words or negating someone else's argument using their frame, actually reinforces their argument in someone's mind.

⁸ Frameworks uses social science methodology to study how people understand social issues and tests frames that resonate. The recommendations here also relied on data from [ECO America](#), and the [Yale Program on Climate Communications](#), which regularly surveys Americans regarding their attitudes about climate change.

Effective framing aligns messages with views already held by the target audience, creating a bridge between the message and what the audiences cares about. Re-framing the issues of climate change and equity can be a powerful tool for change. The following frames should be used because of their cross-sectional compatibility with frames tested for climate change and racial equity.

Value #1: Shared Responsibility

Theme: we can/must protect people and places from being harmed by climate change

Concepts included in this frame:

- Our health and safety depend upon the health of our environment(s)⁹
- Sense of agency (climate): we can reduce present and future risks¹⁰
- Sense of agency (equity): we can support family-supporting jobs
- Sense of urgency: we must protect the people and places we love.

Redirects attention away from:

- Individualism, nature will fix itself, fatalism

Value #2: Opportunity for All

Theme: everyone has a right to a clean/healthy environment and the opportunity to work, regardless of where they live

Concepts included in this frame:

- Fairness across places: Wherever our family lives, we all have a right to¹¹
- We all benefit from practical measures that address climate and create economic opportunity
- Sense of agency (climate): we can actively reduce future risks
- Sense of agency (equity): we can provide access to family-supporting jobs
- Sense of urgency: the action we take today will affect people now, and in the future

Redirects attention away from:

- Individualism, privilege, short term loss

3. Explain Causes and Effects

Help the audience make the connection between local conditions and climate change. Simple [metaphors](#) such as “heat trapping blanket” can explain key concepts.

This is the place to use graphic materials and information about the sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Milwaukee.

This is also the place to **make connections between climate change and disparate impacts**. Be aware that this discussion will be more productive if it uses language that does not create a sense of social distance between groups. This is good time to reference the opening story.

⁹ Multiple sources, including Mailbach et al with the Yale Climate Communications Program, and health professionals around the country, indicate that health is an effective frame for climate change. Not only do people understand this concept, it also cuts across demographic and social lines as a shared value.

¹⁰ Why is this important? It addresses loss aversion – people weigh present and future losses more heavily than gains.

¹¹ Fairness across groups has proven to be less effective as it triggers individualism and group identity.

4. Highlight Solutions and Benefits

Make the “sales pitch” for the Climate and Equity Plan! Use positive language to describe (in brief!) the process for the plan.

Instead of trying to review all of the Ten Big Ideas, adopt one of these strategies: select the Idea most relevant to the group or presentation; discuss the overall intent without going into detail; cluster several Ideas into groups; ask the audience which Ideas are of the greatest interest to them.

Make connections between addressing climate change and creating economic opportunity. Give concrete examples. If discussing one Idea in particular, review the relevant benefits (listed on the Social Pinpoint surveys.)

Showcase successes and the involvement of others.

5. End with a Call to Action

- Emphasize collective action
- Offer specific, actionable, and timely options for engagement
- Provide access to information and contacts

Continued next page.,

Pulling it all together – one example

Elements	Narrative (core message in bold)
<p>Opening Story:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal ▪ Local ▪ Concrete 	<p><i>Picture:</i> (E.g. trees downed in local neighborhood during recent storm)</p> <p><i>Do you remember this?</i></p> <p>How many of you were affected-- or know others who were affected?</p> <p>What happened?</p>
<p>Frame:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Shared Responsibility</i> to protect people and places from harm ▪ <i>Opportunity for all and basic human rights</i> 	<p>Storms like this present a danger to the health and safety of our families. Few of us can afford to have the power go out or lose an entire refrigerator full of food.</p> <p>This is particularly true for individuals or families with fewer resources. Not only are low-income and communities of color often affected more heavily, but they have fewer resources to deal with an emergency like this.</p>
<p>Cause and Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tie local conditions to climate change ▪ Connect dual threats of climate and inequity 	<p>This storm reminded us that Climate change is affecting us here and now in Milwaukee.</p> <p>Climate change will make extreme weather events like this more common.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ explanation of climate change and the need to reduce emissions ▪ disproportionate impacts
<p>Solutions and Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relate dual opportunities for addressing climate change and creating economic opportunity ▪ Showcase successes, involvement of others 	<p>Fortunately, we can take action to fight climate change and to protect families.</p> <p>And... we can do this while addressing barriers to economic prosperity that many of our residents have experienced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Solutions (the Climate Action Planning Process itself or a specific proposal related to the opening story) ▪ Benefits (include family supporting jobs in clean energy and related fields)
<p>Call to Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specific, actionable 	<p>Join us!</p> <p>Discuss what resonated, interests, and availability.</p>

