

Guide to life on an Activism Leadership Committee

May 2021

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



Activism Leadership Committees (ALC) bring together the commitment, passion and skills of regional leaders to create strategic and sustainable human rights impact. ALCs motivate, coordinate and develop local human rights activism. They mentor and support action groups and activists, and participate in consultations on Amnesty International Australia's (AIA) vision, campaign priorities, and policies.

ALCs are at the centre of our work to challenge injustice and defend human rights.

This guide will:

- Complement the [ALC Charter](#)
- Clarify AIA's theory of change and the role of ALCs in it
- Give an overview of the purpose of ALCs
- Celebrate best practice examples to get you thinking about what your ALC could achieve
- Identify potential roles that you could play on your ALC
- Detail the support and structures available to ALCs
- Provide clarity on how ALCs relate to other AIA structures

How does AIA create change?

1. Amnesty International researches first hand what human rights abuses are taking place. From systemic issues to individual cases we gather as much information as we can to inform the rest of the world about what abuses have happened
2. We release this research publicly putting pressure on decision-makers to make changes to protect human rights. AIA staff are involved in advocating and lobbying decision-makers to do the right thing. But often that is not enough, so finally, and most importantly;
3. We empower people, like you, around the world to take action. This could be anything from signing petitions, writing letters, holding community events, organising public stunts, and sparking conversations. It is AIA's people-powered movement that puts pressure on leaders who otherwise may not do the right thing.

ALCs can be involved in all three areas of how we create change but particularly in the final area. ALCs lead our people-powered movement to take sustained, meaningful action to ensure that decision-makers pay attention.

HOW CHANGE HAPPENS



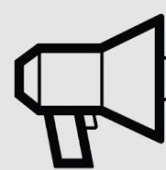
Research

Human rights change starts with the facts. Our experts do accurate, cross-checked research into human rights violations by governments and others worldwide.



Advocacy and Lobbying

We use our analysis to influence and press governments, companies and decision-makers to do the right thing.



Campaigns and Action

Through petitions, letters and protests, campaigners worldwide press for action from the people and institutions who can make change happen.

What is an ALC?

ALCs are regionally based committees of AIA which focus on our core business: human rights impact through mobilisation, coordination and leadership of human rights activism. ALCs operate in our seven regions across Australia: WA, SA/NT, TAS, ACT/SNSW, NSW, QLD/NNSW.

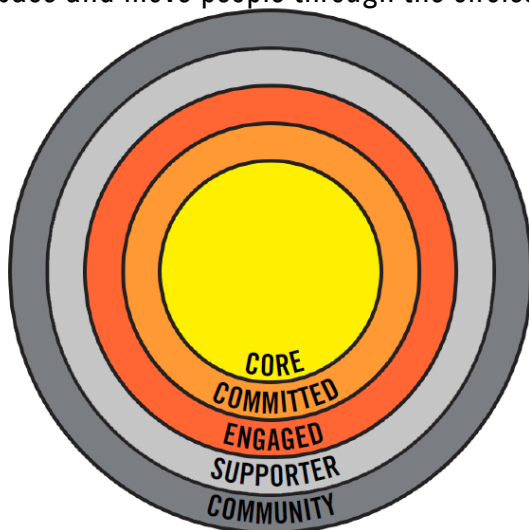
An ALC is made up of between five and twelve AIA members elected by other members living in that region. Terms are for 2 years, which are staggered – this means that half of the ALC members are elected for two years in an even year, with the other half being elected in odd years.

What do ALCs do?

The role of each ALC is to motivate, coordinate and sustain local human rights activism in line with AIA's national objectives, vision, and policies. Each ALC has the opportunity to adapt its strategy to the circumstances of its region. We encourage you, as an individual and with your committee, to be creative and innovative, and to involve group conveners and other activists in the process. By working with individuals and groups in your region you can be more strategic and sustainable in your impact. Essentially ALCs are the core leadership in each region.

What does core leadership mean?

At AIA we use the circle of commitment model to understand the different ways that people make up our movement. As core leaders, ALCs set the direction and strategy for the region and enable activists to contribute in whichever way suits them. As a movement we want to identify opportunities to grow our supporter base and move people through the circles of commitment.



COMMUNITY: People that do not have any involvement with Amnesty International.

SUPPORTER: People that have taken some form of action with Amnesty e.g. signed an online action, liked our Facebook page or added themselves to our mailing list.

ENGAGED: People who are involved as activists in a supportive capacity. They support leaders and staff by volunteering to help with public activities or behind the scenes.

COMMITTED: People that provide regular high level support or coordinate activities themselves. They have usually been in the movement for a while and have some form of ongoing responsibility.

