

LWVHC Policy #16

Guide to LWVHC in Partnering with Other Organizations

Organizations

Building coalitions, cooperating with other organizations, and forming collaborations can all be common partnerships for Leagues. Yet, the parameters of how and if these partnerships are decided remain gray at best.

In an effort to maintain the nonpartisanship of the League and its mission to advocate for its positions, the following guidelines should be carefully considered before a decision is made to partner with a given organization.

1. Is the organization one which has repeatedly endorsed candidates of a specific party in a public way, i.e. ads, letters of support, etc.? If so, this is a negative for League.
2. League should be involved (at least two people) in the planning and the evaluation stages of the event to assure that speakers on panels, etc. are qualified and will uphold the quality of League's programs as well as responsibly evaluate the event or program. Coming to League after a program has been planned to seek League's public support does not give League the opportunity to weigh in on the selection of speakers.
3. If the majority of the Executive Committee cannot agree to make a decision on a given situation, the Board should be approached. The questions to be answered in making this decision are: "Does affiliation with this given organization negatively or positively affect the League's image to remain nonpartisan? Will partnering with this organization weaken or strengthen League's position in a given category?"
4. The use of the name of The League of Women Voters of Henderson County in support of any given event or any given coalition, cooperative event and collaboration, must be approved by its Executive Committee or its Board.

League members may still serve as moderators or facilitators of programs when and if partnering with a given organization is deemed to be not in the best interests of the League.

Definitions of Various Kinds of Partnerships

Coalition - Organizations working together in a common effort for a common purpose in order to make more effective and efficient use of resources. Ex. Fundraisers might be jointly planned and the revenues raised split rather than have staff of several organizations spend their time on raising money. Working to seek passage of specific legislation might also be a good reason to form a coalition.

Collaboration - The process of individuals or organizations sharing resources and responsibilities to jointly plan, implement, and evaluate programs. Collaboration in the strict sense of the term tends to be more detailed agreement than a coalition would

require. Collaborations usually are longer term, have more clear written agreements which might involve sharing of resources and responsibilities in a variety of ways, i.e., sharing staff, office space, computers.

Cooperation - a temporary alliance of organizational structures and personnel to accomplish a common goal. Ex. Organizations will request letters of support of other organizations in order to add strength to a grant proposal which they all support but which funds go to a single organization.

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