



LOCAL GOVERNMENT
**HISPANIC
NETWORK**
AN AFFILIATE OF ICMA

The Chapter Toolkit

Resources for LGHN Chapters &
Local Government Members

Dear LGHN Chapter & Local Government Members,

Based upon our real experience, we at the Mesa Hispanic Network with the Local Government Hispanic Network have outlined in this toolkit the possibility of events, workshops, and partnerships your local chapter organization can accomplish. Over three years at the City of Mesa, Arizona, we've built the Mesa Hispanic Network from a small council of 12, to an organization with nearly 200 members. We've done a lot of things really well, and there were things we could have done better. The most important part—***we did something***. We engaged our peers, our partners, our city leaders, and we worked at accomplishing our goals. This Toolkit was created to assist you in your mission to promote excellence within your peers, your organization and within *yourself*.

As you embark on your endeavor to develop your local organization, we encourage you to contact us for anything you may need. We, like you, are passionate about serving others—that includes you and your organization.

Mesa Hispanic Network – An LGHN Chapter

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The purpose of the Local Government Hispanic Network is to encourage professional excellence among Hispanic/Latino local government administrators, to improve the management of local government, to provide unique resources to Hispanic local government executives and public managers, and to advance the goals of professional, effective and ethical local government administration. The Network works with other organization such as the International City Management Association which shares common goals.

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For more information, contact us at www.LGHN.org

For the purposes of this toolkit, 'Hispanic Network' refers to your LGHN Chapter or Local Government Member group. To get you started, here are some questions to engage your group and set yourselves up for success!

Questions to Ask	Discussion
<p>What are the goals and needs of your organization? How can your Hispanic Network support those?</p>	
<p>Do you have the support from your organization's Executive Management?</p>	
<p>What is the annual budget for events and programming? How will it be allocated?</p>	
<p>What are top 3 programming or events your Hispanic Network would like to focus this year?</p>	
<p>How do you want to keep your Hispanic Network members informed and engaged?</p>	
<p>What are there potential partnerships with other internal departments or employee groups?</p>	
<p>What support do you need from LGHN or other regional/local groups?</p>	
<p>How will you be measuring your success?</p>	

Planning an event can be a big undertaking, but it is a way to make a big impact and bring important issues or topics to light. Hosted events—from lunches to conferences—provide an educational opportunity that is outside of the daily work environment. It goes beyond the regular training platform in that employees typically leave inspired, informed and perhaps have a new perspective than when they came in. The greatest benefit of conferences is the ability to bring likeminded and industry peers together where they can meet new people and learn in a safe and open environment.

One of the biggest, easiest to use, and already built-in tools that all chapters have for event planning—**the calendar!** There are many Hispanic, Latino/Latina, and international events that have been celebrated for ages. Those can be found online, and there's two examples [here](#) and [here](#). If you have trouble coming up with a reason to celebrate, there's many already on the calendar!

Here are some steps to see if planning a conference is right for you:

- Budget**— First and foremost you need to know where the resources are coming from and how much you have for a budget. Whether it will be supported by your agency or you have other sponsorships, it is best not to make any commitments without having the funds to execute your plans.
- Determine the Vision**— What type of event do you have in mind? Multiple sessions, keynote speakers, theme, goals, etc. You need to have a solid vision before planning any logistics.
- Set a Timeline**— Planning an event can take a lot of time and work. You will not be successful without setting up a timeline and task list of all the items that need to take place. Start from the event and work your way backwards in order to see how much time is really needed. An average of 12 months is typical but can be more depending on the size of the event.
- Select a Decision Maker**— There has to be one person designated to lead the entirety of the conference planning and to make some of the hard decisions. This person should have authority on behalf of the Hispanic Network, the budget, and within the agency. Most importantly, this person needs to have the allocated time, knowledge and resources to be able to ensure the success of the event is carried out.
- Get your Committee on Board**— Not only is it impossible to do it all by yourself, it is much more fun to do it as a team! **Implementing a event is just as meaningful for professional development as it is to attend one.** Folks have the opportunity to grown their leadership skills, lean about even and project management, be engaged in work groups and dynamics—the opportunities are endless! So make the space inviting and open for all the get involved, your event will be the better for it.
- Event Space**— Secure an inviting and accommodating location for all within your agency. Your space will not only help determine the atmosphere for your event but will set the boundaries of what is possible.

