



RELATIONSHIP BASED FUNDRAISING

A FIELD GUIDE BY I.G. ADVISORS

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE FORD FOUNDATION

A MESSAGE FROM

Alisha Miranda

CEO, I.G. ADVISORS

For years, it has become clear that non-profits around the world need additional support navigating a rapidly-changing funding environment. A damaging combination of factors has made it harder for organisations to secure core funding to continue their critical work: the closing space for civil society and restrictions on fundraising in many countries; government funding cuts that have forced organisations to diversify in order to stay afloat; and numerous other issues. And that was before COVID-19 was added to the mix.

The services and advocacy delivered by non-profits are needed today more than ever, but in order to fulfil their missions, organisations need the funding necessary to not just survive – but to thrive. While for many this may still come from cold calls for proposals or grant applications, strong relationships and networks are vital to building sustainable sources of funding that are well buffered from coming storms. At I.G. we are a group of passionate, dynamic advisors with in-house fundraising experience and expertise in advising organisations of all sizes in their fundraising journeys (from the UN to small grassroots groups). We've seen how the principles of relationship-based fundraising are essential to success across all contexts, and how strong relationships are critical to resilience.

That's why we decided to create The Field Guide to Relationship-Based Fundraising, a practical resource by fundraisers, for fundraisers, aimed at organisations of varying types and sizes around the world. In order to ensure we built something relevant and widely applicable, we worked closely with over 25 organisations in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe, and North America. Throughout the process, collaborators joined our conversations, shared their fundraising challenges and strengths, provided valuable

feedback, and made suggestions to refine the content of our Guide.

Unsurprisingly, we learned a lot from our collaborators. They reinforced the knowledge that fundraising is not an easy task for anyone, no matter the size and reputation of your organisation, or your experience as a fundraiser. Non-profits globally want to learn more about their donors, what motivates them to give, how they like to be cultivated, and what other organisations in the sector are doing. They need more resources and support to build internal capacity and engage donors.

Critically, fundraisers need one thing no guide is able to give them: more time. As advisors, we can't quite add extra hours to their day, but we can help them make the most of the limited time they have at their disposal. This Field Guide is designed to help readers create a fundraising strategy that leverages and maximises their existing resources, and provides general guidance on the quest to successfully grow and diversify their income. We're grateful to our partner, the Ford Foundation, who champions our dedication to building capacity across the sector, and believes in the importance of this work.

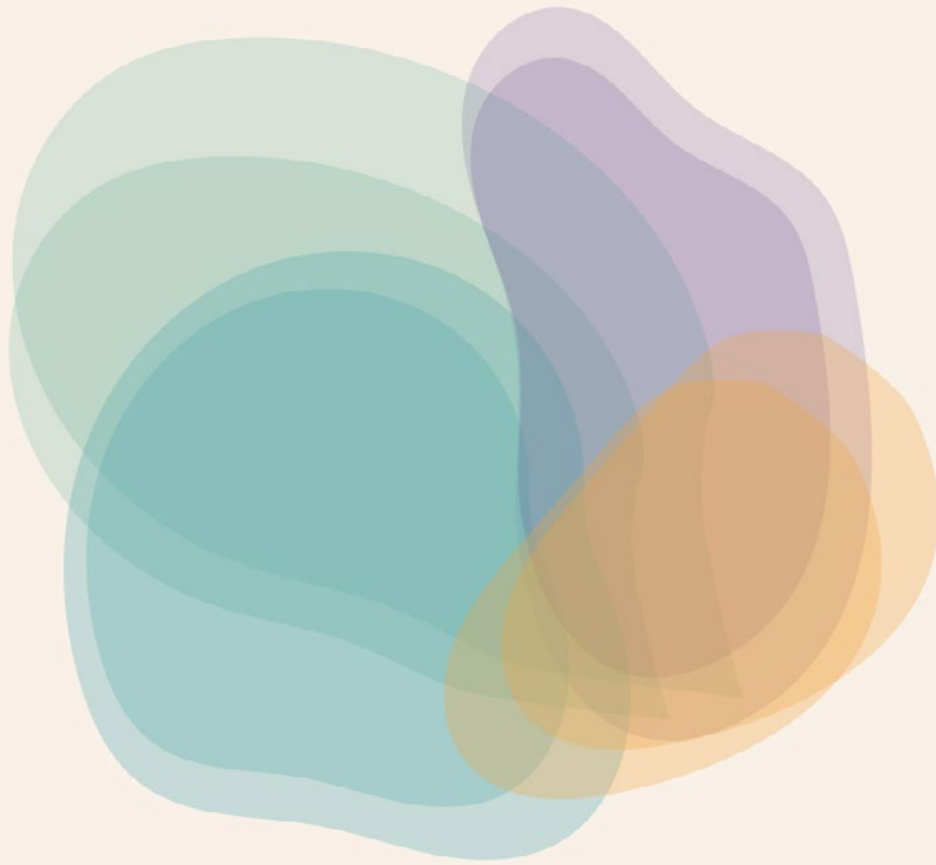
This is the first iteration of what we hope will be a live, changing, breathing document. In order to ensure we can constantly improve it, we need your input and feedback as time goes on. We hope you'll join us on this journey to make relationship-based fundraising less daunting and more accessible for the non-profits on the frontlines of our ever-changing world.



ALISHA MIRANDA

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WELCOME TO THE FIELD GUIDE

This section is the introduction to I.G. Advisors' Field Guide to Relationship-Based Fundraising. The next few pages will tell you a bit more about who we are and why we designed this Guide. Then, you will learn about the Donor Journey framework and how to use this Guide. A general overview is included to help you customise your own journey through the process.

- **WELCOME**
- **GETTING STARTED**
- **GUIDE OVERVIEW**

Welcome!

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our Field Guide to Relationship-Based Fundraising! This is a free resource for non-profits developed by I.G. Advisors in partnership with the Ford Foundation. The aim of the Guide is to provide an easy-to-use set of activities, case studies, tools and best practice templates to support non-profits of all sizes with building fundraising strategies that sustain their impact.

WHAT IS RELATIONSHIP-BASED FUNDRAISING?

Relationship-based fundraising is a type of fundraising that centres around developing long-term, strategic partnerships with donors, rather than focusing on small, one-off donations, or transactional grants and contracts. Relationship-based approaches usually engage 'high-value' audiences, such as Trusts and Foundations, High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs), Corporates, and Bi- and Multilaterals.

CAN RELATIONSHIP-BASED FUNDRAISING BE TAUGHT?

Absolutely! Successful fundraising is an alchemy of art and science. Whilst the 'art' is often an intuitive skillset of things like charisma, optimism and persistence; many aspects of the 'science' can be easily taught and incorporated. The intuitive elements can be learnt too, although perhaps not as easily.

Our Field Guide is an open source for organisations of all sizes around the world, and is based on our collective decades of expertise and experience supporting organisations around the world, of all remits, scopes and sizes, who want to diversify their income by building strong relationship-based fundraising strategies and practices.

HOW DO I KNOW IF THIS GUIDE IS FOR ME?

This Guide is for you if you are looking to generate income through partnerships with high-value audiences, for example Trusts and Foundations, Governments, Multilaterals, Corporates, and / or High-Net-Worth Individuals.

WHO ARE WE?



I.G. ADVISORS is an award-winning global consultancy on a mission to bridge the gap between non-profits, businesses and philanthropists. We work closely with our clients and partners to deliver innovative, practical strategies for impact and growth that are effective, seamless and sustainable.



FORD FOUNDATION is a US-based private foundation with the mission of advancing human welfare and supporting social change. The Foundation stewards a \$12 billion endowment and makes \$500 million in global grants each year.

OUR COLLABORATORS

To create a resource that is useful, relevant and applicable to as many different types and sizes of organisations as possible, we collaborated with several non-profits globally, who provided valuable insight into their fundraising challenges and needs, and generously shared some of their 'secrets' to fundraising success.

CHALLENGES

The most common challenges shared by collaborators were:

- **COMMUNICATION:** communicating with donors on different channels
- **FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND VOLATILITY:** obtaining unrestricted and long-term funding
- **INCOME DIVERSIFICATION:** setting up different revenue streams and approaching new donor audiences
- **MESSAGING:** persuading donors to give and managing their expectations
- **FUNDING APPLICATIONS:** improving capacity and internal skills to understand and apply for competitive calls to proposals
- **UNDERSTANDING DONORS:** learning about donor preferences and ways of working
- **LIMITED CAPACITY:** time constraints and lack of skills to engage in fundraising activities
- **LOCAL CLIMATE:** understanding and adapting to local attitudes toward giving

BEST PRACTICE

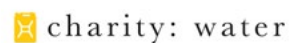
The case studies spotlighted throughout the Guide focus on:

- **DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS:** a cross-movement partnership between Fondo Semillas and FASOL
- **ORGANISING GREAT EVENTS:** eXXpedition's low cost events
- **RAISING PROFILE:** G(irls)20's thought leadership strategy
- **LEVERAGING ASSETS:** how Tewa leverages its assets
- **APPEALING TO DONORS:** Ashoka's donor-centred approach
- **FINETUNING YOUR MESSAGE:** charity: water's donor-oriented website
- **JOINING CONSORTIA:** The Live-in Care Hub Consortium
- **SETTING PRIORITIES:** mothers2mothers' endgame



Here are the wonderful organisations from around the world that helped us develop this Guide, and inspired us with their best practice.

NORTH & SOUTH AMERICA



AFRICA



EUROPE



ASIA



Getting Started

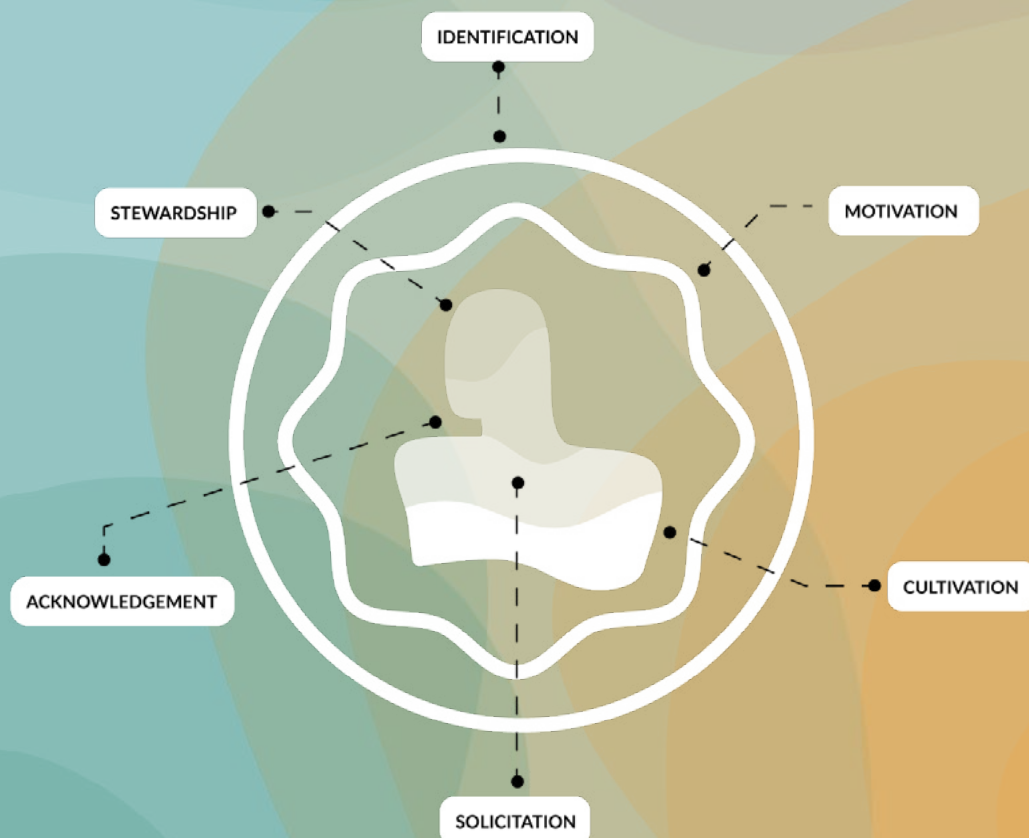
THE DONOR JOURNEY FRAMEWORK

The key to successfully managing relationships with donors is having a clear and easily actionable journey and engagement plan. We structured this Guide in such a way that each topic covered directly (or indirectly) addresses one or more stages of the 'Donor Journey'.

The Donor Journey is a framework that helps you understand who your donors are (identification), and why they make the giving choices they do (motivation), as well as track how and when you engage and communicate with them (cultivation, solicitation, acknowledgement, stewardship). Understanding and planning each stage of your donors' journey will make it easier to engage them with the right message at the right time. Once a prospect has been identified, and their motivations are understood, the Donor Journey is a cycle that typically has four key stages:

1. Cultivation
2. Solicitation
3. Acknowledgement
4. Stewardship

After this process has been initially completed, it repeats to encourage donor retention and long-term partnerships.





IDENTIFICATION

Determining your donor audience, and the right prospects within this audience:

- How do you identify your donor audience?
- How do you know this is the right one for your organisation?
- How do you keep track of your prospects?



MOTIVATION

Understanding what motivates donors to give, and how to assess this within your donor audiences:

- Why do donors give?
- What do potential donors like and not like when it comes to non-profit engagement?



CULTIVATION

Designing and implementing methods of cultivating your prospective donors before making an ask:

- How do you raise your donors' awareness of your work, impact and ambitions?
- How do you build a friendly, interesting rapport with your donors?
- How do you build your knowledge of prospective donors' interests and passions?
- How do you determine 'next steps' after each engagement?



SOLICITATION

Planning for and making a successful 'ask':

- How do you determine the right time to make an 'ask'?
- How do you frame your 'ask'?
- How do you react to a rejection?



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanking your donors for their commitment:

- How do you say thanks and make your donors feel special?
- How do you determine if your donor likes to be acknowledged and recognised publicly?
- How do you use your resources to make your donors feel appreciated?



STEWARDSHIP

Managing relationships with donors after a donation, to support future giving:

- How do you plan benefits for donors, and fulfill them?
- How do you ensure your donors are engaged regularly, and in a personal way?
- How do you involve donors in your strategy discussions and make them feel involved in your mission?

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Guide is designed for non-profits at different stages of their growth, located in different regions of the world. To make the most of it, you should use it as a customisable resource, and focus on the topics and sections most relevant to you and your team.

The Guide is interactive, and offers a range of readings, resources and activities that you can do individually, or as a team. Four icons will indicate:



Briefings & Readings



Activities & Exercises



Resources & Tools



Spotlights & Examples

Throughout the Guide, you will find clickable buttons that are hyperlinked to other relevant sections. Click on those if you need extra support, or have missed briefings, resources, or activities mentioned in the section.

HOW DO I DECIDE WHICH TOPICS TO FOCUS ON?

In the Warm Up section that follows you will find a self-assessment test to help you identify your strengths and weaknesses, as an organisation and an individual fundraiser. If your results indicate your knowledge in a particular area is already strong, then you can skip that section of the Guide and focus more on the areas where you need support.

At the end of the Guide, we will invite you to retake the test to celebrate progress and identify areas for further development.

HOW DO I CUSTOMISE MY JOURNEY THROUGH THE GUIDE?

After taking the self-assessment test and browsing through the Warm Up resources, you will be ready to design your own journey through the Guide. The full process is comprised of two main sections, each divided into two parts:

SECTION I

Defining Your Fundraising Strategy

PART A

Preparing for the Process

PART B

Designing the Donor Journey

SECTION II

Implementing Your Fundraising Strategy

PART A

Preparing for the Donor Journey

PART B

Implementing the Donor Journey

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY OUTLINE

This is your fundraising strategy outline. A full fundraising strategy usually takes the form of a document (Word, or PowerPoint), and can be shared with internal and external stakeholders to describe your organisation's plan to raise money. This Guide provides all the tools and resources you need to develop each of the areas described below.

CONTEXT SETTING

The background information and research that will inform your strategy.

GENERAL CONTEXT	Defining your needs and ambitions
FINANCES	Painting a clear picture of your financial and funding history
LANDSCAPE RESEARCH	Key data and analysis from your research into funding trends in your sector
SWOT ANALYSIS	A summary of your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats to understand what's realistic and achievable.
BENCHMARKING	Relevant data and analysis on comparable organisations

STRATEGY DEFINITION

A plan of how you will meet your fundraising targets and objectives based on your context analysis.

FINANCIAL TARGETS	Amounts you will seek to raise during the strategy period, including an overview of the size and number of grants and donations necessary to meet those targets
TARGET DONOR AUDIENCES	The donor audiences your fundraising strategy will target and your rationale
DONOR MOTIVATIONS	Analysis of the typical motivations of your target donor audiences
DONOR 'OFFERING'	The range of experiences and benefits you could offer to build a cultivation plan and secure sustainable donor relationships
DONOR JOURNEY	Defining your 'Donor Journey,' a map of the cultivation process for key target audiences

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The specific focus areas and action points to implement your fundraising strategy.

PROSPECT PIPELINE	Building a list of key prospects to be cultivated and solicited
RESOURCES ASSESSMENT	<p>Defining the resources required to effectively implement the strategy and meet targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• STAFFING & GOVERNANCE: the role of existing staff, boards and stakeholders, and potential for capacity building where relevant• INVESTMENT: the necessary investments to support your fundraising efforts• STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT: the buy-in and support necessary from key leaders, volunteers, and donors to meet targets
OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT	<p>Defining any elements the wider organisation needs to provide, change or refine to support its fundraising efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• STAFF TEAM: recruitment, investment or training needed• BOARD MEMBERS: recruitment, leverage, introductions or training needed• KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs): ways of measuring progress and impact of your fundraising programme
MESSAGING	<p>Defining the communications strategy to engage donor audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• STORY & VISION: communicating your organisation's needs, ambition and aspirations to your prospects• PITCHING: communicating the reasons why an individual or foundation should support your organisation• COLLATERAL: the specific tangible items you'll need to produce for donor cultivation
ENGAGEMENT	<p>Defining all the engagement opportunities that will help you cultivate, solicit, acknowledge, and steward your donors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PARTNERSHIPS: finding opportunities for collaborations• THOUGHT LEADERSHIP: engaging the team in content creation• EVENTS: assessing the strategic value of hosting events

Guide Overview

The following Guide Overview will help you design and plan your learning experience:



THE DONOR JOURNEY ICON next to each topic highlights the stage(s) of the Donor Journey this topic refers to.



THE CLOCK ICON indicates the estimated time in hours to complete each section. The actual time needed may vary depending on the size of your organisation, the number of team members taking part and your past fundraising experience.

