

LWVCEF STUDY PROCESS: Study Committee Responsibilities

[Note: Throughout this document, the word "study" may be taken to indicate either a full study to create a new position or an update of an existing position.]

1. Normally, only one state study should be adopted at any convention.
2. Ideally, a state study will be a three-year process to avoid education and consensus activity interference with local Leagues' work during the federal election cycle. Any request for a shorter or longer timeline must be reviewed and approved by the LWVCEF board. The time frame may not be changed once the study is in process without express permission of the LWVCEF board.
3. An exploratory study committee that wishes to have its topic considered for recommendation by the LWVCEF board at convention must submit the following items as part of the program planning process. These should be distributed to all local Leagues, along with any other background material helpful to promoting the study, in time for each local League to consider the study as part of its own program planning meeting.
 - Rationale for the study
 - Outline of the study's proposed scope
 - Names of local Leagues that back the study and pledge to participate in the consensus.
4. When a study is adopted at a convention (either a recommended or a not-recommended item), with a completed study rationale and preliminary scope, the LWVCEF board will conduct a process to appoint the study committee members, including appointing the committee chair.
5. Once a study committee has been appointed, the following items must be completed within six months and approved by the LWVCEF board. If these items are not completed on time, it will be up to the discretion of the LWVCEF board whether to allow the study to proceed.
 - Attendance by the official study committee at a training session conducted by the LWVCEF board and/or staff detailing the fiscal and organizational responsibilities of all parties involved in the study. Consensus question framing will also be covered.
 - Development by the study committee of a more detailed scope of the study
 - Development by the study committee of the proposed schedule for the study, including deliverables
6. Development by the study committee of the proposed budget and funding sources for the study. *[Study budget and fundraising strategies must be developed with the executive director and follow LWVCEF policies.]*
7. Acquisition of funds for a not-recommended study. *[Recognizing that a not-recommended study is not included in the budget as proposed at a convention, a nominal amount of "seed money" will be provided in the LWVCEF budget to allow for startup costs for a not-recommended item. Study fundraising strategies must be developed with the executive director and follow LWVCEF policies.]*

8. The study committee should send regular updates to each local League beginning early in the study process—even while the study kit is still under development. These updates can include suggested readings, short articles, and ideas for meetings. Study committee members are encouraged to meet with local Leagues to help promote the study and to be available to answer questions from local League members.
9. The study kit must go out to local Leagues a minimum of nine months prior to the consensus due date to allow for local League scheduling.

***Sample Timeline for a
Three Year State Study Adopted May 2019***

[This schedule is intended to be very rough and allows a lot of leeway. It tries to take into account the “down” time that most local Leagues experience over the summer and around the holidays. Most importantly, it avoids the ongoing conflict between the study's education and consensus process and local League responsibilities relating to the Federal election cycle.]

May 2019: Study is adopted at convention

May–October 2019: Study committee is selected and trained; study scope, schedule, and budget are developed, board approves funding source and application, and funding is obtained

November 2019: The LWVCEF board gives go-ahead for study to begin

November 2019–June 2020: Study committee conducts research and develops consensus questions and study kit; sends out a reading list to local Leagues, along with suggested resources and/or activities; local Leagues form their own study committees

July 2020: The LWVCEF board approves study kit and consensus questions

August 2020–February 2021: Study committee distributes study kit to local Leagues and begins the process of educating local Leagues through other means—e.g., LWVC Web site articles; local Leagues form their own study committees

March–May and October–November 2021: Local Leagues educate their members and conduct consensus meetings

January–February 2022: Study committee crafts draft position based on local League Consensus Reports

March 2022: Study committee presents draft position to the LWVC board for review/editing

March–April 2022: Study committee revises position based on the LWVC board input

May 2022: Position is adopted at LWVC board meeting so that action may begin

May 2023: Position is formally ratified by members at convention along with the rest of the rest of the LWVC program

***Sample Timeline for a
Two Year State Study Adopted May 2019***

[A two-year study is one that is either a very limited study, or else a limited update study of an existing position. This schedule is intended to be rough and allows some leeway. It tries to take into account the “down” time that most local Leagues experience over the summer and around the holidays. Most importantly, it avoids the ongoing conflict between the study's education and consensus process and local League responsibilities relating to the Federal election cycle.]

May 2019: Study is adopted at convention

May–September 2019: Study committee is selected and trained; study scope, schedule, and budget are developed, board approves funding source and application, and funding is obtained

September 2019: The LWVCEF board gives go-ahead for study to begin

September 2019–July 2020: Study committee conducts research and develops consensus questions and study kit; sends out a reading list to local Leagues, along with suggested resources and/or activities; local Leagues form their own study committees

March 2020: The LWVCEF board has a first discussion of the proposed consensus questions

May 2020: The LWVCEF board approves consensus questions

Summer 2020: Study committee distributes study kit and leader’s guide to local Leagues. Local Leagues form their own study committees.

Fall 2020: Break for General Election

November 2020–March 2021: Local Leagues educate their members and conduct consensus meetings

April–May 2021: Study committee crafts draft position based on local League Consensus Reports

May 2021: Position is adopted at LWVC board meeting so that action may begin

May 2022: Position is formally ratified by members at convention along with the rest of the LWVC program

LWVCEF STUDY PROCESS: Board/Staff Responsibilities

1. Create a budget that includes the necessary board-approved funding sources for a board-recommended study or, alternatively, seed money for a possible not-recommended study, for the fiscal year following each convention. The process must follow LWVCEF policies.
2. Create and moderate a program planning list-serve for use by local League members.
3. Create an application form and "vetting" process for the members of any study committee—especially the chair. Qualifications will include:
 - League experience
 - Expertise in the area of the study
 - Project management experience, including writing skills
 - Time availability over the life of the study
 - Lack of bias toward a desired outcome.
4. Exercise final approval over the creation of the study committee, which ideally would consist of at least nine qualified members plus its chair.
5. Provide historical data to the study committee to allow for realistic budgetary and scheduling activity.
6. Present recommendations for hiring of part-time, temporary staff to support the study committee so that ongoing LWVC operations will not be jeopardized. *[These recommendations will assist the study committee in budgeting and in planning their fundraising strategy, which must follow LWVCEF policies.]*
7. Develop and conduct a training session for study committee members that covers, in great detail, the roles and responsibilities of all participants in the study process. Also, ensure that the study committee has copies of and has reviewed relevant League publications such as *Writing for League*.
8. Commit the necessary LWVC Program Committee time and effort to provide ongoing supervision of, documentation of, and punctual reporting on the study committee and its work, especially:
 - Completion of “deliverables” by the scheduled dates
 - Adherence to budget and to financial reporting procedures
 - Issues of attrition or non-participation by study committee members.Emphasis should be on early detection and resolution of problems.
9. Resolve to be willing to “pull the plug” on a study if ongoing problems are not addressed—e.g., schedules are not met, quality of research and analysis are not acceptable, study committee is non-functional, or too much staff time is being used to the detriment of the LWVC ongoing work.
10. Provide continual, repeated education of local Leagues about these procedures.