- **Build the Program**– Set all the details such as length of event, speakers, program sessions, meals, breaks, vendors and any other features you plan to incorporate. Keep in mind all of these areas will require their own working groups and implementation plans.
- **Market Event for Attendees**– Determine how you will promote and get the word out. Keep in mind all of the available outlets for posting information to your employee base. Set up a website or e-registration site that hold all of the event details, program information and even local information that will enhance the experience of your attendees. Remember to send personalized invitations to your community and regional partners.
- **Materials & Supplies**– As each area of the event is being planned, keep track on an ongoing materials and supplies list. Having a master list makes it easier to find partners and resources to start checking off items on your list.
- **Day of Event**– Make sure you have delegates in all areas of the program and solicit for volunteers well in advanced to cover shifts on the day of (think of the small details such as room monitors, registration, floaters, etc.), have key individuals dedicated to support your speakers/ presenters, and most importantly have a dedicated post where your Decision Maker is stationed and questions can be filtered. Consider having feedback cards on the session and overall conference for improving future events. There are many detailed ‘day of’ checklists available through a simple web search that will help manage the success of the event.
- **After Event**– Schedule and hold a debrief meeting, send out appropriate ‘thanks’ and recognition to all who participated in the planning or day of events. Most importantly, celebrate the success of your event and the impact you made for all who participated.

If you are not quiet ready to plan your own conference, join the LGHN Professional Development Committee and take part in planning the biennial conference! Also reach out to other Chapter and Local Government members who can share tips and tricks with you.

You don't have to do it alone. LGHN and other regional/ partnering affinity groups are readily available to collaborate on programming, networking and opportunities for your Hispanic Network.

Here are ways you can connect with other similar groups:

- Use LGHN Directory and Resources
- Join an LGHN Sub-Committee
- Connect with other affinity groups in your organization
- Connect with Hispanic Networks in your region
- Collaborate with INAPA, NFBPA, ICMA and other affiliate partners
- Collaborate with your state or local delegation of ICMA (i.e. – Arizona City Managers Association)
- Consider similar affiliates at your local community colleges, universities and major corporations
- Connect with the Hispanic Chambers of Commerce or other similar community groups in your community

‘Lunch and Learns’ or Brown Bag Luncheon events are a great way to engage your Hispanic Network because they take place during the lunch hour, they are voluntary and have a relaxed and collaborative atmosphere that is less formal than a structured training session or seminar. Hosting a regular occurring lunch time event provides the platform to foster an environment where members support and encourage each other to succeed professionally, personally, and in the community.

Here are some tips to get you started:

- **Opportunity to Promote your Hispanic Network**– Hosting events is a great way to engage your network base and increase membership or participation by building new relationships.
- **Leadership Approval/ Sponsorship**– Always make sure you have leadership approval before hosting an event. If your network does not collect funds, consider soliciting avenues in your agency to support and fund this as a training or professional development opportunity.
- **Pick a Topic**– Topic selection is critical as it should be informative, interesting and relates back to the network/LGHN’s mission, but it should also be lighthearted, general enough for the masses and fun! Remember, the audience is giving up their lunchtime so topic selection is essential to keep them coming back!
- **Find a Venue**– Find a neutral place that is easily accessible by all levels of your municipality. Don’t be afraid to showcase interesting sites such as Art Centers, Council Chambers, or recreation or large conference rooms. Be sure the space is equipped for technology, food and large crowds.
- **Food**– Whether you are supplying the food (Lunch & Learn) or asking the participants to bring their own (Brown Bag Luncheon) it is important that you are clearly stating such in the marketing. When supplying the food, be mindful of common varying meal needs (i.e. vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, etc.) and offer to supply alternatives on request.
- **Vet your Presenter and Have a Backup Plan**– Things happen, plans fall through and emergencies happen so plan be prepared. Make sure your presenter feels supported with information on the front end, refrain from hosting anyone you have not heard speak or met in person, and always have a solution to fall on in case your speaker is late or unable to perform.
- **Market Event**– Your event will only be as good as your marketing. Use creative titles and fun jargon to catch the eye of your attendees. With the availability of free online marketing tools (Canva, Spark, Lucidpress, or Crello just to name a few), it is very easy to create flyers and develop a brand for your Hispanic Network. Be sure to include all the necessary event information and use a sign-up site or designate a singular email to RSVP.

