



Build Your Advocacy Grantmaking


Advocacy Evaluation Tool Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool

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Alliance for Justice for
The George Gund Foundation
Evaluation of Advocacy Project

INTRODUCTION



BACKGROUND

The usual framework for evaluating direct services does not work well for advocacy. Grantmakers and grantees have to use a different framework to effectively evaluate advocacy. The Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool and Advocacy Evaluation Tool were developed for The George Gund Foundation as a pilot project implementing the Alliance for Justice's new evaluation of advocacy model. These tools were created by Alliance for Justice with assistance from Mosaica: The Center for Nonprofit Development and Pluralism. The project is based on material from *Investing in Change: A Funders Guide to Supporting Advocacy* by Alliance for Justice, and Mosaica's work with numerous organizations to evaluate advocacy capacity-building efforts and to identify organizational practices that are necessary to sustain advocacy work.

These tools were developed to assist both private and public foundations, as well as grantees, that are seeking better evaluation methods.

Funders and organizations can use the two tools together or separately. They can use the entire package or only portions of each tool. The tools are designed to complement each other to encourage funders and grantees to consider how they can build capacity and measure advocacy efforts.

PURPOSE OF THE TOOLS

Advocacy is challenging to evaluate and measure. Policy change usually results from a combination of strategies and actions by multiple constituencies—it can be difficult to show "cause and effect" between one specific organization's advocacy activity and a policy change. Because policy change is usually a long-term prospect, producing incremental results along the way, advocacy organizations must have the capacity to sustain their activities over time.

To assist funders and organizations with assessing both the outcomes of advocacy efforts and the ability of organizations to sustain those efforts over time, Alliance for Justice and Mosaica developed two assessment tools:

The Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool, which appears on pages 3–11, is designed to help organizations identify key ways to strengthen their advocacy capacity.

The Advocacy Evaluation Tool, which appears on pages 13–20, is designed to help organizations identify and describe their specific advocacy achievements. It has sections for both "pre-grant" and "post-grant" information.

WITH WHOM CAN FOUNDATIONS USE THE TOOLS?

Foundations can use these tools with:

- > Prospective grantees, new grantees, or current grantees
- > Advocacy organizations requesting general support, or organizations requesting support for a particular advocacy effort or campaign
- > Organizations that have been engaged in advocacy for years, as well as those with relatively little experience

HOW CAN FOUNDATIONS USE THE TOOLS?

There are a variety of ways for foundations to use the tools, ranging from an **informal guide** for internal discussions to a **formal assessment** of grantees. Foundations can use the *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool* to:

- > Assess the advocacy capacity of a prospective or current grantee and identify priority areas for capacity-building
- > Work with a grantee to develop a plan for building its advocacy capacity and to evaluate progress toward meeting capacity-building objectives
- > Become familiar with measures of an organization's capacity to effectively engage in advocacy work
- > Spark discussions among a foundation's staff and board, as well as with grantees, about advocacy and building effective advocacy organizations
- > Determine a prospective grantee's level of commitment to engaging in advocacy, especially if it is a new strategy for the organization

- > Consider the foundation's overall strategy towards funding advocacy

Foundations can use the *Advocacy Evaluation Tool* to:

- > Assess progress in meeting advocacy goals
- > Help grantees develop long-term and incremental measures of advocacy success and progress
- > Assist grantees in planning their advocacy efforts
- > Help grantees identify and apply lessons learned from advocacy efforts
- > Stimulate discussion among the foundation's board, staff, and grantees about how to accomplish effective advocacy and techniques for evaluating advocacy
- > Build realistic expectations for advocacy and advocacy capacity-building efforts funded by the foundation
- > Learn new perspectives on an issue of importance to the community

DEFINITION OF ADVOCACY AND OTHER TERMS

The tools use the term *advocacy* to encompass a broad range of activities that can influence policy—from researching, organizing, and building communications strategies to lobbying, networking, and educating voters. Both tools cover administrative, legislative, nonpartisan election-related, and legal advocacy strategies, as well as advocacy capacity-building (see each tool for the definitions of these and other terms).

HOW CAN THE RESULTS HELP FUNDERS MAKE GRANTMAKING DECISIONS?

Both the *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool* and the *Advocacy Evaluation Tool* can provide information to help make funding decisions, although in most cases neither tool will be the sole factor for determining whether to fund a particular organization or project. For example:

- > If an organization does not address an issue that is a foundation priority, the funder may choose not to fund it even if the tools suggest the organization has a strong advocacy capacity and has previously achieved positive advocacy results.