Additional Content Elements

Organization and layout

Most readers will read the headlines. Some will skim the content. Make it easy for everyone.

- Use **bolding** and underlining to draw attention to key points.
- Use bullet points, paragraphs, and call-outs to organize ideas. Whenever possible limit bullet point lists to groups of three. Place the most important points first and last.
- Use images that inspire and empower. Photos can provide context and reinforce content. Include captions to highlight content. (See “Branding” below for guidance on what kinds of photos to use.)
- Favor people over pie charts.
- Limit the use of facts; convert large numbers into smaller human-scaled numbers and use analogies (e.g. one in five instead of 20 out of 100)¹²

Tone and Language

- Open with “you” the reader, or “we” the community.
- Use active voice, in the present tense, with a positive tone.
- Aim for a 6th – 9th grade reading level or lower.
- Use short and concise sentences. Only one idea per sentence. Keep paragraphs short.
- Eliminate unnecessary words, especially adverbs and adjectives.

Terminology

Terms such as “climate justice” and “racial equity” may be useful for internal communications or planning documents. However, they may be problematic when used in public-facing communications.

In addition to not being widely understood, or meaning different things to different people, these terms can trigger unconscious biases or create dissonance with the target audience. In addition, some terms embody a “deficit bias” that makes assumptions about people based on one or more defining characteristics, ignoring the fact that there is diversity within diverse populations.

Whenever possible:

- Use concrete examples or explanations that relate to shared values
- Use “people first” and respectful descriptions
- Here are some examples:

Instead of:

Climate justice

Blacks and Latinos

The unemployed

Disabled

Say:

Ensure that everyone benefits from efforts to curb climate change. The fair distribution of jobs in clean energy.

People or communities of color

People seeking employment

People with disabilities

¹² For some helpful examples see Chip Heath and Karla Starr, [Making Numbers Count: The Art and Science of Communicating Numbers](#), Avid Reader Press, 2022

Communication Channels

The importance of using multiple channels of communication to reach a broader cross-section of the public cannot be stressed enough. Online channels, including social media, websites, Zoom events, and emails each have their own built-in audiences. Different groups may also be reached through radio ads, community newsletters, or in-person events. See the Marketing Calendar and Outreach Plan for more information.

When providing access to additional online resources, **all links should direct traffic to Social Pinpoint** -- AKA the [Public Engagement Website](#) -- which is regularly updated. The short URL is bit.ly/engagemke

Accessibility

Follow the recommendations in the Branding Section and throughout this Communications Guide to make communications accessible for everyone. Small or multi-colored fonts, busy designs, and lack of white space impede access and comprehension. Special considerations can be taken to overcome some common barriers to communications.

For written communications

- Provide Spanish translations for public facing documents and other documents as needed.
- Follow the guidelines in the resources listed below, which enable the use of screen readers and other assistive features:
 - Microsoft Word documents: [Best Practices for Making Word Documents Accessible](#)
 - Google Docs: [Accessibility Checker for Docs checks your Google Doc against Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#)
 - For social media, use this [guide](#)

For presentations and events

- Offer events at various locations around the city. Balance between the north and south sides, to create opportunities for diverse community participation.
- Provide Spanish and sign language interpreters when possible, especially for large events.
- Use captioning and transcription services available in Zoom or other online meeting service.
- Offer written materials and any assistive listening devices that are available for in-person meetings.

