



PRACTICAL GUIDE TO TABLING

INTRO

Tabling is an important and essential tool for recruiting new members, gathering signatures and building support for your group's work. It is one of the simplest and most effective ways to increase the visibility of Amnesty International in your community or at your school. This guide walks you through key areas needed for successful tabling, including preparation, presentation and follow up.

The purpose of an AI tabling event is threefold: to educate about human rights issues, engage and mobilize on human rights issues, and recruit new members and activists.

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RESOURCE SUMMARY

[Tabling Tutorial](#) - Check out this video outlining good tabling and outreach techniques.

[Tabling and Outreach Form](#) – This is a form, you or the community partner you are coordinating with, can fill out to help coordinate the logistics of tabling opportunities.

[Sign Up Sheet](#) - Here is a group sign up list! Along with our petitions we should always be asking if people are interested in getting involved with Amnesty locally.

[Materials](#) - Order Amnesty Materials and Swag

[Petition Library](#) – Here are the up to date printable petitions.

[Activism Guide](#) - Check out the guide for Amnesty Canada's **priority** actions.

Step 1: Find Opportunities to Table

PARTNER EVENTS

We are often invited by community groups, schools, and other organizations that are holding film festivals, public lectures and conferences to partner on these events. This often means promoting the event through our social media and being invited to table. Ask your Regional Office for a list of the upcoming opportunities.

Checklist for being invited to table at an event:

- Prioritize opportunities that intersect with Amnesty's work
- Be clear that Amnesty is not endorsing or negating the ideas or opinions promoted by the event but simply supporting discussion around the subject
- Make sure the event works within our schedule and that we have adequate time to let volunteers know

CREATE YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES TO TABLE

3 ways to create your own opportunities:

1. Don't forget to set up a table at events that you or your group are organizing (e.g. Write 4 Rights or a public talk) and use it as an opportunity to reach out to the wider community.
2. Check out the [Activism Guide](#) for active periods for Amnesty International priority campaigns (i.e. World Refugee Day and Safe Third Country Campaign) and plan tabling opportunities accordingly.
3. Just get out there when you have capacity and energy! Booking spaces at your campus or farmers market is a great way to connect to people and increase Amnesty's visibility.

Step 2: Coordinate the Logistics

MATERIALS

[Swag](#)

[Sign Up Sheet](#)

[Tabling and Outreach Form](#)

Essential Tabling Materials:

- Campaign and Issue Resources/Backgrounders
- Printed Petitions
- Visible Amnesty Branding (posters, stickers, banners)
- Sign Up Sheet

LOGISTICS OF TABLING EVENTS

Here are **the basic questions** for the event organizer:

What is expected/needed from the Amnesty volunteers?

1. Name and description of the event:
2. Name and contact of event liaison:
Location of event:
3. Dates of the event (what are the best dates for tabling):
4. What time should we set up our table and materials?
5. What are the best times to table? (Consider that it is often best to table before or after an event, like a play, screening or lecture, rather than during it)
6. Will there be tables and chairs, for two volunteers, provided at the location?
7. If the event is outside, will we need a tent and can you provide one?

VOLUNTEER TIMETABLE

Send a call out to other Amnesty supporters to assist you in tabling. Email the Regional Office if you need assistance with this. Try to schedule two Amnesty volunteers to table, one who can sit at the table and one to walk around with the clipboard. Narrow down and choose your dates and times strategically; if it is a multi-day event, pick the dates (like opening night or the keynote) that will likely have higher attendance and plan to table during the times with the highest amount of foot traffic. This way you can increase your impact without exhausting volunteers.

Step 3: Choose Your Issue

RESOURCES

You can find Amnesty Canada's priority actions in the [Activism Guide](#) and the up to date printable petitions in the [Petition Library](#).

CHOOSING ACTIONS

Actions are the things you want people to do for human rights issues when they visit your table and may take the form of a petition, postcard, photo action, phone call, or other act. There are three important things to remember when choosing actions:

- Actions should be **relevant** to current Amnesty campaigns and issues and not be out of date. Your Regional Office can help you identify the best actions, or clarify if actions are still being used.
- Actions should be **appropriate** for the audience and community in which you are tabling. For example, if you are at a Pride parade, an LGBT rights petition makes more sense than a maternal mortality postcard.
- Actions should be easy and **quick** for passersby. Petitions or postcard actions will generally yield more success than a hand-written letter because few people have time to spend at the table beyond 3-5 minutes.
- It is also important for you to limit the number of actions at your table. It is better to have 1-2 key actions on similar areas of work than 5+ actions on a number of different issues.



UNDERSTANDING THE ACTIONS

Familiarize yourself with the issues! Make sure when choosing your actions you print and read the accompanying resources for background information. Volunteers should be able to speak about each of the actions or issues they will present while tabling. They should know enough background on the issue to be able to speak about why it is important, as well as what the “ask” is – what do you want someone to do? If asked a question beyond their knowledge, the volunteer should feel comfortable referring people to the resources printed or to Amnesty International website for more information. The website is www.amnesty.org.

Step 4: Perfect Your Tabling Techniques

RESOURCES

Check out [this video](#) outlining good tabling techniques.

TALKING TO THE PUBLIC

When tabling, volunteers should stand up to talk with people who are passing by. When approached, remember to say hello and ask if they have heard of Amnesty International. If they have, introduce the actions chosen for your tabling event and ask them if they would like to sign. Then, take the opportunity to share information about your group, including the types of actions you take and the issues you are working on. If they have not heard of Amnesty, briefly tell them about the history, mission and basic background on priority campaigns and issues.

PROMOTING GETTING INVOLVED

Not only will tabling result in actions being taken for human rights, but it’s also an invaluable way to promote and grow your Amnesty International group. While talking with people about Amnesty International, share with them what your group does and how they might become more involved. Be prepared to talk about ways of supporting Amnesty other than joining your group, such as becoming a member of Amnesty International or joining another group in your area. Have on hand brochures, flyers, bookmarks, or business cards that promote your group. These items should have key information about your group and a way to contact you. The Regional Office can help develop these items with you.

Step 5: Follow Up

CONTACTING NEW MEMBERS

Following the tabling event, input all contact information into your group’s database or email list. Within one week, contact those who signed up to thank them for stopping by the table and initiate contact with a member of your group. Invite them to an upcoming meeting or event and address any questions they asked about while at your table. Make sure that new contacts have a way of getting in touch with the group, such as the New Member Coordinator or generic email address.



SENDING ACTIONS

A signed petition or postcard doesn't make an impact on human rights if it never reaches the intended target. Following the event, gather and sort all signed petitions, postcards, or other actions. Send them to the address listed on the action, and if no address is listed please send them to the Regional Office.

As a reminder, do not contact or distribute information of those who took action unless they also completed the sign-up sheet.

ONGOING

Periodically check Amnesty International's website, Facebook page, and newsletter for up-to-date human rights information on the issues you have taken action on. Inform your group if there have been any developments, such as the release of a Prisoner of Conscience. **Sharing successes** helps people see the importance of the actions they helped with in the past.

Debrief with your group after tabling to identify best practices and things to avoid. Reflect on which actions generate the greatest response and help volunteers find answers to questions they were unable to answer while tabling.