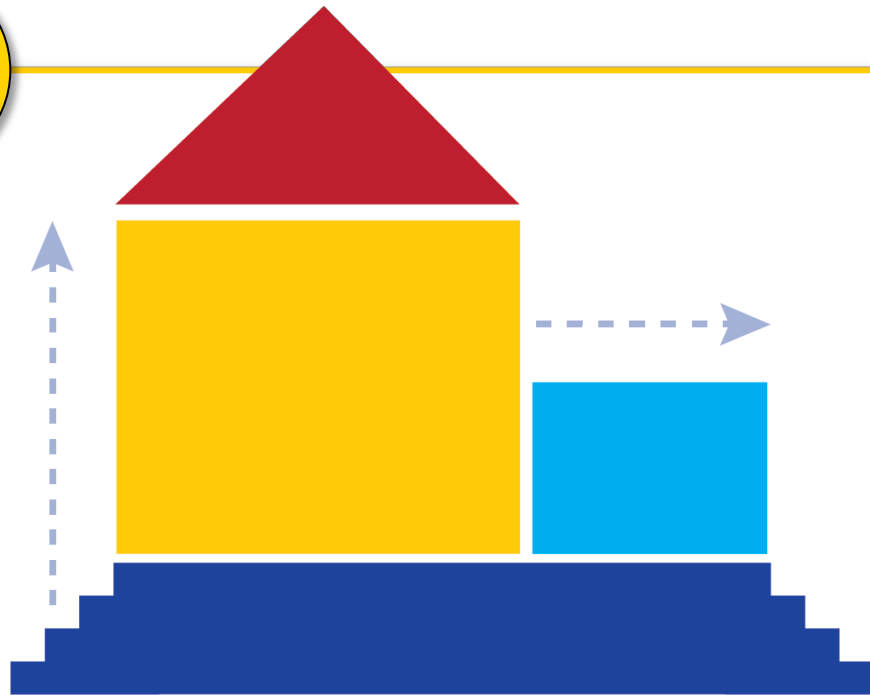


2



BUILD A
MOVEMENT!

USING PUBLIC POLICY TO ACHIEVE YOUR MISSION

2. Everyday Advocacy: Become a Build-Ready Organization



WASHINGTON NONPROFITS

washingtonnonprofits.org | (855) 299-2922 | info@washingtonnonprofits.org

Part 2 of a series. Download the rest from the Washington Nonprofit Institute:

wanonprofitinstitute.org/advocacy

IMPORTANT NOTE

This information is provided for educational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice. If you are unsure about anything covered in this toolkit, we suggest that you contact the appropriate agency or an attorney. In Washington State, Wayfind is a great place to start: wayfindlegal.org.

Thank you!

The following individuals have served as advisors and shared tools to develop this toolkit.

Gabriela Quintana	Amber Johnson, Spokane Neighborhood
Jon Gould, Children's Alliance, Seattle	Action Partners, Spokane
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of King County, Seattle	David Streeter & Laura Pierce, Washington
Hikma Sherka, Youth Development Executives	Nonprofits
of King County, Seattle	David Lawson, Elaine Rose, & Jodi Nishioka,
	Wayfind

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MORE FINE PRINT

Build a Movement! was written for 501(c)(3) nonprofits in Washington State. Much of the information here is also useful for other types of nonprofits, who can also participate in advocacy but may have differing rules or limits. If you are using this resource outside of Washington, make sure you consult the laws that govern advocacy and lobbying where you are. You might start with your state's nonprofit association and the state agency that oversees nonprofit organizations in your state, often the offices of the Attorney General or Secretary of State.

Local jurisdictions have their own rules. In the City of Seattle, for example, you need to register as a lobbyist to try and influence legislation by the City Council. Check with your city or county to make sure you comply with relevant rules. The best ways to check are searching Google with the county or municipality name and the words "lobbying disclosure" (ex. Pierce County lobbying disclosure) or call the local council and ask if they have a lobbying disclosure requirement.

Washington State

Public Disclosure Commission

711 Capitol Way South #206
PO Box 40908
Olympia, WA 98504-0908
(877) 601-2828
(360) 753-1111

Email: pdc@pdc.wa.gov

Website: <https://www.pdc.wa.gov>

Internal Revenue Service

(800) 829-4933

<https://www.irs.gov/help/contact-my-local-office-in-washington>

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How to use *Build A Movement!*

Build A Movement! has 8 parts:

YOU ARE HERE	Name	What	Where
	Overview	Information about Build a Movement.	Combined guide
	Groundwork	Common language and core principles of nonprofit advocacy	
	Everyday Advocacy	Basic good practices and upkeep	Guide
	Urgent Advocacy	Unexpected advocacy to respond to a challenge or opportunity	Online resource
	Step-It-Up Advocacy	Lobbying and more	Guide
	Activities	A guide on key advocacy activities	Guide
	Tools	Templates and samples ready to use	Online library
	Resources	Links to other organizations	Online list with links

Everything is available on the Washington Nonprofit Institute website:

wanonprofitinstitute.org/advocacy

There is no one place to start. You can choose your own pathway forward.