SECTION I: DEFINING YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

PART A: PREPARING FOR THE PROCESS



DEFINING YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY



LANDSCAPE RESEARCH & BENCHMARKING



FINANCIAL TARGETS



PART B: DESIGNING THE DONOR JOURNEY



DONOR AUDIENCES



UNDERSTANDING YOUR DONORS



DONOR OFFERING: ASSET INVENTORY



DONOR OFFERING: 'PRODUCTS'



MAKING AN 'ASK'



SECTION II: IMPLEMENTING YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

PART A: PREPARING FOR IMPLEMENTATION



INTERNAL RESOURCES: THE BOARD



INTERNAL RESOURCES: THE TEAM



PART B: IMPLEMENTING THE DONOR JOURNEY



PROSPECTING



MESSAGING



PARTNERSHIPS



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP



EVENTS



PERSONALISED TIME TO WORK ON THE GUIDE:



+



+



+



=





Up Next...

You are officially ready to start. Let's 'warm up'!



This is your Warm Up.

The first part of this section includes a self-assessment test to help you determine whether you are ready to start this process, and which steps of the Donor Journey you should focus on.

If you aren't quite ready to dive in, the second part includes creative exercises and resources you can use for preparation.

- **SELF-ASSESSMENT**
- **ORGANISATIONAL READINESS RESOURCES**

Self-Assessment

INTRODUCTION

This self-assessment test will help you determine if you are ready to start this process, and which steps of the Donor Journey you should focus on. It is divided into three sub-sections:

1. ORGANISATION READINESS ASSESSMENT TEST

Is my organisation ready to start this process?

You will need to rate your general readiness in the following areas:

A.
MISSION & IMPACT

B.
FINANCIALS

C.
**GOVERNANCE &
STAFFING**

2. DONOR JOURNEY PRIORITIES TEST

Which stages of the Donor Journey does my organisation need to work on the most?

You will need to rate your knowledge in the following areas:

- Identification
- Motivation
- Cultivation
- Solicitation
- Acknowledgement
- Stewardship

3. PERSONAL ASSESSMENT TEST

How comfortable do I personally feel in my fundraising role, and conducting fundraising activities?

You will need to rate your confidence and knowledge as a fundraiser.

1. ORGANISATION READINESS ASSESSMENT TEST

This will help you assess if your organisation is ready to start the process, and take full advantage of this Guide. Rate the three sets of statements below on a scale of 1-5, where each rating means:



- **IF YOUR FINAL SCORE FOR EACH SET OF STATEMENTS IS 20-25:** you are probably ready to start the process.
- **IF YOUR SCORE FOR ANY SET OF STATEMENTS IS LESS THAN 20:** you may need to work on some fundamentals before developing a fundraising strategy. At the end of this section, you will find 'warm-up' resources to bring your organisation up to speed.

A. MISSION & IMPACT: assess your organisation's ability to articulate aim, activities and impact.

MISSION & IMPACT	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We have clear Vision and Mission statements					
We feel confident articulating what makes our organisation unique compared to others working on similar issues					
We feel confident articulating how our organisation's activities help us to achieve our wider mission					
We know how to measure the impact our organisation is making					
We know how to evidence and communicate our impact to donors					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

B. FINANCIALS: assess your organisation's ability to accept donations and plan a budget.

FINANCIALS	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We are a registered entity (e.g. non-profit, social enterprise, for-profit, etc.)					
We are able to receive donations from national and / or international donors					
We have an annual budget (a set list of planned spending for the next fiscal year) that is based on our expected income					
We keep careful track of our spending throughout the year					
We issue regular financial statements, audits and / or annual reports					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

C. GOVERNANCE & STAFFING: assess the fundraising capacity of your organisation's Board and team.

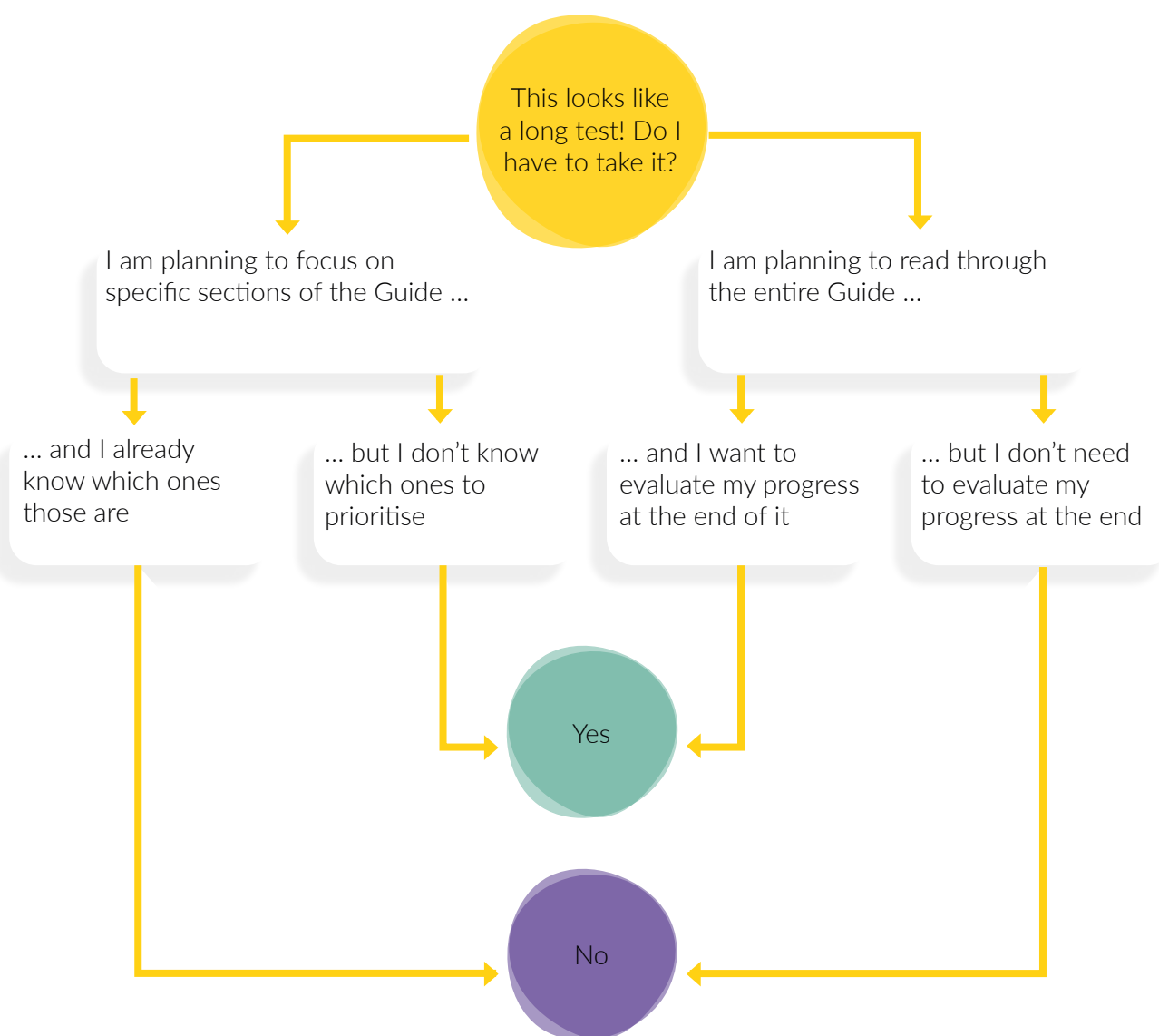
GOVERNANCE & STAFFING	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We have an active Board of Trustees, Directors, Governors or equivalent					
Our Board and / or senior leadership gets involved in fundraising activities					
We have (a) staff member(s) dedicated exclusively to fundraising					
We regularly discuss fundraising strategy or plans as a team					
We are able to dedicate time and resource to fundraising and relationship-management					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

2.DONOR JOURNEY PRIORITIES TEST

This will help you assess if your organisation is ready to start the process, and take full advantage of this Guide. Rate the three sets of statements below on a scale of 1-5, where each rating means:



- **IF YOUR FINAL SCORE FOR EACH SET OF STATEMENTS IS 20-25:** your organisation has a strong understanding of a specific stage of the Donor Journey.
- **IF YOUR SCORE FOR ANY SET OF STATEMENTS IS LESS THAN 20:** you may need to focus on the sections of the Guide that address those specific stages of the Donor Journey.



IDENTIFICATION	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We know who our priority donor audiences are / should be (e.g. foundations, governments, etc.)					
We can articulate the specific qualities of our ideal donor(s)					
We have a systematised list of potential donors (i.e. a prospect pipeline)					
We know what information to look for when researching prospective donors					
We have a network of people who can help us meet our fundraising goals (e.g. by donating to our organisation, introducing us to other donors, etc.)					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

MOTIVATION	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We know what drives our donors to engage with our cause area, and organisation					
We know what our donors need or want from our organisation					
We feel comfortable asking our donors about their motivations for giving					
We know what our donors' concerns or worries about our work might be					
Our communications (e.g. social media, articles, website, reports) are written with specific donor audiences in mind					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

CULTIVATION	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We know how to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with donors					
We have an internal system that helps us plan and manage relationships with donors and other external stakeholders					
We have an existing 'offer' of experiences to engage your donors					
Our organisation is ready / equipped to organise engaging donor events					
Our team members have everything they need to confidently engage with donors					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

SOLICITATION	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We have a defined organisational pitch and donor materials to use when we want to make an 'ask'					
We know the right time to make an 'ask' with our donors					
We know the right way to position an 'ask' with donors					
We know how to write dynamic and inspiring funding proposals					
We know how to appropriately respond to a rejection					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We have effective ways to recognise and thank our donors that feel personal and unique					
The way our organisation acknowledges donors reflects our values and mission					
We know how our donors like to be acknowledged and recognised for their contributions					
We know how to write emails and thank you notes for our donors					
We know whether our donors feel valued and acknowledged					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

STEWARDSHIP	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We have a personalised and diarised engagement plan for our donors					
We have compelling experiences we can offer donors					
We fully leverage our organisation’s existing assets to engage our donors					
We are able to meaningfully keep our donors in the loop when our plans change or things go wrong					
We know how to write dynamic and inspiring funding reports					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

3. PERSONAL ASSESSMENT TEST

This test will help you assess your knowledge, skills and confidence as a fundraiser. Rate the statements below on a scale 1-5, where:



- **IF YOUR FINAL SCORE FOR EACH SET OF STATEMENTS IS 25-35:** you are probably an experienced fundraiser.
- **IF YOUR SCORE FOR ANY SET OF STATEMENTS IS LESS THAN 25:** you may need to develop more fundraising skills and gain experience. This Guide will help you address a lot of these areas. We will invite you to retake this test at the end of the Guide so you can celebrate your progress and identify further areas for development.

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT TEST	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
I have a thorough understanding of how relationship-based fundraising differs from fundraising from other sources					
I have a thorough understanding of the practical, day-to-day elements of relationship-based fundraising					
I have personally built and managed relationships with high-value audiences, either in this role or in a past role					
I fully understand what is needed from me to support my organisation's fundraising ambitions					
I feel I have the time and skills needed to fulfil my organisation's expectations					
I feel like I have enough professional development opportunities to improve my fundraising skills					
I enjoy the process of fundraising!					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

Organisational Readiness Resources

INTRODUCTION

If your Organisational Readiness Test score was low, and you have realised you are not quite ready to take full advantage of this Guide, these resources can get you up to speed. The next few pages contain practical exercises, resources and briefings on the following topics:

A.

MISSION & IMPACT

- Vision & Mission Statements
- Unique Value Proposition
- Theory of Change
- Measuring Success (Monitoring & Evaluation)

B.

FINANCIALS

- Organisation Types
- Fiscal Sponsorship
- Building Your Budget
- Budgeting Basics

C.

GOVERNANCE & STAFFING

- Building an Effective Board
- Building Fundraising Capacity

A. MISSION & IMPACT



VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS



To effectively engage external stakeholders (e.g. donors), you need be able to speak about your organisation's Vision and Mission. These two simple concepts explain why your organisation exists and what it is set up to achieve:

- **VISION STATEMENT:** a brief description of the version of success your organisation is working towards (i.e. the 'world you want to see').
- **MISSION STATEMENT:** a brief description of what your organisation does, how it does it, and who it does it for. Ideally this should be no more than 12 words and include at least one active verb.

OBJECTIVE

To articulate your organisation's Vision and Mission.

YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- Paper and markers
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Prompt your team with the following question: **'What would the world look like without your organisation?'** Then, ask everyone to spend 5 minutes drawing what they imagine the world would look like. They can draw this any way they like, but it must be a drawing.

This might sound strange, but drawing (rather than speaking or writing) often leads to new and interesting ways of sharing thoughts and ideas.

STEP 2

Ask each team member to describe what they have drawn, and note down key words and themes. These might be negative things about the 'world without you', but you can note down the positive side too – for example, if someone draws some people who are confused about where to go for support, the positives of your organisation existing might be noted as 'people always have somewhere to go'.

STEP 3

Using the themes you've collectively identified, craft your Vision and Mission statements. Use the drawings of a world without you to focus on what you do, the change it creates, and why it's important.

Keep your Vision and Mission statements short and snappy, and remember the first draft is unlikely to be the final one. To finetune your statements, we recommend asking other people in your organisation and network to read them and share their feedback. Let them sit for a day or two before you read them again, and arrive at an agreement.



For inspiration, here are some great examples of other non-profit **Vision Statements** and **Mission Statements**.



UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION



Your unique value proposition is an articulation of your organisation's unique strengths, and why your organisation is different from other non-profits in the sector. This is often referred to as your Unique Selling Point (USP).

OBJECTIVE

To articulate your organisation's unique value proposition (i.e. your USP).

YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- Paper and markers
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Prompt your team with the following question: **'Imagine you've inherited \$1 million and wanted to make a donation. Why would you give it to this organisation instead of another non-profit in the same sector?'**

With a timer on for 5 minutes, ask everyone to rapidly brainstorm as many USPs as they can think of, and write these down (one idea per Post-It).

STEP 2

Ask each team member to share their top 3 USPs with the team. Once everyone has shared their top 3 ideas, continue until all unique USPs have been shared and discussed collectively.

STEP 3

If you feel you have too many USPs, allow each team member to cast 3 votes for their favourites. The final short list will be your unique value proposition, which will enable you to explain to donors what makes your organisation unique (and why they should choose your organisation to support!).



THEORY OF CHANGE



Theory of Change is a tool you can use to articulate your work (Outputs) and connect it to your bigger goals (Vision). Your Theory of Change should outline causal linkages between the Problem you are trying to solve, your activities (Outputs), your Outcomes, and your broader Aims and Vision. A great Theory of Change should ultimately be a simple, visual document (no more than one page) that is easy to understand and digest. When done correctly, it's a powerful tool for both external fundraising and internal strategic decisions.

OBJECTIVE

To create your organisation's Theory of Change.

YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- Post-Its, paper, and markers
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Read the guidelines below to understand the general structure of a Theory of Change. Whilst there are many different templates available, we find this structure to be the most comprehensive and versatile:

PROBLEM

What is the problem you are trying to solve and who is your audience?

OUTPUTS

What are the activities done by your organisation? (this needs to be broken down to specific active verbs)

OUTCOMES

What happens as a direct result of your outputs?

IMPACT AIMS

What are the planned areas of change that would enable your overall goal?

VISION

What is the broader goal your organisation is working towards? (i.e. the 'world you want to see')

STEP 2

If your group is larger than 4 people, break the room into two sub-groups, and discuss each category in smaller teams to populate the Theory of Change. Start from your Vision, which you have already articulated in the Vision and Mission Statement exercise. Then go straight to the Problem, and work your way back to the Vision box.

STEP 3

If your group was broken down into smaller groups, bring the room together and discuss each category to co-populate a central Theory of Change. It can be really useful to have a central facilitator or notetaker in the room to help you capture and synthesise ideas.



THEORY OF CHANGE TEMPLATE

This is a basic Theory of Change template for you to fill in, easily adapt and brand for all relevant purposes (e.g. website, fundraising applications, donor engagement collateral, Board presentations, etc).

PROBLEM	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT AIMS	VISION
e.g. Homeless people’s wellbeing is heavily impacted by their lack of access to housing	e.g. We offer up to 24 hours of mental health support to each homeless person in our community	e.g. The life-satisfaction levels reported by the homeless people we support are 30% higher than pre-intervention	e.g. To significantly increase the quality of life for homeless people in our community	e.g. A world in which homeless people can have opportunities in their communities and are able to create a better life for themselves



MEASURING IMPACT - MONITORING & EVALUATION

WHY DO I NEED TO MEASURE MY IMPACT?

Measuring impact is important because it:

- Demonstrates the value of your work, and the difference it makes in the world.
- Helps you reflect on and improve your work.
- Improves visibility of your programmes.
- Makes your organisation more accountable.
- Makes your programmes easier to understand for both internal and external stakeholders.
- Generates more support from donors and partners.

The concept of impact is often misinterpreted, as it can be confused with 'output' or 'outcome'. Noting the distinction between these three terms is key to preventing mistakes when measuring the impact of your organisation:

- **OUTPUTS:** the activities done by your organisation (*e.g. the number of hours of mental health support you provide to homeless people*).
- **OUTCOMES:** what happens as a direct result of your outputs (*e.g. improvement in life-satisfaction levels, reported by the homeless people you support*).
- **IMPACT:** the positive change your work specifically has created in the world (*e.g. the quality of life for homeless people significantly increasing in your community*).

Therefore, a statement such as '*In the last year, we supported more than 100 homeless people through our mental health interventions*' is not an impact statement, but rather a description of your output, because it does not explain the difference your organisation made.



If you want to learn more about the difference between these three concepts, we recommend reading **this paper** by Stanford Social Innovation Review.

HOW DO I MEASURE IMPACT?

To measure the impact of your work, you need to be able to measure your outcomes (listed in the Theory of Change exercise). The template in the next page is an Impact Dashboard, i.e. a practical tool you can use to consistently assess and monitor which data you need to collect. We recommend building yours on a centralised Excel spreadsheet and updating it regularly.

HOW DO I TALK ABOUT IMPACT?

Impact statements are a summary and interpretation of your data to demonstrate how your work is making a difference. Once you have collected and analysed the data in your Impact Dashboard, you need to explain it in a way that is easy to understand for your donors and any other key stakeholders. Impact statements are great for donor communication purposes (you will learn more about this when we'll talk about Messaging), and are often accompanied by infographics and powerful quotes that bring about the human element.

