

Dinner+Politics

Discussion Guide

How to get the conversation started.

Host Preamble

Begin by thanking your guests for attending. Next, tell your story. Why did you decide to host an event? What issues do you care about? What is YOUR political intention? Do you need help achieving your political intention?

Know your audience

Guests may want to discuss specific issues, while others are more interested in getting tactical and laying out next steps. Have a plan for the discussion, but be open to the night taking you in unexpected directions.

Five guidelines for having an open dialogue

1. Listen carefully and intently.
2. Treat others with respect. Do not cut people off or interrupt.
3. Make a plan so everyone has an opportunity to participate in the discussion.
4. Speak for yourself. Do not speak for others.
5. If you feel hurt by what someone says, say so and say why. It's okay to disagree.

Create a safe and respectful space

Be open to learning about each other. Encourage everyone to introduce themselves and consider beginning the event with an ice breaker or networking activity.

Share the space. Ensure your guests understand that the space is safe to explore ideas. Remember the value and benefits of diverse voices to the conversation.

Do not be judgemental or dismissive. Build trust, while encouraging dialogue and debate.

Empower guests to take action. Invite guests to follow-up and expand on their ideas and intentions.

Next steps

Make sure your guests share photos of your event online with the hashtag #DinnerandPolitics.

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Discussion Questions

Here are some questions to get your dinner started:

1. Why did you decide to participate in the dinner? What is your story?
2. What issues do you care about? What issues are you following?
3. In what ways have you engaged politically in the past?
4. What are your hopes for upcoming elections? What are your hopes for your community beyond the election?
5. What is your political intention for engagement in upcoming elections?
6. What are the strengths of our community? How can we leverage these strengths to take action as a community during and after the election?
7. Let's choose a problem facing our community and discuss how we would solve it. How do we support each other?
8. What would you like the next federal government to do to help our community solve this problem?

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Intention Meets Action Worksheet

Now that you've shared a meal and had a conversation about your political intentions, it's time for intention to meet action. Let the discussion empower you and your guests to take action.

Take some time with your guest to brainstorm about what happens after dinner:

What is the next step you would like to take, either individually or collectively, based on our dinner?

What does this look like?

Who in your community can help?