

EQUALISTERS TOOL KIT



Equalisters' success in Sweden started with one person's idea and grew into a movement mobilizing tens of thousands of people through social media. These people contribute to positive social change daily.

How can you utilize the power of the crowd to be the change you want to see in the world?

To help you further in making things happen, we've put together seven key points that worked for us in crowdsourcing for social change. Use them, copy things that work for you, let us know how it goes. Most importantly, go out there, have fun and change the world!

GET ANGRY, BE NICE

1 Yes, Lina Thomsgård got sick of hearing "they don't exist" when asking why there were no female DJ's in the major Stockholm nightclubs. But instead of complaining about it, she decided to prove those club owners wrong. Actually helping people, companies, organizations or night clubs improve their diversity and equality in representation turned out to be a unique approach to making the change that she felt needed to happen.

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THE CROWD WILL HELP

Lina started out by creating a Facebook page where she posted the first call, for DJ's who weren't men. She went to make a cup of tea and when she got back the page had spread like wildfire and a list of DJ's was already coming together. After only three days, she delivered a list of over 100 DJ's who were not dudes. That really smashed the excuse "they don't exist"!

The magic was in the crowd. Lina had the idea and made the first move, but then the crowd stepped up and did the job. She didn't have to know all those DJ's herself. So many other people contributed with names she'd never come up with herself. And obviously it was all news to the club owners!

One of the keys to keeping people involved and committed was by simple thanks and celebrating the collective effort and success. We can make a difference, together!

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GET OTHERS INVOLVED

It can be pretty hard work and long hours starting up and running an online initiative like this. There's the work with the calls, responding to things that pop up in the community, doing interviews with press that start calling. At some point you will need the help of others. And the thing is, other people will want to get involved! If there's something in society that makes you angry or frustrated, there are least ten other people in your surroundings who feel the same way. By building a team of volunteers who respect and trust each other, your initiative will grow and prosper. Letting go of full control can feel a bit scary. Instead, think of it as sharing – that feels nicer. You get to share both the burden and the joy with others!

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HELP MEDIA HELP YOU

Equalisters went completely viral in Sweden. It quickly became quite a social media phenomenon. The whole idea is based on people making a difference by finding the alternatives to set norms. Since one of the key inequalities we noticed was within the media, we started helping them improve too. Media started calling and the effect was a double positive. They posted stories about our social media success and we got increasingly involved in helping them improve their equality and diversity. Media exposure has been a great thing, since it helps get the message out and bring more people in.

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STAY SHARP AND POSITIVE

Equalisters is all about getting specific, moving equality forward step by step, post by post, call by call – all through positive action. We stick to the same format as the very first post. That's what people recognize, relate to and interact with. It's like our signature dish, our brand. From day one we've had a positive approach to accomplishing equality in society. We never played the blame game. We are, genuinely, helping others get more equal and diverse. And that's a great thing, worth being super positive about.

KEEP DOING THE WORK

Equalisters started in March 2010 and it's still going strong, growing every day. An initiative like this is an ongoing process that doesn't really have an end date. Once you've reached a critical mass and have a large number of people contributing and spreading the word, then you have an organism that wants to keep being fed. This work has required countless hours of voluntary resources and some paid staff to actually manage the community. We work hard every day on staying true and committed to our values and finding new ways to strengthen the work we do and the impact we have.

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LIVE LONG AND PROSPER

Obviously, when you've started something that you know is needed and is working, you don't want it to stop.

Getting an idea to survive and thrive means putting a lot of time into getting others to invest in you as well.

Equalisters has won various awards, scholarships and grants to support its ongoing work. As a registered non-profit organisation, we have been eligible for different grants, but every application requires a lot of work.

Although a treasure at the end of the rainbow would be nice, we realize that our long-term success will build on our ability to get many supporters to also back us with the resources we need.



ACTION GIVES INSPIRATION

We hope you're inspired by our example. We know that you've got some great ideas brewing too. They may be for your personal use or for global spread. You might have been thinking about some initiative for a long time, or it just came to you today. Or you might already be doing some great social change work. How can the examples and tools that we've shared help you make an even greater impact for social good in the world? We love to hear about great initiatives, so share your inspiring stories with us!

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