

Minnesota Values Campaign | Concept Overview

Objective

A statewide campaign that inspires and supports Minnesotans to more effectively work across differences, so every Minnesotan has the freedom and opportunity to thrive, and every Minnesotan belongs.

Problem Statement

One thing Minnesotans agree on: we are frustrated by our divides.

Most Minnesotans...

...are exhausted by the ugly and polarized environment.

...don't want to feel angry at or afraid of our neighbors.

...want to go to our kids' soccer game or our book club and not have to worry about a divisive argument that damages relationships.

...want public leaders that listen and work collaboratively on solutions that really matter to all of us.

We have real differences. We have real disagreements. We can't gloss over that. Yet, we have to be able to work across our differences and work through disagreement to make progress on anything. The future of Minnesota depends on it.

We know the vast majority of people believe this. We know people want this.*

So what will it take for Minnesotans to get out of our polarizing patterns and relate to each other in a different way?

A group of Minnesota foundations has come together to propose a campaign to connect Minnesotans to see what we have in common and the value of working across our differences. The campaign aims to:

- Create a forward-looking cross-sector civic movement around a positive narrative for the state, that endures beyond any one moment or event.
- Engage Minnesotans of all backgrounds, all across the state, to build a durable, big tent coalition that can work together to achieve campaign aims.
- Shift mindsets and drive behaviors to unite people around shared Minnesotan aspirations.

- Equip people with tools and opportunities for learning and practice, to strengthen their ability to work from common aspirations instead of division.
- Help Minnesotans see the ways that Minnesota is stronger because it is comprised of people who come from different backgrounds and perspectives, to embrace this diversity as an asset.
- Make Minnesota a more caring, connected place by bringing people together across differences, so we can work together to materially improve the lives of people in our state.

DRAFT CAMPAIGN FRAMING: Our North Star

As proud Minnesotans, we enjoy one of the strongest and healthiest states in the nation because we care for one another.

We have a lot in common.

- We want to say what we believe and have our perspectives heard by people making decisions that impact our lives.
- We want to be seen as individuals, and not have assumptions made about us.
- We want the opportunity to make a good living and provide a good life for our family.
- We want to be safe, healthy and treated with respect.
- We want to be connected with others for support and friendship.

These shared aspirations tie us together. We need each other to protect these things.

These shared aspirations do not mean we will agree on policy and politics. But if we focus these common hopes, we can treat each other and work with each other in ways together that make Minnesota better for all of us.

- We can build trust and understanding across our differences, leading with curiosity about others' experiences and perspectives.
- We can speak out when people say or do things that are meant to divide us.
- We can hold ourselves and our leaders accountable for earnestly working to solve local problems that matter in the real lives of Minnesotans.

Across our state – and across sectors, generations, faiths, and communities — these shared aspirations are a North Star to guide us toward a Minnesota where we can all contribute and where we all belong.

Campaign Outcomes

We want to develop measurable outcomes related to whether people are inspired to act differently, whether they are equipped to do it well, and whether they are, in fact, acting in new ways that make a positive difference for Minnesota. Longer term, we want to see Minnesota recognized as “the best” in the country at effectively working across difference.

* [Recent data](#) from the national Council on Foundations tells us:

- Nearly nine in ten Americans (89%) support efforts to collaborate across differences, including strong majorities of Democrats (92%), Independents (85%), and Republicans (87%).
- 88% agreed with the statement, *“To make a difference in the world, you need to be able to work with people you disagree with.”*
- 80% agree that charitable foundations should play an important role in modeling and facilitating collaboration across divides.
- More than 75% of respondents remain optimistic about the future, despite ongoing polarization.