



Narrative
Initiative

2025 NARRATIVE GUIDE FOR IMMIGRANT FUTURES:

How To Create Narrative Interventions That Counter
Fear and Change Attitudes

A Guide for Organizers, Advocates & Artists

Featuring Original Research Findings from Define American and Harmony Labs

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Audience Insights	4
• What We Know About Audiences	5
• What We Know About the Moveable Middle	6
• Deep Dive: Audience Profiles	7
Crafting A Narrative To Counter Fear & Build Pro-Immigrant Support	11
• A Narrative for This Moment	12
• Testing the Narrative for Persuasion	13
• Tips for Crafting Your Narrative	14
• Build-Your-Own Narrative Worksheet	15
• Audience Reference Guide	16
Designing Effective Narrative Interventions	17
• Tips for Designing Narrative Interventions	18
• Finding Narrative Opportunities	19
• A Need for More Immigrant Stories	20
• Narrative Intervention Examples	21
Acknowledgments	24
Appendix 1: Research Methodology	25

Introduction

The use of fear narratives to generate political support and consolidate power is an old strategy, one we have seen throughout history. In our current reality, a coalition of Christian nationalists, authoritarians, and techno-oligarchs are reshaping our government and society in their own image through this time-tested playbook. They have successfully advanced their authoritarian agenda by stoking fear against immigrants and the immigration system, devastating families and communities in the process.

As anti-immigrant narratives are used to undermine a societal consensus that our shared future lies in a multi-racial democracy, this has broader implications for all of us. The fear-mongering targeting immigrants attacks a defining goal of our country: pluralism. Though we are far from realizing the promise of a society where everyone can thrive no matter where they come from or what they look like, holding the promise of pluralism as a collective North Star establishes an important shared direction. Put simply, this threat to immigrants is also a threat to an equitable, democratic future.

It has become urgent for our movements to understand why this latest brand of fear-based attacks work on different audiences and how to effectively counter them. At the same time, we need narratives that align with our long-term goals and put us on the path to reach them. We know from research that many audiences are hungry for any alternative, for another way forward that moves beyond fear and hate and reaches toward belonging and possibility.

Here we find a powerful opportunity: we can put forward the better vision that audiences crave and expand the universe of immigrant stories that people encounter. Narratives shape the public imagination around what is possible for our future. We can connect the dots to show how a shared pro-immigrant future allows all of us to thrive.

“Narratives shape the public imagination around what is possible for our future. We can connect the dots to show how a shared pro-immigrant future allows all of us to thrive.”

With this guide, we aim to help advance these hopeful possibilities for the future. From numerous interviews and research reviews, we gathered the best and most current advice in the field to help you navigate these challenging times.

In these pages, you’ll find insights into what persuades “moveable middle” audiences, a narrative framework to help you craft your own narrative, and tips and examples to support the design of effective narrative interventions that can meet this moment.

We have great faith in our collective brilliance, resilience, and vision. Together we can build the narrative power we need and create a better future for us all.

Audience Insights

Narratives have power because audiences believe them. Making sure we reach our audiences with narratives that resonate depends on understanding who those audiences are, who they trust, where they spend their time, and what persuades them.

We will focus in this guide on learning about the “moveable middle” audiences; those audiences who can be persuaded either toward or away from pro-immigrant attitudes. We turn our attention toward the “moveable middle” because though they hold pro-immigrant values, they are the audiences most targeted by fear-mongering politicians. Fear-based narratives have been an effective tool in overriding their values and moving these persuadable audiences to embrace anti-immigrant stances.

In the following pages we will outline what we know from research about audiences more broadly as well as the specific “moveable middle”. We hope to give you enough information so that you can be both strategic and creative in figuring out who you are best positioned to target, and where and how you might reach and engage them.

