

BAA process for advancing new budget initiatives

Over the last several years, considerable effort has been put into two budget initiatives, Pest Management and Water Security. The concept of addressing issues of great importance as described in the Water Security Initiative has gained broad support of the BAA, and at least some traction at NIFA. Several valuable lessons have been learned through these processes including: the need to have a unified voice, the use of topical experts in developing white papers, and vetting white papers at various levels including ECOP, ESCOP, the BAC, and the Policy Board of Directors. A critically important point is to identify the outcomes and impacts enumerated in any proposal. There also is need for logistical support from the Executive Directors and at least two years of lead time to get an initiative “in the cue” for consideration. Every effort must be made to have federal partners engaged in the process. The process from idea to white paper development and approval must be completed at least two years in advance of efforts to include in a budget request.

In addition it is essential to define important components of advocacy campaign in an effort to establish a generic framework or checklist for future campaigns.

Issue identification Steps:

- Identification of the big problem – What are the big issues of the day that can be addressed by the LGU system using integrated approaches.
- Ideally only one issue would be selected so as not to send mixed messages.
- Vet idea with Sections, BAC
- Vet idea with Cornerstone for feasibility
- BAC charges formation of workgroup with scope of work to include whiter paper development
- Deans/AES/CES Directors identify workgroup members who agree to participate
- Workgroup is created with the assistance of the Executive Directors and current Section Chars serve as co-chairs

White paper Development and Content

With the assistance of the EDs, and Section Chairs, WG develops a white paper through an iterative process using electronic means and may also meet face to face. The white paper:

1. Clearly identifies the issue or situation and importance to a broad base of stakeholders
2. Identifies the needs, goals, and objectives
3. Identifies expected outcomes, impacts
4. Articulates tangible benefits to be realized by the public
5. Specifies time frames for milestones
6. Describes how will conditions will change
7. Articulates implications of failing to take actions
8. Identifies budget information/implications
9. WG develops a logic model as a component of white paper

Approvals/Endorsements

- Endorsed by Section Budget and Legislative Committees
- Endorsed by Board on Agriculture Assembly Committees
 - Budget and Advocacy Committee
 - Committee of Legislation and Policy if necessary
- Endorsed by Policy Board of Directors

Communications

Policy Board Chair formally communicates the white paper to all members of the BAA, the Director of NIFA and other appropriate agencies. Deans/Directors distribute white paper to their faculty as appropriate.

EDs and others work with kglobal and Cornerstone to develop messages that will resonate with targeted individuals/groups. EDs work with communications staff to develop aesthetically pleasing one-pagers

Strategic Advocacy Campaign

1. **Once an issue has been identified and the above steps are complete, the following considerations should be considered from a broad communications perspective**
 - a. What is the **issue** and what is needed to address it?
 - b. What will be the **benefits** to the public? What are the measures of success? What difference would the completion of this campaign make?
 - c. What **level of funding** would be needed to complete the campaign that will address the issue? What types of activities might be supported?
 - d. It is recommended that a large portion of the funds should be provided on a **competitive** basis in support of integrated activities
 - e. Relate the campaign to the **issues of the day**, e.g. drought, food safety, energy, obesity, health, etc.
 - f. **Brand** the campaign (name the issue) to easily communicate to a broad audience. (We will cure cancer.)
 - g. Identify **expected outcomes**, impacts, and tangible benefits
2. **Timeframe for the ask and buy-in from appropriate individuals, groups, and organizations**
 - a. Who is the audience?
 - b. **Who needs to be involved** and at what time and stage of the campaign? Communicate early on and involve appropriate people from various organizations in the discussion (e.g., USDA, NIFA, or other agencies). Develop a complete **list of players** (including their affiliation and contact information) before the start of campaign and preferably during early discussion period.
 - c. Develop a detailed schedule (**timeframe**) of the steps to be completed for the campaign.

- d. What are some specific **milestones** regarding the schedule? Who is responsible for achieving them?
- e. Identify people/organizations that may **not necessarily support the issue**. Work with them to collaborate or develop strategies to counter. Develop an inventory of coalition members.
- f. Utilize **kglobal's expertise** in this effort to develop a broad and diverse cross-sector advocacy coalition that includes commodity groups, producers, industry, citizens, universities, NGOs, and politicians as appropriate

3. Design a complete plan of action

- a. Develop a **vision/goal/strategies** and actions for the campaign
- b. **Refine the timeframe** developed earlier for the campaign—who should be involved and who is responsible for various steps??
- c. Appoint a **steering committee** responsible for coordination that responds to questions, communicates with the interest groups, and provides news releases.

4. Develop educational materials

- a. Use background research and gaps identified to develop **fact sheets** that include easily-understandable messages targeted at specific audiences
- b. Focus on current advances, **the need, and expected outcomes**
- c. Make taking action **effortless** for those who are interested in helping
- d. Use **personal/real stories** to communicate the importance of the campaign
- e. Kglobal should be able to develop an **advocacy marketing strategy** that includes effective messaging, launching a media campaign, coordinating the process, and reaching out to elected officials.

5. Create a mechanism to provide/receive feedback

6. Monitor progress and modify approach as needed