



## **Engaging New Advocacy Partners**

Beldon's Human Health and the Environment program sought to broaden support for environmental protection by raising awareness of the connection between environmental contamination and personal health. One of the key strategies was to engage a range of influential voices from outside the traditional environmental community, particularly nurses and health-affected groups, and help connect them to environmental grantees.

New advocates contributed to scores of state policy victories, which have built momentum for comprehensive reform of national policies regulating the use of toxic chemicals in consumer products.

Here's what we learned:

1. Take time to build relationships.
2. Fund the new partners directly rather than providing support to existing grantees to reach out to them.
3. Help build the new partners' knowledge of your issue and frame it through their issue lens.
4. Recognize their different organizational culture and work with them where they are.
5. Help connect the agendas of grantees and new advocates.
6. Establish clear working agreements.
7. Recognize and cover the costs of collaboration to the different groups.

### **Do Not**

- Approach this as rent-a-partner.
- Expect partners to prioritize your issue over theirs.
- Go for outcomes at the expense of process.