

# SOCIAL CHANGE WHEEL

All of these strategies can contribute to social change.



**Campus Compact**  
Minnesota

**Advocacy** – supporting an idea or cause through public and private communications, and collecting evidence to support one’s position

*Examples:*

- Speaking or writing to individuals, groups, or elected officials on behalf of a cause
- Sharing a video about your cause on social media

**Charitable Volunteerism** – addressing immediate needs, most often through social service agencies, churches, or schools

*Examples:*

- Tutoring a child or an adult once a week
- Serving food or registering people at a soup kitchen or shelter

**Community & Economic Development** – acting to provide economic opportunities and improve social conditions in a sustainable way

*Examples:*

- Developing marketing plans, websites, or other supports to help small businesses grow
- Providing microloans or training to aspiring entrepreneurs

**Community-Based Participatory Research** – conducting research in partnership with members of a community with an intention to benefit the community

*Examples:*

- Defining a research agenda and implementing each aspect of research projects with local stakeholders
- Jointly publishing results to ensure they reach public as well as academic audiences

**Community-Building** – strengthening through interpersonal connections the capacity of local residents and associations to work together

*Examples:*

- Creating local history projects profiling both long-time and new residents
- Organizing neighborhood clean-ups or National Night Out activities

**Community Organizing** - bringing people together to act in their shared self-interest

*Examples:*

- Mapping the skills, interests, relationships, and other assets of residents to inform work on particular issues
- Developing an issue campaign to call for change in a troubling practice, such as the overuse of school suspensions

**Deliberative Dialogue** – exchanging and weighing different ideas, perspectives, and approaches around particular issues in a public setting

*Examples:*

- Organizing ongoing local discussion circles
- Using a National Issues Forums guide to prompt a group to consider multiple options on an issue

**Informal Associations & Mutual Aid** – unpaid, collaborative work or sharing of resources by people seeking to improve their collective quality of life

*Examples:*

- Starting a support group around an issue of concern
- Participating in disaster relief efforts or opening your home to a displaced person

**Philanthropy** – Donating money to increase the well-being of humankind or advance another social good

*Examples:*

- Holding a fundraiser for a nonprofit organization
- Providing cash or in-kind donations yourself

**Protests & Demonstrations** – expressing public disagreement with a situation or policy in a visible, non-violent way

*Examples:*

- Participating in rallies or marches in support of a cause
- Creating public visual or performance art intended to draw attention to an issue

**Social Entrepreneurship** – creating a new venture or using entrepreneurial principles to change an existing one

*Examples:*

- Launching a business with a clear social benefit
- Developing a new product that affordably provides clean water to people in areas without it

**Socially Responsible Daily Behavior** – acting on one’s values and civic commitments in one’s personal and professional life

*Examples:*

- Challenging racist or sexist words or behavior
- Buying from locally owned or socially responsible businesses

**Voting & Formal Political Activities** – mobilizing others to influence public policy through formal political channels – and participating yourself

*Examples:*

- Organizing a voter registration drive
- Running for public office or working or volunteering on another candidate’s campaign

# Social Change Wheel Discussion Questions

Which part of the wheel are you drawn to the most? Why?

What strategies do you have experience with?

What strategies have you seen others use effectively?

Which part of the wheel do you find most challenging or unappealing? Why?

Why might it be necessary for more than one strategy to be employed?

## Group Exercise One

Break into small groups based on people's reactions to a particular strategy (either positive interest or negative perception).

Ask each group to discuss the following questions:

- Why did you choose this particular area?
- What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of this approach to change?
- What are the skills or knowledge you think most important to doing this kind of change work well?

## Group Exercise Two

Divide into groups based on interest in specific social issues.

Have each group brainstorm and analyze ways that multiple strategies could be used to address the necessary change that needs to happen to create change around their issue.



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