

# *Made in L.A.* Event Planning Toolkit



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## About the Film

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*Made in L.A.* an Emmy-winning documentary that follows the remarkable story of three Latina immigrants working in Los Angeles sweatshops as they embark on a three-year odyssey to win basic labor protections from trendy clothing retailer Forever 21. In intimate observational style, *Made in L.A.* reveals the impact of the struggle on each woman's life as they are gradually transformed by the experience. Compelling, humorous, deeply human, *Made in L.A.* is a story about immigration, the power of unity, and the courage it takes to find your voice.

*Made in L.A.* premiered nationwide on the PBS documentary series, P.O.V, and has received numerous other national and international awards. For more information visit [www.MadeinLA.com](http://www.MadeinLA.com) (bilingual English/Spanish)

## About this Toolkit & Community Screenings

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This toolkit is designed to be used by community organizations, nonprofits, faith-based organizations and grassroots and student groups that want to screen *Made in L.A.* in their communities in order to draw attention to local issues or to create a dialogue around the issues in the film.

We have tried to make this toolkit detailed and comprehensive to empower you to do the best event possible, and we realize that some sections will not be applicable in every case. We are making suggestions, but you will have to decide what works best to reach and impact *your* audience.



Community screenings require a community-licensed DVD or one of our special “Fundraising Screening Kits” that contain posters, postcards and enough extra DVDs so that the kit both “pays for itself” and helps you raise additional funds for your organization. For more details and to obtain a Community-Licensed DVD or a Screening Kit, visit [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host).

Note that screenings held at universities, colleges, schools, public libraries and government institutions require the educational version of the DVD, which is available from our nonprofit educational distributor California Newsreel at [www.newsreel.org](http://www.newsreel.org). (Student groups, however, can often use a screening kit or a community licensed DVD. See special note at [www.MadeinLA.com/buy/#Student](http://www.MadeinLA.com/buy/#Student).)

Portions of this guide were adapted from the “*Made in L.A.* Event Planning Toolkit”, developed by Active Voice with funding from P.O.V. For crediting info about this toolkit please see page 11.

## Getting Started With Your *Made in L.A.* Event

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Consider your organization's goals and needs – and use the film to support them in a practical way. Before any film screening, you should consider the following:



### 1) IDENTIFY OBJECTIVES

Identifying your objectives will lay the foundation for your event planning. Think about what you'd like to get out of the event, how it can benefit your organization, and what is realistic. Here are a few suggested objectives (these are not mutually exclusive!):

- **Raise awareness** about the issues faced by low-wage workers, about immigrants' rights and immigration reform, the impact of immigration and globalization on labor and consumerism, and the benefits of labor organizing.
- **Heighten visibility** and spotlight the importance of your work by connecting it with the issues raised in the film.
- **Build bridges** between immigrant workers and community members.
- **Educate** immigrants and low-wage workers about their rights, and present them with opportunities that are available in your community.
- **Establish coalitions** with other organizations and inspire the development of new programs that address the needs of low-wage workers, the importance of conscious consumerism, and the need for fairer labor practices.
- **Engage general audiences** around how to be more conscious consumers.
- **Prompt local decision-makers** and business leaders to consider how addressing the needs of immigrant and low-wage workers benefits the community.
- **Fundraise for your organization.** You can buy a "Fundraising Screening Kit" to raise funds for your organization. For more information, visit [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host).

### 2) TARGET AUDIENCE

Once you determine your objectives, consider your target audience. Do you hope to cast a wide net and reach the community-at-large? Or do you want to narrow the focus to reach out to a specific sector or group? (E.g., low-wage workers, labor and immigrant-serving organizations, corporate reformists, unions, community organizers, activists, decision makers, foundations, etc.)

