



SPARKING IMAGINATION: A PROOF OF CONCEPT

# Wisdom for Visual Storytelling Through Films

Providing insights into the creative and organizing processes of Hip Hop Caucus Think 100%'s Hampton Roads Organizing Project (HROP) is helpful for further understanding how a creative and cultural organizing project was initiated, implemented, and continues to grow. However, providing direct wisdom may be valuable as imagination is sparked and you work to create a proof of concept through creative and cultural organizing work for climate justice. The wisdom is for those that range from having years of advocacy experience to those who may just be beginning to explore doing the work necessary to further climate justice.

1. People in front of and behind the camera, and in every step of the way, need to be connected to the places, people, or issues that you are telling stories about (identity, geography, life experience, the context of generation, etc.). This wisdom goes for everyone involved in the creative processes that happen after shooting the content.
2. Match your approach, budget, and the visual aesthetic you are trying to create with your strategy and audience.
3. Use the filmmaking process to bring together stakeholders who may not communicate daily to talk about the same subject. Doing this can help facilitate stakeholder relationships, foster community, and make sure different viewpoints are included in the content.
4. Use filmmaking as an opportunity to give access to people who have not had opportunities to operate cameras. At the end of the day, what you are doing is not really about the cinematography. It is about the story that you are telling.
5. You can get fantastic footage on a phone, try not to use the sound on the phone. Good sound is less expensive than fantastic cinematography.
6. Use tripods for interviews and spend time getting good angles and lighting. You can use sheet bounce boards to bounce light onto the people you are filming.
7. Learn to edit because it will open other universes and expand your understanding as you develop as a storyteller.
8. The idea of being creative, being a listener, and being a storyteller is all the same.
9. If you have a decent budget, purchase a camera, tripod, audio equipment, powerful computers, storage space, lighting supplies, and an editing program.
10. If you only have a few thousand dollars, get a fast computer for editing, and a camera that shoots 4K with detachable lenses (can be found for less than \$1500) that captures high-quality audio and that has video outputs that you can stream through right away.
11. Visual storytelling is an excellent investment that offers almost unlimited ways to use what you shoot (as a creator, organizer, or organization).