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# How grants are used

**What support we provide**

Advocacy, for the purpose of BEST-Dialogue’*s* work, is the process of influencing the government to make changes to existing policies in order to improve the business environment. We provide technical and financial support to private sector organisations, which empowers them to undertake advocacy work.

**Advocacy, a five-step approach**

In order for organisations to be able to engage effectively with the government they must present evidence. BEST-Dialogue employs a five step approach in assisting organisations to gather this information.

1 – **Identifying the issues** – this step can be identified in a number of ways and may come from business, government and other stakeholders, including consumers, employees and NGOs. Much effort may be required before an organisation has an idea of the real issues and their priority. When the government has proposals for new regulations, it will want to consult. Sometimes, the government may not consult or may not believe that a proposal has implications for the private sector.

2- **Research –** **understanding the issues –** in-depth research is required to gain a full understanding of the implications. This includes a systematic gathering of views, the ability to draw logical conclusions and a process for developing internal consensus (everybody agreeing on a particular issue).

3 – **Packaging the information –** **developing responses and proposals –** formulating *evidence- based policy*. This requires the careful selection of objective evidence from reliable sources, the consideration of policy options and the preparation of a compelling argument. Support from members and the wider private sector will be necessary when lobbying. Proposals must not disadvantage other businesses, as they will lobby against you.

4 – **Dialogue –** **influencing policy makers –** reaching appropriate people in government. Policy makers who need to be influenced may be senior civil servants or ministers. This may not be the case if the real objective is to seek the enforcement of existing regulation, or to ensure that policy is introduced in such a way as to minimise the administrative burden. For some issues there may be an opportunity to build alliances with others, including business membership organisations, professional institutions, civil society organisations and trade unions.

5 – **Monitoring** –**following up on progress** to ensure that, when the public sector agrees changes, they are put into practice. If the agreement requires new legislation, then you may need to apply pressure at various stages to ensure that the legislation is passed. This may require lobbying parliamentary committees, ministers or senior civil servants. If the agreement requires changes to the way that a regulation is implemented, then work closely with the relevant ministry, department or agency to ensure that they do what is necessary.

As with all projects we run at BEST-Dialogue, a dedicated project officer is assigned to your organisation to assist in every step – from identifying your advocacy issue to carrying out your advocacy project and achieving a continuous discussion with government.

five-steps