Here's an example of an Impact statement: '*More than 80% of the homeless people we support through our mental health interventions have shown improved wellbeing after taking part in our programmes*'.



IMPACT DASHBOARD TEMPLATE

ACTIVITY / PROJECT NAME	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	TARGETS	DATA SOURCES	WHEN TO MEASURE	VARIABLES TO MEASURE	BENCHMARKS
Activity 1 E.g. Mental health support is provided to homeless people	Result of Activity 1 E.g. Improved self-reported levels of life satisfaction	Specific, observable, and measurable characteristics E.g. Life satisfaction score	The impact you intend to achieve E.g. At least 80% of service users' life satisfaction score increases by 30%	Where you need to extract the data from E.g. Service users' survey, interviews, etc	Timeline for measurement E.g. At the beginning and end of each intervention period	Other elements that differ from user to user, and may affect the results E.g. Demographics, location, etc.	Any available data that can be used to compare E.g. User's pre-intervention self-reported life satisfaction score; national life satisfaction levels for homeless people
	Direct result of Activity 1						
	Direct result of Activity 1						
ACTIVITY 2	Direct result of Activity 2						
	Direct result of Activity 2						
	Direct result of Activity 2						
ACTIVITY 3	Direct result of Activity 3						
	Direct result of Activity 3						
	Direct result of Activity 3						



B. FINANCIALS

ORGANISATION TYPES

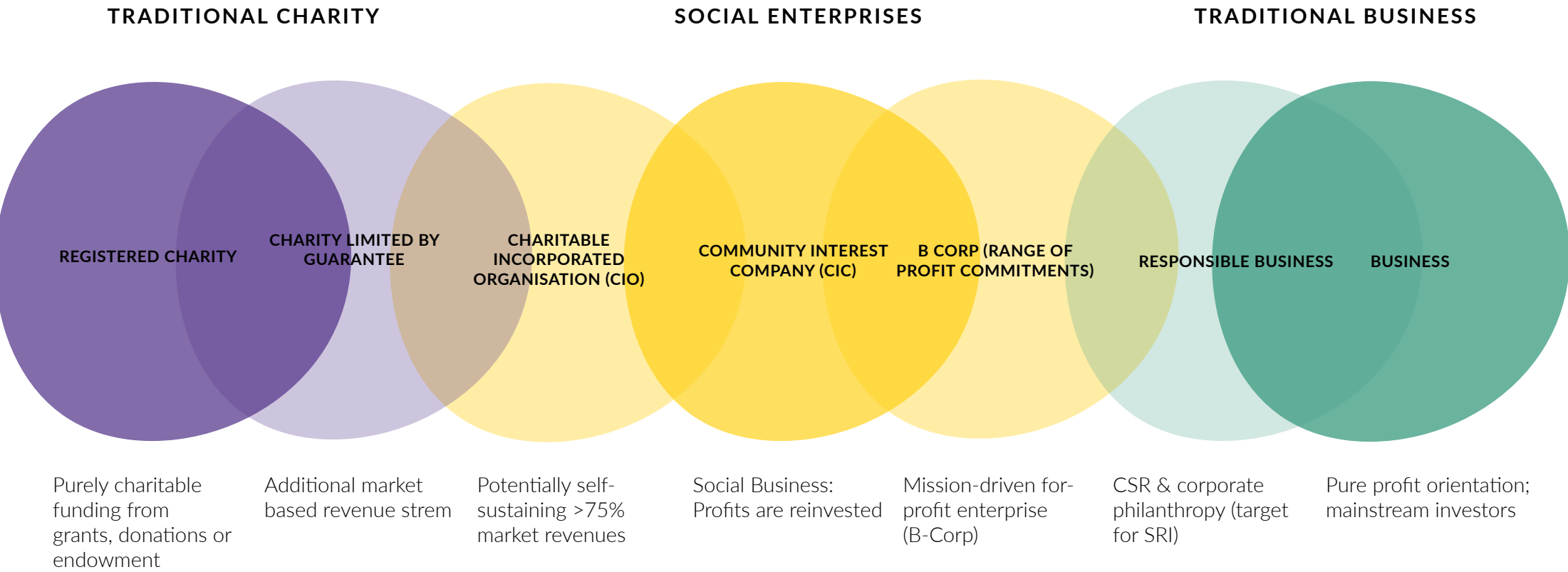
Being legally registered as a non-profit can have several benefits. Depending on the country where your organisation is based, it can:

- **TAX-EXEMPT STATUS ON NET INCOME:** allow you to formally accept tax-deductible donations from individuals and organisations (only if your country provides tax incentives for giving)
- **CURRENCY:** allow you to accept donations in your own currency
- **CREDIBILITY:** add credibility and trust to your organisation

If you are looking to formally register your organisation, you should conduct thorough research to evaluate what organisational set-up would be most suited for you, and potentially seek legal advice.

Make sure you explore all the registration options that are available for impact organisations in your country, and understand their implications from a tax, reporting and regulatory perspective. Some organisation types require annual reporting, or restrict what the organisation can do financially. For example, the chart below is a summary of the 'spectrum' of potential set-ups for organisations doing social good in the UK– from traditional charities (on the left), all the way to traditional businesses (on the right).

Most likely, some of these UK-specific registration types are available in your country. Either way, it's useful to keep these categories in mind to assess where on this spectrum your organisation sits, and what options (or equivalents) are most suitable.



Source: adapted from J. Kingston Venturesome, CAF Venturesome, and European Venture Philanthropy Association (2015).



FISCAL SPONSORSHIPS

If you are not in the position to register in the country or with the organisation type that works for your needs, you may still be able to accept donations from partners and supporters through a fiscal sponsor. Fiscal sponsors are registered entities, sometimes in another country, that can accept donations from your donors on your behalf. They accept the funds, noting that they are for your project, and can sometimes provide tax benefits in the donor's country. They usually retain an admin fee.



You can find out more about fiscal sponsorships, including how to find them, and pros & cons, in [this blog](#) by Grantspace (Candid).



BUILDING YOUR BUDGET

Having a budget is fundamental. If your organisation doesn't have one yet, we recommend building one as soon as possible. A clear and planned budget is a great way to demonstrate your organisation can responsibly manage financial resources – an essential element for donors. Your budget should include:

- **PROJECTED INCOME:** gifts, grants, membership fees, income from fundraising events, investments and/or sales.
- **PLANNED EXPENSES:** your overhead and programme costs. Overheads include management expenses (e.g. management salaries, rent, utilities, fundraising costs, etc.). Programme expenses are associated with the activities your organisation conducts for your service users (e.g. frontline staff salaries, equipment).



Small Charities Finance offers some great, easy-to-understand resources, as well as some downloadable templates to create your own budget. You can find them [here](#).



BUDGETING BASICS

Financial reporting is an art. When you are planning your budget for a proposal, or communicating what you intend to do with a donor's money, you need a complete understanding of budgeting terminology. For example:

- **UNRESTRICTED FUNDING:** grants that are not ringfenced to a specific programme or project, therefore allowing you to spend the money on whatever areas you need (also known as 'general operating support').
- **FULL COST RECOVERY:** this is a technique used to put together transparent and appropriately-priced bids with all costs covered, including a share of your overheads. It involves proportionally costing out your overheads and applying them to project budgets, as appropriate (e.g. if your CEO will spend 50% of their time on this project, then 50% of their salary can be applied to that project budget).



Cass Business School developed an great [Online Guide](#) that provides a framework which charities can follow to maximise cost recovery.



C. GOVERNANCE & STAFFING RESOURCES

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE BOARD

Non-profits are usually required to have a Board of Directors or Trustees. The main role of Board members is:

- **STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP:** lead on all key strategic decisions for the organisation, and line-manage the Executive Director or CEO.
- **SAFEGUARD MISSION:** ensure the organisation's mission and impact are protected and considered in financial, legal and administrative matters.
- **FUNDRAISING:** help set and meet fundraising goals.
- **AWARENESS AND VISIBILITY:** build and maintain key external relationships.
- **TECHNICAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT:** make their skills available to help your organisation in specific operational areas.

If you want to build an effective Board, you should follow these simple tips:

- **NUMBER:** don't have too many members, and keep an odd number to avoid vote ties.
- **ROLES:** set clear roles (e.g. a chair to moderate meetings, a secretary to take minutes and keep track of decisions, a treasurer in charge of budget discussions, etc.).
- **MEETING FREQUENCY:** plan Board meetings every 2 to 3 months, depending on the size of your organisation and the type of decisions that need to be made.
- **MANDATE:** Board members should have a term limit (likely 2-3 years), and do not receive financial compensation for their work.
- **NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Board members should be ready to step down or refrain from voting on certain matters if they have a conflict of interest (e.g. where a decision could benefit them, their business, or their family).
- **RESPONSIBILITIES:** to manage expectations, these should be discussed upfront and reviewed regularly. Supporting fundraising goals should be on this list.
- **JOINING REQUIREMENTS:** you should only invite Board members who bring the skills, experience and connections your organisation needs.
- **FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS:** in some countries, Board members are expected to support their non-profit with financial contributions, or direct help in meeting specific fundraising goals.
- **COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION:** ideally, your Board should involve members from the communities you serve (e.g. if you serve people living with HIV, then people living with HIV should be on your Board).

The role of the Board in fundraising will be further discussed later in the Guide.



This assessment tool was created by Adelphi University for non-profits to review their Board's performance, structure and priorities.



BUILDING YOUR TEAM'S FUNDRAISING CAPACITY

If you and your team are not able to dedicate time and resource to fundraising and relationship-management, but you only have a small (or no) budget to hire a fundraiser, we suggest three potential solutions:

- **ASK ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM CURRENT, LOYAL DONORS:** firstly, you could have a frank and honest conversation about your team capacity and needs with loyal donors who already believe in your organisation's mission. Make sure you are prepared to demonstrate a return on investment from an impact perspective before you ask for an additional gift to support your organisational resilience. For instance, if you need to hire a fundraising staff, you should highlight how much more income you will be able to generate as a result of the additional capacity in your team, and what impact that will eventually translate into.
- **OFFER BENEFIT PACKAGES AND PART-TIME ROLES:** if you cannot afford to hire full-time staff or pay a competitive salary, think about other kinds of benefits that would make your offer more attractive and competitive (e.g. flexible working hours, additional paid leave, etc.). Alternatively, you could offer a part-time role, or delegate specific fundraising-related tasks to an external consultant or intern in a cost-effective way. This will hopefully give you the head space you need to stay inspired and strategic.
- **PRIORITISE YOUR CURRENT STAFF'S TIME:** if you are not in the position to recruit fundraising staff then we recommend prioritising your time and increasing efficiency across your existing team to focus more on fundraising activities. For instance, you could block off an hour or two each day to reach out to prospective donors, have a weekly meeting with all staff who are involved in fundraising, and use digital tools to systematise processes and responses.

The section on 'Internal Resources: The Team' offers further insights on how to address fundraising capacity issues and hire new staff.

Up Next...

Your Warm Up ends here! Now that you have covered all the basics, you are ready to start designing your fundraising strategy. The next section will prepare you for the process: you will learn why you need to have a fundraising strategy, how to conduct landscape research and how to set fundraising target.

SECTION I

DEFINING YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

PART A

PREPARING FOR THE PROCESS

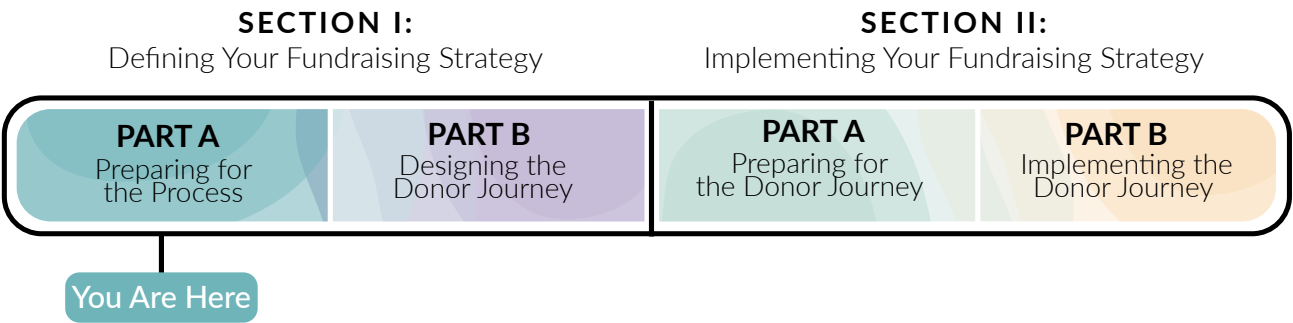
PART B

DESIGNING THE DONOR JOURNEY



SECTION I PART A

PREPARING FOR THE PROCESS



In Part A, you will lay the foundations of your fundraising strategy. The following activities and briefings are designed to help you understand and define your ‘boundaries’ as an organisation, with a view to designing a fundraising strategy that is both realistic and implementable.

-  **FUNDRAISING STRATEGY**
-  **LANDSCAPE RESEARCH & BENCHMARKING**
-  **FINANCIAL TARGETS**



Fundraising Strategy



INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A STRATEGY?

A strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim. It's an agreed direction, and means, of travel, and can be specific or general. For example, your whole organisation might have a strategy for creating impact or change, and your fundraising team might have a fundraising strategy to generate income. Some organisations also have sub-strategies and plans, such as a foundation strategy, or a major donor strategy.

WHY SHOULD I HAVE A STRATEGY?

Whilst it is possible to do fundraising (and any other type of work) without a strategy, there are serious drawbacks to operating without an articulated and agreed approach, such as:

- **CONFUSION:** it's difficult to coordinate a group of people towards a goal, and effectively delegate activities, without a clear strategy or plan. People may be confused about the best way to spend their time, or focus their efforts.
- **UNAWARENESS:** if you are not setting and checking your progress against specific strategic goals, you may not be aware of problems that are keeping you from moving forward. You may also be unable to spot potential opportunities, if you do not spend time articulating your priorities.
- **DISTRACTIONS:** without a specific set of goals to focus on, it's very easy to get pulled in too many directions, and move from idea to idea, and project to project, without making real progress.
- **EXPENSE:** time is money, and so spending a lot of it can be expensive – but so can spending money on ideas and projects that aren't strategic, or don't provide a good return on your investment.
- **OVERWHELM:** without a strategy to help you prioritise opportunities and activities, often there can be a feeling of the work 'never being done', or there always being too much to do at once.
- **UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS:** part of developing a strategy is deciding what you want to achieve, and balancing that with what is possible to achieve. Not engaging with that process can lead you, your leadership, or your Board to have unrealistic expectations.
- **REACTIVITY:** without a strategy to support targeted, proactive fundraising activities, you are likely to always be reacting to the most urgent things, with a feeling of 'firefighting'. This does not support long-term thinking.

Below are some activities and tools you can use as a starting point to identify where a strategy would be most valuable, and the risks and opportunities available.



SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT Analysis is a popular tool to use to assess your organisation's current position before developing a new strategy. You can also use it for specific elements of your work, such as your donor communications.

OBJECTIVE

To articulate what is working well, and what needs improving through a simple but powerful SWOT framework.

YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

This activity can be done alone, however we strongly recommend a group brainstorming session. For each section, explore the following questions:

INTERNAL	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you doing well? • What great assets does your organisation already have? • What do donors like about you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could you do better? • What is your organisation lacking? • What do donors dislike, or find worrying about you?
EXTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What opportunities are already available to you? • What trends or changes in the sector could you take advantage of? • Which of your strengths can you build on to achieve your goals? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What risks can you foresee? • What competition do you face? • What challenges do your weaknesses expose you to?

THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

- **LENGTH:** once you've generated ideas in each area, be sure to simplify the SWOT so you can make easy use of it for the rest of the process.
- **SPECIFICITY:** ensure each point is specific, not vague, to ensure the SWOT is a clear and accurate reflection of the status quo.
- **HONESTY:** it's important to be honest about weaknesses, and realistic about opportunities.
- **OPTIMISM:** it's also important to celebrate strengths, and not spend too long dwelling on weaknesses without planning how to address them.

WHAT NEXT?

The results of the SWOT Analysis should be used to inform the rest of your strategic planning. Your strengths are your tools, your opportunities are your goals, and your weaknesses and threats are things to make changes to address and avoid. The risks and opportunities you have identified are the external factors you must bear in mind when setting goals.



PESTLE ANALYSIS

PESTLE stands for Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental. A PESTLE Analysis is a tool that can be used to further assess the external factors that may potentially impact your organisation's success and sustainability. The tool can be applied to fundraising activities, as well as overall organisational work, and the results should be used to guide strategic planning.

OBJECTIVE

To articulate Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental factors that (may) impact your organisation's activities.

YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

This activity can be done alone, however, we strongly recommend a group brainstorming session. For each section, explore the following questions:

P

POLITICAL

- To what degree can your government, or the government in the countries you're fundraising, impact your work?
- How might a change in policy, leadership, stability, law or economic policy change your fundraising approach?

E

ECONOMIC

- What are the opportunities / risks from the health, growth and stability of the economy in your country?
- How might changes impact the value of your funding, or your donors' ability to give?
- What economic forces are at play if you fundraise in other countries?

S

SOCIAL

- What are the shared beliefs and attitudes of the population in the countries you're fundraising within?
- How do these impact the motivations of your donors, and how might that change?
- Note: These are often underpinned by key demographic data points on your donor base such as age, culture, health and career.

T

TECHNOLOGICAL

- What new technological changes could impact the way you work, the way your donors engage with you, or the way your donors expect you to deliver impact?
- What technology could become unavailable to you in a crisis?
- How secure is your technology?

L

LEGAL

- What laws impact your fundraising activities and your ability to accept donations?
- What are the differences between your laws and the laws in the countries where your donors are?
- What must all of your team understand to operate lawfully?

E

ENVIRONMENTAL

- How reliant on non-renewable resources is your model?
- How might scarcity of raw materials impact the wealth of your donors?
- What are the risks of engaging with donors working in industries that are considered unfriendly to the environment?

WHAT NEXT?

Once you have completed a PESTLE Analysis for your fundraising, make use of the results for the rest of your strategic planning.



