



BATTERY POWERED

INTERIM GRANT REPORT

Organization: Represent.Us
Theme: Healthy Democracy
Grant amount: \$250,000
Grant term: December 1, 2018 – May 31, 2020
Reporting period: December 1, 2018 – November 30, 2019

Headlines

1) RepresentUs was a principal partner in the New York City - Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) campaign that won with more than 70% of the vote. The number of Americans who can use Ranked Choice Voting in upcoming elections has tripled as a result of this significant victory.

2) We convened the second Unrig Summit, the democracy reform movement's largest annual gathering. The Unrig Summit brought 2,000 activists, practitioners, and thought leaders to Nashville, TN. Programming included a plenary featuring successful reform leaders from RepresentUs campaigns that were victorious in the 2018 election cycle. Jennifer Lawrence moderated a discussion between six activists that won significant reform campaigns in the previous year. This discussion demonstrated the power that everyday Americans can wield through advocacy and civic engagement. As one audience member put it: "This session provided hope that change is possible."

3) RepresentUs launched 'Unbreaking America,' a mini-film starring Jennifer Lawrence. 'Unbreaking America' quickly accrued millions of views and shares on social media. Within two months of its debut, our email list grew by more than 10%, we gained 60,000 Facebook followers, accrued 6,500 new volunteer signups, 5,000 members signed up to host a screening of 'Unbreaking America', further disseminating our message. We also saw a 270% increase in the number of small-dollar donors in our monthly sustainer program, 'The Common Wealth'. This audience growth is critical to scaling the movement.

Responses

1. Describe the progress you've made in achieving the results described in your application. Be as specific as possible.

The RepresentUs Campaign Accelerator seeds and identifies emerging state and local campaigns and assesses their policy impact and political viability. If the policy is transformative and the politics viable, we work with local leadership and our national partners to professionalize their campaign, identify, and source the assets and expertise needed to win. The Accelerator plays a pivotal role in the scaled passage, implementation, and protection of transformative reforms at the state and federal levels.

The Accelerator as an apparatus performs four major functions:

- Tracks reform campaign opportunities nationwide (both ballot measures and legislative;)
- Connects volunteers across the country to campaigns and key actions to help them win
- Proactively seeds impactful opportunities;
- Provides prioritized campaigns with the most needed and leveraged services necessary to mature and win.

In 2019, an “off-election-year,” the Accelerator has already played a crucial role in 14 victorious campaigns, services we provided were research-driven, leveraged, and pragmatic. In addition we are tracking and evaluating more than 90 campaigns across the country. We are actively seeding three statewide campaigns, and anticipate partnering and providing a high level of services for 15 campaigns in the 2020 election cycle.

Below is a list of Accelerator-supported or RepresentUs Chapter-led initiatives that won 2019 cycle, list below:

Ballot Initiatives

- New York, NY – Ranked Choice Voting
- San Francisco, CA – Dark Money Disclosure, Pay-to-Play Contributions Ban
- Easthampton, MA – Ranked Choice Voting

Non-Ballot Initiatives

- California – Contribution limits for local candidates (AB 571)
- California – County-level Redistricting (AB 849)
- Maine – Ranked Choice Voting expansion (LD 1083)
- Maine – Automatic Voter Registration (LD 1463)
- North Dakota – Ethics Implementation (SB 2148)
- New Jersey – Dark Money Disclosure (S150)
- Pennsylvania – Expanding Vote-by-Mail (SB 421)

Highlight: New York City - Ranked Choice Voting

RepresentUs partnered with FairVote, Common Cause New York, and a broad coalition of other New Yorkers to pass Ranked Choice Voting, a game-changing reform, with more than 70% of the vote.

The number of Americans who can use Ranked Choice Voting in upcoming elections has tripled as a result of this significant victory. Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) addresses major problems with our elections by giving voters more meaningful choices in the voting booth, making it easier for more candidates to run for office, increasing diversity amongst candidates, and reducing the incentives for negative campaigning. The system will be implemented for the New York City's 2021 election, which is expected to attract more than 500 candidacies for the widespread vacancies throughout the city, including the Mayoral office.