What We Know About Audiences

From research done in the past few years, we have seen some striking trends that apply broadly across all audience segments:

- **Audiences across all demographics and ideologies are overwhelmed, exhausted, and fearful.** They are worried about gun violence, polarization, threats to democracy, and global instability, to name a few. They are particularly sensitive to chaos narratives and crave a sense of calm, order, and stability.¹
- **When audiences encounter stories about immigrants or immigration, it is often in the context of news stories about the immigration system.** These stories usually feature politicians or enforcement officers, not immigrants, as the protagonists.²
- **The narratives audiences are currently hearing about immigration are almost entirely harmful anti-immigrant narratives.**³ Even liberal politicians use talking points focused on “security,” accepting an anti-immigrant premise. But in tests, audiences repeatedly prefer pro-immigrant narratives and solutions over fear-based ones.⁴
- **Audiences long for a better way forward and a future where everyone can thrive.**⁵ Narrative researcher and expert Anat Shenker-Osorio told us: “Americans are desperate for anything better.”⁶ Research affirms that illustrating a pro-immigrant future in value-based terms is very persuasive for all audience segments.⁷

“In tests, audiences repeatedly prefer pro-immigrant narratives and solutions over fear-based ones”

¹ Race Forward. (2023). [Butterfly Lab Research Findings Report](#).

² Harmony Labs. (n.d.). [Latinx Encounters with Immigration Stories in the US Media](#).

³ Vera Action, Immigration Hub, PerryUndem (2024) [Campaign Narratives on the Border & Crime](#).

⁴ American Civil Liberties Union. (2023). [New Polling Shows Voters in Crucial Battlegrounds and Nationwide Prefer Proven Solutions Over Toughness on Public Safety and Immigration](#).

⁵ Race Forward. (2023). [Butterfly Lab Research Findings Report](#).

⁶ Shenker-Osorio, A. (2024, July 9). Interview.

⁷ Race Forward. (2023). [Butterfly Lab Research Findings Report](#).

What We Know About The Moveable Middle

Define American partnered with Harmony Labs to investigate which audiences are moderate and open to change on issues concerning immigrants and immigration policy. They used a year of media consumption data to understand how this “moveable middle” engages with media in their daily lives. (You can read their full report here: [Move Them or Lose Them: Strategies for Deepening Engagement with Moveable Audiences](#).)

The research found **four persuadable audience segments**:

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

Realistic, community-oriented caretakers

FOLLOWING THE PLAN

Faithful, family-oriented rule-followers

DOING MY OWN THING

Independent, anti-authoritarian pleasure-seekers



GETTING IT DONE

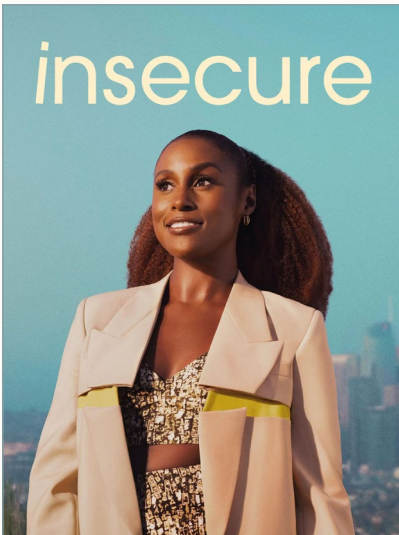
Practical, individualistic achievers

Each audience holds distinct cultural affinities, participates in distinct media cultures, and will seek out different types of stories. Understanding the types of stories these audiences opt into, the platforms they prefer, and the values that they find persuasive can help us better target and design future narrative interventions.


To this end, we offer a more detailed profile of each audience segment on the following pages.

Deep Dive: Taking Responsibility

- **Audience Profile:** This audience is more likely to be Black, Latine, Asian American, or Pacific Islander women between the ages 35-50, or over age 65. They acknowledge that unfairness and bias exist and believe in equity for different groups of people, but want to preserve the social order. They care about tradition and following the rules.
- **Persuasive Values:** Order, Community, Equity
- **Story Preferences:** They prefer media that is culture-first (fashion, food, music, fun, etc). They enjoy media with a conversation or neighborly vibe like The View or The Kelly Clarkson Show. They love stories about other humans that involve interpersonal or family drama, personal dilemmas, joy, and hardship.
- **Narrative Obstacles:** Though they generally aren't consuming opposition narratives through media, Taking Responsibility's investment in rules and the social order will likely make it harder for them to support issues around undocumented immigrants or pro-immigrant solutions outside of the current norms when immigrants are portrayed as breaking the rules.
- **Favorite Platforms:**  
- **Popular Media:** The View, The Kelly Clarkson Show, Yahoo Finance, Real Time with Bill Maher, Workin' Moms, Bridgerton, Snowfall, Insecure