Landscape Research & Benchmarking



INTRODUCTION

Research can often be a forgotten step in a non-profit's strategy development, but to create a realistic and well-grounded fundraising strategy, you must have a thorough understanding of the funding landscape around you, as well as what other peer organisations are doing. Conducting detailed and well-structured research has several benefits:

- **SAVING TIME AND MONEY:** upfront investment in a landscape and benchmarking analysis can pay dividends in the future, as it helps you avoid challenges, and ensures your offerings are competitive.
- **IMPROVING AND INNOVATING:** looking at what others are doing can bring about new, creative ideas on how to improve the way your organisation operates, and turn them into an actionable plan.
- **GETTING INTERNAL 'BUY-IN':** sharing research findings at the Board and senior leadership level can help to ensure any strategic decisions are backed up by evidence.

The next two exercises will guide you through your research process, and include some sample research questions to help break down the task into smaller, more achievable steps.



LANDSCAPE RESEARCH

Landscape analysis is a time-consuming task, which can at times can be quite tedious. However, knowing what opportunities are available for non-profits operating in your sector (or with a similar organisational model) is invaluable context for key strategic decisions. For example, if you operate in the 'democracy' space, your landscape research is likely to reveal that businesses do not like to fund controversial or 'risky' causes that may give them political exposure. This valuable insight will save you a lot of time and energy when you decide who to fundraise from.

OBJECTIVE

To understand the landscape of funding going to the sector where your non-profit operates, and identify any opportunities that will inform your fundraising strategy.

YOU WILL NEED

- A computer with internet access
- A word processing document to summarise and file the information

HOW TO RUN THIS EXERCISE

To make landscape research efficient and valuable, start by identifying the key questions that will guide your analysis, and then answer them using publicly available information. Below are some examples of research questions. This list is not exhaustive, and some of these may not apply to your sector. You should use them as inspiration and refine / expand on them with your team, depending on the context or your work.

SAMPLE LANDSCAPE RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

What is the non-profit sector like in the area(s) where we are based or operate?

What are the key trends in giving to it? Is giving going up, or down?

How many non-profits are there in our country / region / areas where we operate?

Where does most of the money going to non-profits in our country / region come from?

Where does most of the money going to non-profits in our sector come from?

What is the philanthropic culture in the areas we operate in?

What are the public attitudes towards our focus area(s) in the relevant countries?

What is the philanthropic culture in the areas we operate in?

What are the cultural attitudes towards money, speaking about money and philanthropy like in the regions where we are fundraising?

What are the other areas / projects that donors are giving to the most? Can there be partnerships with these organisations? What can be learnt from them?

What are the wealth and / or giving levels of high-net worth individuals in the areas where we operate / are based?

What are the most widespread fundraising practices in this field?

What typical donor experiences and benefits exist and work well?

EXAMPLE RESEARCH SOURCES:

- Google
- International databases about giving, such as Foundation Centre
- Reports about giving, such as the Coutts Million Dollar Report
- Your country's charity and foundation database, such as the Charity Commission
- The annual reports of organisations working in your sector



BENCHMARKING

Another crucial element of your research is benchmarking comparable or aspirational organisations, as this helps you get a sense of where you stand in the wider sector.

OBJECTIVE

To research the income, operations and fundraising practices of comparable or aspirational organisations, which will inform your strategy.

YOU WILL NEED

- A computer with internet access
- A word processing document to summarise and file the information

HOW TO RUN THIS EXERCISE

We recommend selecting a few organisations (3-5) that you and your team would like to learn from. These can be chosen based on their:

- **PROGRAMMATIC AREA:** organisations that have a similar mission, work on similar focus areas or serve a similar population.
- **GEOGRAPHY:** organisations that are based or operate in the same city / country / region.
- **ORGANISATIONAL TYPE:** organisations that have a similar structure / size / operational model.
- **TARGET AUDIENCE:** organisations that fundraise from similar audiences as the ones you want to fundraise from.
- **APPROACH:** organisations that have an interesting / innovative / successful approach to fundraising.

Below are sample questions that could help guide your benchmarking. Again, you should use these as inspiration to draft your own tailored questions.

SAMPLE BENCHMARKING QUESTIONS:

How do they promote specific areas of their work to their donor audiences?

What are their fundraising ratios (money spent on fundraising vs income from fundraising)?

What approaches do they take to communicating with and managing relationships with donors?

What events do they host/ attend / speak at?

How fast have they grown / are they growing, and why?

WHAT NEXT?

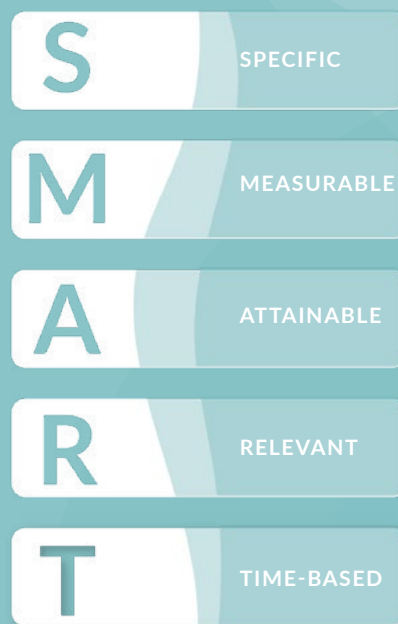
Once you have collected all the relevant information to answer your landscape and benchmarking research questions, summarise and share your key learnings with your team, and consider what you have learnt when answering key strategic questions and deciding on the best plan for your fundraising.

Financial Targets



SETTING REALISTIC TARGETS

Setting fundraising targets as a team is important. Realistic targets will determine the strategic direction of the organisation and provide a tangible framework for the team to plan fundraising. A method that is widely used across industries to set clear and realistic targets is the SMART goals framework:



Here is what each of the 5 qualities of a SMART target mean, and how they can be applied to your strategic planning:

SPECIFIC: avoid generic statements such as ‘we want to do better than last year’, and instead focus on specifics, for example:

- ‘Raise \$20,000 to support 50 orphan children’
- ‘Raise 15% more donations than last year’
- ‘Gain 10 new individual donors’

MEASURABLE: measuring progress can help you assess whether your fundraising targets are able to be met. It will contribute to motivating both your staff and donors. To set measurable fundraising goals, you need to determine:

- What needs to be measured
- How will it be measured
- Who will measure it

In Section II, you will learn about Key Performance Indicators and how you can determine them.

ATTAINABLE: your goals should be ambitious enough to challenge and motivate the team, but also realistic and attainable, to avoid stress and burn out. To understand what is achievable and feasible for your organisation, you need to take into consideration these key elements:

- Your team's needs, experience and ambitions
- Your organisation's previous fundraising success
- Your average number of donors
- Your average donation size
- The time you and the team can realistically dedicate to fundraising activities
- Any additional resources you are able to deploy (e.g. employees, volunteers, in-kind support, etc.)

RELEVANT: the fundraising targets you set must tie into your overall mission and vision. To do so, you should be able to answer these questions:

- What impact will they have on your organisation and your service users?
- How do they fit within your organisation's overall impact strategy?
- What will your return on investment (ROI) be?

TIME-BASED: to ensure you are actually working towards them, the targets you set should have a defined start and end date. Many organisations work to an annual cycle, but the time bounds are completely up to you. You can also set milestones along the way by breaking down a larger fundraising target into smaller, more achievable ones that motivate the team.

The following exercises and resources will help you set SMART targets for your fundraising strategy.



DEFINING AMBITIONS & PRIORITIES

Before you determine your organisation's desired budget for the next financial year, you need to have a clear understanding of what exactly you would like to achieve during that period of time.

OBJECTIVE

To articulate and prioritise your organisation's ambitions for the next 12 months.

YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- Post-Its and markers
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THIS EXERCISE

STEP 1

Ask your team the following question: ***'What does success look like for our organisation one year from now?'*** Then give everyone 5-10 minutes to write down as many ambitions as they can, one per Post-It and categorise their own ideas on a spectrum from essential to non-essential.

STEP 2

On a board, draw a line to divide the space in two areas, where you are going to stick the Post-Its.

Then, ask each team member to pick their top 3 ambitions and share them with the rest of the team, specifying where on the board they should be placed: above the line ('must have'), on the line ('should have'), or below the line ('nice to have').

If other team members have similar ideas, you can create thematic clusters of Post-Its. Once everyone has shared their top 3 ideas, continue the round until all Post-Its have been shared and discussed collectively.

**Must
Have**

BEAR MINIMUM YOU MUST ACHIEVE NEXT YEAR IN ORDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL

**Should
Have**

IDEAL ACHIEVEMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE

**Nice to
Have**

DREAM ACHIEVEMENTS WHICH CAN WAIT A BIT LONGER, IF NEED BE

STEP 3

Finally, facilitate a prioritisation discussion to determine whether each idea or statement on the board should stay where it is, or be moved up / down. Ensure your 'Above the Line' ideas are realistic, and achievable, and that you don't have too many to get done!



COSTING OUT YOUR AMBITIONS

Once you have defined and prioritised your ambitions, it's time to turn those ideas into numbers! In this exercise, you will cost out your goals, which will then feed into your budget. The total amount that results will be your 'prioritised' fundraising target for the year.

NOTE: this activity does not strictly focus on budget creation, but rather on 'conceptualising' your costs and defining financial priorities.

OBJECTIVE

To cost out priority needs, which will ultimately determine your organisation's financial targets for the year.

YOU WILL NEED

- The results of your Ambitions and Priorities definition exercise
- A computer with a programme that allows you to make data tables, such as Excel

HOW TO RUN THIS EXERCISE

On a spreadsheet, create a table like the one below. For each of the ambitions you identified in the previous exercise, enter your 'guesstimate' of how much it would cost you to achieve it. Then add up each row into a total, which will give you the budget for the year: essential (must have), ideal (must have + should have), and dream (must have + should have + nice to have).

MUST HAVE		SHOULD HAVE		NICE TO HAVE	
Goal	Cost	Goal	Cost	Goal	Cost
Goal 1	\$	Goal 1	\$	Goal 1	\$
Goal 2	\$	Goal 2	\$	Goal 2	\$
Goal 3	\$	Goal 3	\$	Goal 3	\$
Total	\$A	Total	\$B	Total	\$C
Essential budget	=\$A	Ideal Budget	=\$A + \$B	Dream Budget	=\$A + \$B + \$C

NEED HELP?

If you need help creating your budget, check out the 'Financials' resources in the Warm Up.



GIFT TABLE

To make your budget more digestible, we recommend using a gift table. A gift table is a recommended framework to break down the gift sizes and timelines needed to achieve overall budget targets, which applies for existing and new donors you identify. Below is an example of a gift table you can replicate and adapt based on your organisation's size and income:

\$	QUARTER 1		QUARTER 2		QUARTER 3		QUARTER 4	
Gift Size	Number	Total	Number	Total	Number	Total	Number	Total
\$5,000	2	\$10,000	3	\$15,000	4	\$20,000	4	\$20,000
\$10,000	1	\$10,000	2	\$20,000	2	\$20,000	2	\$20,000
\$15,000		\$	1	\$	1	\$15,000	1	\$15,000
\$20,000		\$		\$		\$	1	\$20,000
Fundraising Target	3	\$20,000	6	\$35,000	7	\$55,000	8	\$75,000

GIFT TABLE EXPLAINED

- **TIMELINE:** it is divided into 4 quarters for the financial year
- **GIFT SIZE:** the target size of the donations
- **NUMBER:** the target number of donations per quarter
- **FUNDRAISING TARGET:** the amount of money you should aim to fundraise each quarter

NOTE: for new donors, you need to account for a cultivation period before you can make an 'ask'. Hence why in the first quarter you should expect to receive smaller and fewer gifts, and focus on 'cultivation', which will then ultimately result in commitments. You will learn how to build and implement your cultivation plan throughout the Guide.



RISK-ADJUSTED FORECASTING

In fundraising, it is critical to account for risk in forecasting income against targets. An easy way to do this is by incorporating risk into the planned income pipeline calculations. Risk-adjusted planned income means you multiply the total ‘gift size’ amount for each donor by the probability of the ‘ask’ being successful. For example, if you ask for a \$50,000 gift but you estimate that your chance of success is 50%, your risk-adjusted figure would be \$25,000.

While it can be hard to estimate the probability of success, especially when you are not familiar with new donors, you can incorporate 4 different probabilities as follows:

PROBABILITY OF SUCESS	EXPLANATION
25%	It is unlikely we will receive this grant.
50%	The donor could either accept or reject the ask, but we can’t tell yet.
75%	There is a good likelihood of success.
95%	We are almost certain we will receive this unless something unexpected happens.

Below is an example of a risk-adjusted forecasting table.

DONOR NAME	GIFT SIZE	PROBABILITY	RISK-ADJUSTED GIFT
Donor 1	\$10,000	50%	\$10,000
Donor 2	\$10,000	75%	\$7,500
Donor 3	\$15,000	25%	\$3,750
Donor 4	\$20,000	95%	\$19,000
Total	\$55,000	Risk-Adjusted Total	\$35,250

WHAT NEXT?

Once you have worked out how much your organisation needs to raise to sustain its activities in the next 12 months, it is time to assess the feasibility of your plan. What follows is a guided thinking process to help you navigate your next challenge: to scale, or not to scale?



FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT



WHAT IS YOUR ENDGAME?

The following thinking process will help you assess the (financial) feasibility of the goals you identified and costed out so far. If you are a small non-profit operating at a modest scale, you might be thinking that in order to tackle a huge social or environmental problem, you should scale your operations and grow your income. This might be true for you, but it is not always the case.

As a non-profit, your success is not only determined by the impact of your work, but also by how change is promoted in the wider sector where you operate. So other than your mission, vision, and impact (if you haven't identified those yet, please see our 'Mission & Impact' resources in the Warm Up), another key element of your strategy that needs defining is your 'endgame'.

Your endgame is the specific role your organisation wishes to play in confronting an overall challenge (e.g. ending homelessness). In this context, 'scale' takes on a new meaning: it doesn't only refer to your organisation's growth, but rather to the overall sector's growth. With this definition in mind, scaling does not necessarily mean having larger budgets for wider operations, but can also mean collaborating with other providers and transferring services to them to achieve success as a collective.



SPOTLIGHT: MOTHERS2MOTHERS' ENDGAME

mothers2mothers (m2m) is a great example of a non-profit that successfully defined its endgame, and shifted the focus of its strategy from the scale of its organisation to sectoral impact.

m2m started with a mission to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV through its Mentor Mother Model, which sees m2m employ and train women living with HIV to deliver health services and education to other women.

After growing its programme from one site in Cape Town, South Africa, to hundreds of locations across nine African countries, m2m realised that to truly end mother-to-child transmission of HIV, it needed to scale its impact beyond what its funding and existing direct service delivery model would support.

As a result, m2m redefined its overall strategy to include services designed to help governments, local NGOs and other partners use the Mentor Mother Model. To date, both Kenya and South Africa have

adopted the Mentor Mother Model as policy, and in both countries, m2m led a five-year project to build capacity for others to implement the model, and gradually transfer operations. m2m is currently on a similar trajectory in Angola, Mozambique, and Tanzania.

By defining its endgame, m2m realised it was more efficient to shift from being solely a service provider, to supporting governments to implement its work. That has had the added benefit of opening up capacity for m2m to innovate and evolve its model to serve all stages of life, including early childhood development and adolescent health. organisations that implement its work.



TO SCALE, OR NOT TO SCALE? DETERMINING YOUR ENDGAME

To work out your endgame, think about the characteristics of the social problem you are trying to solve, and the operational model you use. There are six potential approaches your organisation could adopt in the future; once you have identified yours, you should be able to define your role as an organisation, and assess the need for scaling and growing your programmatic work.

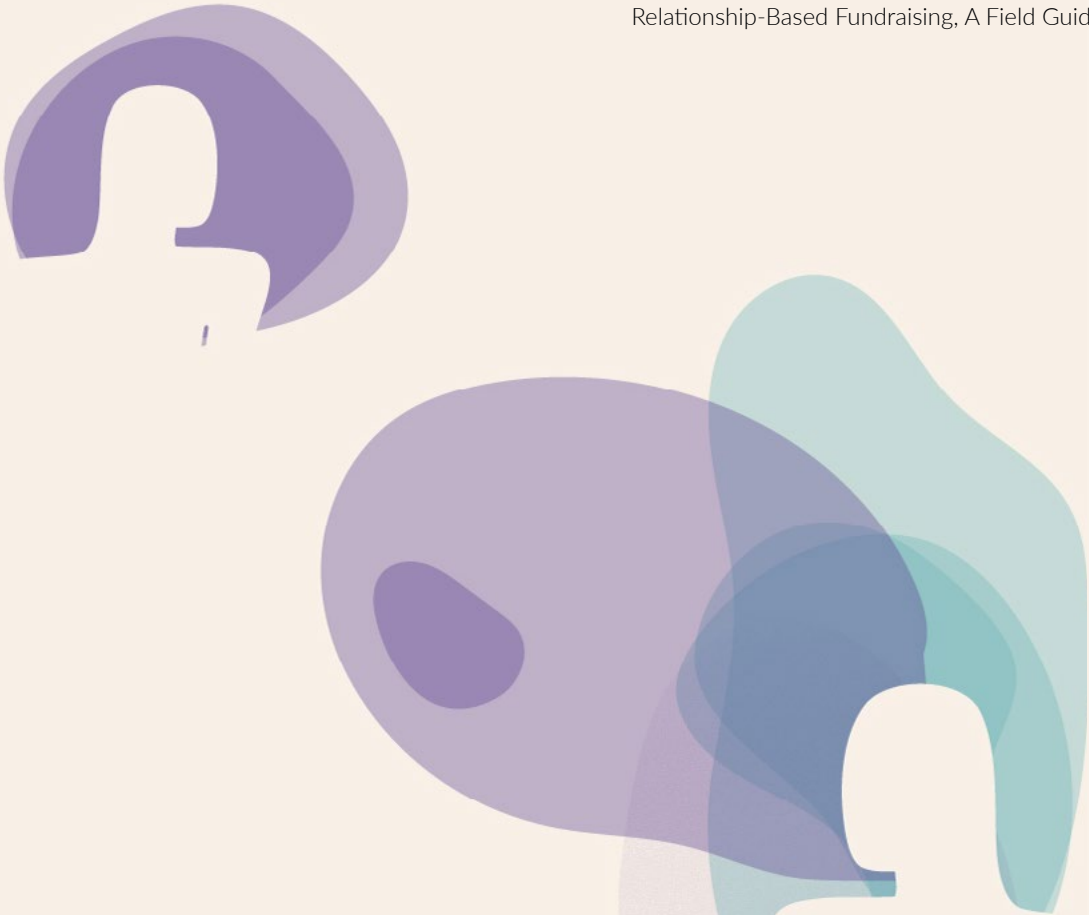


The following table by **Stanford Innovation Review**, is meant to guide you through your feasibility assessment thinking process:

