



## Public Policy Framework

### Criteria for Implementing Advocacy and Public Policy

The following criteria will be used by the Arizona Nonprofit Policy Council in developing the annual public policy agenda, and in considering whether the Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits should engage in policy advocacy on a particular issue:

#### Impact:

Does this issue affect the interests of the entire nonprofit sector in a significant way?

#### Support:

Is there, or do we reasonably anticipate there will be, a general support among the members of the Alliance on the position to be taken?

#### Credibility:

Would the Alliance as an organization be perceived as a legitimately concerned and appropriate stakeholder for the position to be taken?

### Statement of Policies and Procedures:

- I. The Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits may take and implement appropriate organizational positions on legislative or other public policy issues which:
  1. Have statewide application or effect, or
  2. Have local or limited application but are determined to have statewide policy significance, or are precedent-setting for the entire sector;

**and**

  1. Have general relevance to the creation, management, operation, administration and well-being of nonprofit organizations in the State of Arizona, or
  2. Are of broad, community-wide importance, and are likely to have such a significant impact on the people and causes nonprofits serve that it is appropriate for the voice of the nonprofit sector to be represented in the policy debate.
- II. Except as noted in I. above, the Alliance should not take or implement positions on legislation or other public policy issues which are limited in application to a particular subject matter (i.e., education, human services, arts, etc.) of the nonprofit sector.
- III. Should the Alliance decide not to take a position on a particular issue, it may, nevertheless, provide limited legislative monitoring and updates to members on the status of the issue.

- IV. In cases where there it appears there not reasonable consensus among Alliance members on a policy position on a significant issue affecting nonprofits, the Alliance may play a role in providing information to both members and legislators on the various opinions within the sector.
- V. The Alliance's role in supporting nonprofit organizations in **their** advocacy activities on particular sub-sector issues may include: technical assistance and consultation, training in generic voter engagement, lobbying and advocacy skills, training in lobbying laws and regulations, convening nonprofit organizations to discuss and strategize around issues of broad (but not sector-wide) significance, and creating opportunities for nonprofit organizations to discuss these issues with their legislators.
- VI. Public policy positions shall be consistent with the mission of the Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits and with plans, policies and objectives adopted by the Board of Trustees.

### **Alliance Role in Advocacy and Public Policy:**

As the Alliance reviews public policy matters and determines whether or not to engage, it must also determine how deeply to engage. In each case, the Alliance must evaluate whether they should:

- I. Lead the community in a public policy matter.
- II. Participate in coalitions with other entities or organizations to engage on a public policy matter.
- III. Remain neutral or take no position on a public policy matter.
- IV. Share information regarding public policy matters with members, partners and the public, but take no formal position on the matter.
- V. Monitor a public policy matter internally in order to be prepared to engage if necessary.

### **Public Policy Review Process**

The Nonprofit Policy Council will develop a proposed Annual Public Policy Agenda for review and approval by the Alliance Board of Trustees. Public policy matters may be suggested for inclusion in the Annual Public Policy Agenda, or for review and action outside of the agenda, by the Alliance nonprofit policy council, the Alliance board or staff, or Alliance members. When a public policy matter is brought forward for discussion, the review process will generally proceed as follows:

- I. Nonprofit policy council gathers data and information, including speakers or testimonials, and discusses the matter at a regular policy council meeting. If the council recommends the Alliance take a position on the matter, then a draft position statement is prepared for the board of trustees. The council should also recommend the level of engagement the Alliance should have in advocating for that position.
- II. The policy council recommendation and position statement is brought to the Alliance board of trustees for discussion and approval. The Board should also make a determination regarding the organization's level of engagement on the matter. During this conversation, the Board

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees*

must consider the organization's capacity to participate on the issue, including staff and volunteer time, expenses, and "political capital" used.

- III. If the Board approves a formal position statement, the final statement is shared publicly, and the plan for engagement is executed. If the matter is a long-term issue, it will be included in the next approved Annual Public Policy Agenda.
- IV. Public policy matters already included in the approved Annual Public Policy Agenda are considered "pre-approved" and the plan for engagement can be implemented without the review process outlined above.

It should be noted that some matters will not be included in the Annual Public Policy Agenda, but may arise quickly and require an almost immediate response. In these cases, the CEO will work with the nonprofit policy council chair and/or vice chair, as well as the Alliance board chair, to formulate a response and execute an appropriate strategy. In these cases, the nonprofit policy council and/or board of trustees will receive information via e-mail or reports at the next meeting(s).

If a public policy matter is already included in the approved Annual Public Policy Agenda, the CEO can act without additional approval but will report back to the Nonprofit Policy Council and Board of Trustees.