



DEMOCRACY & POWER
INNOVATION FUND

TRANSFORMATIVE CONVERSATIONS

USING DEEP CANVASSING TO ENROLL
COMMUNITIES IN A PATH TO POWER

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ABSTRACT

This report explores how grassroots organizers in Missouri use deep canvassing to build and expand multiracial bases to advance their issue agendas at the local and state levels. Through their Transformative Conversations program over the last six years, the Missouri Organizing and Voter Engagement Collaborative (MOVE) has supported base-building groups in designing, running, and analyzing deep canvassing programs that have made possible what was unachievable only a few years ago. These programs 1) help organizations learn about new constituencies, 2) move people's opinions on contentious issues, and 3) enroll people in collective action to build power for creating material change in their communities. Our research is informed by program data and interviews with MOVE staff and Missouri organizers. It reveals how investing in relational, localized, and learning-oriented strategies can engage voters, shift attitudes, and fuel the building of broad-based coalitions to win change. This report includes practical recommendations and resources for designing effective deep canvass conversation frameworks and program strategy.

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INTRODUCTION

Since 2019, the Missouri Organizing and Voter Engagement Collaborative (MOVE) has designed and led an innovative program called Transformative Conversations in service of their long-term goal of building multiracial unity and constituent-based organizing power in the state. In practice, Transformative Conversations is a canvassing program to engage voters on perceptions of race, power, policy, and collective action. At its core, it is a learning process for how to transform traditional script-based canvassing programs into an organizing tactic that demonstrably builds membership, engagement, and broader collective action in communities. This strategy, called “deep canvassing,” is now used by several grassroots groups in Missouri to enroll new members and to move people to action.

Deep canvassing contrasts sharply with the dominant method of reaching voters: advertising. In the 2024 US Federal Election, nearly \$11 billion dollars were spent by campaigns on advertising. \$3.1 billion was spent on Presidential race political advertising alone; \$1.8 billion by the Democratic Presidential campaign and pro-Democrat outside groups, and \$1.4 billion by the Republican Presidential campaign and pro-Republican outside groups.¹ In the last few weeks of the election, the Harris campaign spent \$129 million on media and advertising, \$25.4 million on combined canvassing, phone, text message, and direct mail outreach, and \$45.5 million on events.²

Despite outspending Republicans, Harris lost at the top of the ticket. The Democratic Party has come under sharp criticism that they are grossly out of touch with voters and fail to communicate effectively on issues that matter to regular people. As one journalist put it: “Democrats have simply forgotten to actually talk to voters, rather than at them.”³

In contrast to the national scene, on Election Day 2024, Missourians passed two ballot measures that MOVE and other groups in Missouri’s progressive coalition advanced. Amendment 3 enshrines the constitutional right to an abortion and Proposition A raises the minimum wage and requires private employers to pay sick leave.⁴ A coordinated, strategic campaign across the state informed by deep canvassing won these concrete changes.

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In the wake of the 2024 election, many seeking to engage with their constituencies may wish to look more closely at Missouri, where organizers have been wrestling for years with how to bridge race and place to build a broad enough constituency to advance the issues their base cares most about.

¹ Ben Kamisar, “The final price tag on 2024 political advertising: Almost \$11 billion,” *NBC News*, November 8, 2024, <https://www.nbc-news.com/politics/2024-election/final-price-tag-2024-political-advertising-almost-11-billion-rcna179341>.

² Bowman, Kamisar, and Murphy, “How Kamala Harris’ campaign spent \$277 million in the final weeks,” *NBC News*, December 6, 2024, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2024-election/kamala-harris-campaign-spent-277-million-final-weeks-rcna182923>.

³ Stuart, Suebsaeng, and Perez, “How the Democrats blew it,” *Rolling Stone*, January 11, 2025, <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/campaign-2024-democrats-failure-1235230952/>.

⁴ Missouri Secretary of State, *2024 Ballot Measures*, 2024, <https://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/petitions/2024BallotMeasures>.



Through the Transformative Conversations program, MOVE and other organizers in Missouri use deep canvassing to:

Learn about constituencies they have not yet engaged in a lab-like setting to inform broader programs;

Create space for voters to wrestle with difficult questions, lean into tensions between stated positions and core values, combat cynicism, and shift opinions on contentious issues; and

Enroll people in collective action within a larger base-building organizing strategy, driving momentum for policy wins that deliver material change in communities.

This report explores the opportunities and outcomes of deep canvassing in Missouri and provides recommendations for moving voters toward constituent-based coalitions that can build power to win change in their communities and state.

METHODOLOGY

We conducted a series of interviews, examined program reports, and reviewed several research projects connected to this program in order to provide this overview of MOVE's Transformative Conversations program from 2019 through 2024. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis in each phase was conducted by MOVE and participating organizations' data managers and, in certain phases, by analysts at the Democracy & Power Innovation Fund, TOPOS, and the Analyst Institute.

This report documents how MOVE and partner groups pioneered and proactively adapted their programs to lean into political and cultural tensions, grow multiracial bases, and advance strategic campaigns in Missouri. While we should not expect an exact iteration of Transformative Conversations duplicated across states or bases to produce the exact same results, many lessons, strategies, and tools can be adapted to fit other contexts where organizers are building their own real-time, in-program, practice-based research labs.

PHOTO: Missouri Jobs with Justice Transformative Conversations training.





DEEP CANVASSING AND TRANSFORMATIVE CONVERSATIONS OVERVIEW

ABOUT DEEP CANVASSING

Practiced by organizers for decades as “house visits,” deep canvassing was formalized by David Fleischer, founder and former Director of the Los Angeles LGBT Center’s Leadership LAB, following the passage of Prop 8 in California that banned same-sex marriage in 2008.⁵ “Since polls obviously had failed to capture how we were really doing with voters, and since our own common sense and experience about our neighbors also was not helping us see our true situation, I thought, well, maybe we just need to go door to door in the neighborhoods where we got crushed and talk to the people who voted against us and ask them why they did that,” said Fleischer.⁶ In MOVE’s first phase of Transformative Conversations, organizers were trained by the Los Angeles LGBT Center.

Since 2008, deep canvassing has been further implemented and tested for various purposes, including reducing prejudice against transgender people⁷ and undocumented people.⁸ The practice and outcomes of deep canvassing have been studied by political scientists David Broockman of UC Berkeley and Josh Kalla of Yale University. In 2015, they conducted a randomized trial⁹ in Miami

and found that employing the Los Angeles LGBT Center’s deep canvassing approach “increased positivity toward the transgender community,”¹⁰ and “also increased support for a nondiscrimination law.”¹¹

More recently, in 2019, People’s Action Institute launched a deep canvassing program in rural Michigan, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania to understand and shift perceptions of immigration and to test how solidarity narratives “could reshape voters’ worldview away from fear and scarcity towards linked fate and shared abundance.”¹² Research indicated that deep canvassing “generated around 8 new supporters of including undocumented immigrants in an expanded healthcare social safety net for every 100 conversations,”¹³ and that these shifts lasted at least 5 months after the conversations.

⁵ Elizabeth Rowe, “Dave Fleischer on the Power of Deep Canvassing,” *The Campaign Workshop*, April 8, 2024, <https://www.thecampaign-workshop.com/blog/canvassing/deep-canvassing-0>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Brian Resnick, “How to talk someone out of bigotry,” *Vox*, January 29, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/2020/1/29/21065620/broockman-kalla-deep-canvassing>

⁸ California Immigrant Policy Center, “Research Brief: Deep Canvass, Deep Change,” March 2019, <https://caimmigrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Canvass-Research-Brief-FINAL2-1.pdf>

⁹ David Broockman and Josh Kalla, “Durably reducing transphobia: A field experiment on door-to-door canvassing,” *Science*, 352, (April 8, 2016): 220-224. <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aad9713>

¹⁰ Nsikan Akpan, “Brief, face-to-face canvassing reduced transgender prejudice, study says,” *PBS News*, April 7, 2016, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/science/face-to-face-canvassing-reduces-transgender-prejudice-study-says>.

¹¹ Brookman and Kalla, “Durably reducing transphobia,” 220-224.

¹² People’s Action Institute, “Building a Bigger We,” March 2020, 4, <https://peoplesaction.org/wp-content/uploads/PA-Deep-Canvass-Final-Report-v5.pdf>.

¹³ Ibid, 12.



CREATING TRANSFORMATIVE CONVERSATIONS

In the 2010s, Missouri's labor and organizing groups launched and lost a series of important legislative and ballot measure campaigns around minimum wage, paid sick leave, democracy reforms, and healthcare access. Key leaders in the state during this period realized that, in order to win their agendas, they would need to find ways to actually understand sectors of the Missouri electorate they had not previously reached and innovate methods for engaging and moving them. MOVE, a 501(c)3 organization, and MOVE Action, a companion 501(c)4 organization were created "to empower ordinary people to reclaim democracy in the state of Missouri," by "supporting existing grassroots movement organizations in developing and executing strategic integrated voter engagement plans."¹⁴

MOVE's overarching goal is to organize 1.6 million Missourians behind "a collective agenda that chooses multiracial solidarity and abundance over dog-whistle racism and scarcity," said Molly Fleming, Founding Executive Director of MOVE and a strategist behind Transformative Conversations. MOVE's hypothesis is that they have to find ways to overcome superficial political divisions and align working families across race based on core common vision and values.