- > A funder may choose to fund an organization that has limited advocacy capacity if the organization is focused on an issue that is a foundation priority and the funder wants to help build the organization's advocacy capacity.

- > A funder may choose to fund an organization that has few of the advocacy capacity measures in place but has savvy and skilled advocacy leadership. In this case, the funder may want to encourage the organization to build its advocacy infrastructure so it is less dependent on one person.

- > A funder may decide to continue funding an organization's advocacy effort even if past efforts were not ultimately successful but the organization is achieving incremental results and is learning from its experience.

CUSTOMIZING THE TOOLS

Remember that the tools are simply that: *tools* that both foundations and grantees can use to strengthen the ability of organizations to impact the issues they care about. The tools will not provide easy answers to tough funding decisions, but they can help funders better understand an organization's advocacy capacity and potential for added effectiveness. Keep in mind that each organization is different and the experience and judgment of funders remain important while using the tools. Funders should feel free to modify the tools as they gain new insights from their experiences. We hope the tools will help stimulate learning among funders of advocacy and organizations that conduct advocacy.

When using these tools, foundations and grantees should keep in mind the rules for supporting and engaging in advocacy. A copy of *Investing in Change: A Funder's Guide to Supporting Advocacy* is included with your materials for that purpose. The tools and the *Funder's Guide* are designed to be used together.

For more information about the tools or to provide feedback about your experience using the tools, contact:

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Build Your Advocacy Grantmaking

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The Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool

Foundations can use the *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool* to assess the advocacy capacity of a prospective or current grantee, work with a grantee to develop a plan for building its advocacy capacity, or serve as a catalyst for discussion among the foundation's staff or with grantees. The indicators in this tool describe capacities to which an organization should *aspire* if it wants to institutionalize its advocacy work. Taken together, the measures encompass the knowledge, skills, and systems an organization needs to *sustain* its advocacy work. However, no one organization is expected to do everything.

The tool can provide information to help make funding decisions, but by itself *cannot* provide an easy "answer" to whether a funder should fund a particular organization or project. Because each organization is different, the experience and judgment of funders are important. For example, a foundation may wish to highlight measures that reflect important funding criteria it uses. Foundations may also adapt this tool as they gain new insights from their experiences with advocacy grantees.

USING THE ADVOCACY CAPACITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

Funders can use a "hands on" or a "hands off" approach for completing the *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool*. For example, a funder can:

- > Sit down with a current or prospective grantee and fill out the tool together as part of a site visit
- > Request that the grantee complete the tool as part of the application and reporting process
- > Post the tool on the foundation's website and suggest prospective grantees do a self-assessment in the process of planning their proposal

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

Funders should understand that the results of the *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool* will be different depending on the size, mission, and experience of the organization.

- > **Size of the organization**—Small organizations with few paid staff are less likely to have formal advocacy structures, such as systems for providing its constituents with prepared advocacy materials.
- > **Mission of the organization**—Organizations whose missions are primarily service-oriented are less likely to have organizational practices that support advocacy, such as decisionmaking structures or board-approved policy agendas.
- > **Level of experience with advocacy**—Organizations that are new to advocacy may still be developing their practices.

In all cases, the *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool* can help organizations understand what it takes to achieve and sustain effective advocacy and to identify areas where they can build their advocacy capacity.

ADVOCACY CAPACITY INDICATORS

The *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool* is organized around nine broad indicators of capacity:

- > decisionmaking structures
- > advocacy agenda
- > organizational commitment to and resources for advocacy
- > advocacy base
- > advocacy partners
- > advocacy targets
- > media skills and infrastructure
- > advocacy strategies
- > knowledge, skills, and systems to effectively implement strategies

CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

For each broad indicator of capacity, the tool lists specific measures of what capacity in this area “looks like.” Each measure can be assessed according to five qualitative descriptions (true, and functioning well; true, but needs strengthening; not true, but in process; not true, under consideration; and not true and not desired) as described in the box below.

DEFINITIONS

Advocacy—Efforts to influence public policy. This encompasses a broad range of activities—from researching, organizing, and building communications strategies to lobbying, networking, and educating voters.

Advocacy Capacity-Building—Activities that build an organization’s ability to effectively sustain advocacy efforts. Examples include building partnerships with other organizations, securing a board commitment to advocacy efforts, educating the public about advocacy systems, organizing constituency groups

to influence policy, and strengthening the advocacy skills of the organization’s staff, board, and members.

AVENUES FOR ADVOCATING CHANGE

Following are descriptions of the types of advocacy based on branch of government or the electoral process.