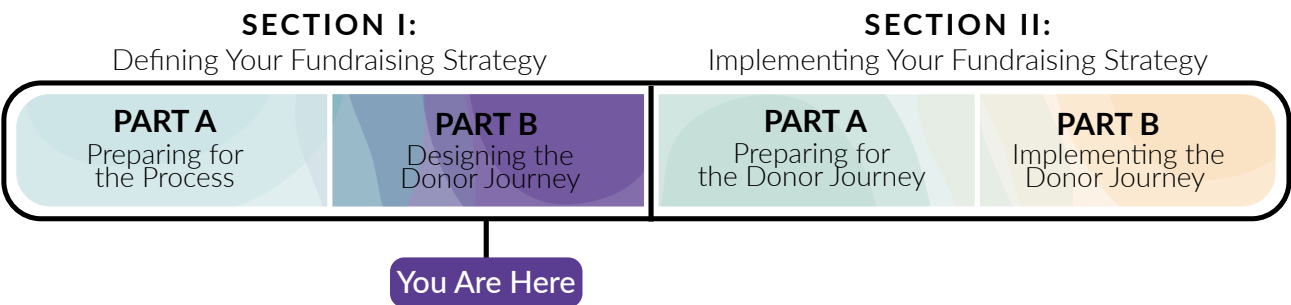
ENDGAME	CHARACTERISTICS	CORE APPROACH	FUTURE ROLE
OPEN SOURCE	A breakthrough idea that is easy for other organisations to adopt and integrate	Conducting research and development, and sharing knowledge	Serving as a knowledge hub for research related to a breakthrough idea
REPLICATION	A breakthrough product or model that is easy for other organisations to adopt and deliver	Defining a replicable operating and impact model, demonstrating its efficacy and sharing it with other organisations	Providing certification of franchise programmes and training services, and serving as a centre of excellence
GOVERNMENT ADOPTION	A model with high coverage potential, along with a capacity for integration into public sector programmes	Delivering results at a sufficient scale and level of efficiency to make a case for public sector involvement	Offering services to government agencies, and maintaining research and advocacy efforts
COMMERCIAL ADOPTION	A product or service with profit potential that solves a market failure or reduces market risk	Demonstrating the impact and the profitability of a product or service, and reducing associated risks	Maintaining advocacy and monitoring efforts, targeting hard-to-reach market segments, and working to ensure commercial delivery
MISSION ACHIEVEMENT	Defined and achievable outcomes related to solving a discrete problem	Maintaining a focus on targeted intervention	Applying (where relevant) unique assets and capabilities to additional issue areas
SUSTAINED SERVICE	A strong organisation, with a proven ability to sustain funding, that fills a market or public service gap	Creating a cost-effective model, building a strong organisation, and making efficiency improvements	Continued provision of a core service at an ever-increasing level of efficiency

Up Next...

In Part B of this section you will be designing your Donor Journey. You will learn about target audiences and what motivates them to give; design your cultivation plan that is achievable and engaging; and prepare your solicitation pitch.



SECTION I PART B
DESIGNING THE DONOR JOURNEY



In this section, you will design your Donor Journey.

After learning about your potential donor audiences, you will identify the ones that best fit your organisation’s needs and ethos, and understand what motivates them to give.

Then, you will build a donor cultivation plan by designing your offering of benefits to tactically engage donors by leveraging your existing resources and assets.

Finally, you will learn how to develop your pitch to make an ‘ask’ to your donor.



DONOR AUDIENCES OVERVIEW



UNDERSTANDING YOUR DONORS



DONOR OFFERING: ASSET INVENTORY



DONOR OFFERING: ‘PRODUCTS’



MAKING AN ‘ASK’



Donor Audiences Overview



INTRODUCTION

To design your fundraising strategy, the first thing you need to decide is which donor audiences your organisation should fundraise from. Diversifying income sources is extremely important, as it makes you less reliant on a single type of donor. However, the decision over which types of donors you should cultivate must be taken very carefully. Ultimately, successful donor relationships depend on your capabilities, skills and access to networks, but also on the mission of your organisation and how well it aligns with your target audience.

The following pages will introduce five main types of high-value audiences. Each of them has specific characteristics you need to keep in mind before you start working on your engagement plan. Below is a quick comparison tool outlining the main features of each audience. The ones highlighted in green are what makes those audiences easier to engage with, the ones in red are less desirable features, and the ones in amber are somewhere in the middle.

TRUSTS & FOUNDATIONS

CORPORATES

HIGH-NET-WORTH INDIVIDUALS

GOVERNMENTS

MULTILATERALS

AUDIENCE	GIVING TYPE	SPEED	RELATIONSHIP EXPECTATIONS	PAPERWORK	CULTIVATION	STRATEGIES	INFLUENCE
Trusts & Foundations	Often opt for a smaller, restricted 'get-to-know-you' grant, followed by opportunity for large, multi-year, flexible partnerships.	Can move faster than other audiences, but are not the fastest.	Often the most 'low-maintenance' of donor audiences, they tend to be straightforward.	Whilst reporting requirements vary, they usually look to evaluate the impact of their work, and in need of evidence and learning.	Do not require building relationships with several stakeholders.	Can invest in strategic ways, including early-stage ideas, systems approaches and leveraged giving.	Can be open to influence, especially from innovators.
Corporates	Cash giving is extremely limited compared to other philanthropic audiences; the best partnerships figure out how to use a company's other assets, and target budgets that are not just CSR.	They can respond to asks quickly, especially the smaller, less international ones.	Notoriously 'high-maintenance' to manage and often require transactional benefits and experiences for their key stakeholders that are negotiated during the proposal process.	Usually do not require as lengthy proposals as other audiences.	Need engagement with various stakeholders at different levels (executive, senior and general staff).	Their giving trends are aligned with business interest.	Strong relationships can lead to influence over their business model and practice, and ultimately their social impact.
High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs)	Often opt for a smaller, restricted 'get-to-know-you' grant, followed by opportunity for large, flexible partnerships.	Are the most responsive donors, as they are responsible for their own money.	Many want to be publicly recognised and offered exclusive experiences. It is advised to present a clear framework of opportunities to manage expectations.	Want to hear about your work through more informal means, and do not require lengthy reports.	Do not require building relationships with several stakeholders. Usually it is just one individual or family member.	Increasingly establishing formal philanthropic structures to strategically deploy funds.	Are keen on learning about your work, but are usually set in their ways of working. However, Next Gen are increasingly open to influence.

AUDIENCE	GIVING TYPE	SPEED	RELATIONSHIP EXPECTATIONS	PAPERWORK	CULTIVATION	STRATEGIES	INFLUENCE
Governments	Tend to be large in value, but heavily restricted and time-bound.	Require onerous proposals and are quite slow and bureaucratic.	Tend to be straightforward and don't have high stewardship expectations.	Often require lengthy and complicated reporting frameworks.	Require building relationships with multiple stakeholders at different decision-making levels.	Quite responsive to political or economic changes, in both positive and negative ways.	Are less likely to be open to influence.
Multilaterals	Often opt for a smaller, restricted 'get-to-know-you' grant, followed by opportunity for large, multi-year, flexible partnerships.	Require onerous proposals and are quite slow and bureaucratic	Tend to be straightforward and don't have high stewardship expectations.	Often require lengthy and complicated reporting frameworks.	Require building relationships with multiple stakeholders at different decision-making levels.	Quite responsive to political or economic changes, and are accountable to member countries.	Are notoriously inflexible



TRUSTS & FOUNDATIONS

WHO ARE THEY AND WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER THEM?

Trusts and Foundations are grant-making organisations. They usually have clear missions, relatively large funds and an obvious desire to create impact. In general, they are:

- **WEALTHY:** they have access to large cash budgets purely for grant making.
- **TRANSPARENT:** they are (mostly) clear about their funding priorities and upfront about what they expect from grantees.
- **AGILE:** they can move a lot faster than public funders, and tend to be more open to risk-taking and innovation.
- **INFLUENTIAL AND OPEN TO INFLUENCE:** having big foundation donors adds credibility, and a great relationship with them can lead to influence over their priorities.
- **DRIVEN:** they are keen on collaborating to achieve shared visions and discover the next big idea to solve issues.
- **REFLECTIVE:** they are often looking to evaluate the impact of their work, and in need of evidence and learning.
- **STRATEGIC:** they often invest in strategic ways, including early stage ideas, systems approaches and leveraged giving.

HOW DO I ENGAGE THEM?

Trusts & Foundations – and the people who run them – require a strong relationship-building approach. This field is competitive, and foundations can be idiosyncratic, so your organisation needs to stand out and fit with each donor's needs and preferences. Your approach should include the following:

- **DO YOUR HOMEWORK:** carefully read their website to get a clear understanding of their funding criteria and impact objectives.
- **DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS:** reach out to potential foundation partners, and get to know them both as people and as an organisation.
- **SHARE A CLEAR VISION OF YOUR WORK:** clearly articulate your organisation's vision and objectives for each programmatic area, focussing on the ones that the prospect may be interested in. Check out our Warm Up resources if you need help creating your vision and mission statement.
- **ARTICULATE THE NEED FOR FUNDING:** make sure your 'ask' is tied to specific objectives and programmes (they rarely fund operational costs).
- **FOCUS ON STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT:** solicit their advice, seek to understand their plans and objectives, and invite them to events and strategic conversations.
- **PROMOTE YOUR ORGANISATION'S UNIQUE VALUE:** highlight your strengths and the benefits of having your organisation in their grant portfolio. Check out our Warm Up resources if you need help defining your organisation's unique value.
- **PURSUE 'CO-CREATED' INVESTMENTS:** find common ground, and develop a plan to achieve shared missions, rather than asking for funds in a transactional way.
- **COLLABORATION:** engage in open communication, be approachable and transparent about impact and challenges.



CORPORATES

WHO ARE THEY AND WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER THEM?

Corporates are businesses. They tend to look for multifaceted partnerships, where they can add value in several ways beyond cash donations. Generally speaking, these audiences tend to:

- **MAKE IN-KIND DONATIONS:** they are keen to add value in various ways, and may have resources to provide pro-bono support (e.g. products, services, skills transfer, employee volunteering, etc.).
- **PROVIDE INFRASTRUCTURE:** they may be open to using their existing business infrastructure and practice to benefit a partnership (e.g. marketing a product while raising the profile of a charitable partner).
- **BE INFLUENTIAL:** they add credibility and can help raise your profile. Conversely, if they have a bad reputation, you might not want to be associated with them.
- **BE INFLUENCED:** a very strong partnership with a corporate can lead to influence over their business model and practice, and ultimately their social impact.
- **HAVE VESTED INTERESTS:** their giving trends are aligned with business interest. They usually want to be associated with stakeholders who have a positive impact on their bottom line, or are addressing negative business externalities.
- **HAVE CONNECTIONS:** they can lead to connections with other types of private donors through their leadership and staff engagement.

MISCONCEPTIONS

Here are some of the most common misconceptions about corporates:

- **COMPANIES GIVE TO THE CAUSES THEY SAY THEY DO:** overwhelmingly, corporate initiatives come as a result of a personal connection. If there's not a corporate foundation involved, their stated focus areas may just be a communications exercise.
- **GREAT CAUSES & STRONG IMPACT ARE ENOUGH:** companies are bombarded with requests for funds and partnership; everyone has a great cause that needs support.
- **COMPANIES CAN BE LARGE CASH DONORS:** cash giving from most companies is lower than you might think; the best partnerships figure out how to use a company's other assets, and target budgets that are not just CSR.
- **COMPANIES CARE ABOUT SOCIAL IMPACT:** some do – but the best way to build a sustainable relationship is to think about the impacts on their business, too.

HOW DO I ENGAGE THEM?

Misconceptions aside, corporate partnerships can add a lot of value if managed correctly. The best corporate approaches have these key elements:

- **RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING:** engage with various stakeholders at different levels (executive, senior and general staff).
- **SHARED-VALUE:** asks should be tailored to their corporate mission and values, as well as any of the key challenges / ambitions explored in the cultivation stage, which may help them to meet their objectives.
- **ENGAGEMENT AND VALUE-ADD:** partnerships should engage staff and stakeholders wherever possible (e.g. use their networks, make their customers happy, help them be more efficient, engage their teams, use their expertise and meet their goals).
- **THINK LONGER-TERM:** corporate decision-making can be a complex process but, if done right, partnerships will likely be long-term.
- **CO-CREATION:** the most valuable corporate partnerships happen when there is co-creation and all parties have shared common objectives.
- **BENEFITS:** partnerships should be exclusive and bring benefits that are attractive to their leadership, as well as interesting for their wider staff teams.
- **STORYTELLING AND COMMS:** companies will want to tell the story of the partnership, as this has a benefit for their business. You will need well-written comms materials, impact statements and human-centred stories. Check out our section on Messaging (Section II, Part B) for some useful tips on how to talk about your story.



HIGH-NET-WORTH INDIVIDUALS

WHO ARE THEY AND WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER THEM?

High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs) are individual people that hold significant financial assets, usually above \$1 million USD (and Ultra-High-Net-Worth Individuals usually hold assets above \$30 million USD). Essentially, they are wealthy people and require the strongest relationship-building skills. If well aligned, these partnerships can be extremely fruitful and rewarding. HNWIs are:

- **INVESTED:** they are usually passionate about a cause they support and willing to support you on a regular basis, but don't always commit to multi-year gifts.
- **EAGER TO LEARN:** they are keen on learning about your work and the ways in which your organisation adds value.
- **FLEXIBLE:** they can be flexible with their giving, particularly if they trust your organisation and if there is open and honest communication.
- **RISK-TAKERS:** they are more likely to fund 'risky' causes and untested approaches, compared to institutional donors and corporates.
- **INFORMAL:** they often do not expect (nor wish to) receive lengthy impact reports, but rather want to hear about your work through more informal means.
- **STRATEGIC:** they are increasingly establishing formal philanthropic structures to strategically deploy funds (e.g. Foundations, Donor Advised Funds, Donor Circles, etc.)

HOW DO I ENGAGE THEM?

HNWIs need the strongest relationship-management skills. As it's their personal wealth that they are giving away, everything about the fundraising needs to be personal, too. Successful HNWI relationships should:

- **TAKE TIME TO DEVELOP:** on average, it takes 12-18 months of engagement before you receive your first donation from a HNWI.
- **MAKE THEM FEEL VALUED:** thank them, recognise them, ask for their advice, and be 'exclusive' with the ones that give the most.
- **ASK FOR FEEDBACK:** they usually like to be engaged in strategic conversations, and like to provide feedback.
- **BE CLEAR ABOUT IMPACT:** they usually don't require lengthy reports, but need to understand the impact you are achieving thanks to their support.
- **PROVIDE BENEFITS:** you should provide benefits and experiences of a calibre that is exciting and rewarding (which could closely align with benefits intended for foundations and corporates). Depending on the work that you do, these could include access to experts, field visits, meetings with key stakeholders, etc.
- **LEVERAGE MATCH FUNDING:** when possible, you should offer them match-giving opportunities. They will feel more compelled to support, as their contributions are adding more value.
- **OFFER TAX-EFFICIENT GIVING OPPORTUNITIES:** these are often extremely important to the personal wealth portfolios of HNWIs, so Ensure you have a registration that can meet this need, if possible.



SPOTLIGHT: NEXT GEN DONORS

Next Generation (Next Gen) donors make up an increasingly growing share of this audience type. Whilst definitions differ, they are usually HNWIs between the age of 20 – 45. Next Gen donors stand out from traditional donors in several ways:

- **IMPACT IS EVERYTHING:** they focus much more on impact. They want it to be measured, and want to see it first-hand. Check out our Warm Up resources for some useful tips on how to measure and talk about impact.
- **THOROUGHNESS:** before committing to a gift, they usually want to learn more about your leadership and experts to feel confident about the expertise of your organisation.
- **VALUES-DRIVEN:** they support causes that match their personal values, and often want to bring their philanthropy into their personal life and relationships.
- **COLLABORATIVE APPROACH:** they are pushing the boundaries of traditional philanthropy with a stronger collaborative spirit and a greater use of co-funding mechanisms.
- **BUSINESS APPROACH:** more than previous generations, they bring business discipline and strategy to philanthropy.
- **SUPPORT BEYOND FUNDING:** it's not only about writing a cheque, but also about how they can leverage their connections, expertise and access to support a cause.



GOVERNMENTS

WHO ARE THEY AND WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER THEM?

Grants made by governments are financial awards given by state departments, or local government authorities. Government funding is notoriously inflexible and involves heavy reporting and time-consuming relationships. However, they have the deepest pockets of all funder types. Generally speaking, bilateral funders are:

- **CREDIBLE:** they are a great source of credibility, networks, and mutually beneficial knowledge sharing.
- **POLITICAL:** they are quite responsive to political or economic changes, in both positive and negative ways.
- **INTERNATIONAL:** they often fund organisations and projects in foreign countries, and tend to have geographic priorities depending on their country history and political relations.
- **LARGE-SCALE:** they provide generous funding to address large-scale, regional challenges (e.g. agriculture, education, energy, housing, environmental conservation, etc.)
- **COMMITTED:** if there is political will within the current government, they will be committed to the cause and can disburse large quantities of funding.
- **DRIVEN:** they have internal and external pressure to ensure work is efficient, effective and the right choice.
- **OPAQUE:** they tend to be less upfront about their priorities and their needs, but can respond to proactive agenda-setting if it meets their objectives or makes their lives easier.
- **BUREAUCRATIC:** they require onerous proposals, reporting and detailed-focused accountability processes.
- **SLOW:** they can be slow in disbursing funds, but are usually clear about timelines.
- **RISK-AVERSE:** being funded by taxes, governments answer to the general public, and are therefore quite risk-averse in their approach to giving.
- **KEEN TO SHARE:** they often have access to resources, knowledge and information, which they are keen to share with grantees.

BILATERAL VS. MULTILATERAL FUNDING:

Bilateral funding is money donated directly by individual countries. Multilateral funding is usually channelled through international bodies that represent multiple countries (e.g. United Nations Agencies, World Bank, etc.).

HOW DO I ENGAGE THEM?

Engaging with governments for funding is, unsurprisingly, a deeply political exercise. Alongside having clear 'asks' and a vision they can get behind, it is also essential to focus on:

- **STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT:** build relationships with multiple stakeholders at different decision-making levels.
- **ALIGNMENT:** highlight your unique value-add, and how it aligns with their goals and political agenda.
- **TRENDS:** be aware of giving trends and priorities to get your approach and timing right.
- **INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS:** be aware of international frameworks (e.g. UN Sustainable Development Goals), and present your work accordingly.
- **TRANSPARENCY:** as they are notoriously inflexible, highlighting any challenges and changes in landscape in a timely and mindful manner is key.
- **ACCURACY:** make sure your reporting is compliant with their requirements.



