



Advocacy Policy and Procedures

Adopted November 12, 2019

The Mission of the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) is to **“Inspire leadership and excellence to advance heritage interpretation as a profession” along with its vision of being the recognized voice of interpretation.** NAI’s vision is to be recognized as the recognized voice of interpretation, and as such it is important for NAI to be an advocate for the profession and its members. We believe that interpretation is critical in accomplishing the missions of our members’ organizations and Agency. This policy and procedure was developed with NAI Core Values in mind. The Core Values are:

- We believe that professional development builds stronger organizations and more capable professionals.
- We value the biodiversity and cultural diversity of the planet.
- We connect people with their cultural and natural heritage to promote stewardship of resources.
- We believe that interpretation is a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource.
- We believe in responsible business management that supports healthy environmental practices to the greatest extent possible in all aspects of NAI operations

Advocacy Goals

1. To **educate and encourage the dissemination of knowledge, data, and research** about the relevance and importance of interpretation to contemporary issues, specifically to help people see the present and past more clearly and to make better decisions in the future.
2. To publicly **support members and organizations**, whose policies, positions, practices, or actions further the goals of international, national, state, and local interpretive practice and to advocate and educate on issues that would negatively impact the field.
3. To **support funding** for organizations whose mission includes the interpretation of our natural and cultural heritage and supports the study and interpretation of our shared experiences.
4. To **collaborate with international, national, regional, and local organizations** that support interpretive sites and facilities, as well as related endeavors.

Advocacy Plan

To support Goals 1-4:

- The NAI Advocacy Task Force will create a strategy screen for assisting NAI staff in assessing the appropriate organizational response to current issues, threats and opportunities by the November 2019 National Conference
- Following the November 2019 National Conference and upon official approval of this policy and procedure, an Advocacy Advisory Council (ACC) will be established with the membership to include members who are experts in advocacy, members who have held leadership positions in the past and recipients of NAI Awards.
- The Advocacy Advisory Council role is to serve as an ad hoc advisory group for issues and areas of advocacy. Their scope is primarily to provide advise and consultation on such areas as, but not limited to wording of letters of support, areas to provide assistance, and recommendations on how to proceed in regards with advocacy. The AAC serves only as an advisory group and does not define or establish policy for the Association. That lies solely with the Board of Directors.

To support Goal 1:

- Target delivery of content and skills-based training that engages the public in discussions and educates the NAI membership base about what advocacy is, and how to become effective advocates
 - Strategies may include participation in the annual conference, webinars, maybe use “NAI News, Legacy Magazine, Regional and Section Newsletters, creation of website toolkits, and coordination with various affinity groups
- Target Implementation Date: Beginning in 2020 and ongoing

To support Goals 2 and 4:

- NAI will serve as an information conduit and seek support-action for current legislation
 - Strategies include: surveying member organizations (International, National, State) to understand current advocacy mechanisms in place
 - Sharing information about advocacy at all levels through Legacy, webinars, e-news, social media and the NAI Website
- Target Implementation Date 2020

To support Goal 3:

- NAI will inform the membership in a timely fashion about potential threats to funding at both the national and state levels and provide a call to action
 - Strategies include but not limited to: Participating in National Coalition for History meetings and AAMs Museum Advocacy Day, Hike the Hill and Public Lands Advocacy Days, letter writing campaigns, calls, and face to face meetings with political advocates
 - NAI will develop a network of contacts at the all levels (National, State, Local, Regional Interpretive agencies) to inform and create action steps for the membership
- Target implementation Date 2020

To support Goal 4:

- NAI will resolve to be active and engaged members of appropriate advocacy organizations such as, but limited to the National Coalition for History, American Alliance of Museums, National Humanities Alliance, National Parks Conservation Association, National Recreation and Parks Association, etc and from time to time with related organizations, on advocacy efforts of mutual interest.
- Report back to leadership and membership on activities and collaborations on a regular basis.
- Target Implementation Date Ongoing upon adoption of the policy and procedure

Decision Making

The President of the Association and the Executive Director together will review/consult on all advocacy efforts and turn to the Advocacy Advisory Council for guidance and the Executive Committee for decisions.

Any member of the organization or its communities may request that the Association act on an issue that may have impact on or within the field, given that it falls within the criteria and processes outlined in this document.

The President, Executive Director or any member of the Executive Committee may call for an advocacy matter to be brought to the full Board for discussion.

The President/Executive Director will report to the Board on any advocacy activities or plans on a routine basis with more formal updates at all National Board of Directors meetings. The President/ED or designated representative will also include information at the National Conferences for the membership.

The Chair and President/CEO, on behalf of the Executive Committee, will endeavor to keep the Advocacy Advisory Council (or its successor) informed of advocacy efforts, may seek guidance on issues and may solicit the group's help in developing advocacy positions, finding issues, and strategizing about responses.

Issuing Public Statements

1. The President/VPA and/or Executive Director will act on **statements requiring quick response** (such as an endorsement) which originate with other organizations that have been previously supported or approved for support by the board of director. If the President or VPA are not available, the executive director can make a decision if it extremely time sensitive
2. President/Executive Director will confer with the Advocacy Advisory Council and the Executive Committee about action on statements that they think need to be discussed further.
3. Statements that fit the scope of the above Advocacy Goals and which originate from within NAI that **require drafting and deliberation** will be handled as follows:
 - o The person or persons who bring the matter to the attention of the President/Executive or Executive Committee is expected to provide talking points or a first draft.
 - o Should the President/Executive Director or Executive Committee need assistance, they will turn to the NAI Advocacy Advisory Council or other knowledgeable groups or individuals for assistance in developing such points as an initial draft, contextual points, examples, or strategic considerations.
 - o President/Executive Director will circulate a final draft to the Executive Committee for approval.
 - o If timing permits and as the situation dictates, endorsement by the entire board of directors will be sought
 - o The statement is approved by majority vote of the Executive Committee or the entire board of directors as appropriate and that group recommends outlets for publicizing the statement.

A flow diagram is being developed to assist in this policy presentation