Our support for the New York City campaign was deep and multifaceted. We provide legal and policy testimony before the Charter Revision Commission to ensure the measure was placed on the ballot. We assisted with fundraising and public relations, developed the website and a digital campaign plan. Our creative team created content for social media distribution, managed digital ad placements and produced a celebrity video in support of the campaign. Our team also built a comprehensive field plan that included on the ground canvassing, text and phone banks. RepresentUs members from around the nation sent more than 600,000 text to NYC voters in the run up to the election.

Check out our vibrant NYC campaign timeline:
<https://represent.us/new-york-city-ranked-choice-voting-campaign-timeline/>

2. Tell us about any changes to your proposed scope of work, leadership or staff. If you have new partners or funders, list them here.

Since receiving the first installment of the Battery Powered funds, the Campaign Accelerator has attracted an additional \$2.5 million investment from the Quadrivium Foundation and Unite America.

3. Describe any challenges you're encountering – or lessons you've learned – and how you've responded. If you're exceeding expectations, discuss influencing factors.

Partisanship remains one of our biggest challenges. Campaigns for nonpartisan reform are still often led by partisan actors righteously resistant to coalition building or adapting their messaging to attract politically diverse supporters. The majority of active donors are pursuing reform for partisan purpose and employ partisan operatives. Moreover, the

nonpartisan field is lacking a deep bench of talent and experience.



This deficit of experienced nonpartisan professionals has given rise to our second challenge this year - recruiting the brightest and best talent for the positions we need to fill. We are understaffed and stretched thin, the Accelerator currently has seven FTE staff members. In response we are hiring aggressively with the assistance of specialty recruiters and rigorously prioritizing our work in preparation for the 2020 cycle.

4. Describe any new developments in the field that are influencing this project or your work overall, and how.

Hostile legislatures, shifting qualification requirements, and legal challenges hampering post-passage implementation and protection have meant that citizen-led ballot initiatives are possible in far fewer than the 24 states that technically allow them; limited the number of opportunities for transformative reform on the state-level.

As a result, RepresentUs will be expanding its strategy to include legislative reforms, by doing so we will diversify our portfolio of opportunities and accelerate the rate at which we bring the movement to scale.

5. Is there anything else we should know about your work? Tell us here.

 		Approved Project Budget 2019	Battery Powered Grant FY 19	Campaign Accelerator Expenses Jan - Nov 1	Variance notes
Staffing & Benefit Costs					
Salaries		120,840	36,678	182,538	
		187,400	43,425	115,303	
Payroll Taxes & Benefits		71,250	14,296	27,430	
Total Salaries, Taxes & Benefits		379,490	94,399	325,271	Challenges with finding the right talent for Directors role
Consultants					
Legal & Compliance Consultants		17,846	11,884	34,636	
Temporary Staffing		144,000	11,250	135,050	
Website Development Consultants		9,628		1,750	
Total Program Consultants		171,474	23,134	171,436	
Grand Total Staffing & Benefits		550,964	117,533	496,707	
Communication & Outreach Costs					
Advertising & Promotion		120,000	3,000	74,876	
Video Production & Photography		24,320	2,716	9,240	
Collateral		10,570		2,265	
Supplies, Shipping, Misc		3,952		681	
Hospitality (meetings, briefings, gratitudes)		2,368		539	
Training Materials & Misc Expenses		4,014			
Text Banking		494	1,751	18,382	Highly successful text bank program
Travel Costs		16,668		11,861	
Grand Total Communication		182,386	7,467	117,844	Less campaign activity than anticipated in 2019 cycle
Equipment & Furnishings					
Computer H/W		5,475		4,195	
Computer S/W & Licenses		2,278		99	
Grand Total Equipment & Furnishings		7,753	0	4,294	
Occupancy & Operating Costs					
Other Common Cost Operations		18,182		5,859	
Grand Total Occupancy and Operating		18,182	0	6,491	Adjustments to common cost allocation
		Approved Project Budget	Battery Powered Grant	Campaign Accelerator Expenses	
TOTAL COSTS		759,285	125,000	625,336	