

Listening Projects at NYC Climate Week 2024

September 2024

1) What is the goal of a listening project (LP) at Climate Week? An RC listening project is an effective tool to model the power of listening, introduce people to the work of SAL/UER, inform them about our schedule of workshops workshop, and offer people attention on a difficult topic.

2) How do listening projects work? Usually, RCers work in pairs. They develop an interesting question that they think will engage the interest of folks walking by. (Or at NYCCW, they use a question on the sheet of LP questions.) The question is put on a poster board. The two RCers greet people warmly as they walk by. People often stop to read the question, and some will then engage with the RCers. We want to listen to people well enough that they can begin to think freshly. The goal is not to talk at them or attempt to persuade them to some point of view.

Before they leave, we inform them about our activities at NYCCW, and offer them a flyer of our workshops.

3) We plan to offer two types of listening projects:

- a) A basic listening project with an open-ended question about climate change that can serve to demonstrate the value of engaged listening and encouragement to feel and discharge.
- b) A more targeted listening project with a question that directly connects to the theme of a specific workshop or forum that SAL/UER is offering. These listening projects will be taking place both the day before and the day of each event. The goal of this listening project is to draw support for our SAL/UER work and interest people in attending the workshop or forum. Each workshop team is asked to develop one or two sample questions for the targeted listening project.
- c) At Climate Week we will pair people up and give them the theme for their Listening Project. (Noted on the event schedule.) Please have your questions written on a piece of poster board before leaving 41st Street.

4) Language Liberation: We may offer listening projects in languages that the workshop will be interpreted into. SAL/UER delegates who speak these languages can make signs in that language and seek out areas where people speaking that language might gather. This will also serve to inform people that our event will be interpreted into these languages.

5) How to have a successful listening project: Besides listening well to someone, there are two key skills needed for offering an effective Listening Project:

- a) One skill is the ability to be welcoming, make great eye contact with people you don't know as they walk by, say hello, maybe ask them an interesting question (have you attended

any interesting sessions today?) or offer an appreciation (I love that scarf you are wearing!). After you have engaged a person, then point to the question and ask them the question.

- b) The second skill is creating a question that people want to answer. The key to a good listening project question is to ask a question that draws people to you, is asked in a forward moving way (not a question filled with discouragement and hopelessness), and points people toward feelings rather than intellectualizing.

An effective question: When is a time you experienced unity between groups doing climate change? When is a time you experienced division between groups doing climate change?

A less effective question: How do we deal with all the divisions between our groups?

6) Draft Listening Project Questions

Restoring ourselves for the final 6 weeks of election organizing

Are you stressed out about the upcoming election? What do you do to handle all the stress? Would you like to see climate change more visible as an issue in the upcoming elections?

Backing Indigenous Leaders: where Ending the Climate Crisis and Decolonization Meet

Have you seen indigenous leadership backed in climate work? What do you think would make that possible?

Staying Hopeful and Engaged in Organizing for the Elections

Is there a time you felt hopeless that we would win the battle for climate change? Is there a time you were filled with hope that we could solve the climate crisis?

The Central Role of Young People in the Climate Movement

For young people: When is a time you felt like you were a force for change in climate work? When is a time your voice was not respected?

For adults: What role do you see young people taking re: climate change and how can adults support them?

The Intersection of Climate Change and Racism in the Southern US

Do you have family or friends living in the Southern U.S? How have you noticed racism play out in the South? Was there a time when you noticed racism in the way that people handled a climate crisis?

Mental Health Liberation: Tools for Climate Activists

How does being "normal" need to change to stop the climate crisis?

Do you ever feel hopeless that we can turn around the climate emergency? What do you do that helps when you feel hopeless?

How to Listen to and Build Allies When We Disagree

Do you have trouble listening to people when you have strong disagreements with their positions? Would you like to learn tools for listening to people you strongly disagree with?

Tools for Building Unity with Groups in Conflict

Solving the climate crisis will require us to build a united movement. Is there a time when a group you belong to was in conflict with another group? What did you try to resolve the conflict?

Sustaining Democracy: Reaching Powerfully for Disengaged Voters

How do you feel about people who have decided it's a principled stand to sit out the elections. What can we say to encourage them to vote?

Working Together to Tackle Racism and the Climate Crisis

Have you seen racism connected to the climate crisis? Is there a time you witnessed or experienced racism in the Climate work you do?

Climate is on the Ballot: Organizing Together in the Swing States

What do you think about traveling to a swing state to work on the election? Have you thought about strategies we can use there?

War and Climate Justice

How have you seen the connection between war and climate change? How has that impacted your people or your country?

Making a Climate for Families

How do you talk to your children about climate change? How do you help them with their fears about it?

Climate Change Generic

What do you love and never hope to lose to climate chaos?

How do you think climate change should be addressed in the current elections?

How has the climate crises directly affected you and your people?

How does the climate crisis impact you emotionally?

Is there a time you felt hopeless that we would win the battle for climate change? Is there a time you were filled with hope that we could solve the climate crisis?

When is a time you or your people experienced personal trauma as a result of the climate crisis?

What barriers have you encountered to becoming more involved in the climate emergency?

Countries in the Global South are asking the U.S. to pay it's "fair share" for the damage to the climate. What do you think is fair?