Administrative Advocacy—Activities that influence the development of regulations, executive orders, and other **executive branch** policy vehicles, as well as enforcement of the law.

Legislative Advocacy—Activities that influence decisions made by the **legislative branch**, including lobbying activities as defined by federal, state, and local laws.

Nonpartisan Election-Related Advocacy—Nonpartisan participation in the **electoral process**, such as activities that encourage voting and educate voters and candidates.

Legal Advocacy—Activities that use the **judicial branch** to influence policy through litigation.

Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

ORGANIZATION NAME		DATE
ADDRESS		
CONTACT PERSON	PHONE	E-MAIL
ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGET	NUMBER OF STAFF	
Type of Organization: <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy organization <input type="checkbox"/> Other organization with an advocacy component (e.g., an ongoing advocacy program or a specific advocacy project or activity)		
Organization is: <input type="checkbox"/> Prospective Grantee <input type="checkbox"/> Current Grantee <input type="checkbox"/> Renewing Grantee		

Foundations’ grantmaking practices and grantees’ activities should follow all relevant federal, state, and local laws. For information on the federal rules, see *Investing in Change: A Funder’s Guide to Supporting Advocacy*, Chapter II, published by Alliance for Justice.

INDICATORS OF CAPACITY

I. Decisionmaking Structures:

The organization has in place a decisionmaking structure that supports and manages its advocacy work.

Measures:

- This organization has a structure for policy advocacy (e.g., a public policy committee, the board, an advisory committee).
- This structure communicates or meets—in person or by phone—regularly and is actively involved in guiding the organization’s advocacy work.
- Members of this structure have knowledge and experience in advocacy.

STATEMENT IS:*	True, and Functioning Well	True, but Needs Strengthening	Not True, but In Process	Not True, but Under Consideration	Not True, and Not Desired
1. This organization has a structure for policy advocacy (e.g., a public policy committee, the board, an advisory committee).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. This structure communicates or meets—in person or by phone—regularly and is actively involved in guiding the organization’s advocacy work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Members of this structure have knowledge and experience in advocacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

* See examples of answers on page 4 for further clarification

EXAMPLES OF ASSESSMENT ANSWERS

When using this tool, measures will be rated according to one of five categories of functionality. The example below describes how you might rate the second measure under **Indicator III. Organizational Commitment to/Resources for Advocacy** (page 7).

Measure: “The organization’s Board of Directors is committed to advocacy”

True, and functioning well: You might decide this statement is “true, and functioning well” if the board understands the importance of advocacy to achieve its mission, regularly adopts an advocacy agenda, is updated on advocacy activities, and may be involved in doing some advocacy.

True, but needs strengthening: You might decide the statement is “true, but needs strengthening” if the board has approved committing resources to advocacy, but perhaps only a few board members truly understand advocacy work.

Not true, but in process: You might decide the statement is “not true, but in process” if the board is just beginning to accept the idea of advocacy and has scheduled training on the rules and regulations regarding nonprofit advocacy.

Not true, under consideration: You might decide the statement is “not true, under consideration” if the board is interested in advocacy, but is just beginning to discuss what it would mean to incorporate advocacy into its work.

Not true and not desired: You might decide the statement is “not true and not desired” if the proposed advocacy effort is a staff-driven, one-time only effort and advocacy will not become a significant part of the organization’s work. For some measures, the statement could be “not true and not desired” because the organization is partnering with another organization that has advocacy capacity or if the organization’s leaders do not see the value of building the board’s commitment to advocacy.

VI. Advocacy Targets:

The organization identifies, builds, and maintains working relationships and credibility with targets of its advocacy efforts, such as legislators and their staff, executive branch officials and their staff, or media. "Working relationships" exist when, for example, the advocacy target accepts and returns the organization's calls, engages in policy-related discussions with the organization, shares information with the organization about upcoming events related to the legislative, administrative, legal, and electoral processes, or is willing to consider requested action from the organization.

	STATEMENT IS				
	True, and Functioning Well	True, but Needs Strengthening	Not True, but In Process	Not True, but Under Consideration	Not True, and Not Desired
Measures:					
1. The organization identifies, builds, and maintains working relationships with appropriate legislators (and their staff) who make or influence policy decisions related to the organization's advocacy objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The organization deliberately builds relationships with elected officials who are members of all major political parties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The organization identifies, builds, and maintains working relationships with appropriate contacts in public agencies (e.g., agency directors, key administrators) that interpret and implement policies and programs related to its advocacy priorities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The organization identifies, builds, and maintains working relationships with lawyers, judges, and other stakeholders in the judicial process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. As part of its nonpartisan election-related advocacy, the organization clearly identifies and builds working relationships with groups that mobilize and inform voters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The organization identifies and builds relationships with individuals and groups who are not direct decision-makers but can influence key decision-makers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

VII. Media Skills and Infrastructure:

The organization communicates effectively and systematically with and through the media to publicize and advance its advocacy positions and messages.