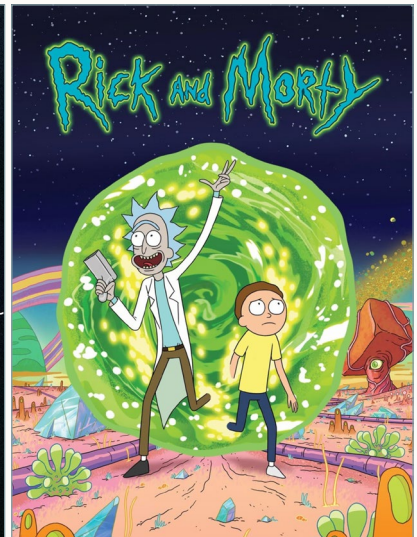
Deep Dive: Following the Plan

- **Audience Profile:** This audience is more likely to be women over age 50, and are more likely to be church-goers. They are very interested in helping others and are focused on caring for those in their local community. They desire order, sameness, and unity of purpose. They desire strong leadership that offers a clear plan for a path toward a safe future (but they themselves would rather support than lead).
- **Persuasive Values:** Order, Helping, Family
- **Story Preferences:** They seek out content that leans into nostalgia with predictable and comfortable plots. They love media with heart-felt stories. They also like “good vs. evil” storylines and stories that acknowledge their fear of threats, and are drawn to characters who struggle to find their way in a scary world, even as they follow the rules and serve others. Media that represents faith, especially Christian faith, are particularly important for this audience.
- **Narrative Obstacles:** They are the primary audience for crime and law & order narratives. They see law enforcement as protagonists keeping us safe. They are concerned with the perceived “rule-breaking” of undocumented immigrants. They are likely to see immigration as an intractable problem with no clear leader and no resolution. They heavily consume media about law and order, and may be especially susceptible to media representing immigrants as people who break the laws and pose threats to safety.
- **Favorite Platforms:** 
- **Popular Media:** Bob Hearts Abishola, Chicago Med, Law and Order SVU, Grace and Frankie, America’s Got Talent, Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris, Heartland, The Chosen





Deep Dive: Doing My Own Thing

- **Audience Profile:** This audience is more likely to be women between ages 18-50. They are focused on pursuing pleasure and autonomy in their own lives. They are naturally skeptical of systems and are strongly anti-authoritarian. They more often describe themselves as political independents than aligned with any political party, and they react strongly against anything that feels like people telling them what to do or believe.
- **Persuasive Values:** Adventure, Autonomy, Freedom, Achievement
- **Story Preferences:** They love media with virtual worlds, fantasy, adventure, play, pleasure, and relaxation. They immerse themselves in video games, music, and movies, though they also consume international (especially Spanish-language) news. They seek out media that features individuals (usually men) talking to the camera, like live-streaming gamers. They are looking for media that challenge norms and conformity, and perpetuates their belief in their own individualism and uniqueness.
- **Narrative Obstacles:** They are not generally consuming any narratives explicitly about immigrants or immigration. They are very focused on their own lives and pay less attention to national events. They are generally hard to persuade (which at least means they're also hard for the opposition to persuade).
- **Favorite Platforms:**    
- **Popular Media:** Vice News, The Kardashians, Rick and Morty, Avengers: Infinity War, Euphoria



Deep Dive: Getting It Done

- **Audience Profile:** This audience is more likely to be younger Black, Latine, Asian American, Pacific Islander, or Indigenous⁸ people between the ages 18-34. They have the highest proportion of immigrants of any audience and are focused on achieving things for themselves and their families. They support more liberal policies on immigration, but have low opinions of immigrants, thinking many of them take advantage, or are criminals
- **Persuasive Values:** Achievement, Order, Freedom
- **Story Preferences:** They seek out media that features individual achievement, from home repair reality shows to crime dramas. The protagonists of the media are often men who set out to create new things and protect others from danger. They appreciate flawed characters who are successfully growing and doing their best.
- **Narrative Obstacles:** On TV and online news, they are especially interested in stories about border crossings, especially across the southern U.S. border, and immigrant trafficking. They also consume a lot of the politician-centered stories leveraging immigration issues for point-scoring and political gain. Crime and law & order narratives are also influencing them.
- **Favorite Platforms:**   
- **Popular Media:** Forbes, Breaking News, TopGun: Maverick, Shotgun Wedding, Ride Along, Tex Mex Motors, FUBAR, Mayor of Kingstown



⁸ Small sample size for Indigenous people

Crafting a Narrative to Counter Fear and Build Pro-Immigrant Support

Once we understand more about our audience, we can craft a narrative that builds on the identities, values, and desires that can persuade them.