CORE: People that lead our movement and do a wide range of high level activities. These include developing plans & strategies. They also coordinate, mentor and develop other activists.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CIRCLES OF COMMITMENT SEE OUR PEOPLE POWERED ACTIVIST TOOLKIT OR OUR ACTIVIST TRAINING GUIDES



Responsibilities of ALCs

Each ALC will look different depending on the interests, capacity and skills of the elected members and the needs of individual regions. But in general, ALCs are expected to:

- Prioritise AIA's national vision, objectives and policies including [AIA's Constitution](#), the [ALC Charter](#) and acting in accordance with our [Values and Behaviours](#).
- Work collaboratively with AIA staff and other activists to develop, implement, monitor, and report on a regional plan which aligns and contributes to AIA's national [2025 Vision](#) and [Activism Strategy](#).
- Coordinate regional projects, activities, or events to achieve the regional plan e.g. calling programs, campaign mobilisation moments, activist training, etc.
- Manage a regional budget and assess any regional proposals from activists for events or resources.
- Maintain knowledge of AIA's current campaigns and lead campaign engagement across the region.
- Celebrate and promote regional successes and report back to the movement e.g. via the People Powered Bulletin or the [Quarterly Grassroots Report](#).
- Create a culture where members, activists, and action groups are supported, appreciated, sustained, and developed. This includes encouraging a culture of [self-care and sustainable activism](#).
- Maintain knowledge and initiate two-way communication between partner organisations, members, activists, and action groups.
- Listen to any feedback, concerns, or conflicts between activists and provide support to reach a resolution. Escalate any concerns to the Regional President, Activism and Membership Committee (AMC), staff, or the National Board in accordance with AIA's dispute resolution procedures or [Whistleblower Policy](#).
- Represent AIA in the region e.g. at regional events, with regional partners, or with regional media.
- Recruit, induct and train new members of the ALC.
- Enable the development of activist leaders and encourage their participation in regional events or national opportunities including with development of AIA's campaigns, plans, and policies.
- Complete other tasks requested by the AMC or National Board from time to time.



What does this look like in practice?

WA: travelled to regional areas e.g. Albany, to connect with activists, host events and informal meetings. The ALC also organised a region-wide action and event for International Women's Day in partnership with a network of Women's Rights Organisations.

SA/NT: organises and partners with large scale public events e.g. Hawke research centre human rights lecture or Adelaide Festival, helping with brand recognition, human rights education and supporter growth

QLD/NNSW: Ensuring activists across our region are well equipped to advocate for human rights by providing training and campaign expertise. We work collectively on submissions to change policy while amplifying member's voices to shape the direction of the movement. We support and respect each other and above all, we enjoy working together to help bring about a better world

NSW: Increasing support for Group Convenors by providing weekly campaign updates, monthly newsletter, regular contact from one of the ALC members, online get-togethers and by developing a comprehensive set of resources and Convenor induction process.

ACT/SNSW: collaborates with grassroots groups, campaigns in and outside Federal Parliament, and aims to be a safe, welcoming space that supports activists across the region to create impact in their communities.

VIC: created an annual Write for Rights marathon for Human Rights Day collecting petition signatures and reaching new audiences

TAS: supported a state-wide speaking tour series with a Uyghur spokesperson which captured media attention

What AIA expects from ALC members:

- respect the human rights and dignity of all people and work in a manner free from discrimination, harassment and bullying;
- represent AIA in good faith and consistent with the values, vision and independence of AIA;
- work collaboratively with AIA staff and other activists;
- responsible use of AIA resources - both in the community and the Amnesty Action Centres;
- respect the need for privacy and confidentiality;
- respect AIA social media guidelines; and
- respect AIA conflict resolution procedures and participating in them should conflict arise.

What ALC members can expect from staff:

- adherence to Volunteering Australia's National Standards for Volunteer Involvement ;
- recognise the work and commitment of AIA activists and everyone engaged in AIA's work;
- provide a safe, welcoming and professional work environment;
- provide activists with the guidance, direction and skill development opportunities needed to achieve success in their work with AIA;
- respect the privacy of AIA activists; and
- promote self care and recognise activists' commitments and responsibilities outside of AIA.

ALC Roles

Each ALC will have a Regional President who is elected by the ALC in a method of their choosing. The ALC Regional President leads the committee, attends regular President meetings, and reports to the Activism and Membership Committee (AMC) of the National Board on behalf of the region.

However, all ALC members are collectively responsible for the work of the ALC. All ALC members are expected to shape and share the responsibilities of the ALC (as detailed on the previous page). It is up to individual ALCs what other roles they may want to include in their Committee, but it is important for the sustainability and well being of the committee that responsibilities and tasks are shared in some way. Some examples could be:

Regional Vice President

- Support and assist Regional President
- Stand in for President where necessary
- Assist in recruitment and induction of new ALC members

Regional Secretary

- Draft agendas in consultation with Regional President
- Take and distribute meeting minutes
- Manage ALC contacts and documents

Campaigns Liaison

(potentially Campaigns Lead)

- Develop expertise on a campaign
- Motivate and support groups to organise events and contribute to AIA's vision and strategy
- Lead regional campaign moments

Event Liaison

- Mentor and support activists in the region on event coordination / strategy
- Take on a coordinating role in any large regional events

Youth Liaison (potentially YAG)

- Youth voice on the ALC and point of contact for youth networks
- Collaborate with youth organisations in the region
- Enable young people to participate in AIA's campaigns and activities