### 3) FRAMING EVENT TO MEET OBJECTIVES

Will you choose to focus on one particular issue, or a range of issues? You may simply choose to do a screening with brief comments before and after, but *it is best that you engage the audience in a way that enhances your work directly*. Here are some suggestions:

- **Community screening:** A screening/panel discussion designed to attract a range of community members – from interested individuals to community leaders – in a broader conversation about the ideas raised in the documentary (e.g., the implications of globalization and corporate institutions on low wage workers and their rights, how immigration is impacting or impacted by a globalized economy, the effect of labor organizing to raise workers’ standard of living and rights, how cultural communities can work together to raise awareness of low wage-workers circumstances and to improve conditions, etc.)
- **Town hall meeting:** A screening and forum for members of the community to learn more about the intersection of labor and immigrants’ rights in a local context, with an opportunity to voice related ideas, questions or concerns. The panel can include a low-wage worker involved in improving workers rights, a representative from a corporation practicing fair labor laws, an elected or government official focused on immigration reform, labor and immigration experts, a professor or other academic studying the relevant issues and an experienced facilitator. Reserve as much time as possible for dialogue with the audience. **Note:** An event like this should be held in a neutral space so that all community members feel comfortable expressing their opinions.
- **Cross-sector policy review:** An event designed to engage specific sectors, such as policy analysts, local government officials and community leaders in a thoughtful solutions-based conversation. The dialogue would be carefully framed, focusing on ways to better meet the needs of low-wage workers. To keep the conversation focused, this type of event is better as a small, invitational screening.



### 4) EVENT ENHANCEMENTS

- **Keynote Speaker:** Invite a local leader or scholar to speak about some of the themes the film raises, such as the global economy, consumerism, immigration, and labor rights. Try to screen the film for her/him in advance!
- **Invite the Filmmakers:** Depending on availability, the filmmakers are sometimes available to come speak about the film and to lead discussions. For more information about availability and fees, contact us at [www.MadeinLA.com/contact](http://www.MadeinLA.com/contact).
- **Invite (other) local organizations to speak:** Invite local organizations to come speak about the issues they face and the organizing they’re doing in the community. If you’re organizing the screening through your organization, you can invite members of other organizations working across the issues in *Made in L.A.*
- **Experienced Moderator:** This is especially useful if you’ll have a smaller group that wants to really tackle some of the tougher issues.





- **Reception:** Plan a special meet-and-greet with refreshments to allow opportunities for networking either before or after the screening. Depending on your budget and capacity, this could be open to the public or invite-only.
- **Exhibit hall:** Provide opportunities for co-sponsors to display information about their organizations and relevant programs/services they provide.
- **Performances:** Invite a local choir, band, playhouse or dance troupe to perform a piece dedicated to labor or the immigrant experience.

Finally, it's important to have **Action Steps:** Offer motivated audience members suggested ways they can help address labor issues. For example, they can volunteer at a local organization, become a more conscious consumer, get involved in a letter writing campaign to legislators to initiate labor law shifts, create a low wage worker committee to discuss issues facing workers regardless of industry, etc. For more ideas, visit our "Get Involved" page at [www.MadeinLA.com/get](http://www.MadeinLA.com/get).

## Getting the Word Out

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There are many ways to get the word out about your event. Remember that people will feel compelled to attend an event if it feels relevant, important and timely, and if it speaks to them as an audience. As you know, *Made in L.A.* covers many issues: labor rights, economic justice, immigration, Latinos/Latinas (culturally and politically),

community organizing, inter-ethnic organizing, women's empowerment and progressive lawyering. At any given time there will be many possible tie-ins to current events and "hooks" for particular media outlets or communities. And, because *Made in L.A.* has been awarded several prizes – including an Emmy Award – you should be able to reach "beyond the choir" to more general audiences to persuade them that their attendance at your event will be a rich, emotional and cinematic experience, in addition to an exploration of "important issues", which doesn't necessarily appeal to everybody.

Take into account how best to reach your target audiences. Not everyone uses e-mail, and not everyone hangs out at progressive coffee shops. A clear understanding of how to reach each audience segment will make you more effective, and the best strategy is likely to be a combination of the techniques listed below. And remember, the best publicity will do more than attract people to the screening: it will bring your message to a much wider audience than those that can attend the event itself!

Finally, be sure to send us your event information ([www.MadeinLA.com/contact](http://www.MadeinLA.com/contact)) so that we can publicize it for you on our Screenings page!

