

What is public policy?

Public policy is a formal means for legitimizing the community value of a program or project by incorporating it into the community infrastructure through political and financial support.

How does public policy impact and determine the effectiveness of my center or the community I serve?

With public policy comes funding. Effective public policy can ensure sustainable, dependable, long-term funding for community technology centers and subsequently increase their ability to focus on the programmatic goals of the center.

What does it take to influence public policy?

All it takes is voicing your concern on issues that affect your center or the client community in which the center serves. This is easy as speaking-out at public hearings, letter writing to legislatures, or signing on to letters of policy activism.

Don't policymakers already know our issues and concerns?

No, policy-makers in telecommunications often get a one-sided view of the possible impacts and effects of their policies. The telecommunication companies are well represented at public hearings that decide public policy, but the community-interest groups are not. In order to ensure that policies are designed with a community focus, public interest groups must take part in the process.

Is it worth it?

Yes, the energy spent on taking a proactive role towards public policy activism that will ensure the sustainability of community technology centers is much more beneficial long-term than the continual pull of resources for short-term grants.

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