



Advocacy Committee

Advocacy: where to start

Developing and advocacy strategy¹

What do we want?

Who can make it happen?

What do they need to hear?

Who do they need to hear it from?

How can we make sure they hear it?

What do we have?

What do we need?

How do we begin to take action?

How do we tell if it's working?

What do we want?

Each advocacy initiative needs a clear focus. What do we want to achieve?
What are the long-term and short-term goals?

To analyse the problems, issues and possible solutions, taking into account context, timing and resources.

Tip: use problem solving techniques and planning research tools to think through the issue.

¹ Based on *Nine Questions. A strategy planning tool for advocacy campaigns* by Jim Schultz and various implementations in advocacy toolkits.

Who can give it to us?

Context will vary depending on whether the issue is local, national or international.

Music libraries, archives and documentation centres will receive funding mostly through governmental bodies on a national or local level, or from private sponsorship. Are other partners involved? Music very often needs to be approached in a wider context, including, but not limited to, education, performance, community or wellbeing.

Who are the stakeholders? Whom do you need to get on board to make things happen?

Tip: contact your IAML national liaison or local professional bodies to help gathering data about context.

What do they need to hear?

Think about the messages you want to send out and identify a clear evidence-based core message.

Even when messages are based on factual information, you will need to be aware of the different audiences you are aiming to approach and influence.

Tip: research your audience in order to come up with a communication strategy.

Who do they need to hear it from?

Who are the most suitable people to communicate the message? We often don't have direct contacts with the decision makers, but might know people who do. Think about who is best placed to influence, or at least reach out, and to whom. Do you, for example, have good relations with composers or performers? Would they be prepared to support your initiative?

Tip: starting from your local environment, think about how you can build a communication network. Would your scenario benefit from support through your IAML national branch or national advocacy liaison or your national library organisation? Does it have an international impact and require help on a local or national level through the IAML Advocacy Committee?

How can we make sure they hear it?

From personal contacts to large scale public initiatives, the options for getting the message heard are extensive. Context and resources will undoubtedly be key factors in deciding what is most appropriate. Think about the most appropriate format in the context of a range of opportunities for communication.

Tip: IAML can help you in getting your message heard. Depending on the context we can assist with actions to support your strategy, for example through social media and/or official statements. Contact advocacy@iaml.info to discuss what is most appropriate.

What do we have?

We might have limited resources available but there are advocacy initiatives and resources not specifically related to music libraries, archives and documentation centres, as well as examples of good practice from within the IAML community that can provide inspiration and guidance.

Tip: Look at examples. IAML annual reports and social media can give some leads within the context of music libraries. IFLA has an excellent advocacy programme with a clear focus. Outside the library sector, there are numerous advocacy initiatives, toolkits and literature about core principles available as models.

What do we need to develop?

As well as listing available resources, identify what you need to enable you to reach your goals. This includes looking at facilities such as outreach, media and research.

Tip: Use strategic planning tools such as SWOT (strengths – weaknesses – opportunities – threats) or ACT-ON (Advantages – Challenges – Threats – Opportunities – Next steps)

How do we begin?

Start with small steps towards short-term goals and build up from there. In order to achieve short-term goals, think about tactics and planning specific actions such as writing letters or starting petitions. Budgeting for advocacy is also part of the planning.

Tip: your tactics and actions will sit within the framework of your strategy. This is where you start identifying SMART objectives (Specific – Measurable – Achievable - Results – Timely)

How do we tell if it's working?

Continue to monitor, evaluate and adjust your efforts and strategy accordingly. Are your actions helping you to achieve your goal? Do you need to adjust the actions or revisit your goal? Who should be monitoring? How will we evaluate?

Tip: resources remain key at this stage to ensure you don't lose momentum.