

Tips for Evaluating Advocacy

A Checklist for Grantees

Discuss Evaluation Expectations Early

Grantors and grantees can arrive at a common understanding early on of reasonable expectations and ways to show the grantee's contribution.

Develop Long-Term as well as Incremental Goals

Policy goals may take years or even decades to achieve. For instance, a grantee that has a goal to make emergency food available by 2010 to all Californians who need it may include an incremental goal of educating or informing 25% of members of the legislature this year.

Use Benchmarks to Measure Outcomes, Progress, Capacity Building

A sample outcome benchmark may be a \$2 million appropriation for clean water programs; a progress benchmark could be support gained from a key legislator; a capacity building benchmark may be motivating 50 constituents to contact officials.

Use Benchmarks of Success that Target Relevant Audiences

Target audiences may include public officials, the public/constituents, other organizations, and the grantee's own organization.

Tell the Story

Tell the story behind the benchmarks. Explain the process, and why something did or didn't work. Maintaining a budget appropriation level, for example, can be viewed as a success rather than a failure to achieve the goal of more funding, if the context is explained.

Make Use of Available Evaluation Resources and Plan Ahead

Organizations' self-evaluations can be very informative. When planning to use outside evaluators, grantees should include them in early budgets.

Make the Evaluation Fit the Nature of the Advocacy Work Conducted

As an example, obtaining face-to-face meetings with key state officials to discuss a policy issue might sound routine. In fact, the meetings might be hard-won, critical steps in an effort to influence state regulators, and should be documented and evaluated accordingly.

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