In the following pages we offer a narrative framework that is persuasive to both our base and “moveable middle” audiences, while also inoculating those audiences against fear-based narratives. We show how different versions of the narrative can be created to reach different audiences, give tips for crafting your narrative, and provide a narrative template and audience reference sheet to help you shape narratives for specific audiences.

A Narrative for This Moment

Our interviews and review of existing research⁹ guided the development and testing of a narrative framework that **works to effectively counter fear-based narratives while also increasing support for immigrants and for a more open approach to immigration.**

The framework includes three main elements: a shared identity and value, calling out the divisive impact of scapegoating, and describing a vision for the future.

The Narrative Framework:

Name a Shared Identity + Shared Value

Define a “we” your audience can identify with

Example: “As people who honor the long tradition of helping neighbors and welcoming newcomers, we know that our communities are stronger when we look out for each other and have each other’s backs.”

Frame Anti-Immigrant Scapegoating As a Tool to Divide

Describe how politicians blame immigrants and how it impacts us all

Example: “But when some politicians blame immigrants for everything from the economy to crime just to bolster their own political agendas, they create division that makes our communities less welcoming and less safe.”

Describe a Vision for the Future

Lay out a vision for the future that affirms your shared value

Example: “Instead of trying to divide us and make us afraid of each other, politicians should be helping us build a future worthy of us all. We deserve a future that values how people who have come from near and far have contributed to our shared American story. We deserve a future where everyone has the opportunity to pursue their dreams and no one is left behind, no matter where they were born or what they look like. In our best future, we don’t just survive, we all thrive.”

⁹ This narrative framework was particularly shaped by the research and insights from Anat Shenker-Orsorio, ASO Communications, Race Forward’s Butterfly Lab for Immigrant Narrative Strategy, the Race-Class Narrative Project, Harmony Labs, and Worthy Strategy Group.

Testing the Narrative for Persuasion

We tested 10 versions of the narrative framework and found all but one were persuasive for audiences. We measured whether the content could:

1. Increase audiences' belief that all immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, belong in America
2. Increase audiences' support to expand the ability for people to move to the U.S.
3. Increase audiences' recognition that politicians are scapegoating immigrants for their own political gain

Here are two versions of the narrative, each designed for a different audience, and the percentage of audiences who were persuaded by the content¹⁰:

Narrative Targeted for Audience: Following The Plan

As people who honor the long tradition of helping neighbors and welcoming newcomers, we know that our communities are stronger when we look out for each other and have each other's backs.



But when small-minded politicians blame immigrants for everything from the economy to crime just to bolster their own political agendas, they create division that makes our communities less welcoming and less safe.

Instead of trying to divide us and make us afraid of each other, politicians should be helping us build a future worthy of us all. We deserve a future that values how people who have come from near and far have contributed to our shared American story.

We deserve a future where everyone has the opportunity to pursue their dreams and no one is left behind, no matter where they were born or what they look like. In our best future, we don't just survive, we all thrive.



Narrative Targeted for Audience: Getting It Done

As people who believe in the freedom to build a better life, we value all those who work hard to provide for their families and pursue their dreams. Everyone deserves to have the chance to succeed no matter where they were born.



But when small-minded politicians blame immigrants for everything from the economy to crime just to bolster their own political agendas, we know that means they've got nothing else to offer. We deserve real solutions, not scare tactics.

In America, immigrants have always been a part of the American story and we should protect that tradition. Instead of trying to divide us and make us afraid of each other, politicians should help us build on our traditions to create a future where everyone has more opportunity, not less.

We deserve a future where everyone has the freedom to create a good life for themselves and their families and no one is left behind. In our best future, we don't just survive, we all thrive.



14%

of respondents **increased their agreement with pro-immigrant statements** after viewing this content

11%

of respondents **increased their agreement with pro-immigrant statements** after viewing this content

¹⁰ We averaged across all the treatment effects, and all points lower on the survey scale to create an index of lift. Content language was designed based on the research from Define American and Harmony Labs, Vera Institute, Greater Than Fear Minnesota, and ASO Communications.