### 1) ELECTRONIC/VIRAL OUTREACH

This is one of the most effective ways to reach people, but attention spans are short, and it works best when it is accompanied by other sorts of outreach and publicity. In all electronic outreach, be sure to include a link to [www.MadeinLA.com](http://www.MadeinLA.com) so people can view the trailer, or better yet, embed the *Made in L.A.* trailer on your website so people can see a preview!

- **Newsletter or e-mail announcement:** You can use the downloadable flyer templates or the template e-mails we provide at [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host) as the basis to create an email announcement to spread the word about your event. We recommend you send out these emails at least twice: two weeks before, and then a reminder a few days before your event.
- **Blogs:** Reach out to any bloggers that you know and to bloggers who are popular with your target audience. Even a brief mention with a link to the event is helpful. Be sure to send them information to link to or embed the *Made in L.A.* trailer from [www.MadeinLA.com](http://www.MadeinLA.com) onto their site for increased impact.
- **Facebook, MySpace and Twitter:** Social networks like Facebook, MySpace and Twitter have become hugely important in reaching certain audiences, and can be especially useful when there's a Facebook or MySpace group connected to a specific local community such as a university, local organization, etc. We suggest setting up an "event" and inviting members of your community to forward and distribute the event information to friends. (Be sure to enable the features that allow people to forward your event information to their friends.) You can also just send a message with the event information to your friends and to groups that might be interested, including links to the *Made in L.A.* website and to our pages on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Made-in-LA/22661863480>) and MySpace (<http://www.myspace.com/madeinlathedocumentary>).

## 2) POSTERS & FLYERS

Putting up posters and flyers around your community, in the right coffee shops, and on community bulletin boards can be incredibly effective. We offer a number of free downloadable bilingual template flyers and mini-posters (at [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host)) that you can easily customize to include your event details and then print on your own printer and/or photocopy. Here are a number of ideas:

- Leave a stack of flyers at appropriate local businesses and ask if you can place a mini-poster in their window. Try video stores, coffee shops, restaurants, community centers, barbershops/salons, churches, synagogues, schools, campuses, and anywhere else that your audience likes to hang-out. You can also try placing an ad on local bus systems, on school shuttles, and similar places. (Some ambitious organizers have even gotten sponsorship from the local bus system in the form of free ad space!)
- Distribute flyers at events with similar themes. Be sure to send (or e-mail) flyers to co-sponsoring organizations to distribute at their events.
- Go to local organizations that do work around *Made in L.A.*'s themes (worker centers, women's organizations, immigrant rights organizations, public interest legal services, etc.) and ask if you can leave flyers at the entrance or if they'll post the mini-poster.
- The Screening Kits available on our website also include beautiful 27"x39" full-size movie posters that are very striking and that can attract a lot of attention for your event! Put them up in strategic locations where they'll really make an impact. We recommend attaching a simple flyer at the bottom with the basic details about your event.



### 3) LOCAL MEDIA

As mentioned earlier, we have designed this toolkit to be comprehensive in order to empower you to do the best event possible. We realize that some sections will not be applicable to every event and this section on local media is a great example – depending on your objectives and your audience, you may or may not decide to pursue media coverage. That’s fine, as it’s all about how best to reach and impact *your* audience. But read on for some guidance for how simple media outreach can be!



If you or one of your co-sponsoring organizations has a communications department that can take the reigns on contacting press, get them involved right away. But we understand that many community organizations may have limited capacity, so we’ve put together some basic tips that can be useful to those who are new to working with local media. Beforehand, you may want to do a little background reading to get acquainted with the basic steps and terms.

For a *beginners* overview read:

<http://www.causecommunications.com/diy/getnewscoverage.html>

For a full tutorial on news releases from the SPIN Project check out:

<http://spinproject.org/article.php?id=115> (The Spin Project has many other great resources on their site, a number of which are geared towards using media around economic justice issues.)

Before you make complicated plans about how to promote your event, spend some time thinking about who is most likely to understand and appreciate your event, and what media your target audience listens to, reads and logs on to. By targeting your core audience, you might decide that it makes more sense to focus on, say, an alternative weekly paper that already covers innovative community initiatives vs. the headline-driven daily paper that tends to focus on crime and celebrity.

