



2nd Annual Better Together Film Festival

Overview for Prospective Hosting Partners

The American story has always been written by everyday people stepping up to strengthen their communities and our country. It is through story that we understand ourselves, others, and the world in which we live. Stories have the power to transform the way we see, empathize, interact and disagree with one another. They have the power to bring us together but also pull us apart. They have the power to inspire and despair.

After a year of especially toxic, polarizing narratives in our media, the frayed social fabric of our nation can feel beyond repair. Now is a time for Americans to hear, see, and experience the stories of people coming together across their differences to solve problems together in their neighborhoods and in their communities. Now is a time to celebrate people choosing curiosity over contempt, dialogue over demonization, and empathy over apathy. We can feel inspired by these stories, and empowered to take actions that build feelings of unity and belonging in their communities.

During the 8th Annual [National Week of Conversation](#) (April 21-27, 2025), the [#ListenFirst Coalition](#) invites local organizations across the country to [serve as Hosting Partners](#) during the 2nd Annual [Better Together Film Festival](#). Together we will leverage the power of value-based storytelling through film and mobilize bridge building efforts in communities from coast to coast. National in scale, but local in practice, the *Better Together Film Festival* creates a scalable “onramp” for people of all backgrounds - across a myriad of sectors and local communities - to begin their journeys toward reducing polarization and building unity in their communities.

How does it work?

The *Better Together Film Festival* (BTFF) is a national scale initiative that offers local partners a low-barrier way to engage their communities in activities that foster bridge building and dialogue across difference, and can grow the audience of local organizations.

During April 21-27, 2025, community leaders across the nation will use a variety of venues (theatrical and non-theatrical) to screen one or more films that have been selected to participate in the festival this year. [Check out our incredible lineup of films here!](#) Hosting Partners **DO NOT** need to screen all of the films included in BTFF but rather can select as many or as few as they wish to screen.

Each screening event will be accompanied by post-screening activities that engage audience members in facilitated dialogues and/or other interactive bridging experiences. These events are

a critical component of BTFF, as we encourage audience members to reflect on the messages in the films, connect with others in the audience, and create space for empathy building between neighbors of different backgrounds. The post-screening events are also where local organizations can raise awareness of their own programming and grow their networks of local participants.

Hosting Partners will be provided a toolkit of resources to ensure their local event runs smoothly, including suggested Conversation Guide(s), audience registration support, marketing materials (such as [fliers](#)), and impact assessment tools.

Who should Sign Up to Host?

Local organizations interested in hosting a film screening are invited to participate as a Hosting Partner. We strongly encourage local organizations to work together to host a screening event. Teaming up in your community with other nonprofits can make lighter work for everyone and will encourage a larger audience to attend.

Requirements for Hosting Partners / Hosting Teams include:

1. Commitment to cross-partisanship.
2. Access to a venue space that can accommodate screening a film and hosting a post-screening gathering / conversation among the audience. Ideally, venue space would be donated.
3. Willingness to host the film screening and post-screening event free-of-charge.
4. Agreement to use a standardized pre/post survey to measure audience members' change in attitude during the event.
5. Individuals experienced in facilitating large group activities or discussions. Ideally, at least one individual will be a trained facilitator, bridge, mediator, peacebuilder, etc.
6. Ability to reach out to large, diverse audiences in the community to encourage a diverse group of people to attend.
7. Connection to local businesses/organizations that can donate refreshments.

BTFF piloted in April 2024, with 25 screening events taking place across 18 cities. The impact data collected through our pre-post survey indicated that most participants experienced significant increases in intergroup empathy, self-efficacy for bridging, and pluralist norms, while also significant decreases in [affective polarization](#). Encouraged by these 2024 outcomes, we are eager to increase the number of screening events and audience sizes in 2025.



Sign up as a Hosting Partner
to bring the festival to your community

Click Here