Measures:

	STATEMENT IS				
	True, and Functioning Well	True, but Needs Strengthening	Not True, but In Process	Not True, but Under Consideration	Not True, and Not Desired
1. For each advocacy issue, the organization develops a clear message designed to share its position with specific audiences, such as policymakers, the media, and the general public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The organization has written policies and procedures to guide its media work, including identified media spokespeople.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The organization has a written media plan with defined objectives, media targets, strategies, and timelines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The organization has a process for monitoring media coverage and identifying opportunities for providing stories related to its advocacy priorities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The organization identifies, builds, and maintains relationships with key personnel in both print and broadcast media.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The organization understands and implements a variety of strategies to interest both electronic and print media (e.g., press releases, articles, op-eds, letters to the editor, meetings with editorial boards, blogs, messages with links to its website, paid ads, and TV and radio appearances).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

INDICATORS OF CAPACITY (continued)

IX. Knowledge, Skills, and Systems to Effectively Implement Strategies (continued)

Measures Related to Administrative Advocacy:

	STATEMENT IS				
	True, and Functioning Well	True, but Needs Strengthening	Not True, but In Process	Not True, but Under Consideration	Not True, and Not Desired
1. The organization can identify appropriate advocacy targets within the administrative/executive agencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The organization understands the regulatory framework, and rulemaking and enforcement processes of the agencies that implement policies and programs in its key issue areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The organization has a process for tracking rules and regulations to monitor the implementation of legislation related to its issue priorities at the administrative/executive level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The organization has staff resources for analyzing and commenting on proposed regulations and other administrative policies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

Measures Related to Nonpartisan Election-Related Advocacy:

	STATEMENT IS				
	True, and Functioning Well	True, but Needs Strengthening	Not True, but In Process	Not True, but Under Consideration	Not True, and Not Desired
1. The organization has a process for identifying the positions of candidates on a broad range of issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The organization has a strategy for informing its constituents/networks on a nonpartisan basis of candidates' positions on a broad range of issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The organization has a strategy and structure for promoting voter registration and voting by its constituents/networks and/or by underrepresented populations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The organization has a process for educating all viable candidates, as well as newly elected officials, on key issues facing its constituents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

INDICATORS OF CAPACITY (continued)

IX. Knowledge, Skills, and Systems to Effectively Implement Strategies (continued)

Measures Related to Legal Advocacy

	STATEMENT IS				
	True, and Functioning Well	True, but Needs Strengthening	Not True, but In Process	Not True, but Under Consideration	Not True, and Not Desired
1. The organization is able to determine when to use legal advocacy strategies, such as litigation or filing amicus briefs, to complement other advocacy strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The organization assesses the advantages and disadvantages of legal advocacy as a strategy for achieving specific objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The organization understands the underlying legal framework and systems for its priority issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The organization has access to competent counsel that can provide good advice on legal advocacy options and strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The organization assesses its capacity (e.g., staff expertise and funding) to engage in legal advocacy before doing so.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The organization understands and can support the legal advocacy done by other organizations around its priority issues (e.g., by filing amicus briefs).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

The Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool was developed for The George Gund Foundation to implement Alliance for Justice's evaluation of advocacy model. This tool was created by Alliance for Justice with assistance from Mosaica: The Center for Nonprofit Development and Pluralism.

**For more information about this tool or to give us your feedback, contact:
Susan Hoehstetter, Alliance for Justice, at fai@afj.org**

Build Your Advocacy Grantmaking

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The George Gund Foundation
Evaluation of Advocacy Project

The Advocacy Evaluation Tool



The Advocacy Evaluation Tool is intended to help foundations and grantees identify and measure advocacy effectiveness. Advocacy requires a different approach than might be used to evaluate other kinds of work by grantees, such as direct services. This tool is designed to help address some of those differences. Foundations can use the tool to:

- > Assess progress in meeting projected advocacy goals
- > Help grantees to develop long-term and incremental measures of success and progress
- > Assist grantees in planning their advocacy efforts
- > Help grantees identify and apply lessons learned from advocacy efforts
- > Stimulate discussion among the foundation's board, staff, and grantees about how to accomplish effective advocacy and techniques for evaluating advocacy
- > Build realistic expectations for advocacy and advocacy capacity-building efforts funded by the foundation

Each organization is different and the experience and judgment of funders remain important while using the tools. Not all types of examples in this tool will be appropriate for every organization or every advocacy effort, nor will they be all-inclusive. Each respondent should focus on areas that are relevant to its work.

