

International Year of Cooperatives 2025
Cooperative Network Newsletter, April 2025

This newsletter from the Cooperative Network shares some great jumping off points for sharing your “cooperative story!” We also encourage you to share any stories of how your credit union has [put people before profit here](#).

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2025 as the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC 2025). This year’s theme, ‘Cooperatives Build a Better World,’ underscores the enduring global impact of cooperatives, positioning them as essential solutions to today’s global challenges.

While IYC 2025 is intended to promote the cooperative movement around the world, it’s also imperative that we “think globally and act locally.” Cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin and throughout the world should always emphasize and promote the vital roles cooperatives play in our local communities and economies. After all, in enriching our local communities, we are in fact strengthening the fabric that underpins society, and by extension making the world a much better place.

Developing and communicating your “cooperative story” can help build stronger relationships with your members and your community, while also raising awareness, including among legislators and policymakers, about the benefits of the cooperative model.

Likely, your employees know about your cooperative’s charitable work in the community. Cooperatives are renowned for funding youth scholarships, supporting kids with their show animals, sponsoring local sports teams, helping stock food pantries and providing tornado/hurricane relief, etc. But can your employees give an elevator pitch about your cooperative’s economic impact? Can they explain how your cooperative circulates money within your community and how that results in other local investments, jobs, and overall economic vitality?

IYC 2025 recognizes the power of storytelling to “celebrate the inspiring work of cooperatives around the world.” At stories.coop you can find dozens and dozens of stories showcasing the tangible impact cooperatives make and how they help build a better world.

The website also contains a storytelling guide. Starting with advice that “stories are good when they capture people’s interest,” the guide includes some prompts:

- Why was your co-op created?
- What solution did your co-op develop for the community it serves?
- How do you help the community?
- What impact do you have on families?
- Who within your co-op community has inspiring stories to share?

You can learn more about the IYC at the [IYC website](#), including how to raise awareness about the IYC and communicate your efforts. The National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International (NCBA CLUSA) also has a webpage dedicated to the IYC, which also includes a list of [IYC events](#).

Cooperative Network also extends an invitation to our member cooperatives to tell us about any efforts or projects you're undertaking to recognize 2025 International Year of Cooperatives. We would be very pleased to share those efforts. Email details to: info@cooperativenetwork.coop.