Branding Style Guide

Strong brands are grounded by a clear articulation of what you stand for and how that gets expressed. These foundational elements guide all other aspects of the brand and can help you make decisions about whether certain words, colors, and images are aligned with your identity.

Cause Communications

Branding Goals

- Consistent look and feel across all media
- Easy to read
- Colors associated with nature and health.

- Visually attractive design that does not call attention to itself
- Suggests positivity, and competence

Logo and taglines

The Task Force has approved the creation of a **Coalition**, which will amplify the voice of the Task Force and advocate for the adoption and implementation of the Climate and Equity Plan. **The wordmark and tagline below summarize the purpose and values of the Coalition.** It provides the message and rallying point to inspire community action around our desired future.



Socially Just. Environmentally Sustainable.



*Socially Just.
Environmentally Sustainable.*

Colors

This is the color scheme for all communications, including but not exclusive to, the Coalition.

Color 1	Color 2	Color 3	Color 4
HEX	23316B	4472C4	90CA72
RGB	35, 49, 107	68, 114, 196	157, 202, 114
HSB	228, 67, 42	218, 65, 77	91, 44, 79
CMYK	67, 54, 0, 58	65, 41, 0, 23	22, 0, 43, 20
HEX	HEX	HEX	HEX
RGB	RGB	RGB	RGB
HSB	HSB	HSB	HSB
CMYK	CMYK	CMYK	CMYK
			FFFFFF
			255, 255, 255
			0, 0, 100
			0, 0, 0, 0

Typography

Text should be readable and accessible to a wide audience.

- Use Sans serif fonts, which are designed for online use: Calibri for the body of the text; Arial may be used for headings.
- Font size should be no smaller than 11 point for documents with normal spacing. Larger fonts apply to presentations.
- Use bolding for headlines
- Use high contrast (black on white, or white on navy) for primary text. Do NOT use orange, yellow, or green colored text, which is difficult to read.
- See the Power Point Guidelines for additional information.

Imagery

Images and captions are one of the most effective ways to attract -- and retain -- viewer attention. To overcome the tendency to see climate change and issues of inequity as distant in time and place, and thus not urgent, follow these guidelines:

- Except for infographics, prioritize photographs over drawings/cartoons. Be consistent in usage and placement across the document.
- Prioritize images of local residents taking action in their neighborhoods or surrounding environments.
- Images of climate change should be concrete and relatable, showing local conditions. Catastrophic images or views from distant locations are not recommended.
- Use close-up angles instead of panoramic or aerial views. In natural scenes, the inclusion of people will retain more attention.
- The full frontal face of a person looking directly at the camera is the most compelling image and retains the greatest amount of attention.
- Photographs and graphics should be fully integrated with the text and support the content. Avoid unnecessary decorative features that distract attention from the topic.¹³

Nomenclature and Terminology

Use these terms as provided. Do not create additional names or acronyms

- Milwaukee “**City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity**”
AKA “CCTFCEE” or “the Task Force”

Note:

- Alderman Nik Kovac is the co-chair of the Task Force with a County Supervisor.
 - Erick Shambarger is the Project Director and a member of the Task Force.
 - Work Groups are chaired by a Task Force member or appointed designee. Work Group members are approved by the Task Force.
- Milwaukee’s “**Climate and Equity Plan**”
 - “**Education and Outreach Work Group**”

¹³ Eye tracking studies and brain scans indicate that full frontal faces retain attention, whereas decorative features and unnecessary details create “cognitive overload.”

AKA “EOWG”

PowerPoint Presentations

[The toolkit for PowerPoint Presentations](#) and webinars includes guidelines for creating content and visuals, as well as video resources. Use the templates, which will make the design process easy.

Implementation

Approval

The Project Charter authorizes EOWG to “Oversee public engagement during the planning process; grow public support for large scale climate action, and effectively convey workgroup activities to the public.”¹⁴

The Education and Outreach Work Group was authorized by the CCTFCEE to create and disseminate press releases and other marketing materials to promote the Climate and Equity plan. These materials are developed and distributed by the Marketing and Education Team of EOWG.