USING THE ADVOCACY EVALUATION TOOL

Funders should request that grantees fill out the *Advocacy Evaluation Tool*, Part 1 at the beginning of the grant period and Part 2 at the end. Some foundations may request use of Part 2 for multiple reporting periods.

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

The results of the *Advocacy Evaluation Tool* must be considered within the fluid nature of advocacy work.

For example:

- > *The changing environment for advocacy often requires organizations to change plans*—Organizations that do advocacy must be flexible because effective advocacy often requires a continuous reassessment of strategies, activities, and intended results. Organizations may need to make adjustments during the project to take advantage of new opportunities or respond to unforeseen threats.
- > *Effective advocacy work can fail to achieve policy objectives*—In any advocacy project, the external environment can greatly affect outcomes. An organization might skillfully execute each of its planned strategies and activities, but still fail to influence policy to the extent desired because of some factor over which it has no control. That organization will, however, have built its capacity, developed relationships, and learned lessons that will impact future advocacy efforts.

ADVOCACY EVALUATION

The *Advocacy Evaluation Tool* is intended to help organizations articulate advocacy goals, strategies to achieve those goals, and benchmarks to evaluate progress and outcomes. The tool measures effectiveness by evaluating the grantee's commitment to and evolution of the advocacy and advocacy capacity-building objectives, relevant benchmarks throughout the project, and lessons learned from the effort. Four types of advocacy strategies are used to help measure the overall effectiveness of a grantee's advocacy efforts:

- administrative advocacy
- legislative advocacy
- nonpartisan election-related advocacy
- legal advocacy

Organizations may use one or more of these strategies in their advocacy work. Indicators from the *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool* are suggested as a way to measure the effectiveness of a grantee's efforts to build and sustain its advocacy work.

Not all types of advocacy strategies nor all types of advocacy capacity indicators in the *Advocacy Evaluation Tool* will be appropriate for every organization or its advocacy efforts.

It is important to note that the value of evaluation, especially in the context of advocacy, is not only in whether a particular policy was changed or maintained but also in the capacities and networks that were built, the constituencies reached and relationships developed, and the lessons learned that can inform and shape future efforts.

CONTENTS OF THE ADVOCACY EVALUATION TOOL

The Advocacy Evaluation Tool consists of three parts:

- Advocacy Evaluation Tool Part 1
 - Advocacy Efforts
 - Advocacy Capacity-Building
- Advocacy Evaluation Tool Part 2
 - Advocacy Efforts
 - Advocacy Capacity-Building
- Overall Lessons Learned

Each part contains instructions for when and how to complete it.

DEFINITIONS

Advocacy—Efforts to influence public policy. This encompasses a broad range of activities—from researching, organizing and building communications strategies to lobbying, networking, and educating voters.

Advocacy Capacity-Building—Activities that build an organization's ability to effectively sustain advocacy efforts. Examples include building partnerships with other organizations, securing a board commitment to advocacy efforts, educating the public about advocacy systems, organizing constituency groups to influence policy, and strengthening the advocacy skills of the organization's staff, board, and members. (Note: See *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool* for more information.)

AVENUES FOR ADVOCATING CHANGE

Following are descriptions of the types of advocacy based on branch of government or the electoral process.

Administrative Advocacy—Activities that influence the development of regulations, executive orders, and other executive branch policy vehicles, as well as enforcement of the law.

Legislative Advocacy—Activities that influence decisions made by the legislative branch, including lobbying activities as defined by federal, state, and local laws.

Nonpartisan Election-Related Advocacy—Nonpartisan participation in the electoral process, such as activities that encourage voting and educate voters and candidates.

Legal Advocacy—Activities that use the judicial branch to influence policy through litigation.

EVALUATION TERMS

Goals—The long-term accomplishments that advance your organization towards achieving its mission. Strategies, activities, results, etc. may change during the grant period, but the goal should remain the same.

Strategies—Approaches to reaching goals; specific plans for working through administrative, legislative, nonpartisan election-related, and legal avenues for advocating change to meet goals. Each strategy will have specific outcome and progress benchmarks.

Benchmarks—Measures of progress or effectiveness of advocacy work and advocacy capacity-building. Benchmarks may be specific accomplishments or activities established along the path toward goals. This tool measures both outcome benchmarks and progress benchmarks.

