

SPEAK UP *for* History

Getting Started *in* Local Advocacy





The American Association for State and Local History is a national professional association dedicated to helping the history community thrive. For the better part of a century, AASLH has provided leadership and resources to its members, who preserve and interpret history to make the past more meaningful to all people.

Speak Up for History: Getting Started in Local Advocacy was prepared in conversation with history and museum professionals from across the field.

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Why Local Advocacy

The history community needs advocacy but often struggles with where to begin. How do we cut through the noise of daily headlines? How do we manage progress with multiple, and often competing, priorities? What does advocacy look like for the country's thousands of small and mid-sized organizations, so often strapped for time, money, staff, and other resources?

The answer lies in starting local. When communities can clearly see the impact of nearby history organizations and experience their work firsthand, they are more likely to value and support them. Becoming an effective advocate means moving from simply participating in your community to being an active agent for change. Based on dozens of conversations with nationwide practitioners and a broad audit of existing advocacy materials, this manual begins at the basic, community level—with the relatively simple premise that effective local advocacy means speaking up and proving to your neighbors that you matter.

This approach differs from primarily theoretical models, instead translating big ideas into simple steps that are scalable, adaptable, and concrete. **This manual emphasizes base-level information, case studies, and resources you can use right away.** It underscores the notion that effective advocacy means continual, everyday actions that demonstrate your value and build relationships. It helps you build a case for where you want your organization to be, make a plan to get there, and prepare a specific ask for what you need.

Look for these icons throughout this manual to assist with your advocacy practice:

CASE STUDY	TOOL	ACTIVITY
 Stories about real places to inspire you to consider how similar situations could play out at your institution.	 Ideas and guidance, such as questions, charts, and checklists, to get you started.	 Simple exercises to use as you move your practice forward.

Defining Advocacy

Advocacy is the practice of supporting or speaking up to create change in favor of a cause, position, or idea. It can take many forms.

This manual focuses on the most foundational, least technical advocacy approaches (storytelling, relationship-building, etc.), but because there are often different associations with—and sometimes rules around—sub-types of advocacy, it is useful to keep these categories in mind, even though they are not necessarily covered in this manual:

- **Lobbying** seeks to influence government decisions, action, or legislation.
- **Campaigning** seeks to elect a specific candidate.
- **Activism** emphasizes direct action, especially in relation to a divisive issue.

Nonprofits—which describes thousands of history organizations—can advocate for their own institutional value, in support of issues that matter to them, for the importance of public funding, and/or for other positions. But, as with many areas of historical practice, there are nuances. For instance, nonprofit organizations cannot endorse or oppose a specific candidate, and they must lobby within certain parameters.

Can nonprofits lobby?

It is a common misconception that nonprofits are not permitted to lobby. In fact, the opposite is true. Nonprofits may lobby within certain bounds, including expenditure caps, set by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Although you should consult an expert, most nonprofits' lobbying activities do not come close to exceeding those limits.

Want to know more? Consult guidance from the IRS and the National Council of Nonprofits to learn more about nonprofits' ability to lobby, which can be a powerful tool for change.

You Are Already Doing the Work

As a history practitioner, you are uniquely positioned to advocate because you have already developed the foundational skills.

In fact, you are likely already doing this work! Think of advocacy as an extension of your existing professional practice. For example:

Every time you ...	You are also ...
... explain why a program matters	... connecting narratives with an intended audience
... call a potential community partner	... establishing and building relationships of trust
... write text for an exhibition label	... honing your ability to tell stories

Beyond your organization's walls, you can use these same skills to make a statement at your city council meeting, invite a local community stakeholder to an event, or write a story pitch for a local news outlet. Advocacy is not only achievable, but it is a powerful way to move your efforts beyond engagement to driving change for your organization.



Think of local advocacy as an extension of your existing professional practice.

What Could the World Be?

Sometimes the hardest part of advocacy is visualizing a defined goal.

It can also be difficult to step back from immediate needs and constraints to imagine different outcomes. However, fellow history practitioners around the country are approaching problems creatively through local advocacy every day.

These case studies offer inspiration for how to solidify general "this could be better" thoughts into outcomes with direction. A concrete plan can expand what feels possible, provide questions for you to consider, and help you articulate your own end goals.