MULTILATERALS

WHO ARE THEY AND WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER THEM?

Multilateral funders are international organisations whose memberships are made up of member governments, who are also the primary source of funds. They hold large amounts of funding and operate in similar ways to Foundations, while also being relatively inflexible and bureaucratic. Generally speaking, these audiences are:

- **IMPACT-ORIENTED:** they have clear impact goals and, whilst there needs to be political will behind them, they are less influenced by members' in-country politics.
- **BUREAUCRATIC AND SLOW:** they can be slow in disbursing funding, and bureaucratic in decision-making.
- **ACCOUNTABLE TO THEIR STAKEHOLDERS:** they are accountable to donors of their own, usually Governments or Foundations.
- **LESS RISK-AVERSE:** compared to bilateral funders, Multilaterals are more willing to take 'risky' or political funding decisions, as they represent the international community.
- **DEMANDING:** they require lengthy proposals and very detailed reporting.

HOW DO I ENGAGE THEM?

Like Governments, engaging with Multilaterals is a deeply political exercise. The best approaches to Multilaterals have these key elements:

- **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:** as they are very driven by their own mission, make sure you communicate how your organisation will get them closer to achieving it.
- **INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS:** be aware of international frameworks (e.g. UN Sustainable Development Goals), and present your work accordingly.
- **PROACTIVITY AND TRANSPARENCY:** share timely updates and reports, and highlight key challenges.
- **KNOWLEDGE-SHARING:** keep an open conversation and solicit their advice. They often have area-specific expertise that may inform your programmes.
- **STORYTELLING:** as they are constantly reporting to governments and donors, help them demonstrate their impact by sharing your success stories and framing your impact based on their priorities. Check out our Warm Up resources for some useful tips on how to measure and talk about impact.



Understanding Your Donors



INTRODUCTION

WHY DO DONORS GIVE MONEY?

This is a question that often gets ignored in routine fundraising. We sometimes assume that Governments, Foundations, Corporates and HNWLs simply have money, and so they should give it to good causes. However, when someone is sitting at their desk in one of these organisations, or looking at their own wealth as an individual, there are many different motivations that might drive them to give money away, and also many reasons they might choose not to.

As a fundraiser, it's your job to advocate for the causes – and organisations – you work for, but it's also your job to provide donors with the type of relationships and experiences that might make them want to start giving, and give more. This includes taking the time to focus on their journeys by asking yourself these questions: Why are they giving? What difference do they want to make in the world? How do they want to be seen? Is their giving a practical decision, an emotional one, or both? What are they fearful of, or excited about? And what challenges do they face in their giving?

All these questions are key to understanding each of your individual donors, as well as targeting your fundraising at specific types of donor audiences. You wouldn't send an individual donor a 100 page technical report, nor expect a government official to make a grant after a private dinner with your CEO – and so you must know what drives your donors, and how you can balance giving them what they like whilst also meeting your organisation's goals.

Donors are all different, but there will be at least one human making the final decision of whether and how much to give. This means understanding the varied motivations for giving is essential. Here are some of the most common reasons why donors decide to engage with non-profits:

- **IMPACT:** demonstrable value for money, and impact of their investment on a cause they support.
- **EXCLUSIVITY:** access to exclusive and unique opportunities, connections and experiences.
- **EXPERTISE:** access to cutting-edge information, innovation and unique insights.
- **CONNECTIONS:** socialising and connecting with peers, donors and experts.
- **INFLUENCE:** being involved in discussions, debates and – where appropriate – decisions.
- **ENGAGEMENT:** getting involved in an issue that matters to them, combining resources with others.
- **PROFILE RAISING:** allowing for personal positioning as a leader in the space.

This section provides several activities and tools you can use to understand your donors, prioritise which donor types you will focus on, make educated guesses at their motivations and even ask them to tell you directly what they want.



DEFINING YOUR DREAM DONOR



This is a simple exercise, ideally done as a group, bringing in people who work on fundraising, communications and programmes to get all perspectives.

OBJECTIVE

To articulate the specific qualities of your organisation's 'dream donors', especially focusing on the elements outside of simple money that could add value to the organisation.

YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- Post-It Notes, or scraps of paper
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Invite everyone to sit and think about their favourite donors (if relevant). Ask them to think about what was so good about them, what the donor brought to the relationship that made things better, and what were the key elements of the engagement that were good for them, their organisation and the cause.

STEP 2

Next, ask everyone to imagine their dream donor – the perfect donor for your organisation. Someone who gives exactly what is needed, is motivated to give by the right things, and works with you in a way that is right for your team and cause. What would the cultivation process be like? What would the partnership look like? What about them would be different to your typical donors?

STEP 3

Give everyone 5 minutes to write as many Post-Its as they can with the qualities of their favourite, and dream donors. One item per Post-It! Make sure these qualities are realistic, for example 'able to give large grants quickly' rather than 'sends cash out of the blue', and 'able to give in our country' rather than 'ignores local legal restrictions'.

Easy to
directly
contact

Understand
the need
for our
work

Comfortable
funding risky
projects

Able to
speak about
us to others

Don't
expect too
much of us

Well
connected

STEP 4

Next, have everyone pick their top 3 Post-Its – the very best qualities they have experienced, or can imagine, in a donor, and share them with the group out loud, whilst adding them to the wall. If anyone has a similar suggestion, they should add it to the wall at the same time, so similar suggestions are grouped. Discuss any areas where there are disagreements on whether something would be good for the organisation.

STEP 5

Continue going around until everyone's ideas are shared, grouped and discussed, and you have a wall full of the best donor qualities you can imagine.

STEP 6

Work together to sort these qualities in order from 'Most Important' to 'Least Important'.

STEP 7

Summarise the top half 'Most Important' qualities as the key criteria you have in looking for the right donors for your organisation.

STEP 8

Have everyone reflect on which donors might meet this criteria, and encourage the team to seek them out!

WHAT NEXT?

You can make use of your 'dream donor' key criteria in many ways:

- Creating 'donor personas', and doing your donor prioritisation exercise (see next page).
- Having a 'dream donor' profile on your wall, to remind yourself of what you are looking for.
- Drafting a donor-friendly version of it and using it as a discussion piece when developing partnerships, perhaps even putting it on your website for donors to see.



CREATING DONOR PERSONAS

To understand the donors who are most likely to give to your organisation, and to inform best practice when building and managing relationships, we recommend creating 'donor personas'.

WHAT IS A DONOR PERSONA?

Donor personas are detailed profiles of the typical donors you attract already, and also those you want to attract in the future. Typically, they address key facts that are relevant for you in tailoring your fundraising approaches, such as:

- Age, gender, relationship status
- Source of wealth, and any other stakeholders involved in decisions (e.g. family, their boss)
- Ways of engaging (e.g. going to events, giving with friends, reading reports)
- Views and values, including their connection to your cause, if they have one
- Personal interests
- Sources of information, including their news sources, and how they might learn about you (e.g. social media)
- Approach to giving, and motivations for doing so
- Assets other than money

WHY HAVE DONOR PERSONAS?

As a fundraiser, time is one of your most valuable assets, and often the scarcest. To ensure you spend your time on the opportunities that are most likely to lead to funding, you must focus your attention carefully.

Most organisations actually have quite a small pool of donors that fit their cause, geography, ethics and other criteria. If you don't know how to spot those donors and aim carefully, you could end up wasting time trying to cultivate too many people, or the 'wrong' people, and you might develop fundraising ideas and approaches that won't work for the donors in your network. Personas allow you to lessen these risks.

OBJECTIVE

To build the profiles of your organisation's donor types. We recommend doing this as a workshop with your colleagues, but it can be done solo, too – the key is to allow time for creative thinking, brainstorming and prioritisation. If you are doing the exercise alone, you might want to share your completed personas with some colleagues for feedback and refinement afterwards – more brains are always better than one!

YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- Post-It Notes, or scraps of paper
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Take some time to reflect on and discuss the qualities of a 'dream donor' from the previous exercise. If you haven't already done that exercise, we recommend you start there to brainstorm together.

STEP 2

Invite everyone to write down all the types of donors your organisation has, one per Post-It. For example, you might have: Big Foundations, Government Aid, UN Agencies, Local Businesses, Wealthy Individuals. You could also break them down even more, if it makes sense for you, with examples such as: Health Foundations, Feminist Foundations, Religious Donors.

STEP 3

Place all Post-Its on the wall, or board, and sort them until you have no more than 10 categories. The fewer the better, but don't leave out any important donor types.

Keep a note of these categories for the 'Donor Prioritisation' exercise later.

STEP 4

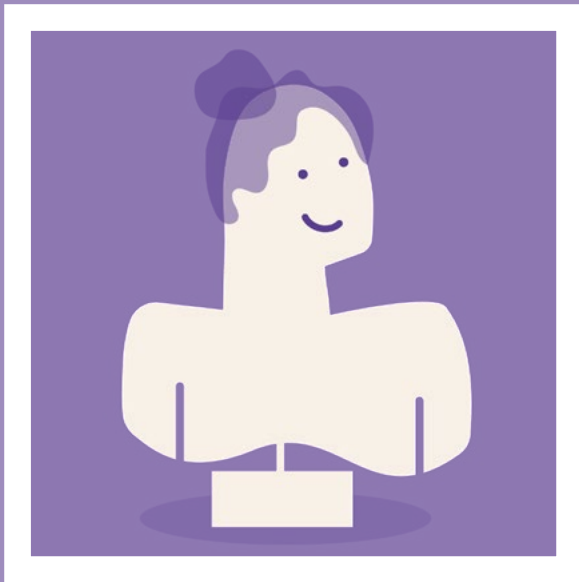
Next, split into pairs or small groups, each taking one of the categories, and one group taking the 'dream donor' category, too. If you don't have enough people to take just one each, you can take more, just make sure you have enough time to spend on developing them!

STEP 5

In your pairs or small groups, spend time building-out a profile for your donor type. Use your imagination! Think of a person you're creating (e.g. a grant officer in a Foundation), not the organisation itself (e.g. a Foundation), draw a simple picture of them, and discuss and write down things like:

1. Name
2. Age Range
3. Profession
4. Lifestyle (e.g. travel a lot, go to social events, stay home)
5. Hobbies
6. Family life (e.g. partnered, married, kids)
7. Their type of wealth (e.g. their employer's, their family's, self-made)
8. Their biggest concerns (e.g. spending wisely, achieving impact, meeting a goal, being known)
9. Feelings about your cause (e.g. sadness, pity, empathy, pride, hope)
10. Values about your cause (e.g. fairness, justice)
11. Giving history and approach (e.g. other organisations they give to, other causes, how much)
12. Cultivation preferences (e.g. coffees, events, reports & data)
13. How they find your organisation (e.g. from a friend, through an event)
14. What would concern them about your organisation
15. What they would love about your organisation
16. Sources of information, including their preferred news source
17. Assets other than money (e.g. fame, networks, property)

Below is an example of a 'donor persona' for a Next Gen donor.



YOUNG LATE 20'S

GENDER STUDIES
OXBRIDGE ED

INHERITED WEALTH

VIEWS

- Intersectional, progressive, believes in the need for system change
- Risk taker and pragmatic

PERSONAL INTERESTS & SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Supports diverse cause areas
- Builds knowledge through podcasts, peers, grassroots organisations, events, academics, and conferences
- Constantly seeks educational and personal development experiences
- Well connected, and networks regularly by attending as many events as possible

PHILANTHROPIC APPROACH

- Fully dedicated to giving, prefers a hands-on approach
- Interested in new models of giving, prefers unrestricted grants and a collaborative partnership approach
- Inspired by audacious goals, but wants to see evidence of impact
- Trusts expert partners for guidance
- Likes to be acknowledged, consulted and referenced as a valued partner

STEP 6

Once your profiles are ready, present them to the rest of the group. Or, if you've been doing the exercise alone, share them with colleagues for their thoughts.

After each presentation, discuss whether any personas feel particularly wrong, or particularly right, when it comes to your current and future fundraising. Which of these fictional people do you feel like you already know? Which do you wish you could connect with? And which do you feel like you don't know?

STEP 7

Once every persona has been presented, work together to shorten your total list of personas down to five. You can do this by combining some (for example, grants officers in big Foundations, and programme officers in UN Agencies are sometimes similar), or deciding which types you do or don't want to spend your time on in the near future. Make sure one of the final five is your Dream Donor!

It is also helpful to prioritise the list based on ensuring a range of qualities that most impact your fundraising approach. For example:

WANTS PROPOSALS

- Jane, Grants Officer, Big Foundation
- George, Programme Officer, UN Agency

WANTS MEETINGS

- Anna, Board Member, Family foundation
- Yousef, Local Business Owner

WANTS EVENTS

- Fatima, Local Philanthropist, Self-Made

STEP 8

Draft final profiles for each of your five donor personas. Make them detailed and visually engaging, good enough to put on your wall, and share with new team members internally. These are your finished Donor Personas!

WHAT NEXT?

Donor persona profiles should be used to support you to:

- Segment your donor pipeline into categories, so you can know at a glance which donor types dominate your existing database, which ones you have most success with, and which ones you need to focus on further.
- Understand potential donors, thinking ‘is this person more of an Anna, or a George?’ when planning how to approach them, and meet their needs.
- Prioritise and streamline your fundraising work by developing and testing new approaches and ideas for engaging your donors against a limited number of types (so you don’t try to please everyone!)
- Ensure new programme developments are effectively translated with a specific set of target donors in mind – e.g. why develop a 20 page technical report if none of your main donor audiences want that?

Some organisations even have a physical representation of their donor personas in meetings with them, such as a photo or a toy, so they can remind themselves to ask ‘what would Anna say?’ or ‘what would Yousef want?’ Others invite specific team members to represent each persona, for example someone might be asked to always ‘think like Anna’ when proofreading a donor communication.

We recommend you update them once every 1-2 years.



DONOR PRIORITISATION

This is a simple exercise to help you prioritise your pipeline and portfolio. As mentioned in the Donor Personas' exercise, every fundraiser has limited time, and should aim to focus it on the donors who are most likely to give funding, and be good partners for the work. This tool, when used, can help to make prioritisation simple and clear.

OBJECTIVE

To create a prioritised list of donor types, for internal use, to articulate which donors you will focus your time on, and which are not a good return on investment for your organisation right now.

YOU WILL NEED

- The results of your 'Dream Donor' and 'Donor Personas' activities
- A computer with a programme that allows you to make data tables, such as Excel

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

This activity is more of a desk-based piece of work, although you can do it as a group if you prefer.

STEP 1

Begin with the Donor Prioritisation Tool below, or recreate it in a simple spreadsheet. Add your current list of donor types, plus your dream donor type if they're not already on there.

STEP 2

Along the top of the table, add in your essential donor criteria created during your Dream Donor exercise.

The tool already has three essential criteria included, based on our experience:

- **EXISTING MARKET:** do donors of this kind, funding work like yours, already exist?
- **EXISTING CONNECTIONS:** does your organisation have existing relationships with, or a way to use your network to reach out to, donors of this kind?
- **EXISTING RESOURCES:** does your organisation have the resources or the potential (e.g. language, offering, capacity) to cultivate relationships with this donor type?

STEP 3

Assign each set of criteria a maximum number of points, based on how strategically essential it is.

For example:

- Something like 'able to give money in our country' would be essential, and should have a maximum of 10 points.
- Something like, 'able to make introductions' might just be nice to have, and so would have a maximum of 5 points.

STEP 4

Give each donor a score for each category, where the highest score means they perfectly meet that criteria, and the lowest score means they don't meet it at all.

STEP 5

Add up the points in each row, and sort the list from highest to lowest. The donors at the top of the list should be your highest priority.

WHAT NEXT?

We recommend focussing your fundraising strategy, and time, on the top 3-5 donor types on this list. This doesn't mean you should ignore other donors if they come to you, but it will enable you to focus your outreach and cultivation time on the most important ones, and arrange your activities around them.

Other uses for this list include:

- Deciding whether a new fundraising idea (e.g. an event, or programme) is worth spending time and money on, to reach your priority donor groups.
- Assessing new donor types against existing ones, to see whether they should be prioritised over them.
- Communicating with Board members and leadership on why certain opportunities are prioritised over others (and working with them to decide these).



DONOR PRIORITISATION TOOL

DONOR TYPE	DONOR SUB-TYPE	PERSONA(S)	EXISTING MARKET	EXISTING CONNECTIONS	EXISTING RESOURCES	CRITERIA 1	CRITERIA 2	CRITERIA 3	CRITERIA 4	CRITERIA 5	TOTAL POINTS
MAXIMUM POINTS			10	10	10	e.g. 10	e.g. 5	e.g. 5	e.g. 5	e.g. 5	
Foundation	Small Family Foundation	Jane, Grants Officer and Anna, Board Member	7	5	5	6	5	2	1	0	31 / 60



EXAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDE

It might sound unusual to interview your donors, but it can often be a great way to engage them with what you are doing, as well as test your assumptions about your Donor Personas and what they like.

HOW TO SET-UP AN INTERVIEW

If you have known your donors for a while, you can invite them to contribute to a process of 'improving your partnership practices', and if you're new to your organisation you could say you're reaching out to the organisation's most important supporters to learn more about their approaches to giving. Either way, donors often feel really valued and flattered by being interviewed, and feel a sense of ownership over the way you work together for the future. If you don't feel able to do the interviews yourself, you could bring in an external consultant or contractor to do them for you.

OBJECTIVE

To solicit frank and honest feedback on your fundraising practices, and ideas, as well as deepen your relationships with your donors.

EXAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDE

You should adapt these questions to suit your specific organisation, but we have found the following focus areas to yield the best results when interviewing donors. We do not recommend more than 20 questions for a 1-hour conversation.

SECTION 1: YOUR (ORGANISATION'S) PHILANTHROPY

- What is your experience of philanthropy? And our sector specifically?
- What causes do you support, with what (time, money, skills), and why?
- When donating to an organisation, do you restrict your giving? If so, how?
- Other than impact, what are the elements of a great non-profit relationship for you? What do you look for from your partnerships (emotionally, practically, socially)?
- From your perspective, are there new or unexpected changes or trends in funding for our sector?

