

You and Effective Library Advocacy



Tim Prendergast - Executive Director, Hodgkins Public Library District
ILA Advocacy Committee Member

Ready, Set, Advocate

<https://www.ila.org/advocacy/ready-set-advocate>



Contains downloadable slide deck for all 3 modules

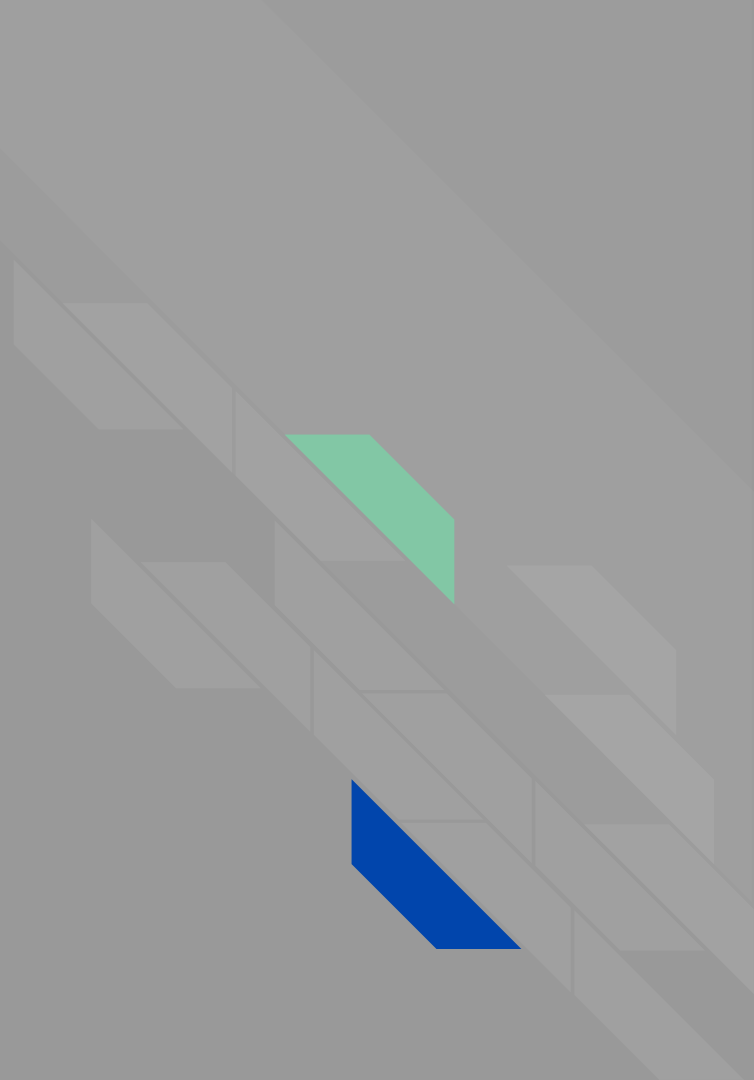
Also contains discussion audio/video for all 3 modules



Advocacy Is Identifying the “thing” you are passionate about, and then...

- Engaging the community
- Developing a supportive network
- Identifying and supporting causes
- Stepping up to leadership
- Getting the message out

Module One: Ready





Module One: Ready

Advocacy is a continuum

Four Stages

Laying the
Groundwork

Turning Support into
Action

Advocating for Specific
Goals

Responding to
Opportunities and
Threats



Module One: Ready **Laying the Groundwork**

- Community Engagement
- Relationship Building
- Measuring our impact
- Sharing personal stories



Module One: Ready **Turning Support Into Action**

- Build support networks with decision-makers and library users
- Get the message out about issues within the library industry
- Find and share resources with advocates
- Seek out and attend advocacy training



Module One: Ready **Advocating for Specific Goals**

- Tell your library's story
- Be aware of local initiatives and community concerns
- Reach out to elected officials to ask for support
- Stay informed about local, state, and national initiatives