- **Include Time for Networking**– Time for networking should be included in any event your Hispanic Network is hosting. Create a comfortable environment where guests can meet and mingle a little bit before and after the planned program.
- **Devil in the Details**– As for any successful event planning, be mindful of all the details: know your audience, amount of folks attending, get there early enough to set-up and test the equipment, delegate tasks, have a checklist, create a welcoming atmosphere with music and greeters,
- **Solicit Volunteers**– Remember that all the roles to plan, implement and work the event are a learning opportunity for individuals to strengthen their event management and leadership skills. Set aside tasks and offer these roles to your greater Hispanic Network to participate and get involved. After all, teamwork makes the dream work!
- **Always Promote your Next Event**– The best way to promote your next event is to announce it at the end of your existing event. Be sure to bring promo materials or let the audience know when and how to register (i.e. designated website, email distribution, contact person, etc.)
- **After the Event**– The after work is sometimes just as important as the event itself because it is your lasting impression. Be sure to follow up with appropriate ‘thanks’ to your speakers and supporters, consider sending a recap to you network and personal messages to any volunteers. And don’t be afraid to get creative! Video snippets or picture collage can be just as effective in helping to get your message across.
- **Set a Regular Schedule**– Consider how many events you have the capacity to hold and plan for them in advanced. Whether it is twice yearly, quarterly or even monthly, your success will be dependent on your planning. Not only will participants be able to set their calendars, but the speakers will have more time to develop content and prepare for your event.
- **Things to Consider**– Some final items to note: maximize the time of year and holidays of significance (i.e. Hispanic Heritage Month, Cesar Chavez Day, Cinco de Mayo, etc.), use the opportunity for surveys, consider making events accessible via recording or web view.
- **What to do when things don’t go according to plan**– No event will ever go *exactly* according to plan. Most of the time, your guests and attendees will never know. Learn from your mistakes, debrief with your event planning team, take notes, and imple-

Keep in mind that there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to planning any event and expect to learn as you go. Be receptive to the needs and wants of your organization and frequently solicit feedback from a neutral party. While lunchtime events can take a lot of effort and planning, they usually come with a high return of support and exposure of your network.

Need a quick way to break the ice at a meeting or event? Here are a few fun ways to get your membership talking and engaged:

- **Little-Known Facts**– Have members share their name, what department they work in, how long they have been with the agency, why they are part of the Hispanic Network and one little known fact about themselves. This “little-known fact” becomes a humanizing element that can help break down differences and encourage future interaction.
- **The Parking Lot**– Set up several large pieces of paper on the wall or table and let members write down questions or topics they want to discuss. Then have the leader generate conversation around them instead of making individuals bring them up. This will help those who may be fearful of speaking up and help navigate sensitive topics.
- **Two Truths and a Lie**– For a fun conversation starter have members introduce themselves by telling two truths and one lie. The rest of the group will have to guess what the lie is.
- **Word Tree**– This ice breaker helps members broaden their minds to the discussion at hand. Generate a list of words related to some of the topics or themes on your agenda. For example, when planning the next event, ask what words or phrases come to mind. They may suggest a potluck, pizza party, toy drive, Olympic Games, etc. Write all suggestions on the board. You can then use this opportunity to discuss planning, solutions or vote on the best option.
- **Random Question Ball**– Get a beach ball and write questions on it in permanent marker (ex: what is your favorite movie, what do you love most about our organization). Bring the ball to your next meeting. Throw the ball to a randomly and ask them to answer the question that their right index finger points to.
- **Who am I?**– Great game for networking events. Each guest gets a character name placed on their back (could be someone from a nursery rhyme, a movie character, a celebrity or a cartoon). They may ask three questions from each person to try and guess who they are.
- **Marooned**– Separate members into groups of five and tell them that they are stranded on a deserted island. Explain that they must select five items from their personal belongings they have brought to the meeting to help them survive and that each person must contribute one thing. Give them about ten minutes to dig through their purses, bags or pockets to select necessary items. Then, have each group explain what they selected and how each object is essential to their survival. This activity encourages networking and team building