Below are some basic tips for your media outreach:

- Use the template press release available at [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host) as a guide to create your own. Interesting details to include would be information on local wages and efforts to improve workers’ rights, a summary description of each of the important issues impacting local workers, statistics on immigrant workers in your community, and a complete list of the co-sponsoring organizations. Be sure to make a special mention if your event will feature the filmmakers or other special guests!
- Ten days before the event, issue the release to a wide range of mainstream, alternative, community and specialized media. Make sure to send it to reporters covering labor and immigration issues, women’s issues and the arts/entertainment and metro sections.
- If press wants photos or a press kit about the film itself, you can always direct them to [www.MadeinLA.com/press/materials](http://www.MadeinLA.com/press/materials) where those materials are available for download.
- Get the event on calendar listings in your city’s weekly publication(s) and on the web.
- Make calls to local television and radio programs. Let them know about your event, and be prepared to give them contact and title information of local experts or advocates that can

be available for interviews. Pay particular attention to local radio shows and shows that focus on themes in *Made in L.A.*, as they frequently need guests and may be very happy to promote a local event! Here's who to contact:

- Local TV news: assignment editors
  - Public affairs or magazine programs: producers
  - Talk radio or local/community radio: producers or hosts
- A couple of days prior to your event contact the people to whom you sent press materials and encourage them to attend the event. Pitch the value of this unique screening and the importance of educating people about the experiences of low-wage workers and immigrants in the community and the need for broader labor protections.

#### 4) CO-SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

We strongly encourage including other organizations in your event plans, as it helps you broaden your reach and establish new, potentially long-term coalitions. Allied organizations can get involved in a range of ways depending on their capacity. This can include getting the word out about the film through listservs or websites, contributing time or resources to the screening event and/or participating in a post-screening panel discussion.

There are many groups that would make good co-sponsors, including labor and immigrant rights organizations, low-wage worker coalitions, labor rights advocates, women's organizations, universities, organizations devoted to human rights issues and media/film centers.

The key in approaching co-sponsors is to help them understand how your event fits into their priorities as an organization, and how they will ultimately benefit from being associated with your plans. Be sure to allow enough lead-time – building new relationships often takes time.

#### 5) CAMPUS SCREENINGS

As with community screenings, finding on-campus co-sponsors is really important. Contact departments, research centers and student organizations that have an interest in the topic and ask them to be part of this event. This will increase the visibility and success of the event and will help put a spotlight on the issues in the film. (Note that depending how a campus event is sponsored, you may be required to use the educational DVD as opposed to a Community Screening Kit. See [www.MadeinLA.com/buy#Student](http://www.MadeinLA.com/buy#Student) for details.)

In addition to the outreach strategies mentioned above, specific have proven to be especially effective for campus events:

- Post information on websites, listservs and blogs at your school and at other schools in the area.
- Create a Facebook event and encourage students to forward it widely. (Don't forget to link to our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Made-in-LA/22661863480>)
- Send press release to on-campus newspapers & publications, on-campus radio & TV.





- Flyer around campus, table in the student mailrooms and dormitories, do chalking.
- Make a big banner outside a particular building (like Student Union, etc) advertising the event.
- Ask professors to offer school credit – this is a great way to bring students to the event, and they're never disappointed afterwards!
- Ask the departments involved to ask their professors to mention the event in their classes.
- Ask all the organizations and departments involved to include the information about the event in their newsletters.

## Before the Post-Screening Discussion Begins

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Before the discussion begins, we recommend that you:

### **1. Pass out the postcards that came with your *Made in L.A.* Screening Kit.**

These postcards will help audience members carry the message of *Made in L.A.* with them, and provide all the information they need to let their friends know about the film and research the issues further. You should also distribute any other materials (flyers, etc.), at this time, as some people may leave before the end of the post-

screening discussion. At [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host) you'll find a one-page "*Made in L.A.* Action Guide" flyer and a "Shop with a Conscience" flyer that you may want to download and distribute.

