



Right now, GetUp members are in more places than ever before. We're a community of 600,000 Australians, working together for a better future for our environment, our neighbours and our country. And as Parliament prepares to reconvene for 2014, it's more important than ever to make our voices heard.

Over the past few months, GetUp members all over the country have been doing just that by teaming up in their electorates to meet with their MP. They've been presenting their electorate's unique GetUp in my Electorate report (you'll be getting yours soon!) and talking to their MPs about how many GetUp members live in their area, the amount of funds these GetUp members have donated and the top issues surveyed by local GetUp members as most important.

Already, 27 teams of local GetUp members have held 27 meetings and it's been an inspiration to see how seriously MPs have taken these meetings and how prepared they've come for constructive and meaningful conversation. With 27 Meet your MP meetings completed, there's now 122 left to go!

If GetUp members meet with every one of Australia's 150 MPs, we can ensure that the issues we care about are fresh in the minds of decision makers going into 2014. It will also mean we've built the foundations for a relationship with every MP in the country - relationships that can be revisited well into the future to talk to MPs about our campaigns.

Whether your MP shares our views, disagrees with us on every point, or hasn't even heard the name GetUp before, every meeting can have an impact. This guide will run you through how to get a meeting with your MP, and how to get the most out of your time with them. And don't forget, we're here every step of the way: you can reach us anytime on takeaction@getup.org.au.

Thanks for all that you do,
Sam, for the GetUp team



What's involved in Meet your MP

- Right now, your team leader (a getup member just like you) is contacting your MP's office to organise a meeting time for your team.
- Once your team leader has made contact with your MP's office, your team should connect, get to know one another and prepare for the meeting.
- Your team attends the meeting with your MP.
- Report back to GetUp about how the meeting went.

Instructions for the team leader

The team leader is in charge of contacting your MP's office and organising a meeting time for your team. Depending on who your MP is and what time of the parliamentary cycle it is, your team might be offered a meeting immediately or you might experience quite a few knock-backs before you lock one in. In some cases, you might only be able to book a meeting with one of the your MP's staffers. That's why the first and most important step is for the team leader to make contact with your MP's office.

To contact your MP's office, you'll need their phone number, email address and postal address, all of which can be found at the Australian Parliament House website:
http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members

Contacting your MP's office

Step 1. Send your MP a meeting request via email and post. At the end of this document, we've provided a sample meeting request for you to customise.

Step 2. Give your MP's office a call 2-3 days after sending your meeting requests.

Step 3. Make follow-up calls to your MP's office. Don't be afraid to keep calling your MP's office until they offer you a meeting time or an explanation of why they aren't able to. Sometimes it can take multiple follow-up calls over numerous weeks to finally book in that meeting. Remember your MP's prime responsibility is hear from their constituents.

Step 4. As soon as you book a meeting time, email the GetUp staff at takeaction@getup.org.au

Step 5. A week before your meeting, send your team's meeting agenda to your MP's office. You can find a meeting agenda to customise at the end of this document.

When you call your MP's office

- Introduce yourself and ask to speak to the member of staff responsible for organising the MP's calendar.
- After being transferred, introduce yourself and tell the staffer you are calling on behalf of a group of GetUp members living in your electorate and would like to book a meeting time with your MP.
- Let the staffer know you have already emailed and posted a meeting request and ask what availabilities your MP has.
- Most likely, the staffer will not know availabilities off the top of their head and will ask you to call back at another time. Ask them specifically when to call back and his/her name and their best contact details.
- If the staffer offers you an availability, book a meeting with your MP. You should ask for a half an hour meeting, but be willing to work with their schedule and needs.
- If your MP is a Minister or an opposition front-bencher, it is reasonable for them to offer you a meeting with their staff. If you are offered a meeting with staff you should take it and treat it just the same a meeting with your MP.

Instructions for the whole team: Organise to meet and prepare

Before your meeting, it's good to get to know the other GetUp members on your team. Organise to meet up somewhere local (like at a pub or cafe), so in person you talk about who can attend the meeting and discuss your GetUp in My Electorate report.

If you can't meet up in person - perhaps because you live in an electorate which covers hundreds of kilometers - you can use GetUp's telephone conference line, skype or continue to use email. If you'd like any more information about this, get in touch with us at takeaction@getup.org.au.