Membership recruitment is about building long-lasting relationships., engaging folks and letting them know how they will benefit, from the Hispanic Network not just professionally but also personally. Garnering and maintaining membership can feel like a full time job but, it works best when you use the outlets already available to you. Take advantage of developing a relationship with your Human Resources or Training staff, have promotional materials at a variety of levels of engagement and remember to have fun with it!

- Attend Staff Meetings
- Online Employee Resource Pages
- Employee Benefits Events
- New Employee Orientation
- Offer Training & Development Opportunities
- Participate in the Community
- Networking & Word of Mouth
- Recognition Program
- Bring a Friend Challenge
- Send Personalized Messages
- Have Top Down Support
- Be Visible!- Use Branding & Marketing

It is just as important to recognize and honor your existing members as it is to recruit new ones. Your Hispanic Network is directly linked to the professional and personal growth of the members. By implementing a recognition program, you are expressing gratitude to those that have significantly contributed to the organization as well as show others how they can get involved.

Here are some ways to recognize your members:

- Annual Award Program
- Monthly/Quarterly Newsletter Spotlight

It is never too early to start planning to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. National Hispanic Heritage Month is September 15–October 15. There are many ways local governments can recognize the many contributions of Latinos/Hispanics in your communities during this month. Latinos/Hispanics are the nation’s largest ethnic or race minority in the U.S. with a population of 58.9 million accounting for 18.1% of the population as of 2017. Many local governments have much larger and growing Latino/Hispanic populations.

Hispanic Heritage Week was initiated by President Lyndon Johnson in 1968 and expanded to a month by President Ronald Reagan in 1988. The dates were chosen because September 15 is the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua), three other countries also celebrate their independence in September (Mexico, Chile and Belize), and Día de La Raza is on October 12.

- Inviting speakers to discuss the history of Latino/Hispanics in your local community,
- Hosting cultural celebrations exhibiting the food and arts of Latin American countries,
- Highlighting historical or famous Latino/Hispanics through communication methods such as websites and social media,
- Supporting/partnering with local nonprofits hosting cultural celebrations,
- Promoting a reading campaign in libraries highlighting Latino/Hispanic authors
- Displaying in community facilities art of Latino/Hispanic artists or historical photographs of Latinos/Hispanics in your community, and
- Issuing a proclamation from the local governing body acknowledging the importance of the month.

As our population in the U. S. grows more diverse, our communities should find ways to embrace and celebrate our diversity throughout the year. For more information and resources on National Hispanic Heritage Month visit www.hispanicheritagemonth.gov.

We have all heard it before— having a mentor is one of the most valuable tools for career development and advancement. But the truth is, many are not comfortable searching out this kind of relationship or have a person in mind for this kind of role. That is why peer mentors and/ or networking opportunities are so valuable. It allows for a more flexible environment for members to meet new people, and develop connections that can turn into more substantial mentor/mentee relationships. Additionally, networking platforms have the ability for increased cross collaboration, training and project performance just by knowing more colleagues in your agency or field. After all, it is not always what you know but who you know!