Tips for Crafting Your Narrative

From our testing, as well as a long legacy of movement research and experience, we recommend you keep the following tips in mind when developing your narrative:

- **Use values-based language**, whether you're talking about your vision for the future or the impact of anti-immigrant scapegoating.
- **Build from existing identities:** When your audience is based in a region, a fandom, or a subculture, we recommend leaning into those “localized” identities and values. You add power when your chosen values build from the unique norms and traditions of that identity.
- **Avoid policy details.** If you're talking about solutions, talk about them in broad strokes, focusing more on the values they uphold, their end goals, or the type of future they will bring about.
- **Avoid terms that trigger anti-immigrant mindsets.** Many terms, like “border crisis”, “migrant crisis” and “amnesty,” are associated with partisan politics, fear-based narratives, or other divisive rhetoric.¹¹ Using them reinforces the underlying anti-immigrant attitudes from which they grow.
- **Don't repeat a myth or mis/disinformation unless in the context of satire or comedy:** Research tells us that if you repeat a myth in order to earnestly refute it, audiences only remember the myth, not the refutation. However, artists can undermine the power of a myth and inoculate audiences against it by using satire or comedy to make fun of it.

Resources:

- [Message-Builder Template](#) (The Opportunity Agenda)

¹¹ ASO Communications. (2024) [People Move: How to Talk About Immigrant Rights in the US](#).

Build-Your-Own Narrative Worksheet

Using the narrative framework, we encourage you to build your own narrative and adopt it as a foundation for developing messaging and designing narrative interventions. We offer this worksheet to help you create a version of the narrative that fits your context and needs. Because different audiences resonate with different identities and values, see our Audience Reference Guide on the next page to help you develop ideas specific to your audience. You can also reference our Audience Profiles for inspiration.

Note for Artists and Creators: You may find that adapting language isn't helpful to you. If it's not, focus on the first box in the worksheet, thinking about what resonates with your audience and how you might translate that into your own medium. For guidance on how this narrative can be adapted into a creative project, check out our Design Tips.

Before You Start on the Narrative, FILL OUT:

Brainstorm which identities and values are most likely to resonate with your audience:

Your Narrative:

Name a Shared Identity + Shared Value | Define a "we" your target audience can identify with

Frame Anti-Immigrant Scapegoating As a Tool to Divide | Describe how politicians blame immigrants & how it impacts us all

Describe a Vision for the Future | Lay out a vision for the future that affirms your shared value

Build-Your-Own Narrative Worksheet

Audience Reference Guide

Here we offer a grid outlining a few elements likely to resonate with our moveable middle audiences. Feel free to use them as your own or simply as inspiration.

	Identities	Values	What They Want
Taking Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caretakers Community Leaders Parents / Grandparents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order Community Equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To bring people together To empower themselves and others
Following The Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregivers Parents / Grandparents Church-goers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order Helping Family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To keep the peace To see their kids thrive
Doing My Own Thing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gamers Rebels Nonconformists Adventurers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adventure Autonomy Freedom Achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To pursue their dreams To have fun
Getting It Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard Workers Doers Problem-Solvers Leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement Order Freedom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build a better life To protect others

Here are three text and two visual examples of how you might use this grid to construct a Shared Identity and Shared Value:

- “As people who believe in the freedom to build a better life, we value all those who work hard to provide for their families and pursue their dreams.”
- “Like most parents, we take pride in taking care of our family’s needs and contributing to our community.”
- “As Minnesotans, we have each other’s backs. We dig each other out of the snow. We help out our neighbors.”¹²



Greater Than Fear Minnesota

¹² Education MN, Faith In MN, SEIU MN. (n.d.). [Greater Than Fear homepage](https://www.greaterthanfear.org/). Greater Than Fear.

Designing Effective Narrative Interventions

With your audience clarified and your narrative in hand, it is time to develop a strategy for getting your narrative out into the world. Where can you reach your audience? How can you embody the core ideas and values of your narrative in an action, event, or art piece? What opportunities can you create to advance your narrative?

In the following pages we offer tips for designing strategic narrative interventions, a worksheet to help you identify narrative opportunities, guidance for telling immigrant stories, and examples of effective narrative interventions to inspire your own planning.

Tips for Designing Narrative Interventions

A narrative intervention is any tactic or piece of content that allows you to challenge, reframe, advance, defend, or popularize a narrative. Narrative interventions can come in all shapes and sizes and are designed to put your narrative in front of your audience. Whether you're an organizer, advocate, or artist, these design tips can help you develop anything from a press release to a direct action to an immersive art exhibit. You don't have to apply all of these tips to each intervention you are planning. But we do recommend you try to integrate as many as are relevant for your project.