Important things to discuss when you meet up as a team

Who in your team will attend the meeting?	To avoid overwhelming your MP and to ensure your meeting runs smoothly, no more than 6 team members should attend the meeting with your MP. Don't worry if your team is bigger than that to begin with; the 6 will be made up of those who can make it to the appointment on the day.
Who in your team will send the media release to your local media?	It's a good idea to send two media releases: one the day before and one immediately after your meeting. At the end of this document there are two media releases for you to customise.
Who in your team can bring a camera to the meeting?	This team member is also responsible for emailing a photo to GetUp staff at takeaction@getup.org.au after the meeting.
Your GetUp in My Electorate report	The facts and figures on this report are great topic points to discuss during your meeting with your MP. Your team will present this report to your MP at the beginning of your meeting.
Draft a running sheet for your meeting	A running sheet is a brief plan for what topics you will discuss in the meeting and how much time you'll allocate for each. Writing one will help you prepare and keep you on track during the meeting. You can find a running sheet to customise at the end of this document.
Who is your MP?	To learn more about your MP, check out their biography on Australian Parliament House website: http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members . Wikipedia also has useful information on MPs: http://en.wikipedia.org See if you can find some common ground with your MP.

In the meeting with your MP

Be yourself!

Start your meeting with your MP is to just say a few words about who you are. If you are able to connect with your MP on a personal level, it'll help create a comfortable situation where you both respect and listen to one another's views. You don't have to be a politician to hold a successful meeting, you just need to be friendly, polite and explain your points clearly.

Give your MP the GetUp in My Electorate report, and talk them through it

Over the last few months, we've compiled reports which break down the statistics of the 600,000 GetUp members in all 150 federal electorates. That means there's a unique report for each electorate, showing just how many GetUp members live there, how many campaigns they've been a part of, and how much they've chipped in to make those campaigns happen. Also in the report are the issues GetUp members have voted as the most important; real action on climate change, better treatment of Asylum seekers, an equitable taxation system, and an independent media. By giving your MP this report in your meeting, you can show them first hand the power and passion of his or her constituents who want to see a more progressive Australia.

How you and your team choose to talk about the report is up to you. You can split up the issues between team members, or focus in greater depth on one of the priorities that you and your team feel passionately about. Just make sure that you know who is saying what and in what order, before you get to the meeting.

Ask your MP questions

Every person who enters parliament has a story - an issue or a belief that motivated them to get into politics, or an event in their lives that shaped the way they see things. Finding out those stories, simply by asking your MP a few questions, can be a great way to connect with your representative in a real way and can give you the insight you need to talk to him about GetUp campaigns in a persuasive way.

Respect their time

Make sure you've practiced your agenda and that it fits into your allocated meeting time. Respect your MP by arriving on time and not going over.

Take a photo!

At the end of your meeting, ask your MP if they'd mind being in a photo with your team. The most effective photos tell a story, so ask a staffer to take a photo of your team with your MP holding your GetUp in My Electorate report. The photo at the top of this document is a good example of what an effective Meet your MP photo could look like.

Report back to GetUp staff about your meeting

After your meeting, let GetUp staff know how your meeting went by emailing takeaction@getup.org.au, along with a photo you took. Not only are GetUp staff excited to hear your insights, but it's important your experience is shared with all the GetUp members living in your electorate. After you've reported back, GetUp staff can send an email with your reflections on your experience and ask GetUp members in your electorate to email or tweet your MP to say thanks for meeting with you.

Sample meeting request

Use this document to request a meeting with your MP. It should be sent by email and post to give you the best chance of getting a meeting.

Your name]
[Your postal address]
[Your email address]
[Your mobile and/or home number]

Dear [Mr/Ms] [Name] MP,

My name is [name] and I am a resident of [suburb] in [X] electorate and I am writing to you on behalf of a team of GetUp members who are also residents of [X] electorate. Together we represent thousands of GetUp members living in your electorate.

As one of your constituents, I would like to request a thirty minute meeting with you on a date convenient to you [a convenient timeframe, eg. within the next four weeks.]

The meeting will be an opportunity to discuss the policy issues surveyed as most important to GetUp members living in your electorate: climate change, asylum seekers, an equitable tax system and independent media, as well as a chance for you to meet local GetUp members.

[Optional: In your own words, a sentence or two about why one or any of these issues are important to you personally.]

In turn, the meeting will also allow local GetUp members to learn where you stand on these important issues and how you plan to tackle them and represent our views over the next three years of office. As part of an independent, grassroots organisation, GetUp members welcome the chance to work cooperatively with politicians and parties from across the political spectrum toward creating a more progressive, sustainable and fairer Australia.