As they began to design their program, MOVE's organizers were inspired by the 1939 Missouri Sharecroppers Strike. The Southern Tenant Farmers Union, led by Reverend Owen Whitfield, held a roadside demonstration of Black and White sharecroppers who had been kicked off the land and made homeless. Organizing within the union,

in churches, and expanding to students and other community members, these farmers refused to be made invisible by the state. In the end, the federal government intervened and created housing for agricultural workers.¹⁵ This material win and the multiracial organizing that sustained it gave today's organizers in Missouri hope. It showed that, despite entrenched racial divisions, it is possible for working-class people to build bridges across race and to win through collective action. Transformative Conversations was born out of this approach: an innovative way to learn how to unite broader bases, bring people into the movement, and support sustainable, positive change in people's lives.

Deep canvassing is rooted in the belief "in the potential for transformation of people, but that people can only be transformed through relationship and experiences," said Fleming.

"It's not just who we are able to mobilize in the present moment based on current circumstances. Transformative Conversations assumes conditions can be changed. And the conditions will change all around us and that we need to be able to respond and react out of actual relationships with real people."

¹⁴ "About Move," Missouri Organizing and Voter Engagement Collaborative, 2025, <https://www.movemo.org/>.

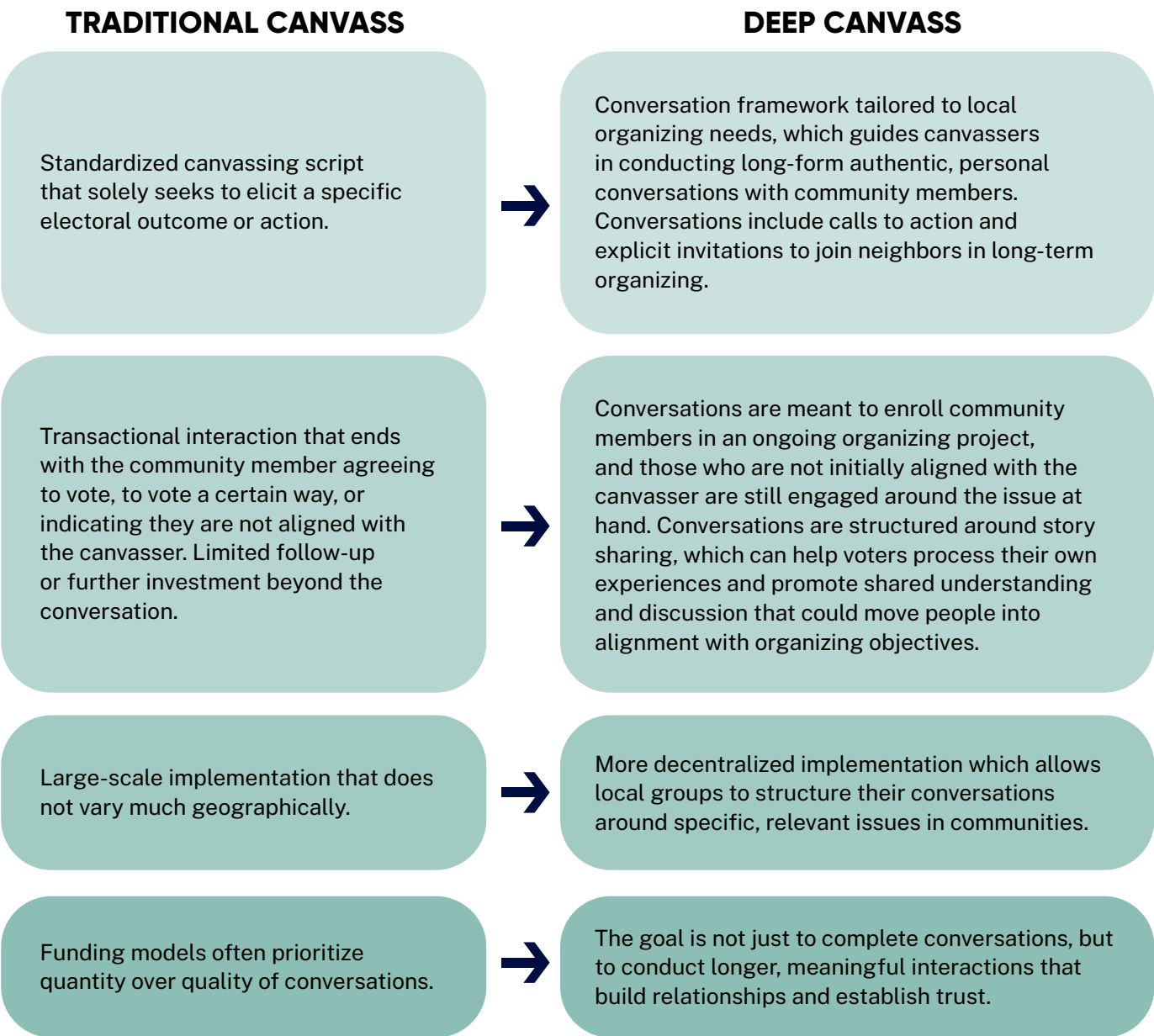
¹⁵ Carol Anderson, "Missouri Sharecroppers Strike of 1939," posted February 13, 2012, by Emory University, YouTube, 8 min., 26 sec., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRhTfKuEKj0>.



Transformative Conversations creates opportunities to develop relationships, hear people’s concerns and connect them to long-term organizing. These components of MOVE’s strategy, rooted in their long-term goals, are “not going to happen through a conversation six weeks before an election about what’s on the ballot,” said Alice Chamberlain, Program Director at MOVE.

“If we are going to effectively wield power in electoral moments, ballot initiatives or otherwise, we have to actually have year-round integrated voter engagement arcs that involve organizing. [...] If we aren’t organizing people into our institutions in alignment with values [...], you can run all of the expensive short-term electoral programs you want and you’re never actually going to make progress,” said Julie Terbrock, Campaigns and Alignment Director at MOVE.

Table 1: Core Aspects of Deep Canvassing



Over five years and four iterations to date, MOVE has built up the Transformative Conversations program by engaging local and state base-building groups in a long-term training, innovation, and refinement process. MOVE has supported local groups to have over 12,837 research-based Transformative Conversations with current or potential voters. They designed the program to help partner organizations learn to:

- Bridge values across race and geography in the state;
- Move people from despair to agency and from agency to action;
- Align and enroll people into strategic issue campaigns;
- Organize more people into base-building constituent groups;
- Localize and differentiate programs while growing a strong and consistent core;
- Equip staff and members to be effective organizers of new people.

MOVE has partnered with the Democracy & Power Innovation Fund, the Analyst Institute, and other researchers to study these conversations and their outcomes.



PHOTO: Kaelyn Seymour, Alice Chamberlain, and Paul Washington at the MOVE Phase 3 pilot debrief.

