BUILDING STRONG, UNIFIED COALITIONS

Identifying potential allies and then recruiting them to join your cause is key to a successful advocacy campaign. Coalitions bring your allies together to speak with one voice, and extend your reach far beyond your core passionate circle of advocates. With careful planning, you can create a strong, unified coalition to bring your advocacy to the next level.

IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS AND ALLIES

• Identify the parties, stakeholders, and advocates affected by the issue. Depending on the issue, look to open government, access to justice, and legal aid groups.

• Identify people with whom coalition members have a strong working relationship: legislators, legislative and administrative staff, state offices, bar associations, etc.

• Cultivate non-librarian and non-lawyer relationships. Consider state agencies, library associations, and government relations staff with these organizations.

• Create contact lists and lists of people with contacts.

DETERMINE YOUR ASSETS

• Identify the skills, contacts, insider information, and legislative know-how your coalition members possess.

• Foster knowledge of or contacts with people knowledgeable about the potential economic impact of your advocacy proposal.

• Figure out the opposition - positions, support, and vulnerabilities.

CONSIDER COMMUNICATIONS

• Appoint a point person for contact, communication, and representation – or a team.

• Address logistics: how will you share information and update coalition members and allies? Will you have a website or another kind of public/shared site, or add to an existing site? Distribution lists? Conference calls? Bulletins?

• Consider how to pitch, frame issue more broadly. What are the issues, the anecdotes, the spark?

• Develop an action plan so that you can mobilize quickly around a call to action.