### **2. Announce that you'll be selling the DVDs that came with your *Made in L.A.* Screening Kit.**

In your Screening Kit, you received extra *Made in L.A.* DVDs that you can sell so that you can cover the cost of the screening kit and raise funds for your organization. We highly recommend that you announce that these DVDs are available at the beginning of the Q & A and that you have someone stationed with the DVDs at a table at the back of the room so that people will walk by that table as they leave. Our experience is that people normally want to buy DVDs after a screening, and every DVD out there in the world is doing good work!

## Tips for Post-Screening Discussion

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Complex films like *Made in L.A.* can raise a range of emotions, questions and/or concerns from the audience, and we recommend you address this with a post-screening discussion. At [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host) you'll find four issue-based Conversation Guides that will help you lead a conversation around issues of 1) Immigration and immigrant rights, 2) Organizing and workers rights, 3) Women's Empowerment and 4) Sweatfree and Fair Labor issues. Below

are some tips and ideas for framing the discussion, keeping the conversation moving and focusing the audience on important topics.

## 1) PANELISTS

Your post-screening discussion will vary depending on your event objectives, but it's always a good idea to have a range of perspectives represented on a panel.

- Your co-sponsors are great resources for identifying potential panelists for the discussion. Also, they'll have more incentive to promote the event if they're being represented on the panel.
- For a cross-sector discussion, you might include a low-wage worker, a labor and immigrants' rights advocate, a corporate representative, a policy expert, and an organizer with experience working on issues impacting low-wage immigrant workers. If you're planning a town hall-style event, it's good to include an experienced facilitator as well.
- If possible, ask panelists to screen the film before the event so they can prepare.
- Give your panelists an idea of who will be in the audience, so they can tailor the discussion to the audience's needs. For example, if you anticipate a general audience, ask panelists to tone down any sector-specific jargon.
- Have a translator present if you'll have audience members with limited English proficiency.

## 2) MEETING YOUR OBJECTIVES WITH THE DISCUSSION

The way the discussion is framed can be helpful in meeting your objectives.

- If you're hoping to build coalitions or enhance existing programs, the discussion should be action-oriented. Focus on what needs to be done, how to facilitate action, and how various community sectors can contribute.
- If you'd like to raise visibility, showcase your organization's work and make sure it's made clear why your work is important to the community. You'll also want to be sure that key people are in the audience, including press, potential funders and other influential decision makers.
- If your main objective is public education, have fact sheets handy. For example, you can download the "Shop with a Conscience" flyer from [www.MadeinLA.com/get](http://www.MadeinLA.com/get).
- Offer your audience members ways to get involved, and be sure to bring along information about specific actions that people can take in your community, nationally or globally. For example, you can direct people to *Made in L.A.*'s "Get Involved" page ([www.MadeinLA.com/get](http://www.MadeinLA.com/get)) or you may want to download and photocopy the "*Made in L.A.* Action Guide" you'll find there. You may also want to direct them to your own website, or to suggest specific local actions, like volunteering at a local workers' center.



### 3) CONTROLLING THE DISCUSSION



You might want to select an experienced moderator to keep the discussion moving and field questions from the audience.

If you have more than one person lined up to speak it is up to you to decide whether each speaker should give a brief reaction to the film in context to their work or if you want to go straight into a moderated discussion.

This is largely based on the time limitations you have, but if you have more than 30 minutes available it's a good idea to allow some time for speakers to introduce themselves – who they are and how their work is relevant to the issues raised in the film:

- As the panelists speak, encourage them to choose specific scenes from the film and link them to their comments.
- Be prepared for potential criticism. Although it is a very small possibility, you must be ready in case the film or speakers come under scrutiny. For example, there may be a lack of sympathy for immigrants that don't speak English or resistance to efforts to improve labor rights through union activity. A neutral moderator can help make sure that the conversation remains productive and many perspectives are heard.
- Guide any comments or concerns to a positive end that applauds the benefits of sharing information in an open forum. Encourage critical audience members to think about how the film might be a helpful way to address the tensions that they are feeling.