Table 2: Phases of MOVE's Transformative Conversations program, 2019-2024

PHASE	PARTICIPATING GROUPS	CONSTITUENCIES AND QUESTIONS FOR LEARNING
Phase 1 (2019) 4,000 conv. total	Missouri Faith Voices, Missouri Jobs with Justice, Metropolitan Congregations United, Missouri Rural Crisis Center, Organization for Black Struggle, Planned Parenthood, and WEPOWER.	Organizations sought to understand what divides and unites poor and working-class communities in Missouri. Conversations targeted poor and working-class Black, immigrant, and Latino Missourians in rural and urban areas, and poor and working-class White Missourians in rural areas.
Phase 2 Pilot (June 2020) 91 conv. total	Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri, Missouri Faith Voices, and Missouri Jobs with Justice.	Through a small-scale research program, organizations tested race-forward and unifying narratives around Medicaid expansion and multiracial unity among poor and working-class people. Conversations targeted voters modeled as unlikely to vote, but who would likely support Medicaid expansion.
Phase 2 Program (2020-2021) 2,786 conv. total	Metropolitan Congregations United, Missouri Jobs with Justice, Missouri Rural Crisis Center, Action St. Louis, and Planned Parenthood Advocates.	Following their electoral win on Medicaid expansion, this program engaged previously-contacted voters to bring them into long-term organizing work. Local organizers set the strategic agendas for their canvassing programs, building conversation frameworks better tailored to move their communities and bring people into their organizations.
Phase 3 Pilot (Feb-March 2022) 308 conv. total	Metropolitan Congregations United, Missouri Jobs with Justice, Missouri Healthcare for All, Missouri Rural Crisis Center, and Pro-Choice Missouri.	MOVE differentiated conversation frameworks: one was geared towards building agency and collective action among Black, Latino, and poor voters who are civically disengaged; another was intended to move conflicted White voters away from dog-whistle and scarcity politics and towards multiracial solidarity and community. Frameworks incorporated a movement question at the beginning and end of every conversation to measure the success of the conversation. Frameworks were adapted locally to resonate with communities. Data-tracking mechanisms were refined to enable daily and weekly in-program adjustments.
Phase 3 Program (2022-2023) 2,362 conv. total	LiUNA Local 955, Missouri Jobs with Justice, Missouri Rural Crisis Center, KC Tenants, and Abortion Action Missouri.	Conversations moved the opinions of aligned infrequent voters and conflicted White voters using multiracial solidarity narratives and included explicit invitations to action and continued organizing. While organizers received training and support throughout, this phase was more decentralized with groups managing their own programs.
Phase 4 (2023-2024) 3,290 conv. total	Empower MO, KC Tenants, LiUNA Local 955, Missouri Jobs with Justice, Action STL, PROMO, and Sierra Club.	The dashboard system was standardized and integrated with each grassroots group's contact database, NGP VAN. MOVE supported partners in strengthening existing deep canvassing programs and helped incubate new organizations' deep canvassing programs. Programs were individualized to local organizing needs and some groups canvassed for 2024 ballot measures around abortion, minimum wage and paid sick leave.





1. LEARNING ABOUT NEW CONSTITUENCIES

MOVE's deep canvass is structured as a learning lab to innovate and test ways of engaging new constituencies in real time.

While the goal of a traditional canvass is to engage in a large number of short, scripted conversations, usually to deliver a message refined through polling, the goal of MOVE's Transformative Conversations is to discover the values and deeply-held beliefs underlying civic behavior in a way that informs their broader programs (see Table 1).

According to Molly Fleming, the initial challenge was to shift from a knowing culture to a learning culture. In traditional voter outreach programs, canvassers are taught to deliver message-based poll-tested scripts at scale. In the Transformative Conversations program, organizers and canvassers are trained to have fewer, but much deeper conversations with community members in order to understand individuals' reasoning, and to identify themes in their communities. "[In the traditional political industry,] we have a deep culture around getting things right and proving we're smart [...]. That is a real dynamic that needs to be broken. I actually think that's a fundamental cultural problem," said Fleming.

Over the last several iterations of Transformative Conversations, MOVE has set up a practice-based lab with a culture of non-judgmental curiosity. This includes careful training of canvassers to relate and listen to people who are not like them, disciplined collection of quantitative and qualitative data, consistent debriefing, and rigorous analysis.

In 2019, after years of struggling to achieve statewide policy wins, MOVE set out to understand what divides and unites poor and working-class communities in Missouri. To do so they had to set aside their assumptions and focus more deeply on understanding both Black and White constituencies across the state. In the first phase of Transformative Conversations, MOVE deployed the "Race/Class Narrative Framework" developed by Anat Shenker-Orsorio in partnership with Dēmos, a national public policy organization, and several state-based organizing groups. The partners intended the framework to "help people envision a multiracial country in which everyone has economic opportunity" and to block "tactics that use racism as a strategy to divide working people and poor people from one another."¹⁶



Figure 1: MOVE's power analysis in Missouri, which visualizes how rich White people use strategies to create tension between people of color and not rich White people to prevent class solidarity and power-building.¹⁷

¹⁶ Dēmos, "The Race-Class Narrative Project," May 21, 2018, <https://www.demos.org/campaign/race-class-narrative-project>.

¹⁷ This graphic is included in MOVE's training materials for Transformative Conversations.

MOVE implemented a conversation framework that started with an “encounter” where the canvasser shared a personal story about what they were concerned about in their community. Then the canvasser shifted into listening mode, inviting “stories of struggle” with questions like: “what kinds of things do people in this community struggle with” and “do you ever feel like the deck is stacked against you or people like you?”¹⁸ The conversation then shifted to a Race/Class Narrative-informed dialogue “exploring race,” and envisioning how Missourians could work together across differences to achieve shared objectives.¹⁹ This conversation format allowed canvassers to surface explicitly the tension between racial divisions and the values underlying the canvassed person’s stories, and invite them into community to work together to create change.

About one third of the 4,000 people canvassed were Black, mostly from the St. Louis region, and two thirds were White, mostly from other regions across the state. Through Transformative Conversations, MOVE learned that 67% of canvassed people agreed that wealthy suburban areas benefit at the expense of urban Black and rural areas and that 69% agreed that people with power use race to divide Missourians.²⁰ Many Black respondents also mentioned the need for unity in the Black community as a precursor to multiracial unity.

Through these initial exploratory conversations, MOVE learned that shared belief alone would not necessarily lead to action. A randomized controlled trial conducted by the Analyst Institute in this phase revealed that Transformative

Conversations increased political interest among people who were canvassed by 5.5 percentage points over the uncontacted control group.²¹ However, people who were canvassed actually had a slightly lower sense of their political efficacy than the people in the control group and were *less likely* to take action on an issue.

MOVE found that discussions about hard issues without naming culprits and providing tangible solutions did not move canvassed people toward taking action.

From this data, program evaluators surmised that the conversations felt too much like scripted surveys and lacked invitations to action or follow-up to engagement. This prompted revisions to the conversation framework in future phases to shift from individual struggle to shared aspirations and specific calls to *collective* action.

This initial pilot in 2019 set MOVE and its partner organizations on a path to use canvassing as a means for understanding Missourians in new ways, rather than as simply a means to deliver a message. From the outset they sought to understand new potential constituents’ values, opinions, *and* orientation to action. Rigorous training and data collection practices established by MOVE ensure that conversations can advance organizations’ learning goals.

¹⁸ MOVE, “Transformative Conversations: Framework for Conversations on the Doors and Phones,” 2019.

¹⁹ Sample conversation frameworks from MOVE can be found in the Appendix.

²⁰ MOVE, “Transformative Conversations: Report of Phase I Outcomes,” February 2020.

²¹ Political interest was measured with the question: “How interested would you say you are in politics?”



TRAINING ORGANIZERS AND CANVASSERS

MOVE's Transformative Conversations lab starts each new cycle by training organizers and canvassers. These workshops prepare staff of partner organizations to develop deep canvass conversation frameworks, to understand and practice the conversation model, and to prepare data collection methods so that canvass lessons can be efficiently measured and used to inform broader program strategy.

Strong relationships with staff established during the onboarding process allow partner organizations to design more effective programs and, importantly, train them to be “co-conspirators in the program, not just implementers,” said Chamberlain. The goal of training is to equip

program leads to be hyper-local social scientists: to develop a hypothesis about what will work to engage new constituencies in their local environment, and then to test those hypotheses. As Fleming said, “to be able to pull that off, [they] need to have a cultural grounding and a deep curiosity and a learning orientation. And it's okay to fail, but you also need to have a theory. [...] There is a real ‘choose your own adventure’ element.” As deep canvassing yields information about what narratives resonate with people, what was effective or not about conversation frameworks, and how to bring people into long-term organizing, leads are responsible for refining their own programs.