The Marketing and Education team may seek input, or develop proposals regarding specific campaigns or policy decisions to EOWG, which are discussed and approved using a “modified consensus” model.

Copywrite

Content, graphics, and other marketing materials created by volunteers for the Education and Outreach Work Group (EOWG), become part of its resources and may be used without permission by EOWG or its representatives. EOWG regularly posts and shares materials on the CCTFCC Shared Drive, which is open to the public.

Materials created by GRAEF, which is a contractor for the City of Milwaukee, are the property of the city in accordance with their contract.

¹⁴ [Project Charter, Milwaukee Climate and Equity Plan](#), Prepared for the City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity (CCTFCEE) by the Milwaukee Environmental Collaboration Office, page 6.

Appendix

Definitions of commonly used terms

Some common phrases. As note earlier, it is best to avoid jargon, but if it is used, provide a brief definition.

- **Equity**

Refers to fairness and justice for all people. It is different from equality in that it assumes some level of accommodation to provide what people need to overcome barriers and be successful.

Economic equity is defined as the fairness and distribution of economic wealth, tax liability, resources, and assets in a society. Social equity considers systemic inequalities to ensure everyone in a community has access to the same opportunities and outcomes. Equity of all kinds acknowledges that inequalities exist and works to eliminate them.

- **Environmental Justice**

The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. ([EPA](#))

The Environmental Justice Movement refers to the struggle to improve and maintain a clean and healthful environment, especially for those who have traditionally lived, worked, and played closest to the sources of pollution.... It addresses a key fact: people who live, work, and play in America's most polluted environments are commonly people of color and the poor. ([NRDC](#))

- **Climate Justice**

A term, and more than that a movement, that acknowledges climate change can have differing social, economic, public health, and other adverse impacts on underprivileged populations. Advocates for climate justice are striving to have these inequities addressed head-on through long-term mitigation and adaptation strategies. Climate justice begins with recognizing key groups are differently affected by climate change, which exacerbates inequitable social conditions. ([Yale](#))

For additional information see the [Glossary](#) on the Racial Equity Tools website

Public Participation Plan

Recommendations from Climate Action Planning by Boswell, Greve, and Seale. 2019

	Preliminary Phase	Planning Phase	Adoption Phase
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reach out various sectors of community ▪ Identify issues of importance to them ▪ Communicate the need, purpose, and potential impact of the CAP ▪ Generate interest, identify early supporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educate community about impacts of climate change ▪ Promote the CAP ▪ Solicit input / identify gaps in suite of strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inform community of results of planning ▪ Generate support for implementation
Branding			
Target Audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop target audience profiles ▪ Identify stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop stakeholder database 	
Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop Primary and Secondary Key messages (main points for target audiences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare for dispute resolution ▪ Collect social norms data about climate friendly actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify co-benefits of proposed changes ▪ Develop social norms messaging
Campaign Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design CAP image (visual elements, slogan, images) for 5 year lifespan 		
Collateral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design and post posters and brochures at community cultural hubs, libraries, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop materials for Kick-off Event ▪ Information packets for smaller events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Handouts summarizing the CAP
Communications			
Earned Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop media list to include neighborhood newsletters, radio, etc. ▪ Develop Press kit ▪ Publicize process thru radio, press releases, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Press releases promoting Kick-off Event and smaller events 	
Owned Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop website or webpages aligned with branding decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Online or telephone Survey: knowledge of CC, CAP, their contributions to GHG, motivation to change ▪ Email blasts to stakeholders 4-6 weeks prior to Kick-off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Copy of the CAP on website at least 1 month prior to meetings
Paid Media		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advertisement of Kick-off event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct social norms campaign
Events			
Major		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High profile interactive Kick-off Event <u>early in process</u> (p324): Include town-hall meeting/ workshops/ polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two Open notice public meetings prior to adoption
Small/ Medium		<p>Following Kick-off a series of events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Speakers Bureau ▪ Workshops/ small group discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Celebration
Outreach			
One-to-one			
Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop contact list with nonprofits, religious orgs, environmental groups, individuals, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote Kick-off event thru network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote Celebration through network

