How to design an advocacy campaign for museums?

A good practice from the Netherlands

11 November 2017
11.15 – 12.30 hrs.

Lodewijk Kuiper (Netherlands Museums Association)
Dutch Elections Case
Dutch Elections Case

Define Outcome
• March/April 2016

Identify stakeholders + process
• April 2016

Outreach
• May 2016

1st Outcome: Publication election programmes 10 parties
• Nov / 2016

2nd Outcome: Government Coalition Agreement
• October 2017

Implementation in governments policy
• 2017-2022

Messaging
• March / April 2016
Define Outcome

4 Priorities for museums adopted in programmes political parties
MAY – NOV 2016

Priorities adopted in Coalition government agreement
OCT 2017

Priorities translated into policy
OCT 2017 - 2022
Ideal Outcome

**Cultural / Museum education**
Acknowledgement of the role of museums for kids. More budgets to allow school classes and their teachers to visit museums.

**Giving Law (tax incentives for grants)**
Maintain the Giving Law – which was expiring – which incentivizes tax payers who gives donations to cultural institutions, including museums.

**Funds for purchasing collection objects**
The national budgets to acquire significant collection objects for museums are back to its old level. Since 2011 the budget has decreased from 50 million euro to 4 million euro.

**Collection mobility – increase the indemnity scheme**
An increase of the indemnity scheme for foreign loans, so that museums have to pay less or even no insurance costs for foreign loans.
Messaging

5-pager with 4 key priorities of the NMA, submitted to 10 political parties
Identify stakeholders + process

Political parties and number of seats before and after election
March 2017

Freedom Party
Seats 15 -> 20

Socialist Party
Seats 15 -> 14

PvdA
Labour
Seats 38 -> 9

Animals Rights Party
Seats 2 -> 5

Lib-Dems
Seats 12 -> 19

Greens
Seats 4 -> 14

Lib-Dems
Seats 13 -> 19

Christian-Democrats
Seats 13 -> 19

ChristenUnie
Christian Union
Seats 5 -> 5

Coalition Government
76 seats of total 150

Liberals
Seats 41 -> 33

Orthodox
Christian Party
Seats 3 -> 3

Network of European Museum Organisations
1st Outcome: Published election programmes [1]

Example: Programme Liberal Party (VVD) with relevant proposals for museums
1st Outcome: Published election programmes [2]

Example: Lib Dems (D66) Programme with relevant proposals for museums
2nd Outcome: Government Coalition Agreement

Dutch Government Coalition Agreement. The 4 priorities of NMA are mentioned. Date: 10-10-2017
Lessons learned [1]

*Election programmes of political parties*

- Personal contact with the secretaries of parliamentary election programme committees is important. They receive input from > 1000 stakeholders. If you talk to them, you are heard.

- Don’t forget political parties which are low in the polls. The Dutch elections 2017 caused a landslide. 6 parties gained or lost > 5 seats.

- When you submit input to political parties, they also adopt positions or topics you don’t share. Dealt with that, and prepare to address those later.

- Don’t stop when your objectives are achieved in the election programmes. Adoption of ambitions in government’s policy is what it is about.
Lessons learned [2]

After elections, towards a new cultural policy

• At least monthly being in touch with personal assistants of MPs or Policy Advisors, gives you insights in the internal mechanisms of Parliament.

• When you submit position papers, that leads often to questions from the policy advisors of the bigger political parties. See this as an opportunity!

• Informing all the significant political parties prior to debates about the cultural policy creates certainty for MPs. Surprise = ‘no’ or postponement in time.
Lessons learned [3]

Obstacles

• Negative input in election programmes. Don’t fight a political party on *core beliefs*. Keep telling the other political parties your positive story on the issue.

• In the coalition agreement of the government your issues can be mentioned, (1) without additional budget, (2) in wording only confirming the *status quo*. Use the wording in the agreement to push later in the policy debates to get your preferred outcome.
Assignment for participants

• You have 5 mins in which you are asked – together with your neighbour - to write down:
  (1) one or two of your advocacy campaigns.
  (2) What was the challenge?
  (3) What was the outcome?
  (4) Which lessons did you learn?

Please choose who will give feedback to the group (max 2 mins)