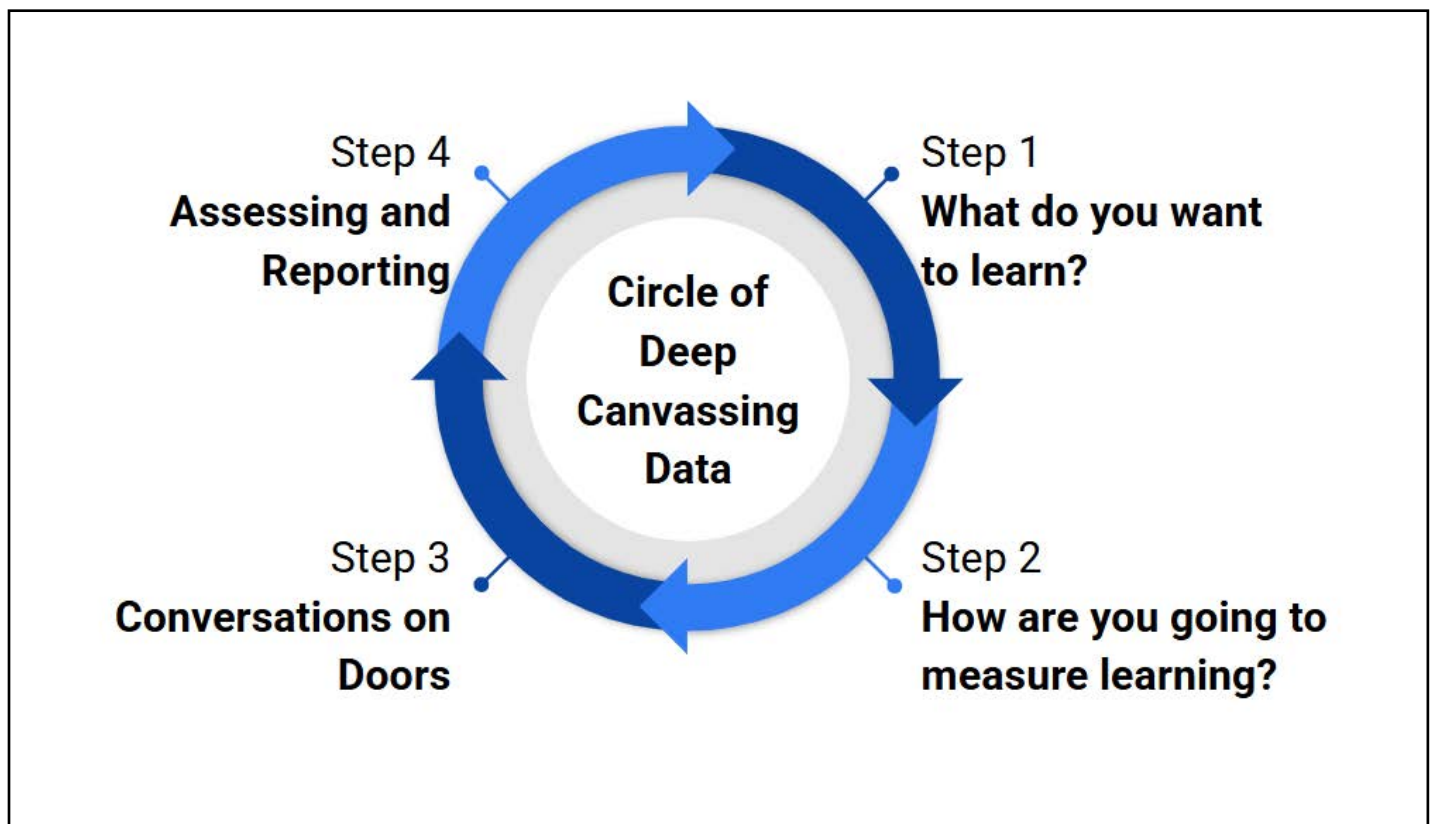


Figure 2: Circle of deep canvassing data, which describes the continuous nature of asking questions about constituencies, determining metrics, collecting data through conversations, and assessing how to continue improving programs and ask new questions.²²





²² This graphic is included in MOVE's training materials for Transformative Conversations.

It takes time and practice to build skills around asking strangers tough and often personal questions. Training requires that leads and organizers practice relational techniques such as eliciting and getting to the emotional core of a story, and how to redirect conversations away from political abstractions and towards storytelling and lived experiences.²³

Describing their 2024 canvass training program, Alex Cook, Director of Organizing and Campaigns at Abortion Action Missouri said: “Part of the reason the program was successful is because we had a long arc that we could enroll people into the team that we eventually had doing deep canvass conversations. We got them comfortable just going up to someone’s door and saying the word ‘abortion.’ And we did that enough where by the time we got to these longer-form 30 minute conversations [...], we had actually incubated and developed a group of core canvassers who were really confident on the doors and were able to do this.” As Chamberlain argued, “Investing in a really serious and thorough onboarding process [...] just can’t be shortchanged. And that should include folks actually getting out in the field and experiencing what it’s like to have these conversations so they’re not confused about what they’re going to be doing.”

COLLECTING QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Learning about new constituencies through the Transformative Conversations program is enabled by a clear and disciplined data collection process. After years of trial and error, MOVE has four top metrics:

-  **Completion Rate:** How many conversations are completed, meaning both initial and post-conversation ratings from a voter are recorded;
-  **Movement:** Difference between initial and final self-ratings (usually on a 0 to 10 scale), which indicates voters’ level of support for an organization’s issue agenda or campaign;
-  **Connection:** Whether a voter and/or canvasser shared an explicit story and whether emotions were named in those stories;
-  **Commitment:** whether the voter committed to taking a specific action.

These data are captured in a Google form and VAN after every conversation between a canvasser and an individual. Quantitative data is tracked in the VAN, including identifying information, self ratings, and action commitments. The Google form is used to track qualitative data, such as which issues are most important to voters and what narrative and conversation elements elicited emotions and connection. The form also provides a place for canvassers to reflect on how they conducted the conversation and what they could improve. This immediate reflection process after every conversation provides canvassers with the constant reminder to assess, sensemake, and adapt.

²³ More detailed information about this conversation structure can be found in the Appendix.



Table 3: Questions from the Phase 3 Reflection Form²⁴

1. Record VAN ID for the conversation, or manually input information if the contact is not in VAN.
2. How did you share something personal in your introduction? What impact do you think that had?
3. What did you learn from asking them to explain their ratings?
4. What issues came up in your story sharing?
5. Key stories to note, emotions named:
6. What helped you get to the story? What question(s), starting with your own story, etc?
7. What concerns or conflicts came up in story sharing re: community power or racial resentment?
8. How did you help them process their concerns? Question(s) you asked, repeating back what they said?
9. How did you make the case for community power or cross-racial solidarity? i.e. being explicit about race, exposing race as a divide-and-conquer strategy, and collective action as the solution.
10. What made you give the leadership rating you did?
11. What's one thing you want to keep doing or do differently in your next conversation?

Information gathered in the reflection forms is analyzed and discussed on a daily basis and helps program leads support canvassers in growing their personal organizing skills.²⁵ As part of the onboarding process, program leads are trained to identify and nimbly implement opportunities for program improvement: “If you can tell three weeks in [that] it’s not working, or you have other ideas about what could be more successful based on what you’re hearing in debriefs, how do you actually pivot your program in real time [...]?” said Chamberlain.²⁶

This program-level adaptation is facilitated by real-time dashboarding (See Figure 3). MOVE staff have found that this transparent and easily accessible visualization of program data in real time helps build trust with organizers and canvassers. They are supported in their data interpretation by skilled data analysts. “My number one suggestion is [to] hire a person that this is their job, even if it is just part-time,” said Kaelyn Seymour, Civic Engagement Data Director at MOVE. Data specialists at MOVE hold weekly check-ins with participating organizations to go through analyses, address technical questions, and provide ongoing coaching to manage their programs. With data management in the hands of the people doing the work, they have more agency over how they use their learnings. As a result of this feedback loop, in the most recent phase of Transformative Conversations, 27.5% of conversations resulted in movement and 50% of canvassed people committed to taking action.

²⁴ These questions are excerpted and adapted from MOVE.

²⁵ Please see the Appendix for information on resources around training and supporting canvassers.

²⁶ Please see the Appendix for information on resources around training and supporting canvassers.