Public Stakeholders Assessment: Outreach Channels

	Publics/ Communities	Key concerns	Possible Entry points/ Information Centers	Tactics: Contact						Tactics: Participation					Actions/ To Do
				Media (press, radio)	Social Media	Email Blasts	Texting	Lit Drops	Groups & leaders	Virtual Survey	Zoom Events	Hybrid events/ Online recording	In-person Events	Other	
Age	Youth/ Young Adults	Highest levels of engagement	Colleges, High Schools		*		*	*	*	*			*		Work with Arts Groups, table at colleges
	Elderly	Grandchildren	Senior Centers; SSI Offices	*				*				*	*		Lit drop; Town Halls
	Parents	Children’s future/ health	MPS, Childcare Providers		*		*							*	
Culture/ Ethnicity	Spanish Speaking	Among the most concerned (Yale)	FQHCs; Community Centers		*				*			*	*	*	Table at events
	Refugee and Immigrant (other than Spanish Speaking)	Basic needs	Resettlement Agencies; Clan leaders						*					*	Work with clan leaders
Race	Black/ Communities of Color	Trust is an issue/ over-surveyed with little change; heavily impacted	Churches, Temples; NAACP and other Groups		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		Community events
Employment	Low- income	Basic needs/ heavily impacted	Social Service Agencies; Neighborhood Groups	*				*	*			*	*		Do lit drop, radio ads, CBOs tabling
	Workers in fossil fuel related industries	Threat to livelihood	Unions, Industry Associations	*					*						
	Unemployed, underemployed	Access to jobs/ training	Unemployment Agency	*				*					*		Green Jobs Event(s)
	Working professionals	Climate fatigue/ guilt;	Professional networks	*	*	*					*				
Other	Environmentalists	Among the Alarmed/special interest areas.	Organizational networks, Community Gardens			*					*				X Serving on CCTFCEE WG X Farmers Mkt

Core Audiences

Recommendations from the Yale Climate Communications Study: Creating a Targeted Approach to Different Audiences and Demographic Groups

	Yales 6 Americas	Attitudes and Engagement	Includes	Appeal	Most effective Approach
Audience #1	Alarmed	Highly engaged as consumers 25% have contacted public official	Environmentalists Mod to liberal Dems. Ed, higher \$; environ vs growth	Climate science Policy Advocacy	Traditional Media Social Media Social Action
	Concerned	Moderately engaged Willing to use consumer power	Diverse group , moderate Dems; American norms; support environment vs economic growth	Change through Markets	
Audience #2	Cautious	Less engaged	Marginalized groups ; low levels engage; traditional religions	Health focus is more accessible; Narrative-based communications	Social Networks and faith groups Texting Print collateral Events
	Disengaged	No involvement/ most willing to change their mind	Low-income , less educated; politically inactive ; Moderate Dems. Economic growth	Personal health & basic needs.	
Audience #3	Doubtful	Open to changing mind; politically conservative	White, educated, growth vs environment ; Evangelical	New voices to explain climate change	Traditional Media
	Dismissive	Opponents to action Supportive of effort to reduce energy use	Politically conservative High income. Republican. Active. individualism	Energy Efficiency, jobs Personal responsibility	

Annotated Bibliography and Resources

Primary and Secondary Sources

Primary Sources by organization

Cause Marketing:

[Communications Toolkit: A Guide to Navigating Communications for Social Impact](#), R. Christine Hershey and Vanessa Schnaidt, 4th Edition 2019

To get your messages heard, understood, and remembered, you need to develop strategies that sit at the intersection of your organization's goals and your audiences' needs.

A comprehensive guide for the nonprofit sector incorporating best practices from the corporate world. Topics include audience research and testing, strategy and planning, branding, message development, budgeting, media, evaluation. Worksheets for messaging rely on the traditional approach of targeting messages to specific audiences, using the “problem> solution> benefit” framework.