CASE STUDY

A Joint Community Investment



In New Hampshire, a group of museums sought to improve field trips and relationships with schools. They invested in cleaning up the area around their buildings so that it was safe for students to walk to the complex. After investing time in the project, they approached the city council with a proposal to install new, safer steps. They also committed to cleaning and beautifying the steps with a mural. Now, hundreds of schoolchildren and families take those steps to the museum complex.

How might you demonstrate your commitment to a joint project with your city leaders that would benefit everyone involved?

CASE STUDY

Partnering to Prove Impact



In Wisconsin, museums and libraries in one city banded together to share impact statements and prove their value to the community. Recognizing that the message would carry greater weight when supported by civic leadership, they worked with the mayor's office to share their stories alongside the mayor's reflections on the essential role these organizations play in the city, amplifying their message and reaching new audiences.

Which voices in your community will most effectively amplify your message?

CASE STUDY

Filling a Need, Increasing Visibility



In Ohio, a historical society has built up a relationship with the local news. They now regularly host a morning segment about the town's identity and history, while the news station is quick to cover events, programs, and other newsworthy happenings.

Where would an investment in mutual support help to raise awareness of your organization and its resources?

Using Place



In rural New York, a small museum reached out to a community foundation that supported related work and invited them to tour the site. The foundation representative saw the importance of the story the museum was telling firsthand. When the foundation had excess funds at the end of its fiscal year, the foundation representative remembered the established relationship with the museum and the museum's related mission. The foundation donated the funds to support the museum's efforts.

Who can you invite to your organization to share the power of your own story in the community?

Local advocacy, like other forms of advocacy, does not have to feel burdensome or intimidating. Focusing on skills that you already possess—storytelling and relationship-building for targeted audiences—strengthens your advocacy muscles and, in turn, your organization. Local advocacy soon becomes part of your daily practice. From there, it can expand from your municipal and county-level decision-makers and supporters to a larger strategy involving state legislators, governors' offices, members of Congress, philanthropies and foundations, corporate partners, and beyond.

Ultimately, change starts close to home. If your community members consider your organization vital to their needs and aspirations, they will support your organization's needs and aspirations in turn.

Doing the Work

Effective advocacy is intentional, especially at the local level. Local advocacy starts with a few core concepts to help you slow down enough to be strategic without getting stuck:

- Know what you are working toward and make a plan.
- Understand who is around you, their place in the decision-making landscape, and what they care about.
- Frame your story around what matters to them and support it with evidence.

Understanding these concepts will provide you with a flexible foundation that you can return to again and again.

Intentional, Not Complicated

Local advocacy moves beyond simple participation. It is not showing up once. Rather, it is showing up again and again with the intention of actively making change, guided by a clear plan.

Your plan needs to answer a few questions: who you are and what vision you are working toward, what types of relationships or partnerships you want to develop, and what specifically you are asking of those audiences. A clear plan connects the answers to these questions, aligning short-term actions with longer-term goals in service of your organization's vision.

A part of intention is knowledge. Local communities have rules, processes, and structures (both formal and informal) that vary widely across and even within states. Investing time in research will help you understand the landscape around you and can offer insight into opportunities you may otherwise miss.

Be Prepared

Advocacy moments can arrive without much notice. When you are prepared, you can confidently respond on message and with direct action, instead of scrambling for footing. A few minutes spent regularly getting organized can make the difference between missing an opportunity and making an impact.

Questions to Help You Plan



Use these questions to identify your path and make realistic choices about how to engage decision-makers and partners.

This can ultimately shape your plan. Your plan can be as simple or as detailed as needed, and it should evolve over time as you learn what works and what does not.

Define your purpose and build your team.

- What do we want our organization and community to look like now and in the future?
- What change are we trying to move toward?
- How much time can each staff member, volunteer, or board member realistically commit, and who has the authority to speak on behalf of the organization?

Identify who can influence or support your efforts.

- Who makes decisions that affect our organization's future (elected officials, funders, community leaders, etc.)?
- Whom do we need to convince, excite, or mobilize to make our end goal happen?
- What does each audience care about most, and how does our organization connect to that?
- What is the one action we want each audience to take after hearing from us?