- **Identify your narrative goal - what specifically are you trying to change and for which audience?** Your narrative goal becomes the North Star for any narrative intervention. Make sure your narrative goal is one that aligns with and allows you to build toward your long-term vision.
- **Design for your audience.** Different audiences resonate with different values, stories, and aesthetics. In the Audience Insights section of this guide we provided you with information to more deeply understand what works with certain persuadable audiences. Use that to find the platforms, messengers, and storytelling styles that have the best chance at both reaching and engaging your audience.
- **Show, don't tell.** Knowing that not all of our persuadable audiences are engaging in traditional news media invites us to be more creative in how we embody our narratives through actions, events, and cultural content. If you need help doing this well, we recommend you work with a cultural strategist or artist (and pay them well) to develop creative interventions that manifest the core ideas of your narrative through images, stories, or experiences.
- **Choose one element of the narrative framework as the central focus for an intervention design.** Our narrative framework has three elements: building a shared identity and value, framing anti-immigrant scapegoating as a tool to divide and naming its impact, and describing a vision for the future. For actions, events, artwork, or memes, it can be helpful to choose a single element around which you build your intervention. (See intervention examples in the next section.) Just make sure that over the course of your campaign, you are creating a series of engagements where audiences are encountering all three elements of your narrative.
- **Mention immigrants specifically.** In our testing, we saw better results when we were clear that we were talking about immigrants.

Resources:

- [The Butterfly Lab's Narrative Design Toolkit](#) (Race Forward)
- [Story-Based Strategy 101](#) (Center for Story-Based Strategy)
- [Strategy & Points of Intervention Worksheets](#) (Center for Story-Based Strategy)

Finding Narrative Opportunities

You can leverage cultural and political moments to tell stories and develop interventions that advance your narrative. To help you identify existing moments or create your own, here is series of questions to begin a brainstorm around potential narrative opportunities:

Which upcoming cultural or political moments (holidays, rituals, pop culture, etc) might embody the values or visions of your narrative? (i.e. Mother's Day, or the release of a movie featuring a compelling immigrant storyline)

Which upcoming cultural or political moments might embody the opposition narrative and provide you with an opportunity to call out fear-mongering or showcase something better? (i.e. when a politician attempts a political stunt to blame immigrants for something)

Are there any upcoming milestones - or arbitrary moments/numbers that you could frame as milestones - that you might use as a hook to advance your narrative? (i.e. when CBP reaches a certain number of children in detention; or when a certain number of families are reunited)

Are there any cultural or political symbols that you might use as a hook to advance your narrative? (i.e. Statue of Liberty, monuments, butterflies, etc)

Which of any of the above opportunities offer the best chance to tell more immigrant stories showcasing joy, family relationships, community connections, etc?

A Need for More Immigrant Stories

Narratives are spread and reinforced through stories. Right now, most audiences are not seeing authentic stories about immigrants, which makes it easier for them to believe narratives based on tropes and stereotypes. To advance our narratives and cultivate long-lasting narrative change, **we need to expand the universe of immigrant stories that audiences encounter.** As you develop your narrative strategies and interventions, always look for ways to center immigrant stories. From our collective experience and research, we offer these do's and don'ts that support effective pro-immigrant storytelling:

DO:

- **Make space for immigrants to tell their own stories.** If you are not an immigrant or your organization is not immigrant-led: engage with and support groups doing frontline organizing with immigrant members and/or hire immigrant artists.
- **Tell more stories of joy and triumph.** Even stories showing immigrants reaching small, personal goals can move audiences.¹³
- **Tell more stories of immigrants just being people,** having agency in their own lives. Our testing found that this type of story improved support for a more open immigration system among audiences who care about law and order.
- **Tell more stories of Black, Muslim, and other immigrants** whose intersecting identities and experiences are often marginalized in immigration discourse.
- **Tell more stories that model the future we want to see.** Showcase equitable relationships, successful policies and solutions, non-immigrant neighbors taking a stand with immigrant neighbors, stories that show the variety of ways people thrive, and more!

DON'T:

- **Only frame your stories around how immigrants are contributing to the economy.** Testing shows this is not always persuasive and it reinforces the mindset that human value is dependent on economic value.¹⁴
- **Only tell stories of harm.** We have to be careful of repeatedly reducing people to their most painful moments. And research shows that focusing only on stories of harm can demoralize and deactivate audiences, making the harmful system seem powerful and intractable.¹⁵
- **Tell other people's stories without their permission.** Be conscious of and sensitive to the personal and sometimes legal risk that immigrants assume when [sharing their story](#).¹⁶

¹³ Define American. (2024, September). [Move Them or Lose Them: Strategies for Deepening Engagement with Moveable Audiences](#).

