



Easy Voter Guide

Using community-based research, we delve beneath the familiar approaches to addressing low voter turnout. We find that many common excuses about not voting relate to information needs and low self-efficacy rather than political or structural issues.

What they say:

Don't like the choices
My vote won't count
Takes too much time
It's inconvenient

What they mean:

Don't know the candidates/issues
Don't feel own opinion matters
Don't know how to vote
Intimidated by the process

This research also reveals “performance anxiety” across all voter types. New voters felt that voting was like “taking a test.” Experienced voters felt that they had to “cram” to get prepared.

NEED	DETAILS	SOLUTION
1) information about the basics of the voting process	especially for people growing up in households that don't vote, new citizens, but also everyone else too now because of new voting equipment	simple 1-2-3 step explanations using FAQs, photos and videos as a “virtual tour” of the voting process.
2) a nonpartisan overview of what is on the ballot	who is running and why, the duties of each elected office and a concise, jargon free summary of statewide ballot measures	the Easy Voter Guide (in print and web formats) satisfies new voters and serves as a user-friendly “menu” for more experienced voters, with links for more information
3) context about how the issues they are concerned about connect to voting and public policy	to help address widespread confusion about the levels and functions of government	www.easyvoterguide.org explains the issues they choose (not just the ones campaigns choose for them) and which parts and levels of government can impact what they care about

This information — prepared and delivered by peers — is a significant tool in reducing barriers to voting. A 1996 study funded by the Kettering Foundation showed that students in adult schools and community colleges who were exposed to two out of three of these elements voted at a rate of 70% compared to just 35% for their demographic peers.

Please visit the www.easyvoterguide.org website to see how we are providing these essential elements for new voters. For more information, contact the League of Women Voters of California Education Fund at info@easyvoter.org or call 916-442-7215.