



FUNDING NONPARTISAN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Advocacy groups in general have learned that the most powerful way to conduct issue advocacy and nonpartisan public education is through direct person-to-person contact. Beldon saw an opportunity to provide environmental advocates with more sophisticated tools that would allow them to engage in this kind of permissible outreach.

Here's what we learned:

1. Consult advocacy funding guidelines. Foundations have considerable leeway to fund 501(c)(3) organizations to conduct nonpartisan voter outreach, education and mobilization. Sources for relevant guidelines: The Alliance for Justice (www.afj.org), GrantCraft Guide to Advocacy (www.grantcraft.org), *Why Supporting Advocacy Makes Sense For Foundations*, Atlantic Philanthropies (www.atlanticphilanthropies.org).
2. Help grantees understand the value of expanding their advocacy toolkit in order to more effectively influence policies.
3. Support strong coalitions that allow groups to develop a common agenda and coordinated strategies, while also facilitating cost-effective sharing of resources and sophisticated tools.
4. Jump in - the water is fine.