Develop a timeline. Evaluate and adapt as you go.

- What big decisions or new opportunities are coming up (e.g. budget votes, elections, council meetings, leadership changes), and when do we need to start conversations so our voice is heard before decisions are made?
- Are there moments on the calendar, such as budget season, an election, or a big community event, when it makes sense to reach out to our audiences?
- Are deadlines and resource allocations realistic given staff capacity and preparation needs?



Create an advocacy plan that can evolve over time as you learn from experience.

Learn about Those Who Can Help

Decisions are made by people, and people listen more closely to those they recognize and respect. Understanding who is involved in a given situation, who holds influence, what they care about, and how those different people communicate allows you to tailor messages without losing your core intent. This is especially effective in local advocacy because these people are your immediate community.

At the local level, you are that much closer to decision-makers, with even more potential sources of commonalities on which to build relationships and trust. However, relationships are real work. Building and maintaining them takes time and effort.

Meet People Where They Are

Effective local advocacy is rooted in relationships and understanding people. Most importantly, it meets people where they are. You may want to jump straight to your goal, but you are likely better off taking the time to get there together.



At the local level, you are that much closer to decision-makers.

Frame the Narrative and Gather Data

Your story is the bridge between your expertise and your audience's priorities, translating your work into shared values and everyday terms. The specific words you choose matter as much as your overall narrative. Appeal to the heart, support it with evidence, and ask for something specific.

As you determine your framing, remember that there are some ideas that are more likely to resonate across a broad spectrum of people:

- Economic impact
- Creating spaces and partnerships that benefit the public
- Educating the next generation
- Community identity and community pride
- Strengthening democracy

These topics and values can make an impact in varied settings, but you know your own community best. Make sure that you do your research and tailor the message to your own community's makeup. National organizations like AASLH and the American Alliance of Museums offer resources and links to get you started with reliable research sources.

Gather data points that support your story, but do not let data overwhelm what you are saying. You just need enough data to provide evidence. Making the overall point of your narrative is most important.

Steady, Not Stagnant

Advocacy is slow work. However, if your efforts are not gaining any traction, it may be time to revisit your message. Do not throw it out wholesale; instead, identify places where small tweaks could improve impact.

Understanding Your Network



Use the tool below to map potential relationships in your local community. Mapping out relationships helps to identify allies, decision-makers, and potential partners; clarify what motivates those different

audiences; and adapt language and framing to specific contexts. The details below are just a starting point. You can and should continue to build a web of information to help you understand your network.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

My local government structure: _____

Government roles likely to make decisions that impact my organization: _____

Two people in my local government to whom I could reach out to form a relationship: _____

Potential positive influence they may have: _____

Their interests: _____

Potential barriers or pain points: _____

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Three organizations I might partner with: _____

Their interests: _____

Ideas to ensure mutual benefit: _____

Potential barriers or pain points: _____

K-12 EDUCATORS

The education system in my area: _____

To develop relationships with schools across the area, I should: _____

Two people to whom I could reach out to form a relationship: _____

Potential positive influence they may have: _____

Their interests: _____

Potential barriers or pain points: _____

MY WORK

PRESS

Local news provider in my community: _____

One person at that outlet/platform whom I should get to know: _____

Potential positive influence they may have: _____

Their interests or topics they cover: _____

Potential barriers or pain points: _____

"Find Your Story" Mad Lib



Use this template to construct a quick and effective version of your organization's story. The first part may feel similar to your mission statement—and that's great! When crafting this version, make sure you are stripping away any professional jargon, instead prioritizing human connection and a conversational tone.

All told, your story has four components:

1. Statement about your organization and what you do
2. Supporting data point(s)
3. Connection to your audience's needs or interests
4. Specific ask

YOUR STORY

_____ exists / works to / inspires
[Organization] [Select one]

so that _____
[Impact/change]

[Difference it makes]

We _____
[What we do]

to _____
[Human takeaways]

This is demonstrated by _____
[Data you have gathered]

The _____
[Actions you take]

contribute to / support / enhance _____
[Element of community]

which _____
[Why that matters to your audience]

[Specific ask]

EXAMPLE

Ye Olde Local History Museum inspires people to realize their potential to shape their own communities. We tell the story of our local community to illuminate the relationships between people, their livelihoods, and the landscapes they call home. The museum contributes to the local economy by attracting visitors, encouraging them to spend time and money in our town.

