

# **INFLUENCING POLICYMAKERS**

Monica L. Stigler, Ph.D.

December 2, 2020



# TARGET YOUR AUDIENCE

## Key Questions:

- What level of policy do you wish to impact?
- How are changes made at this level?
- Who is empowered to make changes at this level?

# OUTREACH

## Tap Your Network

- Who do *you* know and how well do you know them?
- Who do *they* know?
  - Ask for an introduction

## When You Don't Know Anyone:

- Attend a networking event
- Find a connection
- Follow the chain of command

# COMMUNICATION

## Clear, Concise Communication

### In-Network

- Brief phone call, followed by succinct email
- Over coffee or lunch

\*Use communication as an opportunity to gain information

### Out-of-Network

- Succinct email, followed by phone call
- Social media

# POSITION YOURSELF & YOUR RESEARCH

## You

- Credibility
- Positionality
- Interest
- Endgame

## Your Research

- Stage
- Funders
- Findings
- Limitations
- Implementation

# SET EXPECTATIONS & BENCHMARKS

## Intentional Interactions

- What are your goals?
  - Short, intermediate, long term
  - Mutually beneficial
- What is your ask?
  - What do you need? How will it be used?
- What can you offer?
  - Resources? Data analysis? Solutions?
- What counts as success?
  - Developing relationships
  - Circulation of your research
  - Adoption of your recommendations
  - Policy changes
  - Measurable outcome shifts
  - Partnerships

# TRACK COMMUNICATION, STATUS, & OUTCOMES

Create a spreadsheet to track the following:

- Name, title, affiliation, & contact info of folks you've contacted
- Date & method of contact
- Date of first and subsequent follow-up or communication
- Outcome of communication & impressions
- Action items & next steps
- Agreed upon goals & expectations
- Outcomes
- Challenges

# CAUTION

## Avoid Being Used

- Assess openness to data and change
- Identify vast philosophical differences
- Explain the limits of your research to avoid overreach
- Focus on what your research shows and its implications
- Don't promise more than you can deliver
- Ask good questions
- Maintain independence