**“Belonging Begins With Us” Long-Form Content Thought Starters**

*We invite you to create a wide variety of content about the importance of belonging, to pitch to relevant contacts and/or publish across your own channels such as:*

* ***Op-ed*** *to pitch to local press contacts*
* ***Blog post*** *for your organization’s internal or external blog and/or LinkedIn channels*
* ***Online******videos*** *highlighting your relevant efforts and offerings, and spotlighting employees and community members*

*We’ve included the following outline to use as a jumping-off point to develop your own content, in your own voice. You can also refer to the “Messaging Guidelines”* [*here*](http://belongingbeginswithus.adcouncilkit.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/92/2020/11/BelongingBeginsWithUs_Messaging-Guidelines.pdf) *in this toolkit for additional language.*

**SUGGESTED OUTLINE**

* Make a strong declaration that you are committed to creating a community/nation where everyone feels that they belong, and share why that is part of your values as an organization.
* Share why it’s important for organizations like yours to publicly commit to fostering belonging. For example:
  + We all want to feel like we belong in the community we call home, but today, too many of our neighbors experience exclusion, isolation, harassment, and even violence on the basis of their identity.
  + According to the Harvard Business Review, workplaces where employees feel a sense of belonging are linked to tremendous bottom-line benefits including an increase in job performance, a drop in turnover, and reduction in sick days.1
  + When we welcome and include everyone who calls America home, we bring out the best in our community, our nation and ourselves.
* If appropriate, embed the *Belonging Beings with Us* PSA [link to come]
* Share specific examples of how your organization helps create stronger bonds between individuals in your community, such as:
  + Programming and events (including virtual events) or other offerings that bring diverse members of your community together
  + Offerings that celebrate the contributions of people from a diverse range of backgrounds
  + Real stories of people from different backgrounds (age, religion, country of origin, etc.) who have connected through your organization and enriched one another’s lives.
    - Reminder: Share stories that show people of different backgrounds working side by side for a shared benefit or goal, and mutually benefiting from their relationship. Focus more on shared and relatable experiences; not on stories of extreme hardship or extreme achievement. (Example of shared experiences include love of sports, spirituality, family values, food and music)
    - Reminder: Ensure that you have secured permission from any individuals to share their stories, including permission for any identifying details or photos
* End with a call-to-action for others to join our movement of belonging. Depending on where the piece will appear, options include:
  + *(If B2B)* Encourage peers in your industry/community to join you in committing to fostering belonging, and sharing the campaign’s PSA video and message
  + *(If public-facing)* Encourage readers/viewers to make new connections and create a sense of belonging in their communities. Share tips like:
    - If you see someone being excluded from an activity or group, reach out and make an effort to include them next time
    - Write a card to a neighbor you haven’t met and drop it in their mailbox
    - Gather recipes from your neighbors and create a community cookbook
    - Attend **[event or virtual event]** at **[your organization here]** to get to know your neighbors
    - Visit BelongingBeginsWithUs.org to read stories of welcoming and belonging from across the country, and discover ways to create more connections in your community.