Four Foundations of a Build-Ready Organization

A well-tuned vehicle is more likely to reach its destination. Likewise, a “build-ready” organization is better positioned to take advantage of opportunities and face challenges. These organizations have the people, systems, and policies in place to use every tool possible to achieve their mission.

There are four foundational areas to focus on as you get your nonprofit ready to advocate in a policy setting:



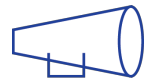
A. People



B. Culture



C. Plan



D. Communications



A. People

Your people are the heroes of this story. Your staff is doing the work, so they know about the impact of change. Your board brings connections and credibility. Your clients or participants offer passion and stories. People are your biggest asset in leveraging policy to achieve your mission.

There are three areas to explore when it comes to people and advocacy: **Roles, relationships, and coalition-building.**

1. Roles

Everyone has a role to play when it comes to building a movement around your mission. By integrating advocacy functions into staff and board job descriptions, work plans, and other performance measures, you build advocacy into the life of the organization.

On the following page are some ways that nonprofit roles intersect with advocacy and what tasks each position might do towards building a movement.

Job	Advocacy role
Board President	<p>Include advocacy in board job descriptions</p> <p>Include policy discussions on board agendas</p> <p>Provide training to board members</p> <p>Support the Executive Director in tracking key policy issues</p> <p>Encourage the board to take positions on key issues</p>
Board Member	<p>Ask about how the organization's mission connects with the larger policy environment</p> <p>Represent the organization to policymakers</p> <p>Practice storytelling skills</p>
Executive Director	<p>Be a spokesperson for your mission and cause</p> <p>Prepare staff to perform advocacy role of connection and storytelling</p> <p>Track policies that might impact the mission</p> <p>Reserve time for networking and coalition participation</p>
Development Director	<p>Explain to donors the importance of their investment in general operating support that allows connection and relationship building</p> <p>Involve donors in conversations about the systems that cause the need for the organization</p>
Volunteer Manager	<p>Invite volunteers to participate in legislative visits (as appropriate)</p> <p>Collect stories from volunteers to inform advocacy efforts</p>
Program Staff	<p>Collect stories from the people you serve</p> <p>Share relevant data to illustrate your organization's positions</p>
Communications Staff	<p>Tie the story of the organization back to its purpose</p> <p>Tell the stories of how policies impact the mission</p> <p>Tell how public investments lead to community results</p>
Volunteers and Clients	<p>Many nonprofits do not have staff in all the roles listed above. Volunteers can provide leadership through a policy committee. People you work with may be the best spokespeople to participate in legislative visits and other advocacy activities because they can speak from direct experience. Bring them along to lobby legislators!</p>

Your Board Members Have Special Superpowers

We particularly encourage you to engage your board members in policy advocacy. Board members can be especially effective advocates because:

- They are volunteers who are clearly there solely because of their passion for your cause.
- They may have connections or respect as community leaders. That credibility can help you get decision-makers' attention.
- Advocacy is an opportunity for your board members to lead and to more deeply understand the work of your organization.

Stand For Your Mission is a great resource that focuses specifically on why and how board members can become powerful advocates.



Just as everyone within an organization bears responsibility for fundraising, everyone in an organization has a role in building a movement!

2. Relationships

An organization's effectiveness depends on relationships!

Identify the Decision-maker

Who does your nonprofit know outside the organization who can influence funding or policies? To engage in advocacy, you will need to identify who are the decision-makers on the issues you are focusing on. Use tools in other parts of this toolkit to identify the people you would like to influence.