Outcome Benchmarks—Specific accomplishments that demonstrate success in achieving the objectives of advocacy strategies or of capacity-building goals.

Progress Benchmarks—Specific accomplishments or activities that demonstrate significant steps toward achievement of outcomes. There are two ways to measure progress: key activities and incremental results.

Key Activities—Major efforts that implement advocacy strategies or build organizational capacity for advocacy. When an activity is used to implement more than one advocacy strategy or impact more than one advocacy capacity-building goal, it is called a *Cross-Cutting Activity*.

Incremental Results—Results of activities that move an organization towards its desired outcome benchmarks.

Advocacy Evaluation Tool PART 1

TO BE COMPLETED AT THE **BEGINNING** OF THE GRANT PERIOD

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

ORGANIZATION NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

CONTACT PERSON _____ PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGET _____ NUMBER OF STAFF _____

Type of Organization: Advocacy organization Other organization with an advocacy component (e.g., an ongoing advocacy program or a specific advocacy project or activity)

Organization is: Prospective Grantee Current Grantee Renewing Grantee

Please complete pages 19–23 below, using additional paper if necessary. Fill in with as many items as appropriate for your organization.

Foundations' grantmaking practices and grantees' activities should follow all relevant federal, state, and local laws. For information on the federal rules, see *Investing in Change: A Funder's Guide to Supporting Advocacy*, Chapter II, published by Alliance for Justice.

ADVOCACY EFFORTS

I. Summary of Organization's Advocacy Goal(s) and Strategies for the Grant Period:

A. Desired Advocacy Goal(s):

In this section, state your ultimate goal or goals for your work under this grant.

Example:

Goal: To reduce childhood exposure to lead by lowering lead levels in Springfield's water supply.

B. Strategies Planned to Achieve the Goal(s):

Describe the advocacy strategies you have planned to achieve your goal(s). Advocacy strategies can be administrative, legislative (within legal limits), nonpartisan election-related, or legal. Include as many as possible. These terms are defined on page 18. **Not all strategies will be appropriate, relevant, or manageable at one time for most organizations.**

Examples:

Administrative: Convince the Springfield Water Authority to issue new regulations requiring lower lead levels in the water supply as allowed by existing legislation.

Legislative: Influence legislators at the local level (City Council) to pass legislation prohibiting certain types of commercial dumping into the water supply.

Legal: Bring litigation to immediately stop dumping products that raise lead levels in the water.

Nonpartisan Election-Related: Join coalition of organizations to educate Springfield voters about the positions of candidates for City Council on a broad range of issues, including those related to lead in the water supply.

II. Advocacy Benchmarks For a long list of sample benchmarks see Appendix F of *Investing in Change: A Funder's Guide to Supporting Advocacy*. This section describes the outcomes and progress you are seeking through the strategies described above. Benchmarks succinctly describe effort and effectiveness.

A. Advocacy Outcomes:

Intended Outcomes: List the outcomes you intend to achieve.

Examples:

Administrative: The Springfield Water Authority will adopt new regulations that tighten limits on lead levels in the public water supply from x% to y%.

Legislative: City Council will pass legislation prohibiting certain kinds of dumping that will effectively stop at least half the commercial dumping into the Springfield water supply.

Legal: The local court will issue a temporary injunction to block the biggest industrial dumpers.

Nonpartisan Election-Related: Voters who attend candidate forums will make informed decisions in the upcoming election that will reflect their interests.

B. Advocacy Progress:

Identify the Major Activities Planned and Incremental Results Sought in order to achieve outcomes listed above.

B1. Major Activities Planned: Describe the activities you plan to undertake to achieve your advocacy outcomes.

Examples:

Cross-Cutting Activities: Produce report on the causes of elevated lead levels in Springfield water supply, health effects, and recommendations for reducing levels; draft two articles for publication in the local media; organize a "safe water" coalition of other organizations concerned about health and the environment.

Administrative Activities: Meet with Springfield Water Authority director and key staff regularly to share and discuss our report findings and recommend new regulations to tighten limits.

Legislative Activities: Draft proposed language for legislation to prohibit dumping; send email action alerts to consumers living in Springfield.

Legal Activities: Develop legal complaint urging temporary injunction on illegal commercial dumping.

Nonpartisan Election-Related Activities: Through coalition, sponsor three City Council candidate debates on a broad range of issues that are open to the public.

B2. Incremental Results Sought: Describe the results that will move you closer to your desired advocacy outcomes.

Examples:

Cross-Cutting Results: Publish a positive editorial in the local newspaper; receive email and phone inquiries from members of the public who heard about our study and wanted more information; successfully encourage five other organizations to add the issue to their agendas.