We are only open May through September, but each year 4,000 visitors, 70% of them from out of state, visit the museum. With so many towns in our area competing for the same visitors' attention, having a strong cultural destination makes a difference.

We'd love to be part of upcoming conversations around tourism and economic development.

Your Message, Their Priorities



Want more help putting story elements together? Use the chart below to think about how each component plays a role in your overall script. The core message about who you are does not change; rather, the

emphasis of your message fits the priorities and perspectives of the person you are delivering your message to. These specifics are just suggestions of the type of language you might use or the data you might offer—you know your community because you are a part of it.

	ECONOMY	PUBLIC SPACE	EDUCATION	COMMUNITY IDENTITY	DEMOCRACY
Story	"We contribute to the local economy by spending money and bringing in visitors, who in turn spend time and money here."	"We provide a welcoming space where people can gather and spend time together."	"We support education by giving students hands-on ways to connect with [art, history, culture, critical thinking, etc.]."	"We help people see themselves and our community in meaningful ways."	"We promote civic practice, such as collaborative problem-solving, critical thinking, and tying past and present together."
Data Points	- Amount spent on goods and services in your community - Visitors per year - Percentage of out-of-town visitors a year - Partnerships with local businesses or organizations	- Number of visitors a year - Percentage of local visitors a year - Partnerships with local businesses or organizations	- Number of schools participating in class trips - Number of school districts served - Number of students per school trip	- Number of visitors a year - Percentage of local visitors a year - Number of students visited on school trips	- Number of visitors a year - Percentage of local visitors a year - Partnerships with schools, libraries, or civic organizations
Relevance	"With so many towns in our area competing for the same visitor attention, having a strong cultural destination makes a difference."	"People want to feel connected to where they live and with their neighbors."	"Students and educators are looking for real-world experiences beyond the classroom."	"Quality of life is a big part of why people choose to stay in or move to our community."	"Communities are looking for ways to repair and fortify American civic culture."
Closer/Ask	"We'd love to be part of conversations around tourism and economic development."	"We'd love to co-host regular evening programming in this space that invites people to connect with each other."	"We'd love to collaborate on an initiative that gets more students outside the school and into their community."	"We'd love to collaborate on wayfinding efforts that share the stories of what makes our community unique."	"We'd love to partner on community dialogue programs that bring our neighbors together."

A Day in the Life

Engaging in local advocacy does not require a dedicated staff position or a large block of uninterrupted time. The work itself can be woven into existing responsibilities through small, plan-aligned actions taken throughout the day. The days will add up, creating a culture of steady progress and stable relationships that does not rely on big, isolated efforts. Plus, practicing advocacy regularly helps keep your skills sharp, especially in changing community landscapes.



Local advocacy can be woven into existing responsibilities through small everyday actions.

