

Advocating for Change in Georgia

A checklist from Science for Georgia

Looking to make a difference in your community? Science for Georgia has a lot of experience in empowering communities with the knowledge and tools needed to advocate effectively for positive, science-backed transformations in the State of Georgia. Let's get started!

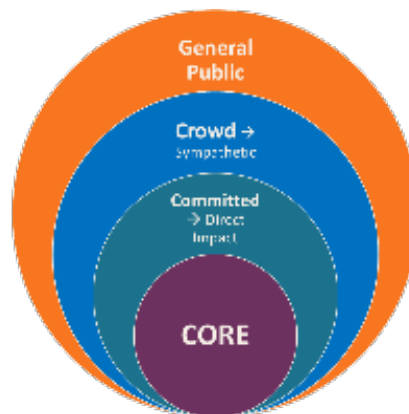
Step 1: Form a Posse

Our voices are stronger together!

This exciting journey begins by asking, "What is it I want to happen?" and then asking, "Who is going to help me make it happen?" Building consensus among a larger group of stakeholders fosters a sense of ownership and shared responsibility, paving the way for collaborative success and fostering a stronger sense of community and common purpose.

Advocating for change involves growing from a *core* posse of dedicated change agents to *general public* support. You grow organically by reaching out to people you know and by crafting a simple message around the problem and solution that has broad appeal.

- Form your *core* posse
- Craft an elevator pitch
- Grow to a *committed* posse
- Brainstorm a solution with broad appeal
- Get the *crowd* involved



Step 2: Get Changemakers on Your Side

Now that you have a clearly defined solution and understand how it can benefit a large group of people, you must involve the people in power. Bring your problem and solution to them, show them who it affects and why, and get them excited to help you with your cause.

Contacting your legislators can be *scary*, but really they are just regular folk. They want to impress you, the voter! They work **for you!**

Key information for policy makers –

- WHO** you are (you are a person living in their district i.e., their constituent)
- WHAT** is going on (i.e. there is this unintended consequence of current legislation)
- WHY** it matters to them or anyone (i.e. farms are losing jobs to Alabama)
- HOW** many people does it affect in their district (i.e., all the farms)
- HOW** to fix it (you and your core group have goals and are ready to go!)

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Step 3: Concrete Change Solutions

Once you have a decision maker onboard, come up with a concrete solution. How is this solution implemented? What is legal? What is possible?

- Get the experts involved. You got connected with some higher powers in the last step—legislators, senators, mayors etc. Ask them what solutions are available. Listen to what they have to say.
- Understand if you need a bill, a rule, a proclamation, a lawsuit, or awareness
- Regroup with your posse. With more information about what the law can offer, go back to your constituents and regroup! How will you modify your goals? Set expectations? Make plans to address everyone's needs?
- Iterate This process may be ongoing, and it is important that you continue to keep your peers represented.

Some examples:

- Gathering up the community members for a trash cleanup effort.
- Holding information sessions on existing programs that address energy burden relief.
- Working with the city council to deny a permit on a possible polluting plant.

Step 4: Now advocate!

Now that you have a workable solution, it's time to get it implemented. To do that, you need broad support. And then you need to get that support to be vocal and urge implementation.

Your posse needs to stay involved in the process and the momentum of your movement needs to be maintained. This means organizing activities and events.

You have probably already had to organize meetings and town halls up to this point. But now you will need to get creative and think bigger and more frequent.

Here are some ideas to consider: Host a letter writing campaign! Host a day at the Capitol! Hold a rally or a march! Get creative with social media! Host a panel discussion or town hall!



← Learn more, get handouts, watch videos

<https://bit.ly/Sci-Advocate-Guide>

About Science for Georgia

Science for Georgia is a 501c3 dedicated to bridging the gap between scientists and the public through training, outreach opportunities, and direct contact with the public, policymakers, and the press. Science for Georgia highlights how science can impact people's lives and advocates for the responsible use of science in public policy.

Please reach out with any questions or comments info@sci4ga.org