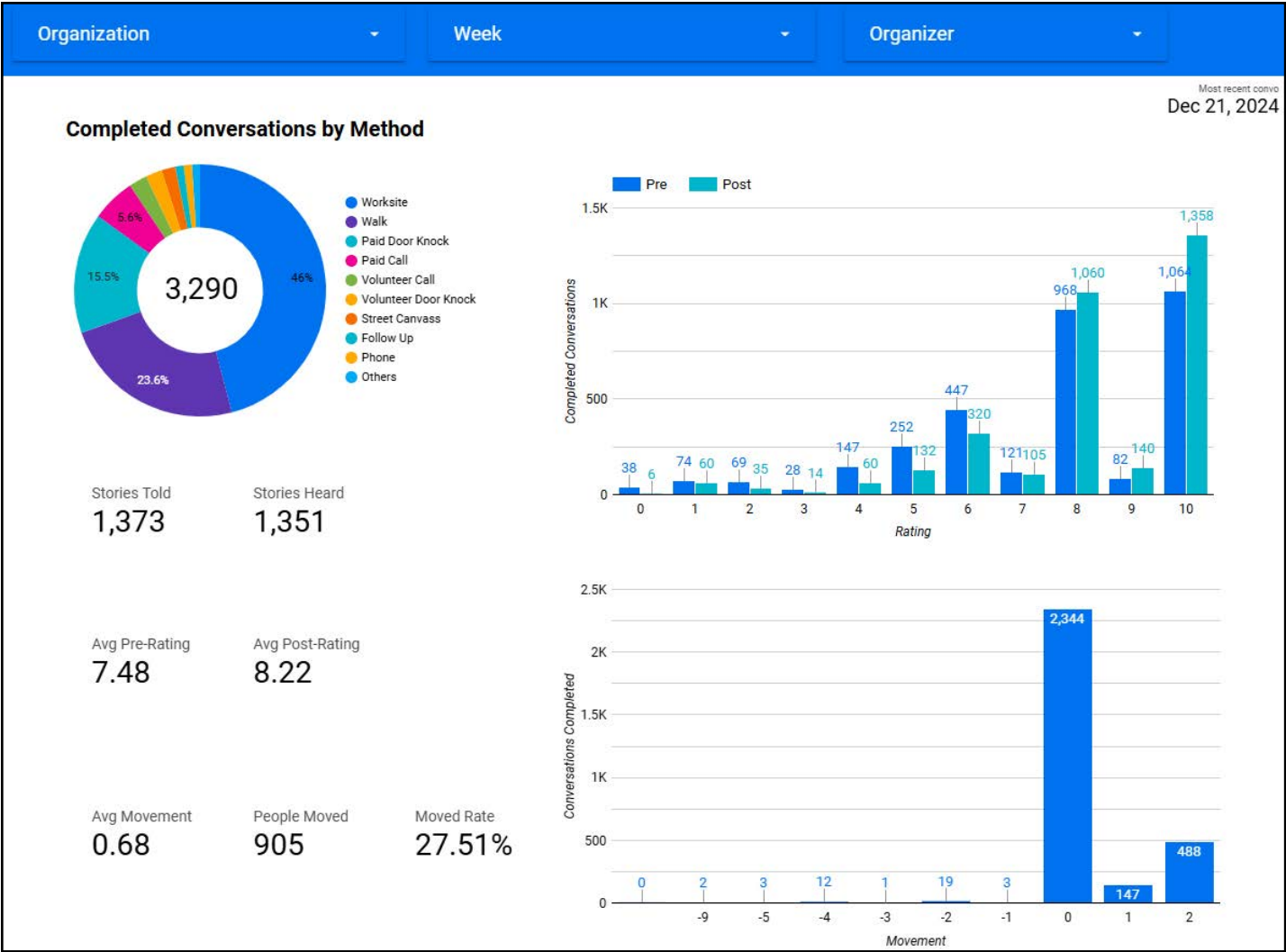


Figure 3: Screenshot of the Phase 4 Dashboard, showing cumulative data tracking around movement in conversations.





2. MOVING OPINIONS ON CONTENTIOUS ISSUES

Over four iterations, MOVE's partner organizations have developed their capacity to measure and shift people's opinions on contentious issues that are usually difficult to discuss with strangers, like Medicaid, wages and job conditions, racial division, abortion, and unionization. By authentically engaging each person, deep canvassers build the understanding crucial to introduce or advocate for new ideas, an orientation necessary for building broader organized bases that go "beyond the choir."

Opinion shifts are tracked through a rating system: the canvasser asks how much or how little the canvassed person supports an issue or point of view at the start and end of the conversation, on a scale from 1-10. If the support ranking increases from start to finish, that shift is tracked as positive movement and indicates that the deep canvass is effectively bringing the canvassed person into alignment with the base-building group's objectives.

In this program, conversations are structured as frameworks – rather than standardized scripts – that allow canvassers to connect with people authentically and to surface tensions between underlying values and stated opinions or positions.²⁷ These conversations focus on exploring lived experiences and shared values rather than fact-sharing or debating. In each conversation, canvassers:

- Affirm that the canvassed person's concern is heard;
- Respond to their concern with a personal story; and
- Redirect the conversation back to the goal of the conversation by asking open-ended questions about the canvassed person's lived experience. (See Table 4).



PHOTO: MOVE canvassers and organizers at the Phase 3 pilot debrief.

²⁷ More detailed information about this conversation structure can be found in the Appendix.



Table 4: Deep Canvassing Conversation Framework²⁸

STEPS	KEY POINTS
1: Introduce Yourself and First Ratings Understand the individual's concerns and build rapport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask ratings question(s) on a scale to determine their current views on an issue. Understand why they feel that way.
2. Story Sharing Authentically share and ask about stories and get into the values, emotions, and experiences that shape their views.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask open-ended questions that elicit stories, and dig into details where you can to get individuals to name emotions. ● Share your own stories related to the issue.
3. Making the Case Help process their concerns or conflicts by affirming their concerns and connecting their conflict to a clear story of changemaking through collective action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lift up the conflict you hear from individuals, and share stories that address their concerns. ● Name the culprit –divide/conquer is a weapon that harms us all, and/or specific policies that cause issues discussed in the conversation. ● Share “stories of us” that show change is possible. Give concrete examples of how collective action has led to material wins in the community. ● Ask rating questions again on a scale, to track whether their views have changed.
4. Invitation, Learning Data, and Closing Give them a path to ongoing engagement with the base-building group, and an opportunity to take action on the issue discussed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make an explicit invitation to action through civic engagement and/or continued organizing. ● Confirm follow-up information.

²⁸ This framework is adapted from the Phase 3 Pilot. A full version can be found in the Appendix.



At the heart of the Transformative Conversation, canvassers focus on telling and soliciting stories to understand community members better and to find common ground. MOVE trains canvassers to effectively share their own stories and pose questions to get to the emotional core of a person's conflict around an issue. Having vulnerable discussions and opportunities to share candidly builds trust and supports a community member in resolving their cognitive dissonance around difficult issues.

Through a relational conversation framework, Transformative Conversations has the potential to sustainably shift people's opinions on contentious issues.

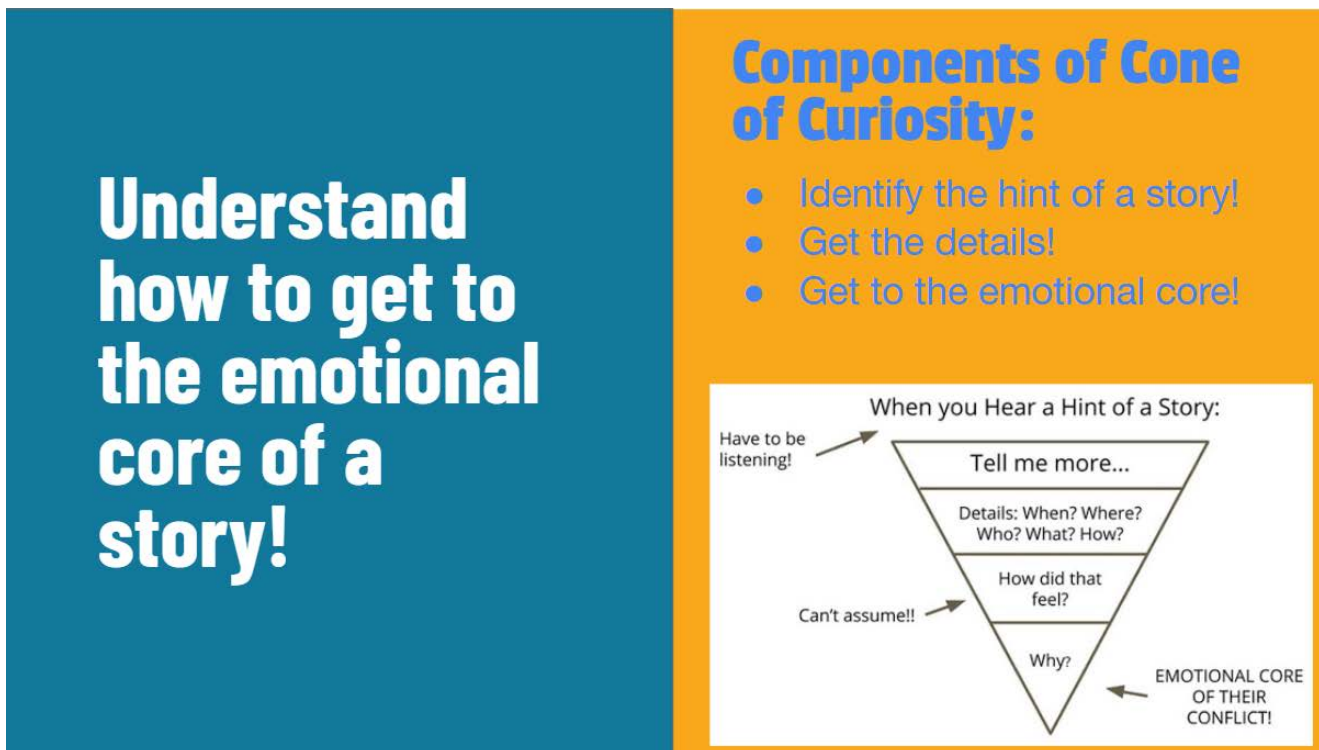
In 2020 MOVE was working to pass Medicaid expansion on the ballot in the general election after years of failing to achieve it through the

state legislature. MOVE launched a pilot to develop the campaign narrative through deep canvassing, and focused specifically on race-forward and unifying narratives around Medicaid expansion and multiracial populism. Building on lessons from 2019, the new framework included "a short-term win call to action (Medicaid Expansion), a power-building pivot to vision, and an invitation grounded in a history of success (Minimum Wage in 2018)."³⁰

Organizers learned that focusing deep canvassing around a specific policy initiative and sharing concrete examples of "multi-racial, people-powered successes" help shift public opinions.