Find the Right Advocate(s)

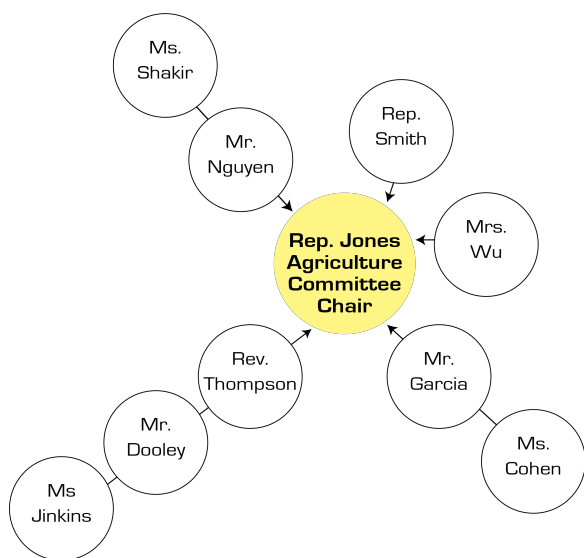
Who cares about your organization's mission enough to speak loud and proud about its impact in the community? Who can speak from their experience about why the policy change you are proposing will make a difference? Who has connections to the policymakers you want to reach? You may need a single spokesperson or a delegation that can present a compelling case.

There are different ways to map relationships and help you understand who are your best representatives. Here are two ideas for you to try:

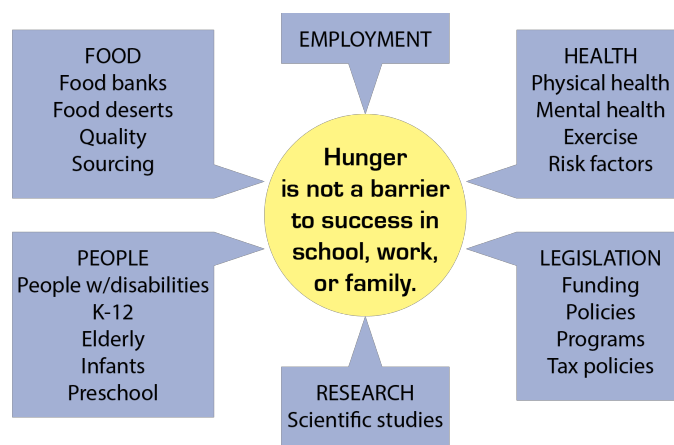
a. Power Mapping: This is a visual tool used by nonprofit leaders to identify how to have maximum influence. At the center is the decision-maker, with people or organizations affiliated with the decision-maker mapped outwards. Once you develop your power map, you will know where to put your energy. See the **Activities Guide** for more information on power mapping.

You can increase your power by expanding your network. Participation in civic groups like Rotary and Kiwanis, serving on a board or commission, or providing leadership to your faith congregation are examples of ways you can meet other community leaders and gain influence. In addition to your own circles, your board, staff and volunteers all have networks that may intersect with the power map of a decision-maker. Ask them about their connections or have each person create their own power map (their network of contacts) in a retreat so that you are aware of who they are connected to.

b. Purpose Mapping: This is a visual tool used by nonprofit leaders that articulates why an organization exists (its purpose). A purpose is a profound statement that motivates the people inside and outside the organization to be involved in its work. By doing a purpose map, you can identify more people who care about your purpose and may join your movement. See the **Activities Guide** for more information on purpose mapping.



Power Map



Purpose Map

C. Research Campaign Contributions. In the United States, campaign contributions are publicly available information. As you would with donor prospecting, you can use information available through the Public Disclosure Commission, Open Secrets, and the National Institute on Money in Politics to find out who is supporting a particular legislator's campaign. If you spot someone you recognize among the contributor list, you may be able to ask them for an introduction to an elected official or even recruit them to be your advocate.

D. Getting Affected People on Your Team. Hearing directly from people who have experience with the issue you are speaking about can make a big difference in getting policymakers' attention. For example, a food bank may want to invite their customers to join them in Olympia to share firsthand the impact of hunger on their lives. A site visit to a school may have more impact if a legislator can visit with children and/or parents who can speak to why a policy change is needed. Their stories will have an outsized impact.

If you serve vulnerable populations, be thoughtful about how you ask your clients to share their stories. There are effective practices for ensuring that you treat youth, people living in poverty, or others with dignity rather than using their stories in ways that feel disrespectful, cause additional trauma or reinforce negative stereotypes.

3. Coalition-building

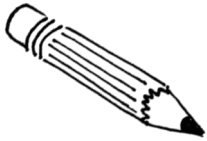
You are already heroically doing all that you are doing. It is a heavy lift—possibly an impossible one—for you to consider doing all of this advocacy work alone. There are many other organizations in your community and across the state working on something related to what you do. Why not join up with them to leverage the power of the collective?

a. Join a coalition. There are many coalitions already operating. Coalitions can come together to work on passing a single policy change, or they may work together over many years toward policy solutions that relate to a common cause like affordable housing or arts education. These coalitions often have lobbyists or policy experts on staff or as members working on policy matters. You may not have to do more than track what they are already doing and lend your voice to their

cause! Washington Nonprofits maintains a list of coalitions they know about, and there are surely others.

b. Build a coalition. If you don't find a coalition related to your work, consider building a coalition. Bolder Advocacy has a great resource on how to go about doing this.