SECTION 2: OUR ORGANISATION

- How would you describe your involvement with our work?
- In your own words, what does our organisation do?
- We describe ourselves as "[Insert mission statement]", what would you say the unique value of an organisation like ours might be?
- What organisations do you think are most similar to us?
- Which organisations would you point to as an example of best practice in our sector, and why?

SECTION 3: FUNDRAISING & MESSAGING

- What aspects of our work do you find most appealing and why?
- How have you found the experience of being a supporter of ours?
- Have you been happy with the level of contact, information and engagement?
- What are the common mistakes organisations like ours make when engaging with donors like you?
- Is there anything that would stop you supporting us in the future?
- From the below list of options, if you had to pick only one for a hypothetical grant, which would you pick and why?
 - Unrestricted Funding (e.g. to support the organisation's overall mission)
 - [List Priority Future Programmes]
- Of those, which is the least attractive option and why?
- Do you feel there are any gaps, or unnecessary focus areas, in our work?
- What do you see as our key strengths when it comes to fundraising?
- What do you see as the biggest barriers to fundraising for our organisation?
- What, in your experience, is important for organisations like ours to do to stand out in the sector?
- If you worked for our organisation, which donor (person or organisation) would be Priority Number One for you to speak with?



SPOTLIGHT: ASHOKA'S DONOR-CENTRED APPROACH

Ashoka is a global fellowship programme which supports the world's leading social entrepreneurs solving deep-rooted social problems. It learns from the patterns in their fellows' innovations, and mobilises a global community that embraces these new frameworks to build an 'everyone a changemaker world'.

Ashoka's unrestricted fundraising model relies partly on the 'Ashoka Support Network', consisting of 350-400 members who donate at least €10,000 each year for a minimum of 3 years. Ashoka Spain has had particular success in nurturing its members, with 90% of supporters usually renewing their commitment. Its engagement strategy includes different levels and channels of interaction, and is based on the feedback Ashoka gathers through a survey that is sent to donors when they first join. Based on this feedback, Ashoka Spain designed its major donor fundraising strategy to respond to its donors' needs and preferences:

- **360-DEGREE INVOLVEMENT:** as well as providing financial support, donors often become Ashoka ambassadors, mentors to Fellows, Board members and counsellors. They like to offer their time and network by sharing their contacts and speaking about Ashoka in the

media.

- **SETTING CLEAR ROLES:** Ashoka Spain makes supporters 'architects of its vision' by sharing impact goals and clearly explaining the individual's role in the Ashoka journey. This discourse, which was used to launch a new Ashoka branch in Barcelona, attracted 15 new members in just 6 months. They are co-creators, and this brings strength and recruitment opportunities.
- **'VIP' TREATMENT:** Ashoka Spain reserves special treatment for supporters who make large donations. This includes a personal visit by its leadership to thank them for their contribution.
- **MAKING PERSONAL CONNECTIONS:** its fundraising strategy heavily relies on the 'power of the individual'. Most supporters came on board through personal connections, and invest in Ashoka because they trust the specific team member who manages their relationship.





Donor Offering: Asset Inventory



BUILDING A CULTIVATION PLAN

Once you have identified your audiences and what motivates them to give, it's time for Cultivation. This is the relationship-building 'get-to-know-you' phase that encourages your donors to make a gift. Ultimately, it's getting a donor to the point where they say: "What you do is amazing! How can I help?" A cultivation plan should be:

- **WELL PLANNED:** the more clarity your organisation has around how to best engage each donor, the more effective you can be making an initial or bigger ask.
- **BESPOKE:** identify which Cultivation steps best resonate with each donor and align your actions based on your growing knowledge of them.
- **STRATEGIC:** each action you take should support you to get to the point where your organisation is receiving its first gift, or increasing a gift. A plan gives you the framework to stay focused on that goal.
- **REALISTIC:** the Cultivation stage of relationship-based fundraising typically takes 12-18 months between the first interaction with a donor and their commitment of a major gift. Of course, there are exceptions to this rule (e.g. if you're introduced by a mutual contact), but it's important to make plans based on conservative time projections.
- **DOCUMENTED:** each touch point with a donor should be documented in a centralised database your whole team can access.

Your cultivation plan should be methodical if you want a high success rate. To create this, it's important you take inventory of the various ways you can engage donors throughout the upcoming year. By doing that, your organisation will have a clear understanding of what you can currently offer donors to build that connection to your cause and help secure a gift, and what new offerings should be developed to further support donors towards solicitation.

Getting to the point of solicitation with any donor will take careful cultivation and time. Shaping that cultivation – and efficiently securing that donation – requires clear 'products', or donor offerings, to 'sell', especially when it comes to prospects who are less likely to provide unrestricted support.



IDENTIFYING YOUR ASSETS

Before you explore potential donor ‘offerings’, you need to have a clear understanding of the internal resources available to you. Non-profits often ignore or simply take for granted the potential of their assets – those elements you already own or have access to, which can make your organisation attractive to funders, and should indeed be leveraged for fundraising purposes.

With a strategic mindset, you can develop an engaging cultivation plan for your donors by maximising the resources you already have. The three categories below are only some examples of the most common ‘cards’ that non-profits can play during their ‘fundraising game’: people, the environment and collateral. This is by no means an exhaustive list; it is simply meant to inspire you to reflect on the specific assets your organisation ‘owns’, and how they may be leveraged to engage your donors.

PEOPLE

The people that make up your team, leadership and stakeholder ecosystem are likely your greatest asset, as their reputation and expertise are key to building trust with donors.

INTERNAL



SENIOR LEADERSHIP

A charismatic leader and management team can motivate and inspire donors to give by building trust in your organisation's expertise. Ensure they build their public thought leadership profiles and attend important donor meetings.



TEAM

Your staff and volunteers, are the repository of your organisation's knowledge. With their expertise and experience, they are best placed to advocate for the work you do. Building their skills and enabling them to develop professionally will greatly benefit them and your organisation.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trustees are often well connected to companies, organisations, government institutions and donors. They should have a clear understanding of your organisation's fundraising strategy to leverage their connections, and make introductions to the right people.

EXTERNAL



END USERS

Depending on the nature of your work, your end users can communicate the impact of your work through their personal experience. If donors hear powerful stories of impact or have a personal connection to someone who benefited from your work, they are more likely to give.



ADVOCATES

Advocates or influencers who are not necessarily part of your organisation, can add a lot to of value. Well-known local, regional or national individuals who support your cause can often be involved at events, or can secure you platforms to promote your organisation.



EXISTING DONORS

If they are supported in the right way, your existing donor base can help you develop a stronger network of donors. Provide them with powerful and easy-to-share comms and materials about your organisation, and opportunities to invite their network to events.

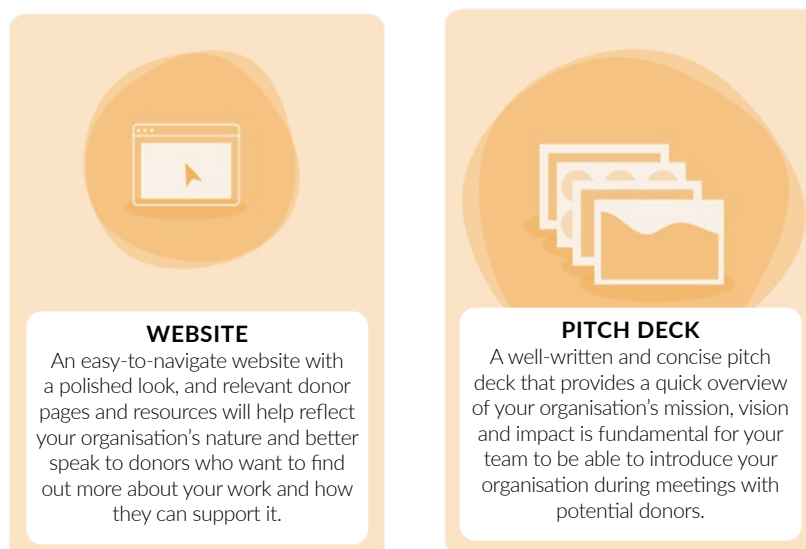
ENVIRONMENT

The ‘non-human’ elements surrounding your organisation can – and should – also be leveraged for fundraising purposes.



COLLATERAL

Well-written and visually pleasing communication materials are extremely important. Make sure yours are regularly updated and polished to reflect the current state of your organisation. The section about ‘Messaging’ will further explore the power of communications in the context of fundraising.





SPOTLIGHT: HOW TEWA LEVERAGES ITS ASSETS

Tewa is a women's fund based in Nepal. Through funding and capacity development, it supports women to organise, raise their voices collectively, and transform discriminatory policies, systems, norms and practices.

The organisation strongly believes in the optimal utilisation of local resources to strengthen trust with local communities. Its fundraising strategy relies on individual and institutional donors, and since 1997 it has been continuously raising funds from over 7,900 individual and 571 institutional Nepali donors.

As part of its strategy, Tewa has been leveraging its key assets for fundraising success. Examples include:

- **VOLUNTEERS:** Tewa trains its volunteers to support the organisation's fundraising efforts. Through their network, volunteers link Tewa's fundraising team with other like-minded institutions or individuals who may be interested in becoming donors, and fundraise directly.
- **VENUE:** Tewa's infrastructure and outdoor spaces are designed to support the sustainability of the organisation. The team often hosts fundraising events, such as music performances and raffles using its own spaces. Its Open Air Theatre, with capacity for 1,000 people, is also a source of income for the organisation, as it is rented out to other organisations.





ASSET MAPPING: CREATING YOUR 'CARDS DECK'

This exercise will help you identify the assets that are unique to your organisation and that can be leveraged for fundraising success.

OBJECTIVE

To identify your organisation's key assets.

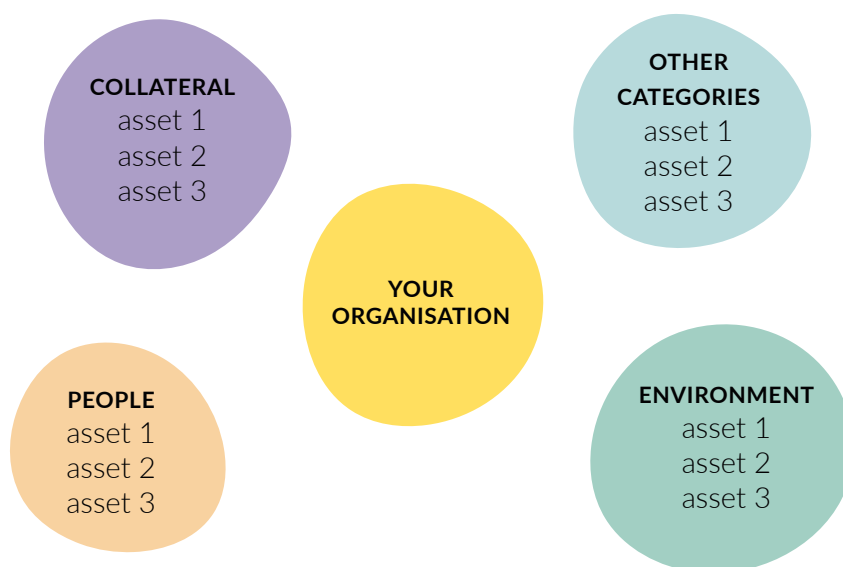
YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- Post-It Notes or scraps of paper
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Divide the space on your whiteboard or wall into areas, one per category. If you identify more categories than the three provided in the example above, then add more bubbles to your diagram:



STEP 2

Ask your team to think about your organisation's assets – i.e. anything you own, or have access to – that could be used to engage your donors. Use the cards provided in the previous briefing for initial inspiration, and don't be afraid to think outside the box. Be as specific as possible.

Give everyone 5-10 minutes to write down as many ideas as they can, one per Post-It.

STEP 3

In turn, ask each team member to pick their top 3 assets and share them with the rest of the team. If other team members have noted similar assets, ask them to share them as well, and create thematic clusters. Once everyone has shared their top 3 assets, continue the round until all of them have been shared and discussed collectively.

WHAT NEXT?

With your list of assets, you will be able to brainstorm ideas for your 'Donor Offering' exercise that follows.



Donor Offering: ‘Products’



DESIGNING YOUR ‘PRODUCTS’: A DONOR- CENTRED APPROACH

Now that you’ve identified your assets, it’s time to create a ‘product offering’ that fits into the strategic direction of your organisation and allows you to bring your cultivation plan to life.

Developing an offering requires a lot of preparation and careful thinking. The framework we suggest using for this process is called ‘human-centred design’, a creative approach developed by **IDEO** that encourages you to cultivate deep empathy with the people you’re designing for – in this case, your donors – by putting them at the centre of your process. Donor-centred design starts with your donors, and ends with new solutions that are tailor-made to suit their needs.



SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY-CENTRIC FUNDRAISING AND POWER-SHIFTING PHILANTHROPY

In recent years, criticisms of philanthropy and the donor-centred approach to fundraising (DCF) have emerged, as our sector reckons with the power dynamics inherent in traditional giving. Several thought leaders in the sector have formulated thought-provoking criticisms to philanthropy, uncovering its fundamental flaws. To name a few, in **Decolonizing Wealth**, award-winning philanthropy executive Edgar Villanueva explains how power dynamics in traditional philanthropy perpetuate colonialism, and what we can collectively do as a sector to change this. As well, in his recent book **Winners Take All**, Anand Giridharadas critiques the concept of plutocracy itself, and encourages wealth holders to integrate social impact with wealth accumulation.

In **this paper by Rogare**, a new theory of community-centric fundraising (CCF) is introduced, not as a radically alternative approach

to donor-centred fundraising, but rather as a movement to change philanthropy from within. CCF is defined as ‘a model that is grounded in equity and social justice, prioritises the entire community over individual organisations, fosters a sense of belonging and interdependence, presents work not as individual transactions but holistically, and encourages mutual support between non-profits’.

CCF is a movement to transform fundraising and philanthropy as a system, so they are both ethical and accountable. In practical terms, the main message for fundraisers is their approach to fundraising should always aim to protect the wellbeing of the communities they serve – and, where possible, fundraisers should be bold enough to question (and potentially say no to) donations that come from unethical sources.

With this in mind, you are now ready to develop a ‘product offering’ that suits the needs of your donors, in full respect of your community’s needs.

WHAT DO DONORS NEED, OR WANT?

Generally speaking, donors have needs and ambitions beyond the impact of the work they fund. Some of the donor aspirations listed below apply to different audiences in different ways, but should nonetheless be considered:

1**TO LEARN**

They know that they don't know everything, and want to fund as impactfully as possible, so any learning opportunities and information sharing is valuable.

2**DEEP PARTNERSHIPS**

Most funders who understand the complexity of supporting social impact know robust and strategic partnerships are vital.

3**MORE DONORS**

Current donors want to see more stakeholders join them on the journey to fund an organisation. Regular updates on your organisation's efforts to build your donor base are important in order to retain current support.

4**CLEAR OUTCOMES**

Even where they understand long-term complex projects, they still want to know what will happen in the next 12 months and be able to track progress. Momentum is key.

5**STORYTELLING**

Donors have a need to tell good stories about their funding – although to a different extent, every funder has stakeholders who want to feel the work is brought to life.

6**BE UNDERSTOOD**

They don't always want to tell partners exactly what to do, but want organisations to understand their ambitions and needs so that pitches are well aligned/easy to sell internally.

7**UNDERSTAND**

Even sophisticated donors are desperate for organisations to thoroughly, but simply, explain the problem – and the solution – with a clear M&E framework that will indicate success.

8**ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS**

Anything from trips, volunteering, seats on advisory boards, conference speaking spots or good examples of storytelling can help them engage their stakeholders.

9**BE VISIBLE**

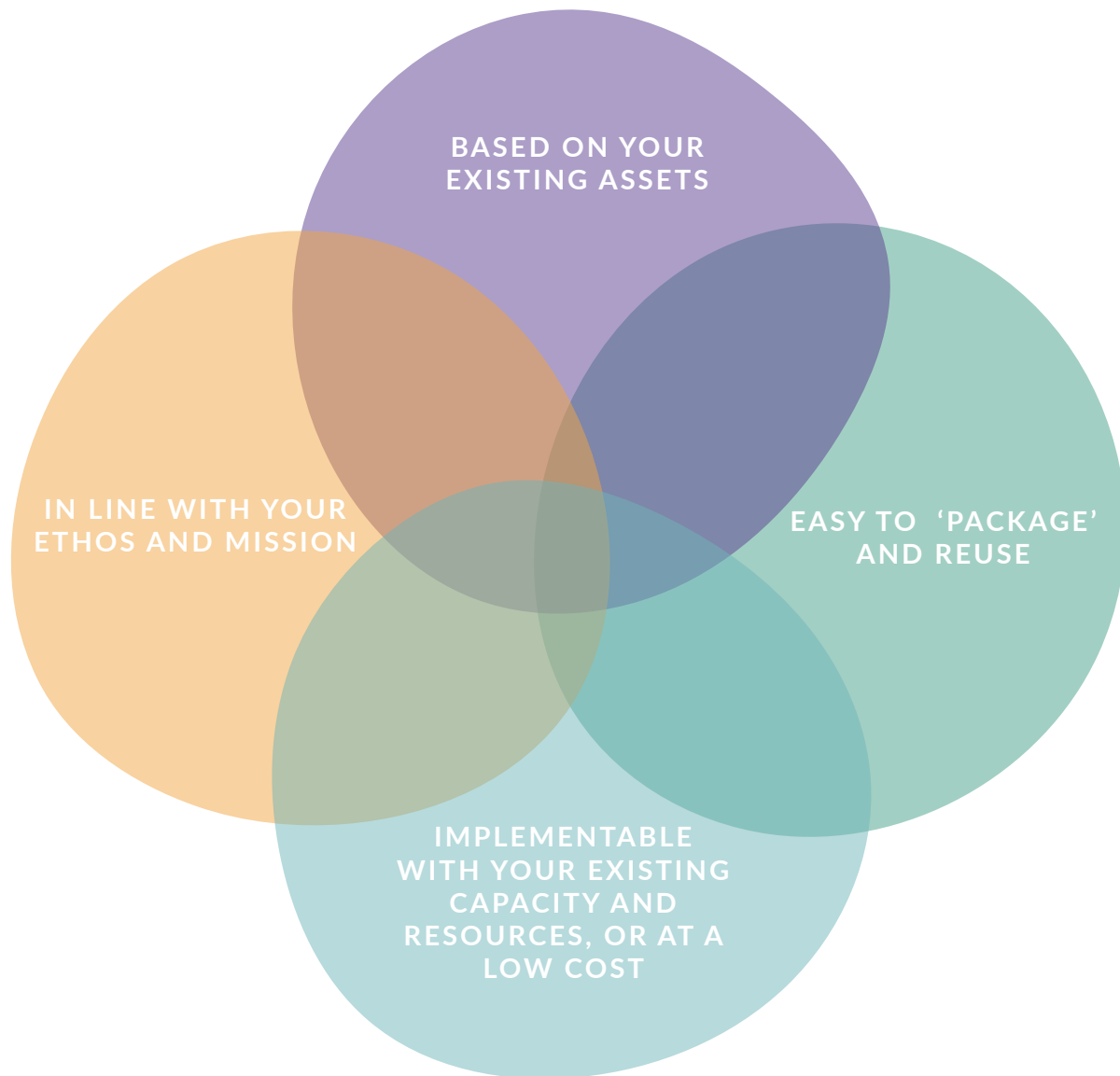
This isn't for everyone, but funders who care about their positioning are keen to partner with organisations with good brands who can showcase their support.

