



RTCNYC Tool 3.2

How to Leverage the Power of Institutional Members

During our campaign, we worked within and outside of our coalition to access different resources and skills that grassroots organizations (or unfunded coalitions like ours at the time!) would normally find difficult to access. For example, a legal services organization in our coalition had access to working hours with a public relations consulting firm, which we were able to use to push news stories about the coalition's work. Below is a list of key resources and skills to consider leveraging - think about who amongst your allies or potential allies might be able to connect you to such resources.

Communications Help

- **Public Relations Firms:** You may be working alongside organizations or other entities that retain the services of a public relations firm. Usually, organizations contract with such firms to do a certain number of hours of PR work. If possible, see if there are a few free hours a month that organizations in your coalition might be able to use to push your media coverage and draft press releases.
- **Voices for Civil Justice:** An organization that exists to raise the profile of civil legal aid in the media. They worked with us to develop a press release and utilized their contacts at many of the major news outlets.
- **AARP:** We worked with AARP to put together [this video](#) about Right to Counsel. It is helpful to think about the populations who will be most affected by a right to counsel (ie. retired people and the elderly) and start reaching out to organizations or lobbying groups representing those interests.

Legal Research Help

- **Pro Bono Counsel:** We worked with law firms in New York to put together legal research in response to legal issues raised by the City.
- **Bar Associations:** We worked with the New York City Bar Association to commission a study on the financial costs and savings that a right to counsel would bring. See the report [here](#).

Media Development

- We are currently working with a filmmaker who is documenting RTCNYC Coalition's campaign.
- AARP also has an in-house graphic designer who did some great work for us.