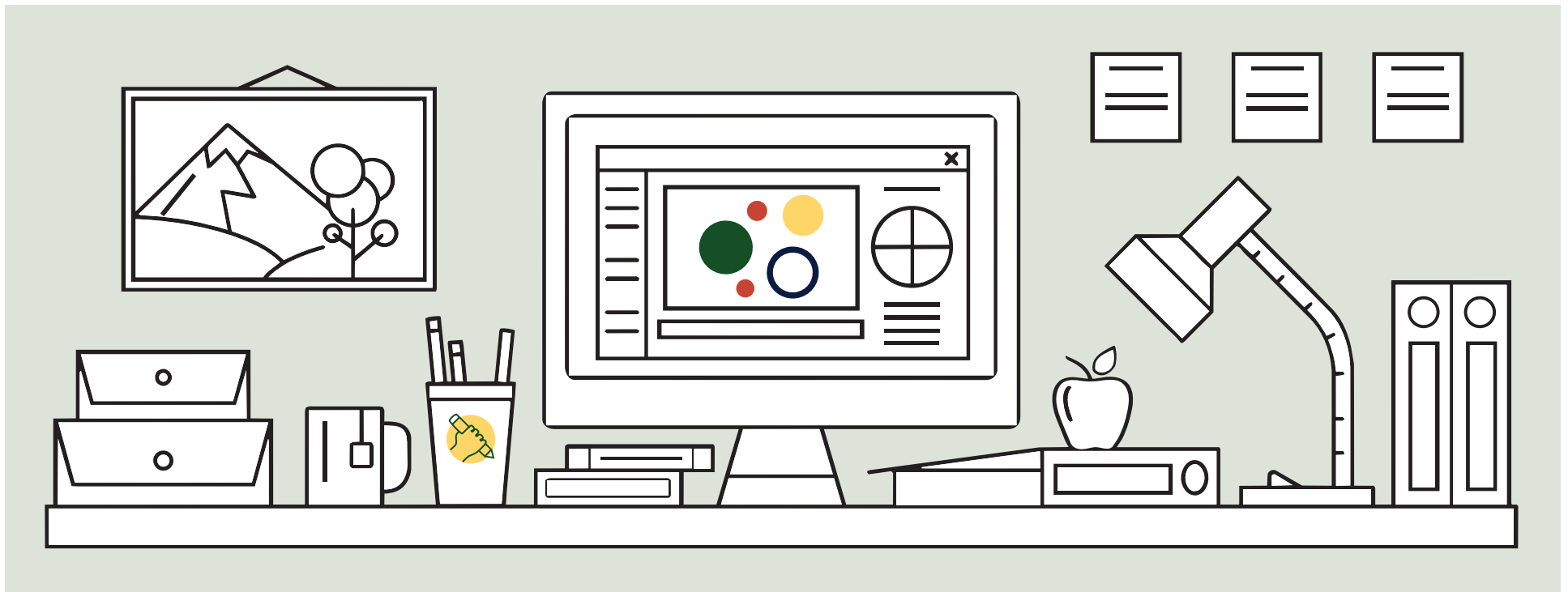
Small Actions to Lasting Impact

Effective local advocacy is built on habits. Small, consistent actions add up to concrete influence and change over time. You do not need to do everything—just work with the time you have. Even a few minutes can move advocacy forward. Think of time not as a measure of importance, but as a guide to the depth of the effort.

Over time, these small moves multiply and reinforce one another, creating a habit with a lasting impact.

Muscle Memory

When local advocacy is a sustained, regular effort, you equip yourself to make reasoned, proactive decisions, rather than reacting in the moment.



What Is on Your Advocacy Itinerary Today?



The ideas in the chart below are organized around key actions that make local advocacy effective. Adjust these ideas to meet the needs of your

organization based on your institutional goals and priorities. Whether you have 10 minutes, 20 minutes, or more, you can still make time for meaningful advocacy work.

	STAY UP TO DATE <i>Research to understand the landscape</i>	DO YOUR HOMEWORK <i>Organize to be ready when opportunity strikes</i>	CONNECT WITH PEOPLE <i>Make time to make friends</i>	KNOW YOUR STORY <i>Practice your message and delivery</i>
10 MINUTES	Read a recent news story about local policies that could affect your organization. Set up a series of news alerts that will deliver relevant stories to you automatically.	Set up an email filing system to save visitor testimonials. Create a shared folder on your organization's drive for each department to highlight visitor feedback.	Create your monthly "call list" of stakeholders to check in with. Make a centralized list of all the local organizations you want to visit in a year.	Reread your organization's mission and vision statements. Ask someone at your organization what phrases they most often use to describe your work.
20 MINUTES	Check your local government calendar for meetings relevant to your work. Share relevant community data in a staff meeting.	Create a chart to track consistent metrics of visitor data. Include an "opportunity struck" agenda item in a staff meeting to share examples of capitalizing on an unexpected chance for advocacy.	Write a thank you note to a local representative who visited your organization. Call a stakeholder to tell them something about your organization you are proud of.	Rewrite one sentence about your work or impact in plain language.
30 MINUTES	Listen to a podcast episode or interview about a topic related to your work. Take a walk on your town's main street, observing what people are drawn to.	Draft a two-sentence elevator pitch about the impact of your school tour programs.	Write and hone a 60-second script to use to introduce your organization to your local city council.	Meet with a community contact to workshop your messaging language.
1 HOUR	Collect and read annual reports for community nonprofits.	Organize multiple elevator pitches according to impactful topics and potential audiences.	Attend a local community mixer. Have lunch with the leader of a community organization you want to get to know better.	Host a practice session for colleagues to try out advocacy pitches. Meet with staff authorized to speak for your organization to discuss what messages are landing.

