



***People's Platform* FAQ**

1. What is *People's Platform*?

- Produced at the Community TV Studio at the BNN Charles J. Beard II Media Center, ***People's Platform*** is a unique addition to BNN's program lineup. Winner of a national community media award for "Empowerment" programming, ***People's Platform*** allows the people of Boston to share their perspectives with two thirds of Boston households and a potential audience of over 380,000 cable viewers. No studio production training is necessary – you just need to have something to say.

2. Who can appear on the *People's Platform*?

- Any Boston resident can become a Basic Member of BNN and request to appear. Minors (under 18) need parental permission.
- Boston non-profit organizations can also sign up for membership and appearances.
- BNN membership provides other benefits. For information, contact our Membership Coordinator at 617-708-3224, or email membership@bnntv.org
- We will record commentaries of individuals (up to 10 minutes). We will also tape the conversations (up to 25 minutes) of two or three people who want to appear together.
- No prior training is necessary. We will work with you before the taping to help you get comfortable with the process and to better understand how to get your message across effectively.

3. What can I do on the show?

- Talk. We provide the studio and enough crew to record what you have to say. You provide the talk.
- We are not prepared, for this program, to record performances or other more complex productions. Nor are we able to provide an interviewer, host, teleprompter, or specialized equipment or sets.
- In the same studio, many BNN community producers have received training to be able to produce more elaborate productions for

themselves. We hope that all Boston residents and organizations, including participants in this program, will consider doing the same, starting with attendance at a BNN Orientation. (Not required for **People's Platform**).

- In some circumstances, we may be able to incorporate a shot of a poster or a piece of artwork, play a CD or videotaped segment, or include a logo. These arrangements must be requested and approved in advance by the Community TV Studio Manager.

4. What can I talk about?

- The opinions expressed are your own. You choose the subject matter and how you want to express your thoughts and feelings about it.
- Pick a subject that you are able to discuss easily, without having to read from a script.
- Plan far in advance for any time-sensitive topics or information, as it may be a month or longer before your program is shown on BNN.

5. Is there anything I can't talk about?

- We are providing this forum as an opportunity for you to exercise your freedom of speech. You can be as opinionated as you wish, and may choose your own subject matter. But there are some restrictions, based on civil law and BNN policy.
- BNN is a non-commercial forum, so you can't raise funds or promote commercial products or services.
- We cannot legally include any content that is obscene or libelous.
- Because of the time slot when this program will be shown, statements may not include potentially offensive material such as profanity, or language that is abusive on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation.

6. How should I get ready for my appearance?

- Think about what you want to say on **People's Platform**. Practice in front of a mirror or friends. Your message will be more effective if you are looking at the camera, speaking directly to viewers, than looking down to read a prepared statement.
- If appearing with one or two others, practice with them ahead of time. Sort out what you want to talk about, and who would be best to lead your discussion. Viewers will hear the points you want to get across better if the discussion is organized, with one person speaking at a time.
- Make sure that you have done all of the following:
 - A. carefully read all of these materials
 - B. become a BNN member

- C. submit a request and discuss it with the Community TV Studio Manager
- D. get your questions answered in advance
- E. get written confirmation of the date and time of your taping
- F. learn how to get to the studio
- G. if working with others, make sure that they are committed, prepared and aware of all related information

7. What should I wear?

- You should wear clothes you are comfortable in.
- Some colors should be avoided – especially white, red and other bright colors that can glare under the lights. Grays, pastels, and other muted colors are best for TV.
- Don't wear tweeds, paisleys or other small, busy patterns. They create distracting ripples on the screen. Plain colors or very large patterns without a lot of fine detail are best.
- It's fine to wear make-up, but not necessary.

8. What do I need to know for the day of the taping?

- Be sure to arrive on time, as other productions will be scheduled after yours. Bring directions and contact info with you so you can reach us and any other participants if you are delayed. We will schedule enough time for you to discuss your plans with staff and rehearse what you want to say on the set. But time will be limited, so punctuality is essential for successful results.
- Be yourself. You'll come across better that way. There's no need to try to sound like anyone else.
- Speak up, so we can get good sound. If you speak too softly, or loudly, we may have problems with that.
- Don't touch the microphones or cables.
- Stay in the position you started in, as our stationary cameras will not be able to follow motion.
- The member who has requested the taping must complete a "Commentator Release Form", and any other participants must sign a Standard Release Form, before taping begins. These forms, which relate to responsibilities, liabilities and permissions, should be read carefully and agreed to before making a request.

9. What else do I need to know?

- BNN reserves the right to make editorial decisions based on the above. Some material may not be able to be used for technical or other reasons. Based on subject matter, some commentaries may be selected for individual themed episodes of **People's Platform**, or combined with other segments for timing reasons.

- BNN members may request additional appearances, depending on availability. To maximize availability for all requesters, appearances will be scheduled at least six weeks apart, and one taping must be successfully completed before making another request. BNN reserves the right to deny repeat requests based on instances of no-shows, late arrivals, or other problems.
- We will contact you when your appearance is edited and scheduled for cablecast, so that you can watch and record it. Copies of the completed program may be purchased (check or money order only) for \$10 each.
- For more information about ***People's Platform***, to submit a request, or to schedule a studio date, contact Community TV Studio Manager Barbara Barrow-Murray at 617-708-3221 or bmurray@bnntv.org.
- We look forward to hearing from you!