While only 25% of canvassed people were initially aware they could vote on expanding Medicaid in the upcoming election, following the conversations, 88% supported the ballot measure and intended to vote yes.³¹

Figure 4: Cone of curiosity for how to get to the emotional core of a story through a deep canvassing conversation.²⁹



²⁹ This graphic is excerpted from MOVE's deep canvassing training materials, and borrowed from the Deep Canvass Institute and People's Action.

³⁰ MOVE, "Transformative Conversations: Report on Phase II June Pilot Outcomes," July 2020.

³¹ Ibid



Critically, winning change in Missouri required deep and meaningful engagement with all voters regardless of party affiliation. Medicaid Expansion (Amendment 2) passed with 53.3% of the vote, which included a significant number of rural voters and an estimated 20% of Republican voters.³² In total, “47,790 more people [voted] on Amendment 2 than in the gubernatorial primary on either side.”³³

The Medicaid expansion fight taught MOVE that by expanding their constituency, listening carefully to voters, and inviting people to join a multiracial coalition for change, they could take on contentious issues and win.

That lesson was further put to the test in 2024, as Abortion Action Missouri was gearing up for a campaign to protect abortion rights with a constitutional amendment by ballot measure. As part of this campaign, they wanted to better understand people’s opinions around abortion access and develop strategies to move voters towards greater support. Abortion Action Missouri found that storytelling in conversations was critical to creating space to discuss complex, personal feelings and experiences. Among people who shifted toward supporting policies that will protect abortion access, 68% expressed emotions during conversations.³⁴ In addition, voters were more likely to increase their support for abortion access when canvassers shared a story.³⁵

A natural language processing analysis of canvasser notes and debriefs revealed that the deep canvass format surfaced deeply-held values and emotions, including anger and concern. 95% of people who increased their support for abortion access during a conversation mentioned values around the freedom to choose, religion, and compassion.³⁶ Those who remained opposed valued the life of the fetus and were concerned that abortion would be used as a form of birth control.³⁷ Understanding and engaging the values, opinions, and concerns voters were wrestling with allowed organizers to engage more effectively during conversations.



PHOTO: Abortion Action Missouri’s St. Louis deep canvassing training in July 2024.

³² Molly Fleming and Tim Lumpkins, “MO 2020 Primary Election Initial Analysis,” August 6, 2020, 2.

³³ Ibid, 3.

³⁴ Sam Gass, Heather Hicks, and David Searle, “Abortion Action Missouri Deep Canvassing Descriptive Analysis,” *Analyst Institute*, September 2023, 15.

³⁵ Ibid, 12.

³⁶ Ibid, 16.

³⁷ Ibid, 17-18



However, Abortion Action Missouri learned that the majority of people they canvassed were either already in full support or full opposition to abortion access. This left limited opportunities for canvassers to have “persuasion conversations” that could potentially shift people toward supporting access. Of the 194 complete conversations³⁸ conducted, 70 (36%) rated themselves in full support of access at the start of the conversation, which meant canvassers did not need to persuade them. 19 people (10%) increased their support of abortion access and 105 (54%) did not change their stance.³⁹

“Deep canvassing, at least the way we structured it, lends itself really well to people who are conflicted or wrestling,” said Cook. While canvassers had productive conversations with

people who were working through their stances on abortion access, “the program wasn’t suited to actually move [people already in alignment] into taking action. It was really geared towards those conflicted people.” Abortion Action Missouri learned that “despite the fact that a lot of people felt supportive of abortion rights, a lot of them felt really alone,” said Cook. In addition to values-based reservations, stigma around supporting abortion access and feeling powerless to make a change made people hesitant to mobilize publicly. With this knowledge, organizers were able to adjust their deep canvassing program to emphasize collective action, offer opportunities for organizing, and “[change] people’s relationship to what they can or can’t do,” said Cook.

Deep canvassing early in their program helped shape strategic direction for Abortion Action Missouri’s campaign. They built the capacity of their team to surface values and emotions in a way that would help conflicted voters wrestle with their opinions. Even more importantly, they realized the overwhelming majority of those they were contacting needed a pathway to action.

³⁸ Complete conversations refer to those for which both an initial and a final rating was recorded, allowing for quantitative analysis on whether there was movement as a result of the conversation.

³⁹ Sam Gass, Heather Hicks, and David Searle, “Abortion Action Missouri Deep Canvassing Descriptive Analysis,” *Analyst Institute*, September 2023, 8.



PHOTO: Abortion Action Missouri’s St. Charles Community Townhall held in 2024, where attendees were primarily engaged on the doors through deep canvassing conversations, including the presenter.



3. ENROLLING PEOPLE IN COLLECTIVE ACTION

In summer 2024, Abortion Action Missouri's program shifted. In addition to continuing persuasion conversations, they focused on deepening and solidifying commitments from those who supported abortion access by providing them with a path to action.⁴⁰ They shared concrete examples of how Missourians have won things together before and offered opportunities for direct action, such as signing a pledge to vote in the upcoming election, setting up one-on-one conversations, and attending large-scale community events. They found that reorienting deep canvassing around taking collective action was successful: 48% of people they spoke with moved in support of one or both of their action-oriented questions and organizers were able to turn people out to community events such as town halls to create public conversation around the ballot measure.

Starting in July 2024, Abortion Action Missouri began deploying organizing committees in districts to lead deep canvassing for Amendment 3. They built out volunteer bases in areas where they identified support but lack of initiative to action, and concentrated their deep canvass work in these areas. As a result, every district in which Abortion Action Missouri had organized passed Amendment 3 at the polls. This included suburban, urban, and rural districts, some districts where Democratic candidates won and others where Republicans won. In 2025, Abortion Action Missouri continues to organize in these same districts, and to learn about the Missourians who remain conflicted about the issue. They do this in part to enroll more people in the ongoing struggle to defend their critical win.

Another example of an organization using deep canvassing to support enrolling people into collective action is the implementation of Transformative Conversations by the Laborers' International Union of North America (LiUNA) Local 955. In 2023, they set out to engage and organize local university workers to become union members⁴¹ and conduct a campaign to secure a collective bargaining agreement with the City of Columbia.⁴² Prior to this, LiUNA's work focused on protecting university custodial jobs from outsourcing, but they found it difficult to connect with working-class White people who did not see themselves as part of the local laborer community, particularly the female, Black, and Latino workers disproportionately affected by outsourcing. In partnership with MOVE in Phase 3 of the Transformative Conversations program, LiUNA implemented deep canvassing to see how they could foster multiracial solidarity and collective action among their members.⁴³



PHOTO: Abortion Action Missouri's first community meeting held in a district where they deep canvassed multiple times in 2024.

⁴⁰ Please see the Appendix for Abortion Action Missouri's Phase 4 Organizing Conversation Script.

⁴¹ Sam Gass, Heather Hicks, and David Searle, "LiUNA Union Organizing Deep Canvassing Descriptive Analysis," *Analyst Institute*, December 2023.

⁴¹ Sam Gass, Heather Hicks, and David Searle, "LiUNA Union Organizing Deep Canvassing Descriptive Analysis," *Analyst Institute*, December 2023.

⁴² Ezra Bitterman, "Columbia city workers union strikes deal with city for better pay," *Columbia Missourian*, August 22, 2023, https://www.columbiamissourian.com/news/local/columbia-city-workers-union-strikes-deal-with-city-for-better-pay/article_35a28596-4135-11ee-93ad-ab4710dc7e3e.html.

⁴³ LiUNA's conversation framework can be found in the Appendix.



LiUNA hired organizers from the union membership and trained them to conduct deep canvass conversations that can shift people's opinions in support of the union and effectively enroll people in collective action. They conducted 317 complete deep canvass conversations and movement in opinions were tracked through a rating system. Canvassers recorded "the contact's support for unions and collective action at the beginning and end of the conversation,"⁴⁴ on a 5-point scale. In the end, 70% of canvassed people shifted towards greater alignment with the union's objectives. LiUNA found that deep canvassing was especially effective at moving people who began conversations unaware or uninterested in union organizing and collective action.

"Doing a conversation rating system I think actually helped us to think, okay, well this person went from, 'don't ever talk to me. Don't look at me. I hate the union. You guys are awful,' to, 'I'm not joining today, but I'm watching and like that.' [...] Flipping someone who's actively telling all their coworkers to not be a part of a movement into someone who's just tacitly observing is a victory," said Andrew Hutchinson, Organizing Director and Union Representative for LiUNA Local 955.

Through a one-to-one transformative conversation, community members "start seeing themselves as part of a whole," said Hutchinson.

"It is the only type of work I've seen where you can get traditionally conservative blue-collar dudes in rooms with Black and brown folks, young queer folks, and everyone's treating each other with respect at the table because all of them are

getting screwed by their boss in the exact same way." A strong, multiracial organizing community is rooted in these relationships that begin in deep canvassing conversations, and are strengthened through the work of contesting for power collectively.