Meeting and Quick Follow-Up Template



If your local advocacy efforts include time to prepare for a government meeting or other public appearance, use the template below to help create an impactful message. At most public meetings, you will likely have a short window to speak (as little as 45 to 60 seconds) and will be cut off even if you are not finished. Time your message before speaking so that you are prepared for this kind of constraint. The example on the following page takes approximately 60 seconds to deliver. The power of your own voice is important, so consider this as guidance on how to put it to best use.

Local media may attend a meeting or public appearance. Be prepared to follow up with a quick pitch or bottom-line message.

STRUCTURE

[Greeting]

[Introduction]

[Thank you]

[Anecdote or human story]

[Meaning of the moment]

[Wider view]

[Evidence]

[What you do]

[Partners you do it with]

[Ask]

EXAMPLE

Good evening, my name is *[Full name]*, and I am the *[Title]* at *[Museum name]*. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I was talking with John, the owner of *[Local restaurant]*, this past week. His restaurant is his life's dream, and it is just a short walk from our building. He shared with me that the night of our exhibit opening, his restaurant was packed with people having dinner before coming to the museum. Moments like that, and conversations with John, show the impact our museum has on our community's economic vitality.

Each year, over *[Number]* visitors pass through our doors, supporting nearby restaurants, cafes, and shops. We make a point to work with local businesses and organizations to maximize this positive impact. We're proud to say that across events, programs, and other offerings, we partner with *[Number]* other organizations in our community. We are thankful for each partnership.

We're asking for your leadership and support through *[Specific ask]* so we can continue strengthening our local business network and making *[City/region]* an even more vibrant place to live and work. We are proud to be your partners, and we look forward to finding even more ways to serve and celebrate this community. Thank you.

QUICK PITCH / BOTTOM LINE

Supporting *[Museum name]* means supporting local jobs, small businesses, and a stronger local economy. When we invest in history, culture, and learning, we invest in a more vibrant *[City/region]* for all of us. Every connection helps strengthen our community.

When You Think You Are Helping (But You Are Not)

Even experienced history practitioners can stumble when it comes to local advocacy. Think of potential missteps as learning opportunities rather than failures. Recognize what does not work so you can focus on what does.

Go Beyond Asking for “Support”

Speaking about your organization is critical, but it is important that you clearly convey your intentions to your audience. Explain why you are delivering your message and what actions you hope they will take.

If there is a chance that someone might miss your intention, assume that they will. You may think that simply making a clear presentation about an upcoming need is enough, but your audience may not understand what you are asking for if you don’t explicitly state your ask in jargon-free language.

When You Are Not Obvious Enough



CASE STUDY

The executive director of a small nonprofit attended a city council meeting, eager to gain monetary support. After a presentation with a compelling story and beautiful photography, the council thanked her for attending, said they were happy to support the good work of the nonprofit, and congratulated her on her hard work. A week later, the executive director wrote to a council member to thank them again for their time and ask how much in funds from the council she should include in her budget. The council member was surprised. There had been no mention of funding or budget, nor a specific ask in the presentation. The executive director thought it was obvious.

Try this instead: Test your presentation with someone outside of your organization or field. Can they articulate your main message and ask afterward?

Choose Discipline over Opportunity

In practice, it can be tempting, especially for highly knowledgeable or passionate advocates, to go off script. **Stay committed to your plan in your words and actions**, and resist the urge to deviate. A deviation from the plan can create confusion among partners, dilute key messages for your audience, and jeopardize your organization’s reputation. While one email, meeting, or story likely will not solve a problem, a single careless occurrence can definitely make things worse. Always think about framing and tone, and never overlook the importance of how audiences interpret your message.

When You Don’t Stick to the Agenda



CASE STUDY

In anticipation of an event, a nonprofit organization submitted an application for a road closure and followed the city process to walk through the event agenda for safety considerations at the council meeting. The representative of the nonprofit started to discuss the event but ended up bringing up a totally different topic. When the representative was reminded that this meeting item was to discuss the road closure and related concerns, he responded that he thought he would “use the time more wisely on a pressing topic, as the permit had always been granted in the past.” The permit was granted. However, the council did not allow time for the new topic and the attitude towards the event, and the new topic, noticeably shifted.