### Additional Resources

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Explore the *Made in L.A.* website's "Learn More" page at [www.MadeinLA.com/learn](http://www.MadeinLA.com/learn), which contains a great number of additional resources, including links to numerous organizations that deal with the issues portrayed in the film. You may also want to explore these links to find potential speakers or partner organizations in your area.

For more information about the film visit [www.MadeinLA.com](http://www.MadeinLA.com). To contact the filmmakers visit [www.MadeinLA.com/contact](http://www.MadeinLA.com/contact).

### Acknowledgements

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Portions of this guide were adapted from the "*Made in L.A.* Event Planning Toolkit", developed by Active Voice with funding from P.O.V.



**Active Voice** ([www.activevoice.net](http://www.activevoice.net)) is a nationally recognized non-profit team of strategic communication specialists who use film, television and digital media to spark social change. From grassroots to grass tops; online or big screen; documentary or narrative; independent or "interdependent" Active Voice works with preeminent filmmakers, funders, advocates and thought leaders to put human faces on the big issues of our times. Since its inception in 2001, Active Voice has built a diverse portfolio of film-

based campaigns focusing on a range of issues, including immigration, criminal justice, healthcare and sustainability.



Produced by American Documentary, Inc., the award-winning P.O.V. series ([www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov)) is the longest-running showcase on television to feature the work of America's best contemporary-issue independent filmmakers. P.O.V. has brought more than 250 award-winning documentaries to millions nationwide, and now has a Webby Award-winning online series, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. P.O.V. has brought more than 250 award-winning documentaries to millions nationwide. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues.

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## Crediting info

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## *Made in L.A.* Event Planning Checklist

Once you have defined your target audience, objectives, and framing, begin planning the event:

### **Preliminary planning – at least 6 weeks prior**

- Book the venue and date for your screening.
- Recruit local organizational partners to broaden your reach, and help identify roles for each one – such as publicity, panelist coordination, reception planning, etc.
- Determine speakers (including filmmakers), panelists, and moderator (if applicable).

### **Logistical planning – 3-4 weeks prior**

- Create a flyer to publicize your screening (template flyers at [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host)).
- Confirm that you have the right equipment to screen the DVD. You'll need a DVD player and a large TV: or a DVD player, a projector, screen and sound system.
- Secure food for reception (if applicable).
- Draft agenda and vet with partners.

### **Logistical planning – 2 weeks prior**

- Create an email blast to publicize your event electronically. (Template e-mails available at [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host)). We suggest sending one announcement 2 weeks prior and another several days prior.
- Contact community calendars about your event.

### **Media outreach – 10 days prior**

- Send out press releases to media outlets (template press releases at [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host)).
- Make calls to local television and radio programs.

### **Final planning – several days prior**

- Important:** test the DVD in advance of the event to make sure there aren't any glitches. Be sure that the screen is high enough so that everyone can read the subtitles!
- Send second round of email blasts.
- Follow up with press who expressed an interest in covering the story.
- Finalize agenda.
- Make copies of handouts, including literature from your organization, fact sheets, etc. If it's appropriate for your event, download and photocopy "Things You Can Do" and "Shop with a Conscience" flyers from [www.MadeinLA.com/host](http://www.MadeinLA.com/host).

### **At the event itself**

- As people arrive, ask them to sign up to receive updates from your organization.
- Before the discussion, pass out the postcards that came with your screening kit, along with any other materials.
- Before the discussion, announce that you have DVDs for sale and that these sales will help cover the cost of the screening! Set up a table near the exit and have someone stationed with the DVDs during the discussion.
- If possible, pass a *Made in L.A.* sign-up sheet around at your event (for download at [www.madeinla.com/get/host](http://www.madeinla.com/get/host)) and send it back to us so that we can add interested attendees to the *Made in L.A.* community & mailing list!
- Have a timekeeper so that panelists/speakers remain within their assigned speaking time.
- If possible, announce a call to action or have materials available for attendees to follow up.
- Encourage participants to spread the word and let them know that they can learn more about the film at [www.MadeinLA.com](http://www.MadeinLA.com).