



NASS PARTNERSHIP CRITERIA

Updated July 2010

The National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) may choose to partner with select external non-partisan and non-issue advocacy organizations or corporations. These collaborations are intended to help NASS accomplish its mission and will not include financial support from NASS. This document is intended to clarify NASS partnership objectives and qualification criteria. The criteria are designed to protect the integrity and reputation of NASS. Member states may develop their own criteria and are not required to adhere to these national guidelines.

Partnership Objectives

The organization's aims and purposes, according to the NASS Constitution, are to "disseminate and exchange information among its members their duties, responsibilities, methods of operation, suggestions and proposals for improvement in their respective offices thought mutually beneficial to themselves, their states, and the nation."

NASS partnerships should further this mission and accomplish the following:

- Enhance and extend NASS, our educational missions, institutional impacts, influence and positive public image
- Develop or strengthen relationships with organizations that complement the mission of NASS
- Share intellectual and social capital

Desired Outcomes

Outcomes from each partnership should include one or more of the following:

- Expansion or increased diversity of NASS audiences
- Distribution of NASS outputs (e.g. studies, surveys, communications materials) to new markets
- Supplementation of limited NASS staff resources

Partnership Criteria

Successful partnerships will be with focused, committed and stable entities and will produce unique and specific mutual benefits. NASS will only consider partnerships with non-partisan, non-profit and non-issue advocacy groups. Attractive partner prospects will possess one or more of the following characteristics/offerings:

- Excellent reputation, defined as no history of negative media coverage and no successful lawsuits filed against and related specifically to the division of the organization with which NASS would partner
- Clear objectives and goals that complement and further NASS mission statement
- Potential for productive outcome
- Potential for NASS to leverage or extend existing social/informational networks
- Programs/services of demonstrable value to NASS constituencies which cannot be offered directly by NASS
- A member group compatible with and complimentary to NASS members
- Near-term stability
- Experienced, capable leadership
- Member audiences accessible to NASS

Partnership Proposals

Any organizations interested in partnering with NASS must submit a written proposal. Proposals must contain the following information to be considered:

- Name of applying organization, names and biographies of organization's leadership (top three executive officers, plus board members)
- Demographic profile of target audiences (age, gender, education and income levels, as well as any other applicable information)
- Statement describing how the organization's mission aligns with the mission of NASS, and how a partnership would benefit both groups
- Copy of the organization's communications/marketing plan
- List of any current partnerships or sponsorships
- List of any donors who contribute more than five percent of the organization's calendar year revenue

Proposals should be submitted a minimum of sixty (60) days before the next NASS conference. Proposals will be sent via email to all secretaries. A conference call with the appropriate NASS committee will be scheduled prior to the next conference for each organization that submits a proposal. They will then be reviewed by the appropriate NASS committee and, if selected by that committee, will be presented at the organization's next business meeting and voted on by the membership. Secretaries who wish to challenge the committee's selections must have the agreement of ten percent of the membership, or five members, to appeal. Appeals must be filed with the committee chair before the membership vote.

Untimely proposals may be eligible for interim approval by the NASS Executive Committee. Interim approvals will be considered valid only until the next full meeting of the membership. The appropriate committee will determine eligibility for interim approval. If a proposal receives interim approval, the committee will then decide whether to advance that proposal to the next business meeting for a membership vote and possible standard approval.

Commitment Letter

NASS will not consider a partnership to be valid without a formal letter of commitment from the current NASS President. The commitment letter will reflect the outcome of the member vote, characterize the nature and extent of the relationship, outline NASS expectations for the partnership, the duration of the partnership and the conditions under which the relationship may be terminated. The letter will also describe the terms and conditions under which the partnership may be advertised and NASS logos used.

Annual Review

The appropriate NASS committee will review current partnerships annually. A conference call with the appropriate NASS committee will be scheduled prior to the next conference for each organization that submits a proposal for renewal. After a NASS partnership has been evaluated annually for three years, the partnership will be reviewed on a biennial basis. Assessments may be based on presentations by the partner, third-party interviews, partner organization growth and constituent outcomes, partner programs, published works and other intellectual outputs and favorable media mentions. Partnerships must demonstrate positive and tangible outcomes and achievements. The results of the review may be shared with partner groups in order to build or strengthen an effective relationship.