- LGHN Padrinos/ Madrinas Program
- Member Contact Directory
- National Forum for Black Public Administrators Mentor Program (Partner Program)
- National Forum for Black Public Administrators Executive Leadership Institute (Partner Program)

Be sure to share comforting words and success stories about the benefits of mentors, peer mentors and networking to promote a safe space where new relationships can grow.

Here are some additional tips to encourage members to participate in networking:

- Just go for it! Hardest step is showing up.
- Be confident, but also know others are being vulnerable just like you.
- Lead with who you are and not where you have been.
- Create meaningful connections by sharing personal information.
- Listening is as important as speaking.
- Get feedback on fresh or innovative ideas.
- Get contact information to follow-up and check-in in order to keep the connection going.

While running and planning meetings seem to come naturally to some, it can be very intimidating or overwhelming for others. Below is some tips to planning effective meetings:

Inviting Participants:

- The decision about who is to attend depends on what you want to accomplish in the meeting. This may seem too obvious, but it's surprising how many meetings occur without the right people there. For instance, consider inviting City department representatives, outside agency, local businesses as it relates to the topic.
- Make sure to invite all committee or Hispanic Network members. Meetings are very powerful tools of communication and engagement when conducted effectively.

Developing Agendas:

- Distribute printed agendas, be sure to include start and end times.
- List items of discussion and what action items are needed.
- Be realistic with how much your meeting can cover during the allotted meeting time. Always allow more time to compensate for open discussion.

Meeting Conduct:

- Always start on time; this respects those who showed up on time and reminds late-comers that the meeting is always on time.
- Have a sign-in sheet at meetings to identify who's there.
- Introduce yourself and your role. Welcome attendees and thank them for their time.
- Remember to model kind energy and positivity. Depending on the nature of your meeting.
- Review your agenda at the beginning of the meeting, giving neighbors a chance to understand why the meeting is taking place and what items are to be covered before open discussion.
- Bring refreshments, this helps encourage socializing.
- Leave 5-10 minutes at the end of the meeting to evaluate or get feedback on the meeting; this is an important step on how well the meeting went. Get consensus on how often you would like to meet in advance, and even choose the date/time of your next meeting while you are all together.
- Summarize action items and next steps so they are clear.
- Finally, remember to have fun, enjoy the company of your peers!



‘Platicas’ is an LGHN hosted series intended for members to connect and learn from each other. During each Platica, 2 Co-Lead Facilitators will guide a conversation based on a pre-selected topic. Topics are chosen based on interest from a previous LGHN Member survey. Facilitators will encourage dialogue with prompting questions and leading sound bites. The Platicas series is a great way to network with LGHN members and gain knowledge from other local government professionals.

TOPIC:

Insert Topic Title

PLATICA DESCRIPTION:

In a Paragraph, Summarize the Topic, Key Concepts, Key Learnings, etc.

PLATICA CO-LEADS:

CO-LEAD #1:
CO-LEAD #2:

LGHN LIAISON:

An LGHN Program Committee Member Will Be the Co-Lead’s Liaison and Will Assist You With Logistics and Preparation for the 1 hour Platica Session

LENGTH OF PLATICA:

1 Hour

PREP:

20-Min Presentation, Development of 2-3 Questions, Attendance Sheet, Participant Feedback Sheet, Timekeeper (1 of 2 Co-Leads or LGHN Liaison)

CO-LEAD (FACILITATOR) ROLE	TIME
<p>INTRODUCTIONS: Begin the session by welcoming participants, introducing Co-Leads and asking participants to introduce themselves (Name, Title, City/County, & Share “What About This Topic Interested You?”</p> <p>RECORD ATTENDANCE: 1 of the 2 Co-Leads documents attendance (Name, Title, City). This attendance sheet will assist with determining whether Participant is an LGHN Member, future outreach, and to keep data on Platica participants. Submit attendance sheet to LGHN Liaison.</p>	<p>5 Mins</p>