Center for Research on Environmental Decisions (CRED), Columbia University

[The Psychology of Climate Communication: A Guide for Scientists, Journalists, Educators, Political Aides, and the Interested Public](#), 2009

CRED research shows that, in order for climate science information to be fully absorbed by audiences, it must be actively communicated with appropriate language, metaphor, and analogy; combined with narrative storytelling; made vivid through visual imagery and experiential scenarios; balanced with scientific information; and delivered by trusted messengers in group settings.

This guide combines laboratory and field research with real-world examples. It blends information from the broad spectrum of disciplines that CRED encompasses: psychology, anthropology, economics, history, environmental science and policy, and climate science.

Climate Leadership Initiative and the Social Capital Institute, University of Oregon

[Climate Communications and Behavior Change: A Guide for Practitioners](#), 2010

Draws on extensive global warming, behavior change and communications research; It includes talking points that have been tested with the public as well as quotes from focus group participants that reflect the attitudes of many Americans.

Part One: illustrates the challenges with existing climate communication and provides tips on how to frame and deliver outreach efforts to motivate changes in thinking and behavior. Part Two: detailed advice and tips on how to frame global warming communications and promote behavior change in ways that resonate with a range of audience segments.

Climate Outreach

[Communicating Climate Change During the Covid-19 Crisis](#)

ECO America

[Five Steps to Effective Climate Communication](#), 2022

We think that people use information to make up their minds, but they don't. We use moral judgment to make up our minds and then use our brains to find reasons that explain why we're right." — Katharine Hayhoe, PhD Endowed Chair in Public Policy + Public Law; Professor, Texas Tech University

Start here. A simple two-page summary.

[Let's Talk Climate and Community: Communications Guidance for City and Community Leaders](#), 2016

Provides research-proven practices to government leaders for successful climate communication, including talking points to counterpoints, "dos" and "don'ts," proven steps to create your own custom message, and a model speech, the guide helps to successfully integrate climate into conversations, speaking engagements, and other communications. The first section summarizes climate impacts in community systems. See page 10, "Successful Messages" and page 13 "Embrace and Replace: Words and Phrases."

[Connecting on Climate: A Guide to Effective Communication](#), 2014

An updated report consolidates research by Eco American and The Center for Research on Environmental Decisions (CRED). Organized into four parts: ("The Basics," "Crafting Your Message," "Overcoming Barriers," and "Taking It to the Next Level").

[American Values 2014: insights by racial and ethnic groups](#), 2014

An oversampled survey of three American groups: African, Asian, and Hispanic/Latino to analyze if and how they differ from national averages and each other in how they understand and respond to climate change.

This research finds that "consensus values" (those supported by 75% or more of Americans) appeal to all groups. Examples include viewing a clean environment and access to natural spaces as personal rights for all people, support for clean energy, belief in the efficacy of local action, and government responsibility. Appealing to family values, real solutions, and personally relevant benefits can motivate engagement among all groups.

While all Americans share these consensus values, there exist variances in awareness, attitudes, and beliefs among racial and ethnic groups. Certain frameworks, such as family values, health impacts, and motivations for protecting nature, are defined differently across these audiences. Understanding these attitudes can help to frame meaningful discussion.

Frameworks Institute

Creating different messages for different audiences can consume a tremendous amount of energy, resources, and time. More importantly, it dilutes the impact of an effective frame. One of the strongest predictors of what people believe is the number of times they

have heard it. Thus, repetition is powerful, and consistent framing is critical for large-scale social change.

Six Common Framing Habits We Should All Seek to Break, Frameworks Institute

What's in a Frame?

A list of a dozen significant framing decisions, or “frame elements.” Each frame element affects how people understand, interpret, and respond to social issues.

Environmental Health Toolkit: A Brief Introduction to Strategic Frame Analysis

Strategic Frame Analysis™ points to three powerful reframing tools—Values, Explanatory Metaphors, and Solutions—that help the public to understand why our communities’ environmental health is important.

Talking About Disparities: The Effect of Frame Choices on Support for Race-Based Policies 2009

This is an important finding, namely, that being explicit about discrimination and the structural roots of inequality, does not, as a communications strategy, improve support for the very policies that will reduce inequity.