¹⁴ Race Forward. (2023). [Butterfly Lab Research Findings Report](#).

¹⁵ ASO Communications. (2024) [People Move: How to Talk About Immigrant Rights in the US](#).

¹⁶ Define American. (2021). [Telling Authentic Immigrant Stories: A Guide for the Entertainment Industry](#).

Narrative Intervention Examples

We offer the following examples of effective narrative interventions to help inspire your own intervention planning. We love these examples because they build toward clear narrative goals with creative innovation, and many create opportunities to center immigrant stories. Notice how each example successfully either builds a shared identity, calls out the use of fear as a tool to divide, or embodies a vision for the future. We share these examples not to suggest you need to match their scale, but instead to invite you to lean into imagination, creativity, and fun as you think about what might be possible for your context and capacity.



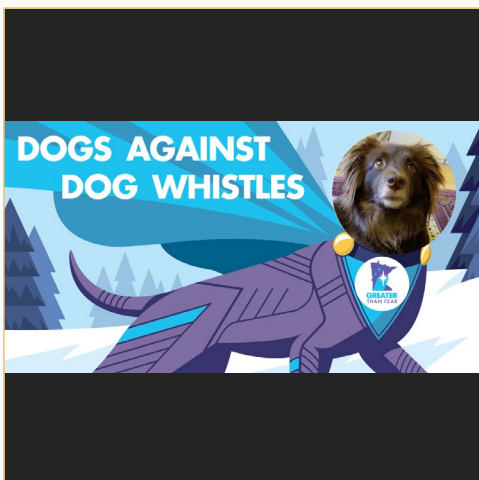
[*Justice for Migrant Women*](#)

[The Humans Who Feed Us:](#) *Justice for Migrant Women* and its founder, Mónica Ramírez, worked with photographers to capture the portraits and stories of agricultural workers in Ohio. They set up a photo exhibit at the Ohio State Fair and engaged fair-goers in conversations with and about their immigrant neighbors. The project aimed to advance a narrative of the interdependence between workers, businesses, and consumers, while fostering a sense of belonging for immigrant workers in the places they live. The Humans Who Feed Us scaled nationally and expanded to focus on immigrant workers across the food supply chain, featuring portraits and stories in restaurants across the country.



[*@john_abernathy*](#)

[Super Eid for Everyone:](#) *Faith in Minnesota's Muslim Coalition* created a mass collective “Super Eid” celebration in response to fear-based attacks against their communities. They wanted to make their celebration even more public and show that their faith traditions are just another way of being Minnesotan. Organizers chose Minneapolis’ football stadium– “the most Minnesotan place you can find”– as the venue and opened the invitation to the broader community. The annual event has included a petting zoo, carnival rides, and cotton candy, and attracts between 30,000 and 40,000 participants each year.



Greater Than Fear Minnesota



Intelligent Mischief

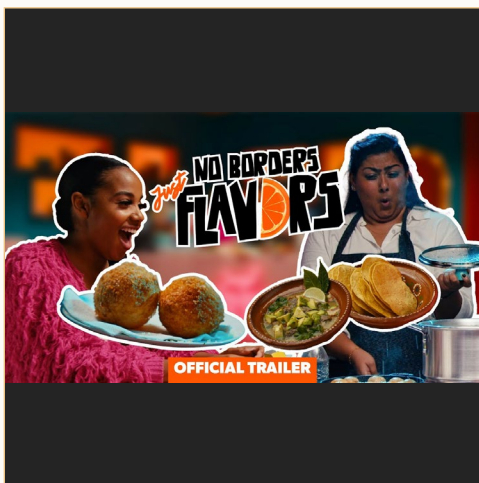
Dogs Against Dog Whistles: The Greater Than Fear campaign was organized by *Education Minnesota*, *Faith in Minnesota*, and *SEIU Minnesota*, using the [Race Class Narrative](#) to turn out swing voters. Dogs Against Dog Whistles was born as a social media intervention to interrupt the way politicians were using racism as a tool to divide. Inviting followers to send in their dog photos, the campaign created a personalized canine superhero image and encouraged people to post the image whenever politicians posted racist dog whistles on social media. This empowered supporters to effectively troll politicians' social accounts, and call out racism in real time. To add to the fun, they also held a Dogs Against Dog Whistles dog contest in a local park.