Activist Liaison

- Connect with groups / activists
- Arrange group visits and calling programs
- Facilitate opportunities for activists and groups to come together e.g. phone conferences, regional days

Communications Specialist

- Training and access to AIA's database
- Maintain and report on activists and members in the region
- Manage regional communications e.g. social, email, newsletters etc

Training Specialist

- Identify regional training needs
- Work with Organising team to implement the training syllabus
- Deliver training to develop the skills and knowledge of the ALC, group conveners, activist leaders and activists

External Partnerships

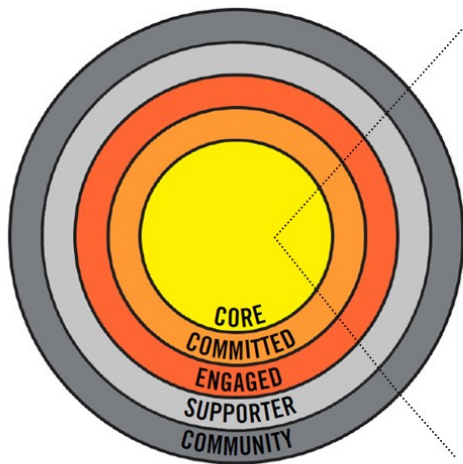
- Work with AIA staff to develop external relationships with regional organisations
- Collaborate on campaigns and events as appropriate
- Keep records of relationships and collaboration

Caring for yourself and others

Campaigning for human rights can be tough. Activists join AIA because they care deeply about people and want to create a world where everybody's human rights are protected. This can put activists in a place where their deep drive to change the world impacts their mental health. Activist burnout and vicarious trauma can happen and it's important to keep a look out for the signs in yourself and in activists you campaign alongside.

Check out our [Sustainable Activism and Self Care resources](#) which explores how we can take care of ourselves as activists and what you can do to make sure your activism is sustainable. AIA's Employee Assistance Program is available to activists if they need it. The number to call is 1300 361 008.

Who do ALCs work with?



ALC members interact with other core activists including:

- Activist Leaders in their region (Action Group / Network Conveners, Campaign Leads, Lead Volunteers)
- Youth Advisory Group representative/s

ALC members are also encouraged to interact with, brainstorm and learn from ALC members in other regions. This can be done by working together on national projects, via the Activist Facebook Group, Slack channels or during relevant webinars e.g. training opportunities or Quarterly Movement Webinars.

Some ALC members will also work with newer activists to support them to start their activist journey with AIA e.g. through Get Active events.



Governance Interactions amc.group@amnesty.org.au

ALCs report to the AMC (Activism and Membership Committee) about regional planning and implementation generally through the Regional President. The AMC should be kept informed about major initiatives, successes, challenges and general performance in their region.

The AMC supports regional activism through working closely with ALCs and by consulting with ALCs. The AMC will work with and support ALCs on a range of initiatives to ensure that they get all the support they need to be strong and effective.

The AMC is the primary point of liaison between the National Board and the ALCs. The AMC facilitates the flow of information between the National Board, ALCs and Members.

Where to find information?

- Join the [National Activist Facebook Group](#) and share ideas, questions, highlights and challenges
- Our Monthly People Powered Bulletin is sent to all engaged, committed and core activists by the Activist Communications Team (activist.communications@amnesty.org.au). This is full of useful information, upcoming opportunities and activist highlights.
- Check your inbox for emails from the Community Organising Team - in particular a monthly Organising update aimed at ALC members.
- Once a quarter the Community Organising Team and Activist Communications Team produce the [Grassroots Report](#). Around this time we also host a Movement review and look ahead webinar.
- Check upcoming campaign moments and skill development opportunities on our [Activism Planner](#).
- Check our website for [latest activist resources](#).

AIA Staff - [see complete Organisational Structure here](#)

Community Organising Team: communityorganising@amnesty.org.au

The Organising Team is committed to building an unstoppable movement by empowering highly skilled activist leaders across Australia who campaign for human rights in their communities.

There is regular collaboration between Organisers and ALCs to:

- Develop the ALC regional plan and key projects to support AIA's Vision and campaigning objectives
- Grow, develop and support activists and action groups in the region
- Facilitate face-to-face or online training including Get Active seminars for new members / activists
- Facilitate activist involvement in campaign planning
- Collaborate for human rights impact in the region e.g. create campaigning moments.

ALC Presidents have a primary relationship with the Organising Lead, while the other National Organising staff will work with ALC members based on their individual areas of expertise or on short-term projects.

Supporter Care Team: activism@amnesty.org.au or call 1300 300 920

AIA's Supporter Care Team manages inbound contact across all channels: online, telephone and in person. The team also provides services to action groups (e.g. events administration/promotion and logistical support) as well as managing an office-based volunteer program.

Essentially the team is the first point of contact for:

- Donations and memberships
- Event information and event approval process
- Event materials e.g. petitions, banners, t-shirts, etc.
- Processing invoices and expense claims for reimbursement
- Data entry from petitions