"Because you're building a union together, you have someone who has really bad opinions on immigration, who then watches one of their good friends who's an immigrant worker get deported for no reason. And they're suddenly like, oh, well, I wouldn't have met this guy if it wasn't through the union. I know him. I know his family," said Hutchinson.

Their opinions are changing through experience and relationship, not through political messaging.

"The way you energize people who don't even want to vote is connecting them to issues that directly affect them and their family," said Hutchinson. In LiUNA's case, building multiracial unity and movement power through union organizing was a result of conversations about workplace conditions at local universities. In addition to increasing support for the union and taking collective action, LiUNA's deep canvassing resulted in 29% of canvassed people taking an action at the end of the conversation.⁴⁵ For the contract campaign with the City of Columbia, LiUNA ran multiple actions that resulted in ending pre-employment drug testing for marijuana, passing paid family leave for all workers – not just union-eligible workers – and significant raises.⁴⁶

For LiUNA, deep canvassing has helped solidify a large new cohort of leaders within the union who are ready to organize their communities. As a result of finding and effectively enrolling new leaders, they have trained 7 paid organizers, 30 union stewards (rank and file volunteer leaders),

⁴⁴ Sam Gass, Heather Hicks, and David Searle, "LiUNA Union Organizing Deep Canvassing Descriptive Analysis," *Analyst Institute*, December 2023, 4.

⁴⁵ Sam Gass, Heather Hicks, and David Searle, "LiUNA Union Organizing Deep Canvassing Descriptive Analysis," December 2023, 11.

⁴⁶ Ezra Bitterman, "Columbia city workers union strikes deal with city for better pay," *Columbia Missourian*.



and another dozen volunteers to conduct deep canvassing.

This investment in organizational leadership has led to significant growth, with LiUNA signing hundreds of new union members, including 196 new members in 2023 and 236 new members in 2024.

Hutchinson describes the significant shift that deep canvassing has created in the union: “Leaders we developed through Transformative Conversations just held a town hall with the Mayor with 80 workers in attendance. They did it completely on their own. And then less than a month ago, we had a university worker town hall with almost 200 workers in attendance. It went from having to beg these workers to come to a meeting, to [now] they’re calling me frustrated that we’re not having another town hall fast enough and that we need to be more aggressive.”

Missouri Jobs with Justice (MOJWJ) has also sharpened their conversation framework to focus on action. In their 2022 program they found that 75% of canvassed people who shared a story during a conversation signed a pledge to “join the fight for an economy and democracy that works for all Missourians,” compared to 57% of people who did not share a story.⁴⁷ This story-to-action design to the conversation has sparked new imagination among canvassers and community members. “We have seen a renewed excitement [...] We have people grappling with power and ‘what do we want? What do I want? What do I want

to build?’ We have had existing leaders that are getting reignited because of seeing the hunger in new people showing up,” said Lexi Amos, Civic Engagement Director at MOJWJ.

Missouri Jobs with Justice uses deep canvassing for their year-round voter engagement. In 2024 they discussed the minimum wage with voters and the misconceptions around raising it. Building durable support for raising the minimum wage through these conversations helped pass Proposition A, which increased the minimum wage and required private employers to provide paid sick leave.⁴⁸ 68% of people they canvassed signed a pledge in support of economic equality at the end of each conversation.⁴⁹ These aligned voters then received follow-up calls from a regional organizer and were invited into pre-existing organizing committee spaces.

In their 2024 program, MOJWJ leaned further into testing and implementing a development pipeline to find new volunteers at the doors, engage them through relational methods, enroll them into the organization’s initiatives, and ultimately build them up as local organizers and leaders.



⁴⁷ Sam Gass, Heather Hicks, and David Searle, “Missouri Jobs with Justice Deep Canvassing Descriptive Analysis,” *Analyst Institute*, September 2023, 5 & 16.

⁴⁸ Missouri Secretary of State, “2024 Ballot Measures,” 2024.

⁴⁹ Sam Gass, Heather Hicks, and David Searle, “Missouri Jobs with Justice Deep Canvassing Descriptive Analysis,” 13.





Figure 5: Development Pipeline Structured around Transformative Conversations⁵⁰

In 2024, Missouri Jobs with Justice received commitments to action from 753 people through deep canvassing, all of which received follow-up engagement from organizers and an invitation to attend a low-barrier “welcome meeting.” The addition of a welcome meeting was based on learnings from the previous year on how to streamline and build a more efficient “voter to leader” structure. They found that, while it required more follow-up than expected to bring someone into a meeting, people were very likely to become further involved once they attended one. 72 of the 93 people who attended a welcome event had a one-on-one meeting with an organizer or attended an additional event (77%), and 27 donated or became sustaining members. Ultimately, 24 attendees (26%) volunteered to conduct voter outreach around ballot measures and getting out the vote for the 2024 election. Amos spoke of the critical role of training new organizers to actualize building community-based

power through deep canvassing: “We go to where people are at, at their houses or on their phones, and work to bring them into our organization. If more people aren’t taking action, we won’t have the power to make the changes in our community and our state that we know working people want and need.”

Through Transformative Conversations, MOVE and implementing grassroots organizations learned that, in addition to moving people’s opinions, deep canvassing can grow collective action and the momentum to win material change for communities. Simply discussing problems and solutions alone did not foster unity or action; community members needed concrete steps to take toward change. As Alice Chamberlain reflected, it was “critical to connect a voter’s existing agency with the potential for collective power and action,” finding the balance between empowerment and realism.

⁵⁰ This chart is derived from Missouri Jobs with Justice’s development pipeline flowchart.





CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

For many years, the traditional voter turnout-oriented practice of civic engagement was leaving Black, White, and Latino working-class Missourians disconnected from a power path to achieve policy outcomes aligned with their interests and values. For many, their opinions were clouded by racial dog-whistles and assumptions based on racial and geographic stereotypes.

In 2019, MOVE decided to try something new. They chose to harness their broad civic engagement programs and pilot a lab where deep learning could happen through conversations on people's doorsteps that were carefully designed and analyzed.

Through five years of practicing Transformative Conversations in communities across Missouri, MOVE and their grassroots partners have learned how to transform voter outreach programs to fuel concrete strategies to shift opinions and to build civic power. They have demonstrated that:

Deep canvassing can function as a practice-based, real-time research program to help organizations **learn about new constituencies** they have not yet deeply engaged.

Deep canvassing conversations can **combat cynicism and shift people's opinions on contentious issues** by providing a structure for people to wrestle with the tension between their public opinions and their deeply held values.

Deep canvassing embedded within a larger organizing strategy can **enroll people in collective action to achieve concrete material changes** in their lives.

With a fierce commitment to learning and improvement, Missouri organizers have changed what is possible for organized bases to achieve in the state. 2024 ballot measure wins around paid sick leave, raising wages, and securing constitutional protections for abortion access prove that there are significant opportunities to unite communities in the state to pass pro-worker, pro-family policies.

MOVE is learning how to build multiracial solidarity in Missouri by using deep canvassing conversations to undermine divisive dog-whistles and enroll people in a path to power. As other state-based organizations' strategic questions and needs evolve, deep canvassing labs may provide them too with the learning and collective enrollment necessary for building a multiracial democracy that delivers real change to their constituencies.





RECOMMENDATIONS



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONVERSATION DESIGN:

Conversation topics, questions, and calls to action should be relational and values-based, designed to surface and share relevant personal stories.

Conversation design should point to concrete instances of local successful multiracial efforts to win change.

Conversations should present a short-term solution and call to action to address community priorities collectively, not only individually.

Canvassers should collect standardized qualitative and quantitative data during each conversation that can be used to continuously inform program design.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND IMPLEMENTATION:

Organizations must shift from a knowing culture to a learning culture. The narratives, conversation frameworks, relevant issues, and invitations to action that best engage bases cannot necessarily be replicated across geographies or demographics. Local organizers must be trained to become strategists who can design and implement deep canvassing programs geared toward advancing their own program goals.

Implement comprehensive data tracking and analytics to inform programs in real time. This promotes local agency around designing program outcomes, identifying areas for improvement, and adjusting deep canvassing mechanisms to better drive power-building goals.

Invest in a thorough training process for organizers and members that establishes practical skills to conduct deep canvassing conversations with strangers about controversial topics.

Invest in year-round funding that can sustain impactful and long-term organizing informed and fueled by deep canvassing.



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APPENDIX: SAMPLE CONVERSATION FRAMEWORKS

What follows are three deep canvassing scripts from MOVE and other groups in Missouri that show how the conversation framework has been adjusted to advance local organizing goals. The first framework from MOVE is from the Phase 3 Pilot, and gives examples of open-ended questions to prompt story-sharing and process conflict. The following framework is from Abortion Action Missouri's Phase 4 program. It explicitly has canvassers name the power of collective action, and ask community members to take specific actions. The third sample framework from LiUNA does so as well – the canvasser is prompted to inquire who has the power to change working conditions, and who benefits by not prioritizing workers' needs. These examples of frameworks demonstrate how the structure of deep canvassing conversations can be tailored to different organizing contexts and goals.