CO-LEAD (FACILITATOR) ROLE	TIME
<p>OVERVIEW OF PLATICA FORMAT: Explain the 1-hour format: i.e. “These Platicas Series are structured to not only learn about the topic and key concepts, but also to learn from one another. As with all Platicas, we learn from each other’s experiences and often realize that we are not alone in our journey. So, in today’s Platica, I will provide you with an overview of the Concepts, ask you some questions about your own personal experience or issues you are confronting at work, and then we will have an opportunity to have a conversation about how this topic applies to your jurisdiction.”</p>	3 Mins
<p>TOPIC INTRODUCTION: During this 20-minute period, present the topic, key concepts, and why it is important to local government professionals who are serving minority communities, etc. Key to tie it back to importance of recognizing demographic changes across the country (more minorities), and why local governments need to develop new strategies to recruit, hire, engage, serve communities of color.</p>	20 Mins
<p>Q & A: Ahead of time, prepare 2-3 questions to start off the Q & A portion of the session, following your 20-min presentation. This will help start off the Q & A period. Questions are designed to kick-start the Q & A. In some cases, participants will have their own questions and want to dive-right in, in other cases, your questions may spark other conversations or questions. The goal is to have a conversation about how this topic relates/affects the participants. Making the topic relevant to issues participants are wanting to address will make the Platicas more valuable to those participating.</p>	25 Mins
<p>PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK: Tell Participants that we want their feedback to continue to improve our Platicas and that we will send them a survey following the Platica, but that you would like to offer participants an opportunity to share 1 learning from the Platica. You can ask: “What resonated with you? What did not resonate with you? Any other input you would like to share? Record participant feedback and submit to LGHN Liaison.</p>	6 Mins
<p>CLOSING: Thank the participants for their interest in this topic and joining the session.</p>	1 Min

A significant way to imprint your Hispanic Network into the community is by offering a scholarship program. Scholarships for education and/ or conference attendance is a impactful way to support the mission of your network while exposing new individuals to the benefits of the organization and offering them an opportunity they may not have had otherwise.

Start by looking at what your organization has to offer first, Is there a program fee you can have covered or waived, can you partner with your library or parks & recreation services. is there a local non-profit that has participants with identified needs or challenges? Often times it will be harder to narrow the scope of your goals once you have identified all the possibilities.

Here are some items to consider when implanting a scholarship:

- Define your Scholarship Goals/Purpose
- Determine Amount and Funding Source if Needed
- Determine if Tax Deductible- (Chapter Members can use LGHN 501(c)(3) foundation group)
- Set the Minimum Criteria
- Set your Timeline
- Market and Advertise
- Candidate Selection Panel or Review Board
- Recognition of All Submissions
- Selection and Honoring of Recipient

Additionally, consider setting up a scholarship or sponsorship for your own Hispanic Network members to attend professional development conferences or events. Often times employees may have difficulty getting such events covered if they are not directly tied to their current job duties, however as a network in support of professional advancement it beneficial to support events deemed meaningful.

Volunteerism is a great way to engage your Hispanic Network while giving back to the community. It is a way to build trust, comradery, gain new skillsets and experiences, all while working towards a common goal. Volunteering has also been attributed to improved mental and physical health.

Consider these ways to give back:

- Events, programs or celebrations put on by your agency
- Support a significant holidays
- Hold a drive or collection
- Group sign-up projects at local non-profits
- Partner with a local school or community colleges

While it is very easy to find volunteer opportunities to participate in, keep in mind that you want to have a streamlined internal process since these efforts will be reflective of your Hispanic Network.

A few more tips for organizing volunteer events:

- Link back to the mission and vision of your network & LGHN
- Host them at different days/times to allow different folks to participate
- Make some opportunities family friendly
- Identify physical skills or requirements needed
- If participating as a group, have individuals sign-up with one designated contact and then have that contact be responsible for information to the group
- Inform on any dress or code of conduct requirements
- Have consent or release forms signed prior to event
- Send reminders before and 'thank you' after