Beyond coalitions, we believe in the power of networked nonprofits. These nonprofits don't need to be working in your field of service. They need to be colleagues facing many of the same issues you are. If there is a nonprofit network in your community, join them! If not, invite the nonprofit leaders you know to lunch and invest in the idea sharing and network building that comes from knowing people. Contact Washington Nonprofits for more information on how to build a nonprofit network.



REFLECTION

What coalitions are you a part of now?

How do you connect with other nonprofit leaders?

How could you strengthen those connections?



B. Culture

People working together develop shared norms and rules for working together. That is your culture. It shows up in what you create, how you behave, and the values you hold. You have the power to shape your organizational culture.

Building a movement takes a culture that allows curiosity, big picture thinking, partnership, willingness to take risks, and a belief in the power of policy to change systems. Typical nonprofit culture can sometimes work against an advocacy mindset. For example, nonprofit culture tells us to focus on the positive for fundraising purposes—not to talk about what we will lose if funding is cut or a policy doesn't pass. Some of us may feel that nonprofits are an alternative to government, rather than a potential partner. Nonprofits that receive government funding may be hesitant to “rock the boat.” Investing time in understanding your culture now and shaping it to what you want it to be will position you well to attract others to your cause.

Culture shows up in three ways:

Things	Behaviors	Values
anything you can touch, from documents to pictures on the wall	what people do that you can see and hear	beliefs or ideas that guide people or organizations (often unspoken)



REFLECTION

Describe one aspect of your organization's culture that supports (or could support) your advocacy work.

What might we see related to advocacy in your “stuff”: documents, agendas, strategic plans, donor letters, etc.?

What might we see or hear related to policy in staff meetings, board meetings, donor meetings, legislative visits or fundraisers?

What underlying values do you hold related to advocacy and policy? Are they apparent to someone coming in from the outside?

What is your advocacy personality? Think about the groups you know trying to build a movement. On one end of the spectrum, this might include environmentalists boldly tying themselves to a tree. On the other end, mothers and fathers working behind the scenes on issues of child welfare. A question for your board to consider: on a scale of (1) quiet behind the scenes work to (10) bold, headline action that forces immediate decisions, where does your organization fall? How does that personality contribute to your ability to achieve your mission?

What do you want to change about your culture to be more advocacy-friendly? What things, behaviors or values would indicate that you have made any changes you are hoping for?



C. Plan

A plan leverages your people, resources, and connections to move you more quickly in the right direction. It builds your capacity to respond to challenges and opportunities.

Planning invites conversations, maps resources, and guides decision-making. When you have a plan, you are ready to take advantage of opportunities or fend off challenges. You have made important decisions already so that you can act faster later on.

There are three ideas to think about:

1. How advocacy fits into other plans
2. How to build an advocacy plan
3. How to build your advocacy muscle

Let's break this down into its parts.

1. Plans, Plans Everywhere! How Advocacy Fits Into Other Plans

A nonprofit has several plans at any one time. They are connected and mutual reinforcing. On the following page is a quick overview of plans you might have and where public policy might fall within them.

Plan	What it is	How public policy fits in	✓
Strategic plan	A guiding document that defines an organization's purpose and how it will allocate resources to achieve the greatest impact.	As you define strategic goals for the next few years, add public policy as one goal. Choose a couple of high leverage actions and include them under this goal.	
Budget	An estimate of income and expenses for a period of time. It is a financial plan.	INCOME: Notice what portion of your income is tied to public funds. EXPENSE: Track any expenses related to lobbying, such as travel costs or staff time to meet with legislators. Know the hourly rate of any staff person registered as a lobbyist.	
Fundraising plan	A document that organizes all of your fundraising activities over a certain time period. It is tied to your budget.	If appropriate, include public funds in your overall fundraising plan. Consider how you could engage donors in your organization's policy strategy.	
Business plan	A statement of business goals and how you will attain them. It is focused on income and how you will generate it.	If applicable, incorporate government contracting opportunities in your revenue plan.	

2. Build an Advocacy Team and Plan

Like with any plan, there are four main stages to advocacy planning:

Pre-planning: This is the stage where you get ready to plan. You do two things: Identify the people who will be involved and lay out the timeline.