Archipelago: An Immersive Sonic Experience: To counter growing divisive narratives being cultivated between Black immigrants and Black Americans, creative studio *Intelligent Mischief* created Archipelago, an immersive Afro-Futurist installation and party in Memphis, Tennessee. After a five week world-building lab with Afro-diasporic immigration activists, artists, and futurists, they constructed a future, desired world in which Black collective liberation had been achieved. They invited visitors to explore the world's different landscapes and pathways celebrating Pan-African global identities and African diasporic movement and migration. In the exhibit space they hosted a Soundclash; a dance party featuring five DJs from around the world livestreaming their DJ set into the party through giant screens and speakers to "sonically unite the Black diaspora on one dance floor under no nation."



Black Alliance for Just Immigration

BAJI Brooklyn Diaspora Dinner: To counter the scarcity-focused “migrant crisis” narrative that was successfully dividing Black communities in New York City, the *Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)* held a community-building dinner in Brooklyn during Black History Month for Black immigrant and African American communities. They invited attendees to share food and connect around shared gratitude for diaspora unity. Facilitators used participatory activities to draw out people’s feelings about the migrant crisis narrative and what they were witnessing in their neighborhoods. Through discussion, facilitators helped attendees reframe away from “this is a migrant crisis” to “this is a policy crisis”, advancing an interdependence narrative that the dehumanizing rhetoric and alienating practices targeting some Black folks impact all Black communities.



United We Dream

No Borders Just Flavors: *United We Dream* produces a YouTube series featuring immigrant youth going head-to-head in a family recipe cooking contest. The popular series aims to support the development of a multi-racial, cross-class immigrant identity grounded in a sense of shared destiny and solidarity. No Borders Just Flavors uses the power of food to share immigrant stories of joy, pride, and connection that the media often overlooks. Throughout each episode, the contestants’ stories spotlight their collective care, shared abundance, inherent worth, and diversity of experience.

Resources:

- [#OurFreedomOurFutures Media Toolkit + Easy-to-Share Video Ads](#) (Amplify)
- [Culture Surge Free Content Hub](#) (The League)
- [Unleashing Unstoppable Voters: Creative Campaign Toolkit](#) (Center for Artistic Activism)
- [Stitch This!: Content Creators & Prospects for Social Justice Communications](#) (Spitfire)
- [Building Irresistible Movements: Best Collaboration Practices for Organizations and Visual Artists](#) (Forward Together)

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APPENDIX 1: Research Methodology

Over the summer of 2024 we developed our narrative framework based on insights from our interviews and research review. In August and September 2024, we translated that framework into 16 pieces of content, iterating across three rounds of testing. All of our content included images and text (the same images used across nearly all content).

We used the Grow Progress Rapid Message Testing platform to survey real people across the United States, balanced on demographics. We measured the efficacy of our content against a control, using statistical best practices to accurately weight populations, calculate statistical significance and account for small sample sizes. In total, we received 7,965 survey responses across the 3 rounds of testing. In the first two rounds, each piece of content was viewed by 400 people. In the final round, each piece of content was viewed by 200 people. Although we cannot guarantee that each response was unique across all tests, the survey platform does prevent duplicate responders in each test. Survey results were also matched to the Harmony Labs' [Narrative Observatory](#) audiences using raw data from Grow Progress, thanks to the teams at Grow Progress and Harmony Labs.

In the first two testing rounds, we based our content's success on audience movement across three questions:

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: All immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, have a place here and belong in America.
2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: We should expand the ability for people to move to the US, even if that means more immigrants move to my neighborhood.
3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: When politicians claim that immigrants are responsible for drugs and crime, they are too often scapegoating immigrants to advance their own agendas.

In the third testing round, we swapped out the final question, adding this one:

4. Thinking about voting in the presidential election, would you say that you are personally...
[Answer options include:] Extremely motivated to vote, Very motivated to vote, Somewhat motivated to vote, Not too motivated to vote, Not at all motivated to vote

To calculate overall audience movement toward pro-immigrant responses, we averaged across all the treatment effects, and all points lower on the survey scale to create an index of lift.

For all methodology around Define American and Harmony Labs' audience insights and profiles, see their report [here](#).