



## Why Should You Build a Coalition?

- While individuals can make a difference, creating a coalition of organizations and having individuals working toward a common cause allows you to have a significantly greater impact.
- By creating or joining a coalition, you can dramatically increase your resources, ideas, and opportunities for spreading your message to the public. Coalitions make it easier to influence important policy issues that directly affect the Arab-American community.
- A successful coalition:
  1. Will promote understanding and awareness of Arab-American issues
  2. Create a network of supporters
  3. Increase the impact of your organization's work

## How do you Build a Coalition?

### 1. Locate Coalition Partners

- First, try to identify whether a coalition working on issues of interest to you already exists.
  - o Contact the ADC National Legal Department for assistance in locating active coalitions in your area.
- If no relevant coalitions exist, reach out to organizations in your community who work on similar issues.
  - o Look online for organizations that deal with Arab-American, Muslim, or immigrant communities
  - o Refer to list of organizations attached.
- Recruit elected officials, prominent Arab-Americans, and community activists who have influence in your community.
  - o Attend community town hall meetings to find out which community leaders are likely to support your coalition.
- Get in touch with universities and local organizations that support Arab-American issues.

### 2. Common Ground

- Find out whether your coalition partner is a good match:
  - o On certain issues that appeal to a wide range of organizations, try to recruit coalition partners and work together to combine goals that are compatible to one another.
  - o Offer to stand with its members on their issues when they agree to support yours.

**Example:** When battling the creation of national identity cards, the American Civil Liberties Union teamed up with over 40 organizations, including Arab-American

organizations such as ADC and the Arab American Institute, and conservative groups interested in privacy issues, such as the Eagle Forum and the American Conservative Union. The diverse team effort paid off: The Bush Administration and Congress later

## How do you Ensure a Smoothly Functioning Coalition?

1. First Meeting
  - Once you create a group of coalition partners, hold an organizational meeting to:
    - o Identify the goals of the coalition
    - o Create a sign-on letter that outlines the framework of your shared efforts
    - o Determine the coalitions structure
    - o Strategize on how to recruit other potential partners
2. Goals
  - Set short-term and long-term goals for your organization.
    - o Make sure that all goals benefit the coalition members
  - Create realistic deadlines
    - o Ensure that deadlines can be met by busy coalition members and volunteers
3. Conducting Meetings
  - Be Consistent = Send the same representative to each coalition meeting to develop effective contacts
    - o Meet once or twice a month to share information, progress, and strategies
  - Encourage Creativity = Allow all members to brainstorm and list possible solutions to problems your coalition addresses
    - o Refine the ideas at a later stage
    - o Also be sure to allow for equal protection and decision making

**Example:** Try to rotate the meeting leader on a monthly basis
  - Efficiently use your time = Speeches and unnecessary time fillers will discourage attendance to meetings
    - o Distribute an outline or agenda at the beginning of each meeting to keep the discussion efficient and timely.
  - Organize = Make a calendar of attainable goals and reassess deadlines when necessary.
    - o Take advantage of holidays (Fourth of July, Labor Day, etc.) to promote ideas and issues important to the Arab-American community.
  - Review = Assess what is accomplished at the end of each meeting
    - o Ask the minute-taker to email the meeting notes to all coalition partners.
4. Creating Harmony
  - If you are in a leadership position and your coalition receives praise, be sure to give recognition and visibility to all members
  - Distribute the workload evenly among coalition members
  - Build consensus with coalition members and encourage an atmosphere of cooperation and flexibility.

## 5. Coalition Communications

- Make sure that you are on the mailing lists of all your coalition partners and vice versa.
  - o Update one another regularly
- Create a phone tree for urgent actions and updates
- Collect and exchange personal stories from your coalition partners and their clients
  - o Personal stories usually create strong reactions
- Seek out other groups who share your concerns and positions on Arab-American issues
  - o Encourage them to join your coalition.

