

6 STEPS TO SET UP A MEETING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS



Interested in meeting with your elected official but not sure where to begin? We have you covered! Follow these 6 simple steps to book a meeting and plan an effective advocacy conversation with your elected officials.

1. RESEARCH

Use our elected official directory to find federal and state officials representing you. You'll find their office contact information, social media accounts, and website. Review their website and social media to see the issues they're working on: <https://bit.ly/ElectedsMC>

scan here to reach our directory!



To find a list of your city or town government officials, you can look at your municipality's website.

2. SOCIAL MEDIA

Find out which social media platforms your elected officials use and if they have personal websites. If you find both - great! Here are some things to look for:

1. Does it list their contact information?
2. Are they working on or supporting arts and culture policies and projects? If they are a state representative or state senator, are they sponsoring or co-sponsoring Creative Sector Agenda bills?
3. Do they schedule regular office or coffee hours? Does it show when they're available for meetings in the district?

Once you have this information, it's time to reach out!

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3. INTRODUCE YOURSELF

If your elected official schedules regular office or coffee hours, sign up or drop in during that time for your advocacy meeting.

If they do not schedule regular office hours or you can't find them, send an email or call their office to introduce yourself. If you're trying to meet with a state representative or state senator, you can find their contact information here: <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>. Include these things in your message:

- Name, address, contact information, and identify the issue you want to discuss.
- Address the elected official by their title. For example, refer to them as "Representative Doe" or "Councilor Doe."
- If you know their staff person, you can include and address them in the email or phone call. Remember that staff perform a lot of behind-the-scenes administrative work, so it's helpful to also get to know them!

4. BE CLEAR AND SHARE YOUR "WHY"

Clearly explain the issue you care about and why. You can include data or references, but save most of your storytelling for the meeting. If possible, keep your introduction email to one or two paragraphs and keep your phone call to about three minutes.

Do your research beforehand. If your state representative is already co-sponsoring a bill in the Creative Sector Agenda that you want to advocate for, thank them. If not, ask them to consider co-sponsoring the bill and have the bill numbers handy. Save yourself the time and try to investigate their position on an issue so you know exactly what to ask from them.

Above all else, include why it's personal. Elected officials want to hear from their constituents about the issues affecting them, not just statistics. How has an issue affected your small business, housing, education, etc.? Remember to bring it back to the personal or local.

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5. ASK FOR A MEETING

After clearly stating your “Why,” ask for a meeting. Offer to meet in person or virtually with the elected official or their staff. Ask for their availability and work with their staff to set up a time.

Make sure to thank them before signing off!

6. PREP AND FOLLOW UP

Now that you’ve scheduled a meeting, you’ll need to prepare. Check out our **HOW TO PREPARE FOR A DECISION MAKER MEETING** guide for more information and details.

You might need to follow up on your meeting request. We all get busy - if you don’t hear back from their offices right after sending a meeting request, wait a few days and then send a follow up.

PASS IT ON

Now that you have the steps to set up a successful advocacy meeting, encourage other people in your circle or community to do the same. When more people feel confident engaging with their elected officials, we build stronger communities.

MORE RESOURCES

This guide is part of MASSCreative’s resources for Creative Sector Advocacy Week 2024. Check out more guides, how to’s and check lists on our website.

We’ve also published our 2024 Advocacy Week Directory, a downloadable collection of all our guides.

If you have more questions or need help with specific advocacy questions, be sure to reach out. You can reach Team MASSCreative via email (info@masscreative.org) or phone 617-350-7610.