Try this instead: Respect the meeting and the process in both form and language. If you would like to capitalize on the moment, at most, reinforce the importance of your ongoing relationships and share that you will be presenting something new to your audience soon.

Prioritize Empathy

Local advocacy centers community impact. Community leaders and local government members may not have the same historical knowledge or perspective as you, but that does not necessarily make them wrong or ignorant. **Remember that they are your neighbors.** They may serve in their positions in addition to another job. See them as people who care about your community just as you do.

You are an expert, but the goal is not to prove how much you know. It is to connect, build understanding, and find common ground. Personal frustration or ego should never drive advocacy. Professionalism and relationship-building always come first.

When You Choose Correction Instead of Understanding



A newly elected mayor was proud of the town's history and frequently attended history-related meetings. The mayor made a comment about an object passed down through his family, sharing excitedly that it had belonged to a person of historical significance. The director of a local museum immediately stated that that could not be correct, nor was it even likely, and walked the mayor through the many reasons why. She offered to call an expert, a friend at a top university, to talk one-on-one and look at the artifact. The mayor politely declined and has yet to visit the museum.

Try this instead: Lead with curiosity and common ground—for example, a shared passion for history—and choose your timing to engage further. As your relationship deepens, you will find moments to allow you to provide accurate, nuanced information while still building trust.



"Do Not" List

- **Do not dismiss or judge criticism right away.** Try to identify whether there is a concern or misunderstanding that you can address.
- **Do not rush to respond to every controversy.** Step back, assess the landscape, and choose the most strategic response—if a response is needed at all.
- **Do not lose your cool.** Do not get defensive, criticize, or make it personal. Keep the focus on your organization's mission and values.
- **Do not get lost in unnecessary details or speculation.** Keep your answers short, clear, and rooted in your key messages. Ground them in your evidence and data.
- **Do not repeat high-temperature rhetoric.** Avoid repeating loaded or negative words, even to deny them. Repetition gives those words more power.
- **Do not share any information that you should not.** Always assume that anything you say could be repeated or published.
- **Do not guess.** It is better to admit what you do not know. You might say: "I had not heard that—I will need to check." or "What I do know is . . ."

Sustaining the Effort and Taking Advocacy Forward

Advocacy can be incredibly rewarding, especially at the local level, where it will help you strengthen ties with your community as you work to make change for your organization. The work can be equally draining. If you fail to protect your energy, you risk burnout and frustration. Think about sustainable practices that will help you maintain your work.

Local advocacy . . .

- Does not have to be formal or complicated—it looks like the work you are already doing and works best when you have a plan and a concrete ask.
- Focuses on a few simple questions: Who are you? What are you working toward? What kind of relationship do you want? What specifically are you asking for?
- Is most effective when it is consistent. You do not need to attend every meeting or serve on a board. Small actions—like brief check-ins or writing down an idea for later—accumulate over time and create a meaningful impact.
- Is rarely a solo effort. Connecting with colleagues, mentors, and community partners provides both practical guidance and moral support. A strong network can help share the workload.



Visit aaslh.org/speakupforhistory for a printable version of this manual and additional resources.

Wellness Check-In



If you need to step back to sustain yourself, others can and will step up. It can help to perform a quick check-in to be aware of how you are feeling before you get burned out. Set aside time to fill out the following:

- What is motivating me this week?
- What is draining my capacity?
- One small action I can realistically sustain this week: _____
- One thing I can choose not to do this week to save energy for true priorities: _____
- Where do I need support or partnership?

Final Thoughts

Your voice has power, but you do not have to do everything yourself.

Fellow history practitioners across the country are participating in advocacy efforts at all levels. It is a group effort.

Many national organizations have built infrastructure to share your voice in support of bigger movements. Participating in their efforts can put a local face on a state or nationwide effort. Then, when you have greater bandwidth or renewed purpose, you can once more return to deeper local advocacy work.

AASLH, your peers, and your community are there to support you as you take on this work and embark on your journey through local advocacy.



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