



CAMPAIGNER NETWORK TOOLKIT

1) Role of a campaigner

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By being part of The Vegan Society's Campaigner Network you are part of a growing global movement. By taking action in your own community, you can help to raise awareness and campaign for lasting change in a world in which humans do not exploit other animals. As a valued campaigner, you will be promoting veganism for the benefit of people, animals, and the environment.

What do campaigners do?

Your role as a campaigner is to advocate for changes which will benefit people, animals, and the environment. You help to raise awareness by highlighting specific aspects of The Vegan Society's national campaigns, helping us promote veganism as an easily adopted and widely recognised approach to reducing animal and human suffering and environmental damage by means of meaningful, peaceful and factual dialogue with individuals, organisations, and companies. As campaigners your voices are crucial to persuade society, including politicians and powerful corporations, to listen to the facts and of the need to take action. We need to convince those who can bring about change that there is a growing public support for the changes we advocate – and that's where you come in.

The voices of ordinary people are vital if change is to happen. Your voice is vital for veganism. As a Vegan Society campaigner you take campaign messages into your communities, giving people the opportunity to express their support, as well as increasing their understanding of a vegan lifestyle.

As a Vegan Society campaigner you will help raise awareness through delivering 'actions' specific to our national campaigns. This will include:

- ▶ Promoting the benefits of the vegan lifestyle by encouraging more people to adopt it and helping to show how it can be easy for people to follow.
- ▶ Advocating for the development and use of vegan alternatives to all commodities derived wholly or partly from animals.
- ▶ Raising awareness of the benefits of the vegan method of agriculture as a means of increasing the potential of the earth to the physical, moral and economic advantage of humankind.
- ▶ Helping to further our message by explaining the various reasons for being vegan. People are most likely to stay committed to veganism if they believe it is wrong to exploit other animals.

- ▶ Campaigning to raise awareness by challenging the dominant world view of exploiting other animals by working towards a world where nonhuman animals are recognised as fellow beings who are not made to suffer or die for human purposes.
- ▶ Raising awareness and campaigning for legal, cultural and policy changes to be more supportive of a vegan lifestyle.

What's The Vegan Society's role?

Before any campaign is launched, The Vegan Society will have established its overall objectives at a national level, based on our knowledge from sound research. We will keep you informed of the aims of our campaigns as they progress, and suggest actions you can take to help us achieve them. You will then need to decide what works locally, given the resources, networks, and supporters you have access to, and the resonance of the particular issues in your locality.

Campaigner Network groups

You may choose to campaign individually or form a group. You may choose to join an existing group in our Campaigner Network. If you want to set up a new group make sure you let us know. By becoming part of our Campaigner Network we'll provide you with opportunities to link up with other campaigners and groups and get the benefit of their support, advice and ideas.

If you decide to form a group, it might be helpful to decide who in the group will take on which roles and responsibilities, for example: group co-ordinator, treasurer, or local media contact etc. This may help you get new members as you can advertise a specific role at your local volunteering centre (e.g., "Treasurer needed for Vegan Society Campaigner Network group"). Whilst these roles are optional, it is important that the main point of contact in each group is a Vegan Society member.

You should avoid relying on people to do the same tasks year on year. By sharing the responsibilities you avoid people feeling overly relied upon. You will also develop the skills of your members by giving them experience of different types of activity. All members of the Group should act in accordance with The Vegan Society's culture and beliefs – respecting alternative points of view and valuing diversity.

Participative meetings for effective action

If you decide to form a Campaigner Network group, you may wish to hold regular meetings. Such events are a good way to share ideas and organise effective action. They should be *accessible, friendly, effective, organised, motivating* and *action-focused*. An agenda can help you to ensure that everything you need to cover gets discussed. Write down action points and key decisions for reference at the next meeting, and to help people who weren't present but are interested in staying involved. There are many different things you can do: invite a speaker, organise a skill-sharing session, or arrange a social event such as a vegan-related film screening.

Communicating with your members

Clear lines of communication are important to make your Campaigner Network group a success. Some of the options are *newsletters, minutes of meetings, phone calls, email groups* and *websites*. Check that people are happy to share their details with other group members/The Vegan Society. If you're not sure, it's best to use the 'bcc' option when you send out emails so that people do not see other email addresses. Please ensure that people know what they are signing up for when they give you their email address, and be clear how their data will be stored and used.

Attracting new members and keeping existing members interested.

- ▶ Ask yourself what the group wants to do more of. What new skills are needed to achieve this? Can The Vegan Society help with this?
- ▶ Think about why a potential new recruit might want to join the group. What sorts of activities might they want to take part in? What might they want to achieve?
- ▶ Materials – put together a general leaflet describing the group's activities, and a sign-up sheet for your events.
- ▶ Consider where you will advertise, and to whom? What is likely to appeal to your chosen audience? What is the effect of the language you use in your materials?
- ▶ You could invite new members to a group meeting, campaigning activity, or social event. Try to ensure people feel positive about what they can achieve, and know what action they can take next based on our national campaigns and their local-level 'actions'.

Representing The Vegan Society

As a Vegan Society activist we trust you to do what you can to uphold The Vegan Society's reputation and not take it for granted. In particular, we'd like you to:

- ▶ Be open and honest about your relationship with The Vegan Society and whether you are communicating your own views or The Vegan Society's.
- ▶ Respect any requests to keep sensitive information to yourself.
- ▶ Act and communicate in a way that best represents The Vegan Society, especially at events and meetings or in communication with third parties. Never do anything that could bring the name of The Vegan Society into disrepute.
- ▶ Try to reflect The Vegan Society's values in the way you represent us. Show consideration and respect for other people and their points of view, both within and outside the organisation.