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## Organizations

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee  
4201 Connecticut Ave, NW, Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20008  
Phone: (202) 244-2990  
Fax: (202) 244-3196  
Website: <http://www.adc.org>

American Immigration Lawyers Association  
918 F Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20004-1400  
Phone: (202) 216-2400  
Fax: (202) 783-7853  
Website: <http://www.aila.org>

Arab American Community Coalition  
P.O. Box 31642  
Seattle, WA 98103  
Phone: (206) 545-1735  
Fax: (206) 547-8607  
Email: [info@theaacc.org](mailto:info@theaacc.org)  
Website: <http://www.theaacc.org>

Arab American Institute  
1600 K Street NW, Suite 601  
Washington, DC 20006  
Phone: (202) 429-9210  
Fax: (202) 429-9214  
Website: <http://www.aaiusa.org>

American Civil Liberties Union  
125 Broad Street, 18th Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
Phone: (212) 549-2585  
Email: [membership@aclu.org](mailto:membership@aclu.org)  
Website: <http://www.aclu.org>

Arab Community Center for Economic & Social Services - Main Office  
2651 Saulino Court  
Dearborn, MI 48120  
Phone: (313) 842-7010  
Fax: (313) 842-5150  
Website: <https://www.accesscommunity.org>

Center for National Security Studies  
1120 19th Street, NW  
8th Floor  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: (202) 721-5650  
Fax: (202) 530-0128  
Email: [cnss@gwu.edu](mailto:cnss@gwu.edu)  
Website: <http://www.cnss.org/>

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles - CHIRLA  
2533 W. Third St., Ste. 101  
Los Angeles, CA 90057  
Phone: (213) 353-1333  
Fax (213) 353-1344  
Email: [info@chirla.org](mailto:info@chirla.org)  
Website: <http://www.chirla.org>

Coalition for World Peace  
Phone: (213) 487-2368  
Email: [coalitionforworldpeace@yahoo.com](mailto:coalitionforworldpeace@yahoo.com)  
Website: <http://www.actionla.org>

Hate Free Zone-HFZ Campaign of Washington  
4860 Rainier Avenue South  
Seattle, WA 98118  
Phone: (206) 723-2203  
Fax: (206) 721-1336  
Email: [info@hatefreezone.org](mailto:info@hatefreezone.org)  
Website: <http://www.hatefreezone.org>

Human Rights First  
100 Maryland Avenue, NE;  
Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20002-5625  
Phone: (202) 547-5692  
Fax: (202) 543-5999  
Email: [communications@humanrightsfirst.org](mailto:communications@humanrightsfirst.org)  
Website: <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org>

Human Rights Watch  
1630 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20009 USA  
Phone: (202) 612-4321  
Fax: (202) 612-4333  
Email: [hrwdc@hrw.org](mailto:hrwdc@hrw.org)

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights - ICIRR  
36 S. Wabash, Suite 1425  
Chicago, IL 60603  
Phone: 312.332.7360  
Fax: 312.332.7044  
E-mail: [info@icirr.org](mailto:info@icirr.org)  
Website: <http://www.icirr.org>

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights & Education Fund  
1629 K Street NW  
10th Floor  
Washington, DC 20006  
Phone: (202) 466-3311  
Website: <http://www.civilrights.org>

National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium  
1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 1200  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: (202) 296-2300  
Fax: (202) 296-2318  
Email: [thong@napalc.org](mailto:thong@napalc.org)  
Website: <http://www.napalc.org>

National Council of La Raza  
NCLR Headquarters Office  
1111 19th Street, N.W.  
Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: (202) 785-1670  
Website: <http://www.nclr.org>

National Immigration Forum  
50 F Street NW  
Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20001  
Phone: (202) 347-0040  
Email: [info@immigrationforum.org](mailto:info@immigrationforum.org)  
Website: <http://www.immigrationforum.org>

National Immigration Law Center  
3435 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2850  
Los Angeles, CA 90010  
Phone: (213) 639-3900  
Fax: (213) 639-3911  
Email: [info@nilc.org](mailto:info@nilc.org)  
Website: <http://www.nilc.org/>

The New York Immigration Coalition  
275 Seventh Avenue, 9th Floor  
New York, New York 10001  
Tel: (212) 627-2227  
Fax: (212) 627-9314  
Website: <http://www.thenyic.org>  
Open Society Institute  
400 West 59th Street  
New York, NY 10019, USA  
Phone: (212) 548-0600  
Website: <http://www.soros.org>

The Rights Working Group  
Krishna Bhavsar  
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