... the frames that increased support for policies that work to reduce racial inequality... tap into widely held American values (e.g., ingenuity, opportunity for all) that are, nevertheless, racially neutral. These frames allow people to see the kinds of systemic barriers that constrain life chances.... Second, discussing these values in the context of all communities creates a sense of linked fate....

Applies empirical research to discern the dominant race frames in public discourse and to test potential reframes capable of improving support for solutions that reduce racial inequality. Investigates whether talking explicitly about disparities and discrimination furthers support to reduce disparities.

Climate Reframe Cards

Useful reference for language to use in explaining climate change and framing discussion.

Don't Feed Fatalism...Put Forward Solutions Instead, 2020

Entering Climate Change Communications Through the Side Door, 2020

Published by Stanford Social Innovation Review. Advocates can make progress by looking for “side doors” to engage people in different perspectives and open the possibility of true dialogue with diverse, even antagonistic, audiences.

Order Matters, 2020

We are more likely to remember items and ideas that come at the very beginning, or the very end, of a sequence. Once an idea is called to mind, it shapes the way we interpret the information that follows. A vivid image or a term with strong connotations —like *poverty* or *race* —can trigger pre-existing and unconscious associations and assumptions. These associations quickly dominate people’s thinking and can derail communications.

George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication

[Engaging Diverse Audiences with Climate Change: Message Strategies for Global Warnings Six Americas](#), 2015

Describes six unique audience segments that view and respond to the issue in distinct ways. Describes the beliefs and characteristics of each group and methods of effectively communicating with them in light of: (1) the pro- or counter-attitudinal nature of messages on the issue for each group; (2) their willingness to exert the cognitive effort necessary to process information on the issue; (3) their propensity for counter-arguing, motivated reasoning and message distortion; and (4) the communication content they say they most desire and, hence, would be most likely to process and accept.

[Conveying the Human Implications of Climate Change: A Climate Change Communication Primer for Public Health Professionals](#), Maibach E, Nisbet M, & Weathers M. (2011)

A primer to help public health professionals communicate the health implications of climate change to the public, to policy makers, and to other professionals.

Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)

[GARE Racial and Equity Communications Guide](#)

VISION: Across the country, cities work in partnership with communities to dismantle structural racism and accelerate a more equitable future for all. Core message: Government created and continues to perpetuate racial inequity. We must transform government to advance racial equity.

Content: Introduction to Racial Equity, Messaging Strategy, Audience Engagement, Content and Storytelling. Includes explanation of structural racism, common myths about racism, outcome gaps, equity map, etc. See:

Page 34: implicit bias chart; Page 48: messaging strategy; Page 64: draft checklist

On the Road Media

[Climate Stories that Work: Six Ways to Change Hearts and Minds About Climate Change, 2020](#)

Brings diverse groups of people, campaigners, journalists, and broadcasters together to create effective messages. Takes traditional messages and reframes it for impact. The guide translates research into practice, connecting a broad body of research to practical recommendations. Includes “Words that Work.”

See the [Video](#) (3 minutes)

Race Class Narrative: [We Make the Future: Messaging Guide 2020](#)

By activating a shared vision for the future, we reinforce our overarching narrative and values.

Racial Equity Tools

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/resources/act/communicating/framing-and-messaging>

The website provides 600+ tools, research, tips, curricula, and ideas for people who want to increase their understanding and to help those working for racial justice.

Stanford Social Innovation Review

[How to Tell Stories About Complex Issues](#), Annie Neimand, Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2018

The Urban Institute

[Applying Racial Equity Awareness in Data Visualization](#), 2020

Eight techniques that data visualization producers can consider to make their work more inclusive.

Talk.Eco

[Resources for Environmental Communicators](#)

A project of the [International Environmental Communication Association](#) (IECA).

Yale Project for Climate Communication

A primary source, which provides regular updates research and national surveys, which includes Milwaukee specific data on attitudes toward climate change and recommended communications.