Administrative Results: Increase our credibility with water authority officials as a source of information about the impact on children of lead in drinking water, as demonstrated by meeting at least twice with high-level officials who have read or heard of our report; obtain support for new regulation on lead levels from at least one high-level official.

Legislative Results: Obtain a commitment from key City Council members to introduce legislation; generate at least 100 emails/letters from consumers to key City Council members; get at least ten organizations to be part of a sign-on letter to City Council.

Legal Results: Enroll at least five coalition partners to sign onto an amicus brief urging a temporary injunction to block industrial dumping.

Nonpartisan Election-Related Results: Get at least 500 consumers to attend candidate debates sponsored by coalition.

I. Summary of Organization's Advocacy Capacity-Building Goal(s) for the Grant Period

Desired Advocacy Capacity Goal(s):

State your ultimate goal or goals for developing organizational advocacy capacity under this grant.

Example:

Goal: To develop adequate advocacy capacity in the organization that will support current and future advocacy efforts to influence public policies on childhood exposure to lead.

Four horizontal lines for writing the desired advocacy capacity goal(s).

II. Advocacy Capacity Benchmarks:

This section describes the advocacy capacity outcomes and progress toward achieving the goals described above. (The types of benchmarks used in the examples below—Advocacy Agenda, Organizational Commitment, etc.—are Advocacy Capacity Indicators drawn from the Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool.)

A. Advocacy Capacity Outcomes:

Intended Outcomes: List the advocacy capacity outcomes you intend to achieve.

Examples:

Advocacy Agenda: The organization will develop a comprehensive, written, long-term policy agenda for addressing childhood exposure to lead that is supported by a majority of organizational members, as well as a significant number of community members and partners, and that can be effectively marketed to partners and policymakers.

Organizational Commitment: Members of the board will learn the basic rules governing advocacy and lobbying and will commit to raising more flexible funds to expand advocacy efforts.

Advocacy Base and Partners: Expand our base and networks to include 200 organizational and community members adequately knowledgeable about our issues and about advocacy systems; engage these networks to rapidly respond to our email alerts; partner with a few nontraditional allies; develop a system and capacity to use technology for web and email-based action alerts that can reach 2,000 members.

Media Skills and Infrastructure: Develop a written media plan and good working relationships with at least one key reporter and one key editorial writer at our local paper.

Four horizontal lines for listing intended outcomes.

B. Advocacy Capacity Progress:

Identify the Major Activities Planned and Incremental Results Sought in order to achieve the outcomes listed above.

B1. Major Activities Planned: Describe the activities you plan to undertake to achieve your advocacy capacity outcomes.

Examples:

Advocacy Agenda: Create a policy committee of the board to work with staff involved in advocacy to draft a written long-term policy agenda for addressing childhood exposure; survey organizational members, key community members, and key decision-makers about their views and synthesize responses.

Organizational Commitment: Contract with an advocacy trainer to educate the board about the rules governing advocacy, including lobbying; provide case examples to the board on the impact of advocacy.

Advocacy Base and Partners: Contract with an advocacy trainer to educate our members on the rules governing advocacy at our annual conference; hold individual meetings with key organizations to get their support; research existing technology for email and web-based grassroots advocacy communications, purchase and set up systems, and get staff trained in their use.

Media Skills and Infrastructure: Create an internal "task force" that begins drafting a written media plan; identify and meet frequently with key reporters and editorial writers at the local newspaper.

Four horizontal lines for describing major activities planned.

B2. Incremental Results Sought: Describe the results that will move you closer to your desired advocacy capacity outcomes.

Examples:

Advocacy Agenda: Draft advocacy agenda gains support from board chair and other key stakeholders.

Organizational Commitment: Board training is held and staff is asked afterwards to look into opportunities for raising more flexible funding.

Advocacy Base and Partners: At the annual conference, 150 organizational members will write their comments to a policymaker for the first time; 800 individuals will receive at least five advocacy updates/alerts using the new electronic advocacy communications system, demonstrating the capacity of the system by not disrupting staff doing other work.

Media Skills and Infrastructure: The local newspaper will request our materials for background when writing stories about water quality; outline of a draft media plan is distributed internally for comments.

Four horizontal lines for describing incremental results sought.

Advocacy Evaluation Tool **PART 2**

TO BE COMPLETED AT THE **END*** OF THE GRANT PERIOD

ORGANIZATION NAME

CONTACT PERSON

DATE

Please complete pages 25-28 below, using additional paper if necessary.

