

Event Participants

Now it is time to think about recruiting event participants. Here are a few things to consider about how you are going to find and recruit people to attend your *Take It Outside California!* event:

- What is the goal for your event?
- While your event may be open to all interested persons, is there a new audience you are seeking to attract?
- Is this the first time you are hosting this particular activity?
- How many people can the event accommodate?
- Are there challenges, such as transportation to and from event?



Create a registration system for your event. It is important to have potential participants register for planning purposes. You will need to know how many people will be attending and any special accommodations needed, such as wheelchair or stroller access.

- Create an online registration page
- Provide a phone number for people to call and register (remember, not everyone has or uses a computer)
- Ensure you do not exceed capacity for your event by keeping careful track of participants
- Collect a phone number and an email address, both if possible
- Use contact information for any pre- and post-event communications



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In addition to working with your partners to disseminate information, here are some suggestions on how to market your event:

- Ask the local community foundation to guide you to other relevant organizations in the community
- Connect with your community's family resource center or community service groups
- Recruit a group or organization to be involved, such as key clubs, churches, youth groups, fishing clubs, tribal groups, and schools.
- Look to existing channels that you have used in the past
- "Mine" your existing database. Current participants are obvious candidates, but how about the people who haven't been involved in some time? Use this opportunity to reconnect with them.
- Ask your board and committee members for suggestions of organizations
- Attend a community event or fair – take fliers, make an announcement, have a table
- Recruit through social media – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- Invite the employees of your corporate sponsors to attend the event, or partner with a corporation for a volunteer work day
- Post to Meetups groups in your area that might be interested: outdoors, exercise or family groups (www.meetup.com)

Please note that if your goal includes connecting with different audiences, you will need to seek out new groups and, as we explore below, possibly use alternative avenues of communication.

Fun Fact

On average, over **60%** of 2016 participants were new attendees. i.e., had never attended any of that organizations events before.

Millennials

If you want to host an event for millennials (those born in the 1980s and early 90s), identify several millennials who already support your work. Empower them to help you grow this effort among their friends and networks.

- Include them in the planning – be open to their ideas which may include non-traditional activities, partners, or marketing
- Ask them to share the event through their social media networks, and invite their friends.
- Give them a role for the event and empower their engagement.

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Family-Friendly

If you would like to host a family-friendly event, make sure the type of activity and difficulty level is appropriate for families and young children.

- Do you have some families already involved with your organization? Invite them to attend and encourage them to invite their friends
- Is there a nature club for families already in your community?
- Target family groups - your event could be a great "play date" for existing groups to attend.
- Ask school teachers to spread the word, or post announcements in school newsletters
- Place a short notice in your local newspaper
- Post notices and calendar items on parenting websites and blogs in your region
- Consider other family vectors, such as the local PTA, church groups, and neighborhood or homeowners' association
- Post your flier at the coffee shop, book store, grocery store, library, recreation center, or outdoor sports and camping supply stores
- Reach out to community leaders, such as government officials, school board members, public health centers, and nature program leaders

"We were very pleased with how our *Take It Outside California!* event went and we had overwhelmingly positive feedback from our attendees. We think this is a worthwhile and really powerful initiative to help raise awareness of our conserved lands but also help get people outside to appreciate these lands and connect to them in a meaningful way."

- Nicole, Riverside Land Conservancy

