

# REEL IMPACT

## Working with Impact Producers

### *Impact Production Activities*

#### Strategic Leadership

- ¥ Defining the campaign goals, messages and change tactics (policy, corporate practices, etc.)
- ¥ Identifying the target decision-makers, influencers, audiences and barriers

#### Campaign Management

- ¥ Day-to-day management and staffing
- ¥ Subject management
- ¥ Impact indicator data collection

#### Financial management

- ¥ Funder engagement
- ¥ Grant writing and reporting
- ¥ Budgeting

#### Partnership management

- ¥ Stakeholder outreach
- ¥ Advisory board development and engagement
- ¥ Strategy convening
- ¥ Partnership agreements
- ¥ Stakeholder communications

### Taxonomy of Change

The role of impact producers and the way those services are delivered is in a state of evolution in the U.S. There is great discussion emerging around the field's definition of itself.



Outreach and engagement are audience building activities that ideally will provide inspiration for individual action. Change based activities are strategic and intentional targeting specific change makers.

Outreach:

1. Audience building
2. Creates opportunities to increase awareness of an issue
3. Often measured through pre/post audience surveys

Engagement:

1. Promoted interactivity with the subject matter often through personal calls to action
2. Creates resonance with the subject matter that provokes interaction



### *Company or Contractor?*

Choosing to work with a company or contractor need not be a question of either/or but more a question of what/when?

Independent contractors often bring contractual elasticity that will support the changing and emergent needs of your project. Contractors have very specific skills that may include content knowledge, existing relationships, strategic planning and grant writing. They may or may not have an extensive background in filmmaking and production.

Media companies often possess an infrastructure poised to manage the logistics of larger campaigns. Contracts define specific activities and costs as well as staff that will be assigned to tasks. Companies often have a wide knowledge of industry specifics related to screenings fees, rights and promotion. Most companies do not fundraise.

Other filmmakers are your best references...ask around!

3. Often tracked through web traffic indicators and social media

Change:

1. Strategic placement of the film into the minds of key decision-makers or “issue elites”
2. Often builds on and supports existing milieu of advocacy efforts
3. Often tracked through presence of visible, before/after policy or practice change.

In understanding the roles of outreach, engagement and change, filmmakers can align their goals more specifically and build a team around them with the expertise needed.

### **What are your Goals?**

You'll save time and money if you adhere to the sentiment of “If you don't know where you're going, you won't know how to get there.” Before hiring an independent contractor or company you should consider the following:

1. What change would you like to see your film make in the world? Who or what is your target for change?
2. What are your *personal goals* with your film? Will you be involved in impact work beyond festival/theatrical screenings and broadcast? To what extent—e.g. will you be leading the campaign or supporting it?
3. What are the personal strengths and challenges you will bring to the campaign? What specific activities can you and want to do?
4. What's your impact budget *right now*?
5. What are your pro bono potentials? Seriously...family, friends, advocate partners, EP's, etc.
6. What are your most immediate needs?

### *10 Questions for Impact Producers*

1. Have they worked on other projects that deal with a similar subject as your film (e.g. conservation, poverty, interpersonal violence, politics, healthcare, etc.)? If so, what contacts do they

- have that would expand your existing network?
2. Have they worked on projects with similar goals as yours (e.g. policy, advocacy, etc.)?
  3. Ask them to define their strategic planning process. Ask for a sample of their past strategic work (a copy of a written plan).
  4. Ask for writing samples related to the writing that you may need (grants, strategic plans, calls to action, etc.)
  5. If you need them to manage the logistics related to the release of your film, what is their experience?
  6. Ask if you'll be working with the same person who is "pitching" you. If not, who and what are their qualifications? If they use interns, ask what role the interns will play in your contract?
  7. What are their policies in regard to unplanned communication (e.g. phone calls, emails, texts, etc.)?
  8. Do they fundraise (typically grant research and writing)?
  9. Have they worked with film subjects before and to what extent?
  10. Will they be managing opportunities you bring or are they responsible for creating opportunities?