[Climate Opinion Fact Sheets](#), for states, counties, or congressional districts, updated regularly

[Dramatic increase in public beliefs and worries about climate change](#), 2021

[Global Warming's Six Americas](#), September 2021, Leiserowitz, Maibach, Rosenthal, Kotcher, Neyen, Marlon, Carman, LaCroix, and Goldberg

[Improving Public Engagement with Climate Change: Five Best Practice Insights from Psychological Science](#), APS, Princeton University, and Yale Project for Climate Communication, 2015

[A Public Health Frame Arouses Hopeful Emotions about Climate Change](#), Myers, Nisbet, Maibach, and Leiserowitz. 2012

Books and Articles

Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and others Die. Chip and Dan Heath, Stanford University, Random House 2008

Conveying the Human Implications of Climate Change, Maibach, Nisbet, and Weathers, George Mason University, 2011

Transforming Apathy into Movement: The Role of Prosocial Emotions in Motivating Action for Social Change, Thomas, McGarity, and Mavor, 9/15/2009

Your Quick Guide to Community-Based Social Marketing, McKenzie-Mohr, 2012

Fear Won't Do It: Promoting Positive Engagement with Climate Change Through Visual and Iconic Representations, O'Neill and Nicholson-Cole, Tyndall Center for Climate Change Research, 2009.

Mind the Gap: why do some people act environmentally and what are the barriers to pro-environmental behavior? Kollmusand Agyeman, Tufts University, 2002

Harnessing the Science of Persuasion, Harvard Business Review, 2001

Shaping Pro-Environment Behaviors, American Psychological Association, 2005

Leveraging Social Science to Generate Lasting Engagement with Climate Change Solutions. Goldberg, Gustafson, and van der Linden Yale University, 8/11/2020

[Boomerang Effects in Science Communication: How Motivated Reasoning and Identity Cues Amplify Opinion Polarization About Climate Mitigation Policies](#), P. Sol Hart, Erik C. Nisbet, 2012

This study demonstrates the weaknesses of the deficit model of science communication and how message effects about climate change may be influenced by political partisanship and social identification. Those talking about impacts on socially distant groups, are likely to amplify polarization about the issue.

Six Behavioral Change Models, Boston University, https://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/mph/modules/sb/behavioralchangetheories/BehavioralChangeTheories_print.html

Transforming Apathy into Movement: the Role of Prosocial Emotions in Motivating Action for Social Change, Thomas, McGarity, and Mavor, 9/15/2009

Influence: Science and Practice, 5th Edition, Robert Cialdini, Arizona State University, 2009

[The Influential Mind: What the Brain Reveals About our Power to Change Others](#), Tali Sharot, Henry Holt and company, 2017.

People make decisions based on emotional connections. Data can support, but not replace, this function of the brain.

One of the strongest ways we impact each other is via emotion. Sharing ideas usually takes time and cognitive effort. Sharing feelings, however, happens instantly and easily.... Our brains are designed to transmit emotions quickly to one another, because emotions often convey important information about our environment.

- *Influence behavior by building on common ground instead of trying to prove others wrong.*
- *Your emotions are contagious – use them thoughtfully.*
- *Induce action using positive strategies instead of warnings and threats.*
- *Increase people’s sense of control.*
- *Reframe the message to highlight the possibility for progress, rather than doom.*
- *Watch out for the influence of others. Being stressed or intimidated affects how we process information.*
- *Be mindful of (over) social learning.*
- *Beware of the equality bias – weigh people’s opinions according to their expertise on the topic.*

[The Routledge Handbook of Environment and Communication](#), Anders Hansen and Robert Cox editors, 2015

Videos

How THE FRAMING EFFECT influences YOUR DECISION MAKING:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1uCimKtPyY> (8 minutes)

Framing | Concepts Unwrapped <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fPQqqEoU3Y> McCombs School of Business (4 minutes)

On the Road [Video](#) (3 minutes)

Resources for data, additional research

[NOAA State Summaries Guide](#)

Environment Protection Agency, [Environmental Justice Screen](#) Maps

Duke Sanford, World Food Policy Center, [Research Brief: Identifying and Countering White Supremacy Culture in Food Systems](#), 2020

Useful definitions of terms