Define the job. Draft a policy committee description and a job description for individual committee members.

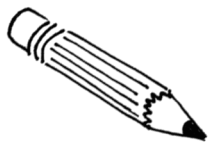
Clarify your decision-making process: How will policy decisions be made? What role will the board of directors play? How will you evaluate benefits and risks of taking a position?

Planning: Now that you have your team in place, let's plan! A typical plan has answers some or all of the following questions. Don't worry. We have provided worksheets on all of this.

- What advocacy tools and systems do you have in place right now?
- What issues will you focus on?
- How will you make decisions?
- What resources are available? How much time and energy will you dedicate to policy advocacy?
- Who are trusted partners/collaborators?
- How will you measure success?

Evaluation: How do you know that you achieved anything? What difference has all of this planning made? Use the *Advocacy Evaluation Tool* to track the number of actions you take, how you have strengthen your capacity for action, and policy results that you achieve.

REFLECTION



Turn back to the previous list of plans. In the right column, check (✓) which ones include advocacy.

Name a next step you can take to expand where advocacy shows up in your current plans.

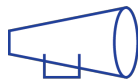
3. Build Your Advocacy Muscle

Best-laid plans won't make a difference if your team doesn't have the knowledge or skills to do what they need to do. Remember it takes practice to build confidence.

There are three main buckets of learning to consider:

Knowledge building	Skill building	Practice
The nonprofit sector Your field of service Your organization The issues that matter to your organization Civics (how government works)	Story-listening (drawing out someone's story) Storytelling (telling your story) Public speaking Policy discussion Non-partisanship Legislative and policy research	Role-playing Scenario planning

Consider how you can incorporate learning into your advocacy plan. We provide more information on activities to move forward with learning in the **Activities Guide**.



D. Communications

Words and images tell the story of your organization. They reach your audiences through a variety of channels, from your own email newsletter to newspapers to social media. Your power to influence is shaped by your ability to communicate effectively.

Here are some key things you need to know about communicating to influence policymakers:

Stories are powerful. Develop stories that illustrate why a policy change will make a difference in your community.

Facts and data are also persuasive, particularly when coupled with stories. Do your research or compile information that supports your position.

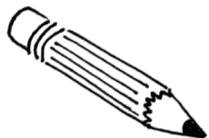
Trustworthiness is key. Your reputation and your direct experience with the issues at hand will help establish credibility.

Lift up the voices of affected people. Bring your constituents to share their experience directly when you can, or ask their permission to share their situation to demonstrate the need for change.

Prepare key talking points so you can be clear when you speak with decision-makers.

Do these points look familiar? If you do fundraising, you probably already use these principles! See what you can borrow from your grant proposals or fundraising appeals.

There are lots of great resources available on effective communications. See Resources at the end of this guide for some of our favorites.



REFLECTION

What stories can you tell about the impact of a policy on the people your organization serves?



Everyday Advocacy Summary

- The four cornerstones of “everyday advocacy” are: People, Culture, Plan, and Communications.
- You have a choice in how to proceed with public policy. You can decide your organization’s “policy personality” and goals and shape a plan that suits you.
- Just as you need to do basic upkeep on your house, every nonprofit needs to tend to its basic operations so that it is ready for challenges or opportunities.
- In the Activities Guide, we have outlined activities for each of these pathways.

Next Steps

- Review the job descriptions of all staff and board members to see how advocacy fits in
- Do the “purpose mapping” exercise in your next board meeting.
- Review what coalition you do/could belong to.
- Examine your organizational culture for where advocacy fits in.
- Review your existing plans to see how advocacy shows up.
- Create an advocacy plan to guide decisions.
- Practice storytelling whenever you can.

Tools

- Advocacy Evaluation Tool
- Policy committee – Decision-Making tool
- Policy committee – Job Description
- Public Policy Health Check Up / Readiness Inventory
- Purpose Mapping Guide



Resources

- Coalition list: <https://washingtonnonprofits.org/public-policy/coalitions/>
- Coalition checklist from Bolder Advocacy: <https://bolderadvocacy.org/resource/coalition-checklist/>
- The Art of Advocacy Strategy (Jim Schultz): https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_art_of_advocacy_strategy
- Claxon University pitch-building exercises: <http://claxonuniversity.com>
- Nonprofit Storytelling for Board Members: <https://nonprofitbestpractices.com/collections/books/products/nonprofit-storytelling-for-board-members>
- Greenlining Institute's Power Mapping Guide: <http://greenlining.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/PowerMapping.pdf>

