

“Program Planning” 2021-2023

This information was provided by [LWV of Rogue Valley](#) and tailored to LWVUV’s needs. If you want to propose a study, please read this carefully for guidance.

Tis the Season – for Proposing Studies

League ‘Program’—the process of conducting a study to develop a position to support advocacy—is on the LWV’s winter schedule. That means it’s time for local Leagues to consider if changes to their current positions are needed and, if appropriate, recommend a potential topic for local study. Studies are used to develop a League position on a local issue, which is the basis for advocacy for or against the issue. Members are also encouraged to review state positions or propose a state-wide study (those study proposals are due to LWVOR February 1). Keep in mind that League ‘program’ is the first step to shaping policy. In League, program is focused on study and advocacy, and some units also use program to plan their educational events.

For local studies, a small group of members may spend 12—18 months researching and studying a local concern to write a report on the issue. Members discuss the report findings to reach consensus on the issue’s policy implications, and then draft a position for member agreement.

If you’re interested in proposing a study, review the 10 tips below. Form a committee (we recommend 5 people) to develop a proposal, organize a work plan, and conduct the study if approved. Submit a written proposal (scope, goals, committee chair/members, rationale, resources, timeline) for LWVUV approval. It is best to have part of this plan prepared for our **January 19, 6:00 – 7:30** program planning time, but a study will be officially adopted by local membership at its annual meeting in the spring.

Your committee may be interested in matters of governance, natural resources, healthcare, or other local service or area of concern. Talk with Action committee members to identify topics that need a position for advocacy. Or examine the positions of other Leagues at local, state, or national levels for possible adoption by ‘concurrence’ (which usually requires obtaining permission from that League). You will study and report on this policy issue to reach member consensus regarding a position on the stance your League will take in advocating for this issue locally.

Bring any possible ideas to the **January 19** program planning meeting. Written proposals should be submitted to the Board by **January 12** and address your topic, focus, scope, expected results, information resources and timeline.

Look for more information on how to conduct a study at the LWVOR website.

10 Tips if YOU seek to Propose and Promote a Study.

It is no big mystery; any League member can PROPOSE a study. It only takes organization and commitment, with a little bit of outreach and interest in the subject.

Remember that the League does not take action, nor advocate on legislative action, unless there is a related position. Almost all of our positions are established by study; a few are established by concurrence with positions of other Leagues or special circumstances.

Considerations for adopting studies

Listed below are things the LWV board (at any level) will consider; thus they are the things YOU should consider for your proposal. To have a successful, competitive bid to get board approval, engage volunteers for your study in advance.

Ask YOURSELF these questions. [Don’t forget to look on national/state/local websites for some answers.]

When you have MOST of the answers, present the proposal (in writing) to your local or state board through the annual program planning process. You could ask a LWV Board member for guidance. However realize that, due to other commitments, the board generally cannot organize a study. Someone needs to chair (and own the organization of) the study. That might be you.

1. Does it fall within League Principles?
2. Does the League already have positions that can be applied to the proposal?
Tip: Experience has shown that broadly written League positions allow us more flexibility than very detailed ones. Do you REALLY need to have a new study to address your issue?
3. Is government action needed? Possible?
4. How much member interest has been expressed for the issue?
Tip: If YOU are really interested, and expect that others would be if they knew about it, then find a few members to include in the proposal or do an informal survey of members, recording the number of interested people.
5. Is this the crucial time for the issue?
6. Do the political realities permit effective action?
Tip: 'political realities' can be discouraging. If you think it is important – then teach the world!
7. Is this the appropriate level of the League to address the issue?
8. Will the League's involvement make a unique impact? Increase the League's influence and credibility?
Tip: If the issue lends itself well to NONPARTISANSHIP this is truly an added advantage. And if the impact is a unique one it will help the League's visibility; again a nonpartisan *approach* is vital.
9. What are prospects for funding the study or anticipated educational activities and/or action strategies?
Tip: Decide NOW whether your report will be electronic or paper, and how your unit will fund any production or education costs. Most studies nowadays (compared to the past) can cost little, as they emphasize 'virtual work' & conference calls. Still think ahead, especially for later 'action' activities based on the new position, if established.
10. Will the League be able to draw on any partners for assistance?
11. Recruit members willing to be on this study committee. Boards will not adopt a study without a committed team.
Tip: This is also an opportunity to reach-out to new members who might be interested in this issue.
12. Identify committed study chairs and members for the Board approval.
Tip: Most likely – YOU are the chairperson. If you are not committed to leading it, rethink your proposal.

Link to LWVUS and LWVOR Positions: <https://lwwor.org/full-lwwor-position-index>

LWVUV Positions: <https://lwwuv.org/publications/local-studies/>