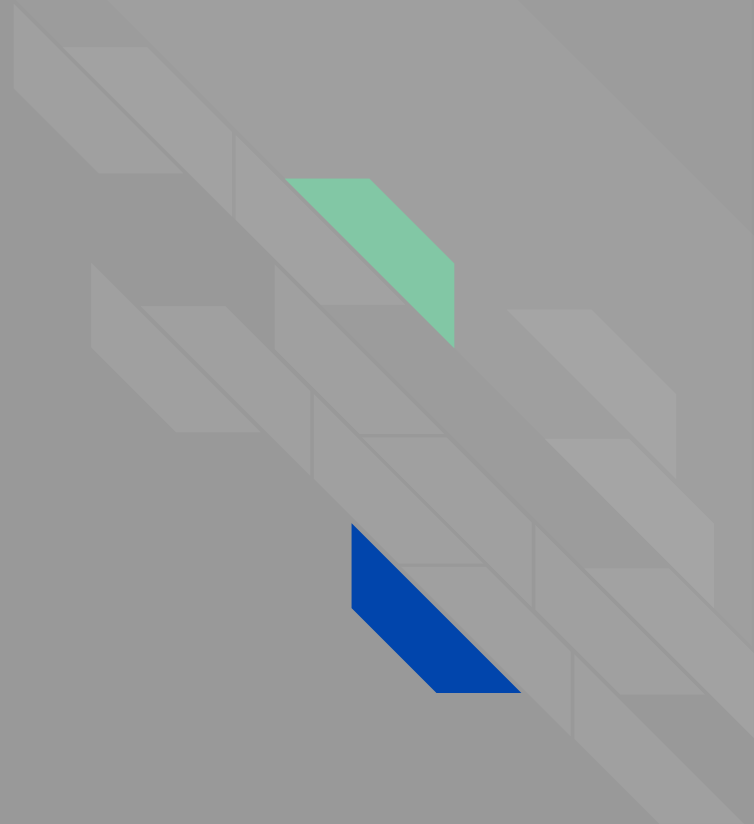


Module One: Ready

Responding to Opportunities and Threats

- Maintain awareness of potential threats to library operations
- Continually read industry sources to learn about legislation impacting libraries
- Pay attention to news coming from other libraries
- Learn how the library pieces fit together

Module Two: Set





Module Two: Set

- Arguably the most challenging part of advocating
 - Identifying the thing you want to improve
 - Crafting the message
 - Identifying stakeholders
- Arguably the most time consuming
 - Trial and Error
 - Modifying and Trimming



Module Two: Set

Advocacy is a continuum



Four Stages

Laying the
Groundwork

Turning Support into
Action

Advocating for Specific
Goals

Responding to
Opportunities and
Threats



Module Two: Set Advocacy Types - Two Paths

Formal Messaging

- Generally Written
- Identified Audience
- Minimal “Insiders”
- Multi-Platform
- Narrow Message
- Defined timeline
- Data Driven

Informal Messaging

- Consistent messaging
- Word of Mouth or Acts
 - ...storytelling
- Organically grown
- Narrow or Wide audience
- Indefinite timeline
- Data Driven



Module Two: Set **Laying the Groundwork**

- What topic do we want to advocate?
 - Local, Regional, or National
- What stakeholders are going to buy-in?
 - How do you reach them?
- What data or info are you going to use to build the story?



Module Two: Set **Turning Support Into Action**

- Learn all you can about your supportive topic
- Identify advocacy organizations similar to or adjacent to your topic
- Build your network of advocates to learn and share information
- Attend any trainings available



Module Two: Set **Advocating for Specific Goals**

- Simplifying your supportive topic
- Crafting a simple and cohesive message
- Reaching your identified audience
- Making officials aware



Module Two: Set **Responding to Opportunities and Threats**

- Create plan to attack successes
- Relying on network of advocates
- Acknowledging need to pivot due to challenges and horizons

Module Two: Set Formal Advocacy - Organizational Examples



@your library™

The logo features a red '@' symbol followed by the text 'your library' in a blue serif font, with a trademark symbol (TM) at the end.

Successful platform
for nearly 15 years



Successful platform used by
many non-profit organizations

Module Two: Set Formal Advocacy - Open Ended Examples



Cyclical and somewhat
predictable window



Rolling campaign with
moving targets



Module Two: Set Formal Advocacy - Local Library Tools

- Newsletter
- Website
- Social Media
- Cross Pollination
 - Another entity pushing your message
- Other Mailing



Module Two: Set Informal Advocacy

Library Specific

- Library Cards
- Fine Free
- Database usage

Library Adjacent

- Welcoming Unhoused
- Pantries
- Equitable Internet



Module Two: Set Informal Advocacy

With so many things that could be advocated for,
where to start?

- Sometimes the fight comes to you
- Sometimes you have to go to the fight
 - What is the “hill to die on”?
 - Typically, you are only allowed one hill at a time



Presentation Resources

- <https://www.ila.org/advocacy>
- <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/advocacy-bootcamp-resources>
- <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/advocacy-academy>
- <https://www.everylibrary.org/>