MOVE'S GENERAL CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK (2022)

TC3 Pilot Framework

Overall Outcome (what do you want to accomplish with your conversations?):

Targeted Universe Baseline (who are you targeting? VAN criteria etc):

Steps with Outcomes	Key Points/Learnings from TC3 Pilot
<p>1: Intros and First Ratings</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build rapport • Understand complex opinions 	<p>Introduce yourself: <i>Hi, are you ____? Great, I'm _____ with _____. I'm out talking to folks here to learn about issues affecting this community because no one usually asks us our opinion.</i></p> <p>Ask ratings question(s) on 0-10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why is this the right number for you?</i>
<p>2. Story Sharing</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentically share stories • Get voter to do the same 	<p>Open Ended Questions and dig into details where you can and get voter to name emotion (when, where, how did that make you feel? Why?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me about a time ...? <p>Share your own stories related to issue/topic</p>
<p>3. Making the Case</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process their concerns/ conflict • Connect conflict to clear story of us 	<p>Lift up conflict you hear from voter and gut check that that resonates: <i>It sounds like on the one hand you said _____ and on the other hand _____. Does that sound right?</i></p> <p>Share stories that address their concerns: <i>In my experience...</i></p> <p>Name divide/conquer as a weapon that harms us all</p> <p>Share stories of US that SHOW change is possible</p> <p>Ask Rating questions again 0-10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why is that the right number for you?</i>

4. Invitation, Learning Data, and Closing	Make in invitation to action and/or confirm follow-up information
Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get accurate contact info for follow-up • Get other data points for learning 	

Suggested VAN tracking for your conversation

From person: survey questions

- First Rating [0-10]
- Final Rating [0-10]
- Phone Number (in Details)
- Email (in Details)

From canvasser: survey questions

- Canvasser Share Story [y/n]: Did you share a story with details (who, what, where, when, why)?
- Canvasser Emotion [y/n]: Did you name emotion in your short?
- Voter Share Story [y/n]: Did the voter share a story with details (who, what, where, when, why)?
- Voter Emotion [y/n]: Did the voter name emotion related to their story?
- Leadership Assessment [based on your organization's methodology]: Does this person have leadership potential for your organization?

Figure out a plan for what do with the people you talk to not in VAN (i.e. GoogleForm)

INTRO

- Hi, my name is ____ and I'm with Abortion Action Missouri. Abortion Action Missouri is an organization working to ensure that people and their families can make personal healthcare decisions for themselves when it comes to having children and starting a family.
- I'm out talking to folks today to learn about how people in our community feel about the recent ban on abortion access in Missouri.
- I know abortion access can sometimes be hard to talk about, but it's been in the news a lot recently, and people don't usually ask us what we think about what's happening. I'm really curious to know what people are thinking.

ISSUES/VALUES - Ask about their experience living, their values, and their vision for community

- **There is a near total ban on abortion in Missouri. Did you know that? How do you feel about the ban on abortion in Missouri?**
 - **Follow up questions to ask:**
 - What's it like for you and your family living in a state with a near total abortion ban?
 - Do you know anyone in your life who ever had to access an abortion? What was that like?
 - Has there ever been a time you or someone you have known has had an unplanned pregnancy?
 - If someone you loved chose to access an abortion, how would you want them to be treated?
 - **Utilize the cone of curiosity:**
 - DIG: Tell me more about that
 - Details: Who, what, where, when, why
 - Emotion: What was that like?

PROCESS/REFLECT - What is on your mind as we have been talking?

- **If supportive:** Repeat back what you've heard and ask: does that sound right to you?
- **If conflicted:** Point out conflicting values/experiences and ask: what do you make of that?
- At the end of the day, I think we live in a state where people care about their neighbors, show each other compassion, and not judge each other's personal health care decisions.
- Despite this, in 2022, a small group of politicians imposed a near total ban on abortion. Because of this ban, people are being turned away from hospitals and are being denied care even in cases where their health is deteriorating. That makes me angry.
- What do you think about that? *<Listen, respond/engage.>*

ISSUE ASK - Based on our conversation: would you support ending Missouri's abortion ban?

HOPE/VISION - Let them know what the benefits coming together in community

- **Do you think you're the only one who feels this way in your neighborhood? Do you feel like you and your neighbors have the power to rebuild abortion access in Missouri?**
- I'm here to tell you that you are not alone, and we deserve better.
- By joining together, we can build power for our community and make sure everyone has bodily autonomy and access to abortion services.
- I got involved with Abortion Action Missouri because _____.
- **Together, with Abortion Action Missouri, Missourians are already winning back our rights.** In the last year, Abortion Action Missouri volunteers made monumental strides to end Missouri's cruel and dangerous abortion ban. Despite countless delays from power hungry politicians, nearly 2,000 Missourians joined together at the beginning of this year to collect over 380,000 signatures so that we can vote to end Missouri's ban. Now, people in our state get to vote to end Missouri's abortion ban.

- But we're not stopping there. Right now, your neighbors are coming together to keep winning and have a plan to end Missouri's abortion ban AND elect politicians who will protect our right to reproductive freedom.

ACTION - Invite them to imagine a world in deep community where they take action

- **ASK 1 - Based on what we've talked about: do you feel like Missourians can end Missouri's abortion ban if we and our neighbors get out and vote on November 5th?**
- Right now, the people in your neighborhood can make a difference by showing up and voting on November 5th. To make sure we can count on each other, we're collecting pledges to go out and vote on November 5th to end Missouri's abortion ban.
- **ASK 2 - Can your neighbors count on you to join them and pledge to vote to end Missouri's abortion ban on November 5th?**
 - **If they say no**, try to go back to what they said before that made them angry - "you told me you don't agree with the current abortion ban and you think politicians have overstepped. Do you think that's going to ever change if we don't come together as neighbors and demand a change?"
- Awesome. I have to go talk to your neighbors but I know Abortion Action's organizer, Lisa Williams, would love to talk with you more about our efforts to end the ban. What's a good phone #, so she can follow up with you? *[Try to schedule a meeting within 48-72 hours.]*

[Organizer FOLLOW UP - Re-confirm them for the meeting and get their contact info

- So, can we count on you to meet up with me at _____? It was so great to talk with you! I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.]

The purpose of this script is to talk to **potential** dues paying members. We are not using this script to talk to current members. This is the script for a long conversation.

INTRODUCTION

You: Hello - my name is __your name__, is this _____?

(if yes)

You: Great. I'm with your union at (MU, City of CoMO, etc) –, Local 955/ MU Workers United. Do you have a second?

Introduction

You: First off, I'd like to ask you – how long, roughly, have you worked at _____, and what do you do?

(ASK PROBING QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR WORK, TRY TO IDENTIFY ISSUES. MORE EXPLORED BELOW.)

AGITATION

(Get into the thick of their work. Ask them questions, prodding/probing for an issue at work. Ask what they do, how they do it, what it's like – what are the challenges of that work? Once you've built a rapport – get to this question:

YOU: what is something you would change at your workplace if you could with a wave of a wand?

(Try to get away from “my manager is a jerk” or “I don't like my coworkers” – if that's their issue, ask questions as to why their manager or coworkers might be jerks. Maybe they're in a bad mood from constant understaffing and overwork?)

(Once they give that information— proceed)

POLARIZE - WHO IS RESPONSIBLE

You: So who has the power to change this(their issue)? Why won't they change it – or why are they making it worse (if that's the case)? **Who does that benefit?**

SECOND SCORE - RATE DEPENDING ON HOW THEY ANSWER THIS

VISION

You: So let's go back to your issue. Do you think it's affecting other people at work? How so? (Ask them to be specific.)

You: Let me ask you something. If you walked up to ___the person responsible today___ and asked them to fix it – would they?

Would you have a better chance of solving this, be more powerful, if your coworkers were all working together? EDIT: Would we have a better chance of solving this, be more powerful, if you

INSERT COMMITMENT HERE, RELEVANT TO THEM?

COMMITMENT/ACTION

Proposition them to taking action to work on their issue. The potential actions could be:

1. **SIGN UP TO BE A UNION MEMBER**
2. Pass around a petition around their workplace on their issue.
3. Sign up to host a site visit.
4. Set up a conversation with another worker.
5. **Make a direct ask for them to contribute extra dues to our PAC fund if they have issues with City policy – ask them if they would be interested in getting more involved to elect better bosses.**
6. **Make a direct ask for them to knock doors on a canvass.**
7. House call training/work

Keep asking them to do things until they say no!

MOVE and their partners have an abundance of training and program materials to support deep canvassing program design and implementation. If you'd like to learn more, please reach out to info@dpifund.org.



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