Foundations' grantmaking practices and grantees' activities should follow all relevant federal, state, and local laws. For information on the federal rules, see *Investing in Change: A Funder's Guide to Supporting Advocacy*, Chapter II, published by Alliance for Justice.

ADVOCACY EFFORTS

I. Summary of Organization's Advocacy Goal(s) and Strategies for the Grant Period:

A. Achievement of Advocacy Goal(s):

Broadly explain whether your goal(s) stated in Part I of the Evaluation Tool was fully met, partially met, or not met.

Example:

As a result of obtaining a temporary injunction against commercial dumping in the water supply, we can expect a small decrease in lead levels. The outlook for further reduction in lead levels over the next two years is excellent given the progress we are making with educating the Springfield Water Authority.

B. Strategies Taken to Achieve the Goal(s):

The strategies listed here may be the same as those listed in the Strategies Planned section in Part I of the Evaluation Tool, or they may be different. If the advocacy environment changed during the grant period, the organization may have developed new strategies.

Example:

We are continuing our legislative, nonpartisan election-related, administrative and legal strategies but with a greater focus on the administrative and legal.

* Some foundations may request use of Part 2 of the Evaluation Tool for multiple reporting periods.

B. Strategies Taken to Achieve the Goal(s):

Tell the Story:

Explain any changes to your original strategies. Be clear about your organization's role.

Example:

Because City Council members became embroiled in a battle over the new football stadium, there was little time for them to consider other issues. After six months, we decided to shift our organization's focus and resources to the legal and administrative strategies while maintaining a limited presence with Council members in order to build relationships for future work with them.

II. Advocacy Benchmarks:

For a long list of sample benchmarks, see the appendix of *Investing in Changes: A Funders Guide to Supporting Advocacy*. This section describes the outcomes and progress you achieved through the strategies described above. Benchmarks succinctly describe effort and effectiveness.

A. Advocacy Outcomes:

Outcome Benchmarks: List the outcomes you have achieved during the grant period, including *partial ones*, such as, *the Water Authority reduced allowable lead level limits by 10% although we sought a 30% reduction.*

Tell the Story: Explain any changes to your desired outcomes for advocacy as stated in Part I of the Evaluation Tool. Be clear about your organization's role in affecting these outcomes.

B. Advocacy Progress:

B1. Major Activities Accomplished: Describe the major activities you engaged in towards achieving your planned outcomes.

Tell the Story: Explain any changes to major activities listed in Part I of the Evaluation Tool and why you made them. Be clear about your organization's role.

B2. Incremental Results Obtained: Describe the results achieved to help you move toward your desired outcomes.

Tell the Story: Explain any changes to your incremental results sought as stated in Part I of the Evaluation Tool. Be clear about your organization's role in affecting these results.

ADVOCACY CAPACITY-BUILDING

I. Summary of Organization's Advocacy Capacity-Building Goal(s) for the Grant Period:

Achievement of Advocacy Capacity Goal(s):

Broadly explain whether your goal(s) stated in Part I of the Evaluation Tool was fully met, partially met, or not met.

II. Advocacy Capacity Benchmarks:

This section describes the advocacy capacity outcomes and progress toward achieving the goal(s) described above. (The types of benchmarks used in the examples in Part I of the Evaluation Tool—Advocacy Agendas, Organizational Commitment, etc.—are Advocacy Capacity Indicators drawn from the *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool*.)

A. Advocacy Capacity Outcomes:

Outcome Benchmarks: List the advocacy capacity outcomes you have achieved during the grant period.

ADVOCACY CAPACITY-BUILDING

B. Advocacy Capacity Progress:

B1. Major Activities Accomplished: Describe the major activities you engaged in towards achieving your planned advocacy capacity outcomes.

B2. Incremental Results Obtained: Describe the results achieved to help you move toward your desired advocacy capacity outcomes.

Tell the Story: Explain any changes made in the work described in Part I of the Evaluation Tool in the Advocacy Capacity Building section (includes Goals, Outcomes, Major Activities, and Incremental Results Sought) from the beginning of the grant period, and why you made them.

OVERALL LESSONS LEARNED

Please answer the four questions below on separate paper and try to use 100 words or less for each

1. What major activities accomplished do you think were most useful in bringing about the outcomes and incremental results you achieved during the grant period?
2. Discuss any challenges you faced and your efforts to overcome them. Were you successful in overcoming challenges? Why or why not?
3. Based on the lessons learned from this project, what, if anything, will you do differently in future advocacy efforts or projects?
4. Will you continue to do advocacy? Why or why not?

**For more information about this tool or to give us your feedback, contact:
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