

Guide to Talkback Radio



It's hard to deny the popularity of talkback radio in Australia. Millions of people tune in to stations across the country everyday to hear about and debate local, state and national issues.

Calling in to your local talkback radio gives you a rare opportunity to raise important local issues, and engage a diverse range of voters with your viewpoint. MPs and candidates also tune in to local talkback to see where pressure is building, and where voter sentiment is at. So let's make some calls!

Step 1. Pick a popular station

Choose the most appropriate popular talkback shows in your local area for the issue you want to discuss. Check out current affairs, morning and drive-time programs. A good place to start is your local ABC radio station here: <http://www.abc.net.au/local/>

You could also do a quick online search to find out if the host has an outspoken stance on your issue, and what audience the programme attracts.

Step 2. Pinpoint one federal election issue

Choose one federal election issue that affects your local community that you're passionate about. For example, cuts to education funding, hospital funding, or renewable energy targets.

Step 3. Frame that issue for your local area

Decide how to best talk about the issue through the lens of your local community.

Example 1: Education

You might be passionate about public education funding - it's a key federal election issue which will have a big impact locally. You might write about how federal cuts will trickle down to affect local schools, leading to fewer teachers' aides, bigger classrooms and a decline in numeracy and literacy.

Example 2: Hospitals

Cuts to health and hospitals funding is a huge election issue that will impact everyone. You might write about how federal cuts could see fewer beds at your local public hospital, longer waiting lists for surgery, and understaffed emergency wards.

Example 3: Climate change

Is your electorate already feeling the extreme impacts of climate change? Depending on where you live, you might write about how federal inaction will lead to more extreme weather events like devastating cyclones, droughts and floods, the loss of farming industries, or forced migration to the cities due to rising unemployment.

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Example 4: Fossil fuel subsidies

The government hands out billions of dollars in fossil fuel subsidies to big polluters annually, and it costs your local community. You could write about the vital services fossil fuel subsidies rob your community of -- like a better health system for our elderly, and a better education system for our kids.

Example 5: Renewables

Is renewable energy a big issue playing out in your electorate? If so, this is your chance to write about how stronger investment and support for renewables, like wind and solar, could power the local economy - creating more sustainable jobs, cleaner land, water and air, and a better future for our kids.

Step 4. What action would you like to see taken?

The best calls in to talkback radio don't just talk about the problem, they call on the MP or candidates to improve, mitigate or resolve that local issue. For example, you might end by saying you'd like to see the MP and candidates make a pre-election commitment, or invite them attend a relevant community event.

Step 5. When you're on the call

When you call in, you'll first speak to the producer who'll ask what you plan on saying. Once you get on air, be confident and talk slowly. Some stations will prod you for a reaction but don't bite. **Remember you are talking to the audience, not the host.**

Step 6. Wrap it up quick, wrap it up strong

You'll probably have less than 30 seconds of airtime so get your point across quickly. Finish with a strong point instead of getting cut off by the host.

Share your story with the GetUp community

Your talk-back radio experience has the power to fire up members all over the country to do the same. Email your photos and any recording to takeaction@getup.org.au. Include your full name and electorate so GetUp can share your story with the rest of our community.