I look forward speaking to your diary manager as soon as possible to discuss your availabilities and I would appreciate the courtesy of responding via email or telephone by [date in 5 business days].

On behalf of [electorate name] GetUp members, I would like to congratulate you on your [election/re-election] to office and look forward to building a constructive and open relationship over the next three years.

Yours Sincerely,

[Your name]

Sample Agenda

Giving your MP a sample meeting request is an important process in carrying out a formal meeting. It's a good way to demonstrate that you take your time together seriously, and give an outline of the issues you want to discuss on the day.

Date: [meeting date]

Location: [address of your MP's office]

Attendees: [Your MP and team members in attendance]

Objective: The objective of the meeting is to discuss the the three policy issues surveyed as the most important to the [number] GetUp members living in [electorate].

Schedule:

Time allocated: [X] minutes (The time you allocate to each "Item" discussion will depend on how much total time you have allocated to your meeting, usually one third of your total meeting time per item)

Item one: GetUp in My Electorate [X] minutes

- Presenting MP with the GetUp in My Electorate report
- Introduce the Meet your MP project and the facts outlined on the report about GetUp members in [electorate]

Item two: Priority issues [X] minutes

- Discussion of the three policy issues outlined in the GetUp in My Electorate report as most important to GetUp members in your electorate

Item three: Representation [X] minutes

- Discussion of how MP will represent local GetUp members and address these policy issues in parliament.

Conclusion of meeting

NB: Following the meeting, the team will issue a media release to local media outlining the objectives and outcomes of the meeting.

Sample Running Sheet

This is a document internal to your team. It'll give a quick outline of your meeting plan, so that your whole team is on the same page.

Part one: Introductions (X minutes)

- Each person introduces themselves, including a few words about why they got involved with GetUp.
- Present your MP your GetUp in My Electorate report.
- Explain the facts and figures outlined on the report.

Part two: Top policy issues (X minutes)

- Discuss the three policy issues of GetUp members in your electorate.
- Feel free to add a few words about why these issues are important to you.
- Explain what you would like your MP to do to address these issues.

Part three: Commitments from your MP (X minutes)

- Ask your MP what their position is on these policy issues.
- Ask what commitments he or she can give you on these issues.
- Ask your MP how he or she will endeavour represent local GetUp members over the next term.
- Conclude the meeting by letting your MP know that you'd like to continue meeting in the future and to build an open and constructive relationship.
- Thank your MP for their time.

Media release to send the day before your meeting:

Find your local media contacts by googling the name of your local paper (e.g. the Inner West courier or the Great Southern Herald) and looking for a phone number or email.

****MEDIA ALERT TODAY****

XX MONTH 2014

TODAY: [YOUR AREA] RESIDENTS MEET [YOUR MP] TO TALK CLIMATE, REFUGEES & TAX

WHAT: [Your electorate] residents will meet with [Your MP] today to show how many GetUp supporters live here and which issues they want put on the new Parliament's plate.

WHERE: Electorate office of [Your MP], [Exact address of your MP's office].

WHEN: [Date, time].

WHO: A group of [number] GetUp members will deliver the GetUp in My Electorate report to [Your MP] - the report shows more than [number of members] GetUp members live in the area.

PIC OP: The group will be available outside [Your MP]'s office after the meeting. We can also provide a photo.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES: (YOUR NAME - YOUR NUMBER)

Media release to send the day after your meeting (with attached photo of your meeting)

XX MONTH 2014

[YOUR AREA] RESIDENTS MET [YOUR MP] TO TALK CLIMATE, REFUGEES & TAX

[Your area] residents met with [Your MP] today to show how many GetUp supporters live in the area and which issues they want put on the new Parliament's plate.

The group of [number] GetUp members delivered the GetUp in My Electorate report, which shows there are more than [the number of member] local GetUp members.

The report details issues GetUp members in [your electorate] care most about, including stronger action on climate change, fair treatment of refugees and a fairer tax system for all Australians.

"(Your quote here about why it was important for your MP to hear directly from your team and why it was important to question them about the issues that matter to your electorate)," team organiser [your name] said.

This is one of [Number of groups] groups from across the country meeting with their newly elected and returning MPs.

"We want to make sure that before our MPs make critical decisions on renewable energy, the Great Barrier Reef and schools funding, they sit down for a chat with GetUp members from their electorate," said GetUp's national director Sam McLean.

"We elect our MPs to represent all their constituents, including more than 600,000 GetUp supporters who live in every electorate in Australia."

MEDIA ENQUIRIES: (YOUR NAME - YOUR NUMBER)