

JCI LOCAL ACTION GUIDE

Local Project Planning Process

JCI Local Organizations around the world conduct projects to provide their members the development opportunities that empower them to create positive change in their communities.

Projects provide an opportunity for members to practically develop organizational, planning, team-building, leadership and management skills. It is also the medium by which young people around the world can best create positive change.

The image and effectiveness of the Local Organization, as well as the performance of the individual members, are reflected in the results of each and every project.

Thousands of organizations around the world conduct projects in thousands of communities but what makes JCI projects unique is that they provide opportunities that empower members to create positive change.



THE JCI PROJECT

JCI Local Organizations conduct projects for one purpose: to fulfil the Mission of the organization. Every project around the world must aim to provide opportunities that empower young people to create positive change.

The Three-Step Test

Before conducting any project, consider the following steps as guidance to determine if a project is aligned with the JCI Mission.

1. Development opportunities

The organization exists for members. Local Organizations provide avenues for members to take advantage of the opportunities JCI offers. All Local Organizations must offer opportunities for members to develop themselves.

2. Empower young people

There is great power in young people uniting for a common good. If there are more young people acquiring skills from development opportunities, then young people in the community will be empowered, and likely to have a greater impact in their communities.

3. Create Positive Change

Positive change is the ultimate goal of JCI. The opportunities and the empowerment of young people leads to positive change. Projects must be sustainable and leave lasting impact, creating a better community. Members take action to implement projects that are relevant to the community, addressing issues of common concern to the community at large.

It's necessary to get the community as a whole involved in the planning process. Here are some helpful steps.

PROJECT PLANNING

STEP 1: SURVEY

A comprehensive community survey is the best way to discover the needs of the community.

Include questions about community problems and needs. Possibilities include:

1. **Public Survey** – asking questions of people on the streets.
2. **Leader Survey** – asking questions of a cross section of community leaders.
3. **Representative Survey** – asking questions of a selected representation of the public.
4. **Panel Discussion Survey** – attending a public meeting where qualified individuals speak on the issues under consideration.

The selection of questions plays a key role in the success of the survey. Consider the following types of questions:

1. **True or false, yes or no** – only one answer required.
2. **Multiple choice** – different options are offered for selection.

3. **Factual** – asks for specific answers or facts, such as, "how many movie theaters are in the city?"
4. **Opinion** – asks for a point of view.
5. **Priority listing** – a list of needs is presented, and a priority order is requested.

STEP 2: ANALYSIS

After the survey, the Local Organization analyzes the results, listing the community needs in order of priority for study. A survey report with the results must be produced and presented to the Local Organization, community leaders, and the media.

The next step is to make a priority list of the projects that most urgently need attention, and appoint a project chairperson for them.

Even though the Local Organization should take immediate action to resolve the problems revealed by the survey, the very act of implementing the survey, making the analysis, and reporting the results has been a positive community contribution.

STEP 3: PLANNING

A well-organized team for implementing each project is the foundation for success.

Ensure success by assigning project to a committee under the leadership of a project chairperson.

His or her first task is to guide committee members to think the project through, step-by-step.

The plan of action must include the following:

1. The mission or purpose of the project.

Establish the reason why the committee is conducting the project. It must identify the project's aims in one sentence that can easily be understood by everyone involved.

2. The key activity areas.

The project must be divided into different key activity areas, such as finances, promotion, records, administration, etc.

3. The objectives in each area.

Major objectives must be established in each key area. They must be achievable and easily understood by the members of the committee.

5. Action steps in each objective.

The strategies must be broken down into small action steps that show exactly what should be done and who is responsible.

After the plan of action is completed, the following information will be needed: a chronological order of events or actions; a time schedule; a budget; an outline of duties for each committee member; and a list of outside organizations, resources and people involved.

After submitting the plan of action to the Board of Directors, the Local Organization must approve it and show commitment to the project.

STEP 4: ACTION

In the action phase, the project gets underway, and all participants perform their responsibilities.

This phase requires important skills from the project chairman, such as delegation, supervision, communications, personnel management, public speaking, etc. When allocating responsibilities, keep in mind that sacrifices have to be made; members have to give up free time and forego leisure interests until the project is over.

STEP 5: EVALUATION

Evaluation will be the natural concluding step for the project. The project may have been an outstanding success, but still not have satisfied the need or accomplished the mission.

If failures occur, it is important for the learning process in JCI to find out why, and what can be done to avoid the same mistakes in future projects. The evaluation is often overlooked because participants feel that the completion of the project is sufficient.

SUMMARY

At the end of the project, the committee can take pride in their achievement and feel satisfied that the experience has developed them as individuals, enhanced the Local Organization's image, and improved the community.