

Coalition Building

What is a coalition?

A coalition is a network of groups that have a common interest, goal or mandate and who come together to take action on a specific issue/issues

Why Build a Coalition?

- Bring together a wider range of skills, ideas, experiences and connections
- Address large issues that demand a lot of public support
- You are stronger as a large group than as small, isolated groups
- Can help each other out with future projects
- Gather wider support and bring in new allies
- By working together, you set an example for others, breaking down barriers and stereotypes
- Tackle larger projects
- Make your organization visible
- If your group/organization is not recognized, seen as threatening by the general public, or when speaking out puts you in a dangerous position, working with more mainstream groups can help you get your message across
- Better media coverage
- Easier to get funding
- Share responsibilities, resources, equipment, supplies, space





Who Can Join Your Coalition?

- Look for existing coalitions who seem to have similar goals to your group, and find out how you can join. You can do this research over the web, through word-of-mouth, or by speaking to like-minded local organizations who may belong to a coalition.
- Make a list of groups who are working on similar issues – if you have trouble, look on the Internet, phone book, or visit the local library & ask where you can find a community directory
- Find out if there are organizations working on a regional or national level on the issues that interest you. They may have connections to a wide range of groups in your community/area.
- Don't just form a coalition for the heck of it – you should have a reason to build a coalition, and the groups involved should be not only interested but committed as well.



How to Build a Coalition

- Invite the interested groups to come to an introductory meeting. At the meeting, include some time to relax & get to know one another, to tell each other what your group is about and to find out what each of you would like to get out of the coalition & what you want from each other. Set another meeting date so that you can work out the details of your coalition.
- Write a coalition mission statement, goals and objectives
- Make a set of coalition rules and norms on what sort of projects you will take on, your commitment to anti-oppression, when you will meet, how to make decisions, how you will speak to the media and general public, and who will do this, responsibilities you will have, how you will resolve conflicts, etc.