10**FEEL IMPORTANT**

Donors want to make a difference and see how they can be leveraged to achieve greater impact through pilots, innovation, matching and sharing ideas.

HOW DO I DETERMINE MY OFFERING?

Before you start developing your ideas, you need to set the key criteria that will guide your thinking process. This should be based on your organisation's current resources and opportunities, to leverage the work you already do and the assets you already have. We identified four main criteria you should be mindful of during your strategic thinking, but you may find your organisation should prioritise more, or other ones. Generally speaking, your product offering should be:



The following activities will help you assess your existing offering, and prototype your new products.



PRODUCT AUDIT

Before we go on to create new products, you need to assess your existing products or benefits that your organisation currently offers donors. This will allow you to accurately evaluate which parts of your work will resonate with specific donors, as well as identify any ‘gaps’ in your offering, or an inefficient use of your current resources.

If you don’t have an existing donor offering, you can skip this exercise and move straight to the next one.

OBJECTIVE

To assess your current product offering.

YOU WILL NEED

- A computer with a programme that allows you to make data tables, such as Excel

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Individually, or as a group, list all the current products (i.e. benefits) your organisation offers to donors.

STEP 2

For each product, write down all the assets that are leveraged and what type of donors they are designed for.

STEP 3

Facilitate a collective discussion to assess the strengths and weaknesses of your current products. Based on general consensus, decide which products should continue to be part of your offering, and which ones should cease to be offered.

CURRENT PRODUCTS / BENEFITS	ASSETS LEVERAGED	TARGET DONOR TYPE	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	KEEP OR REMOVE?
Product 1 (e.g. Field Visits)	e.g. Our premises, volunteers, service users	e.g. Foundations, HNWLs	e.g. They are very entertaining, donors understand our work	e.g. They require a lot of prep work, and take up a lot of staff capacity	Keep
Product 2					
Product 3					
Product 4					

WHAT NEXT?

If your product audit showed any ‘gaps’ or inefficiencies in your current offering, you should design new ones that will better respond to your donors’ needs, whilst making the most of your current resources.



NEW PRODUCT DESIGN: RAPID PROTOTYPING

Now it is time to create your new 'product offering'. What follows is a creative, rapid prototyping exercise to develop and test new ideas. This activity will use a human-centred design approach to test assumptions and help you understand what can be pitched, and to which donors (i.e. what your donors wants vs. what your organisation can offer, and what your donors have to offer vs. what your organisation needs).

DESIGN THINKING: THE (ACCELERATED) PROCESS

Human-centred design consists of three essential phases:

1. **INSPIRATION:** you conduct research and learn directly from the donor (the people you're designing for) by speaking to, or interacting with them to deeply understand their needs.
2. **IDEATION:** you make sense of what you've learned, identify opportunities for design and prototype possible solutions.
3. **IMPLEMENTATION:** you bring your solution to life. And you'll know your solution will be a success because you've kept the very people you're looking to serve at the heart of the process.

OBJECTIVE

To design the 'product offering' for your donor cultivation plan.

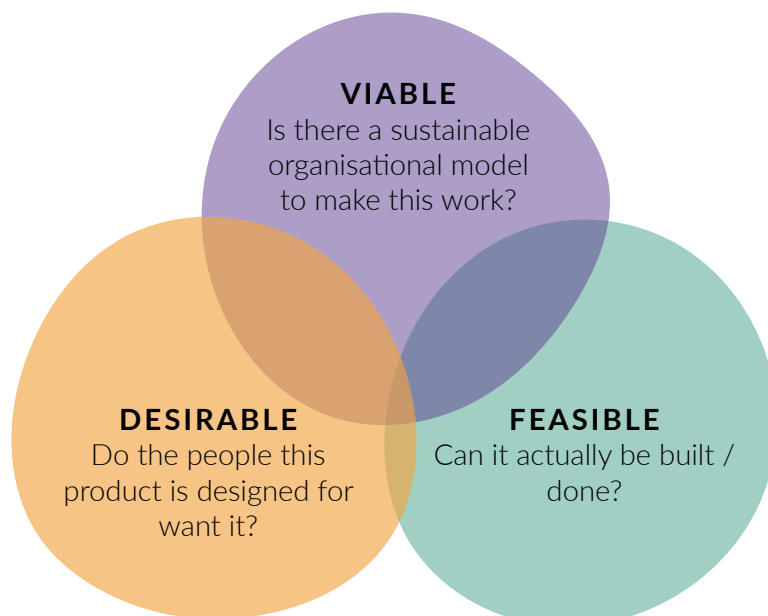
YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- Post-It Notes, or scraps of paper
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND BEFORE YOU START

A. THE 'YES TEST'

Here are three key questions you must be able to answer before you get started with the design process. To ensure adoption is smooth, you want your solution to allow you to answer 'yes' to all three questions, and therefore sit at the intersection of this Venn Diagram:



This is how you can find the answers to these questions:

- **VIABLE:** using the key criteria outlined in the briefing for inspiration, build your own criteria list. In doing this, make sure to take some time to consider your current resources and team capacity, as well as anything else that would be needed to get your new product / offering off the ground for donors. This can include paid staff, board involvement, volunteers, beneficiaries, capacity to deliver and current systems.
- **FEASIBLE:** think about your existing assets and what resources you have at your disposal (see the results of your 'Asset Mapping' exercise above).
- **DESIRABLE:** think about your audience, and what you already know about them. Speak to them and get to know their needs (if you haven't done this yet, see 'Understanding Your Donor').

B. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Dos and don'ts to remember when doing this exercise:

- **TRUST YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM:** this process can be uncomfortable, but it really does work. Trust it and get creative!
- **AMBIGUITY IS OK:** by the end of the process you will come to clarity, but you won't start there. Be okay with things being ambiguous at the start.
- **BE CONFIDENT AND OPTIMISTIC:** this will work. You and your team will design something amazing.
- **ACT LIKE A SCIENTIST:** use a scientific approach. You have a hypothesis, you test it and learn from it, and then you do it again.
- **NO BAD IDEAS:** the first phase is about widening, not narrowing. There is no such thing as a bad idea.
- **LEAVE YOUR BAGGAGE AT THE DOOR:** sometimes history can get you down, if you tried something once and it didn't work. There will be a place for that, but it is not now.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Invite everyone to review and discuss the needs of your target donor audiences. To do this, use all the findings and materials you generated in the 'Understanding Your Donor' section above. Write your key themes on Post-Its, and stick them on a wall so you can go back to them during the process.

STEP 2

Next, do a rapid brainstorm. Ask your team the following question: **'How might we provide exciting engagement opportunities for our donors?'**

Give everyone 5 minutes to fill as many Post-Its as they can with ideas of anything that your organisation could do to engage donors. One item per Post-It! Remember: at this stage, there are no bad ideas; be wild and crazy, stay focused on the topic, and think quantity over quality.

Here are some examples for inspiration:



STEP 3

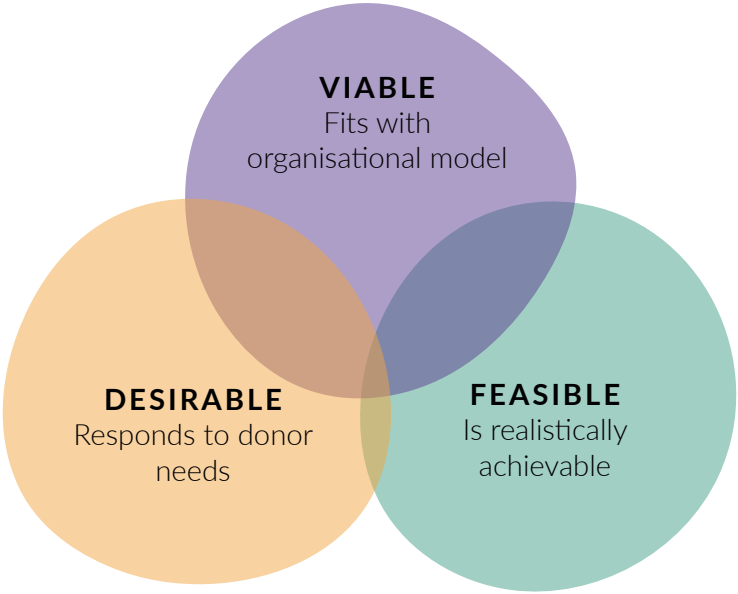
Next, have everyone pick their top 3 ideas, share them with the group out loud, and stick them on the wall. If anyone had similar ideas, they should add their Post-Its and create themed clusters.

STEP 4

Continue going around until everyone's ideas are shared, grouped and discussed, and you have a wall full of ideas for your future 'product offering'.

STEP 5

Work together to sort these ideas so they sit at the intersection of the ‘Yes Test’ circles. This framework will help you filter ideas and prioritise the best ones: the ideas that satisfy all three criteria will end up in the middle of this Venn Diagram (where the three circles meet). These will be the ones you will take on to the prototyping phase.



If you feel you have too many ideas, get the team to cast their vote and select their 3 favourites. You can go back to the other ones later.

STEP 6

Now it’s time to flesh out your ideas (prototyping). If you are in a large group, divide the team into smaller groups of 2-3 people, and allocate one idea to each group. If you’re a small team, develop one idea at a time. For each idea, ask yourselves the following questions:

PRODUCT	TARGET AUDIENCE	RESOURCES NEEDED	CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS	TEAM ALLOCATION	TIMEFRAME
What is the idea? How does it work?	What type(s) of donor(s) would be attracted to this type of product?	What are the costs involved? What is needed to make it happen?	What difficulties might we encounter during implementation?	How can we prevent / overcome them?	Who in the organisation needs to be involved? How should tasks be allocated?	When should this happen? How often should it happen?

STEP 7

Congratulations! You have completed the design and prototyping of your new product range. Now it is time for action. Make sure all viable ideas have been fully developed, and the work has been allocated internally. Consult all team members who will be involved in the creation of these products, and brief them on your next steps.

WHAT NEXT?

With the products you designed, you can now build your cultivation plan. A cultivation plan (see template below) is a detailed list of donor ‘touch points’ to be scheduled throughout the year to develop a strong relationship with your donors. This may involve sharing relevant content, inviting them to meet you or inviting them to attend one of your events. Make sure all your action points are included in your calendar.



TEMPLATE CULTIVATION CALENDAR

MONTH	OUTREACH <i>e.g. email, invite, update, newsletter</i>	TOUCH POINT <i>e.g. coffee, event, conference, call</i>	FOLLOW-UP <i>e.g. update on discussions, personal note</i>	STAFF NEED <i>e.g. CEO time, document drafting</i>
JANUARY				
FEBRUARY				
MARCH				
APRIL				
JUNE				
JULY				
AUGUST				
SEPTEMBER				
OCTOBER				
NOVEMBER				
DECEMBER				



Making an 'Ask'



INTRODUCTION

The art of directly asking for support can be intimidating, but here's the good news: if you're doing cultivation right, and building a strong relationship based on mutual values and strategic alignment, then solicitation becomes a natural extension of that conversation, and oftentimes donors might ask you first!

WHEN IS A GOOD TIME TO ASK?

As an industry standard, most relationship-based cultivation takes 12-18 months from the start of the relationship through to the commitment of a major gift, and it's important you don't rush this process.

Ideally, if cultivation is going well, you'll know the right moment to ask because your intuition will tell you (likely around the one-year mark). Your prospective donor will already have had several opportunities to engage with your organisation (e.g. attending your events, reading your research, etc.), and will also have had a couple of meaningful 1:1 conversations with your team about values and goals. Asking directly for support then becomes a natural extension of this conversation.

However, if you find that you need to ask your network for support sooner than you'd like to, then do so, but proceed gently. In this case, it's very important not to frame your ask as a 'financial emergency' (unless it's a campaign tied to a public emergency), but rather to frame the urgency of the ask from an impact perspective. And if your donor is unable to give at this time, don't push.

Finally, if you're not sure if now is the right time to make an ask – ask! Donors are just human beings and they feel awkward about these conversations, too. Try something like:

'We know you really care about achieving X with your philanthropy, which is very much aligned with our strategic focus over the next 12 months, and I can think of a few ways we might be able to collaborate. If you have the time, would now be an appropriate moment to explore what a partnership could look like? I would love to tell you more about our plans, hear about what you're up to and share some ideas.'

HOW DO I ASK?

Whenever it happens, the key to a good pitch is context. Donors should understand the wider context of your ask in five key areas, and we recommend using these as a framework to guide your conversation. Whoever is doing the 'ask' needs to be able to address all areas, so if you're unable to, then bring someone else along to support:

1. WHAT? (ACTIVITIES)

What are the activities you plan to direct your donor's support to, and over what time period will they take place? Even for general operating support, be as specific as possible.

2. SO WHAT? (IMPACT)

Now you need to talk about impact, and the difference your donor's support will make. It's not enough to say 'help us build this school' or 'help us preserve this species' – you have to take this one step further and not assume donors understand the inevitable impact. Spell this out for them clearly and compellingly. What will the school accomplish for the community? Why does preserving this species matter to local and global climate resilience? Elevate your ask into a wider theory of change framework, and appeal to your donor's humanity.

If you don't have a theory of change, you can create one using the template available in the Warm Up.

3. WHY US? (UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION)

By this point, your donor understands your anticipated activities and impact, but you have to take it one step further: why is your organisation the right partner to deliver this? What makes it different from your cause area peers? What other organisations' work can't happen without your organisation's success? In this competitive fundraising climate, it's not enough simply to state 'why our cause'. It has to also be 'why our organisation.'

If you missed it in the Warm Up section, the Unique Value Proposition exercise will help you articulate this.

4. WHY YOU? (STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT)

Now it's time to make your ask relevant to your donor. Reference whatever you know about their mission, strategic plan, values, priorities, passions and goals. Ensure your ask is personalised to their unique context and ambitions, so they are compelled to get involved.

5. HOW? (FINANCIALS)

To wrap up, it's time to talk about money. Be prepared to address all of these points clearly and succinctly:

- Your overall fundraising target.
- How much support you are seeking from your donor (if you really can't gauge their capacity to give, then just focus on the overall target).
- How much you have raised to date of that overall target, and from whom.
- How much time you have left to raise the remaining amount.
- What raising this extra amount will help you accomplish from an impact perspective (i.e. what won't happen if you don't raise it).
- What your future fundraising plans look like to ensure your work and impact are sustainable.

If you missed it, the Financials section in Part A will help you define your targets.

These are the questions donors will be asking themselves, so proactively addressing these points will demonstrate your expertise and professionalism, and help to build trust during this crucial 'ask' moment.

HOW SHOULD I REACT TO A REJECTION?

Rejections are normal, and as a fundraiser you should get used to them. But what really makes the difference is how you react them. A 'no' from a donor doesn't always mean 'never' – instead it may mean 'not that much', 'not now', or 'not this project'. It's your responsibility to figure that out and here is a checklist for successful rejection management:

- If appropriate, ask directly for feedback.
- Be open to a conversation, and don't be defensive / offended.
- Invite them to visit your offices / workplace / programmes to remove any reservations they may have on your programmes or team.
- If you still think there is a chance for future gifts, keep this donor in your database and continue to cultivate them.



PITCH PERFECT

Pitching takes practice. This is a quick exercise you can do to strengthen your skills. While most of it can be done solo, it's important to practice in front of a group at some point.

OBJECTIVE

To finetune your pitch and articulate the specific qualities of your organisation for donors to understand the wider context of your 'ask'.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Visualise your donor. Before jumping into pitch practice, it's extremely important to articulate who you're actually pitching to. A perfect pitch is personalised. It can't feel generic, because then the possibility for genuine strategic alignment is lost. So, take a moment to recall the descriptions you created in the 'Donor Persona' section, and make sure you are able to answer the following questions:

1. *What is their name? Age? Cultural background? Current location?*
2. *How have they come into their philanthropic wealth? Are they inheritors or self-made? Do they work as a staff member in a philanthropic institution (like a Foundation or Government body)?*
3. *What social impact causes matter most to them or their place of work?*
4. *Are they experienced givers, or new to philanthropy?*
5. *What key challenges might they be facing in their philanthropy?*
6. *What is their motivation for a philanthropic partnership?*
7. *Have they had previous partnerships? What did they look like?*
8. *What kind of support do you want from them? Just money, or something else?*
9. *What questions or concerns might they have?*
10. *Why are they the right partner for you?*

STEP 2

Craft and present your pitch. Once you have a clear understanding of who you're pitching to, try crafting a pitch to them using the following questions as the framework. Try this once for a written pitch, and then once for a verbal pitch. Share with your colleagues for feedback.

WHAT: what activities are you seeking support for? When will they take place?

SO WHAT: what impact will these activities have?

WHY YOU: how is this proposed partnership aligned with your donor's goals? What is it about your donor's passion and goals that makes you think this is a good fit?

WHY US: why is your organisation the right one to deliver this? What role does it play in the cause area ecosystem, and what other organisations' work can't happen without your organisation's success?

HOW: how much are you asking them for? And beyond this ask, how are you planning to resource your work? What is your total fundraising target; how much have you raised to date and from who; what do your future fundraising plans look like so you ensure your work and impact are sustainable?

WHAT NEXT?

Practice, practice, practice! Make sure you practice your pitch as much as possible before you meet donors. If someone in your organisation is particularly good at pitching, ask to shadow them the next time they make an ask. Learning by doing is always the best way.

Up Next...

This is the end of Section I – and now that you’ve defined the key elements of your Fundraising Strategy, you can start bringing it to life! To prepare yourself for the Implementation Phase, in the next section you will learn about the role of your organisation’s Board and Team members, and how to leverage their skills for fundraising.

SECTION II

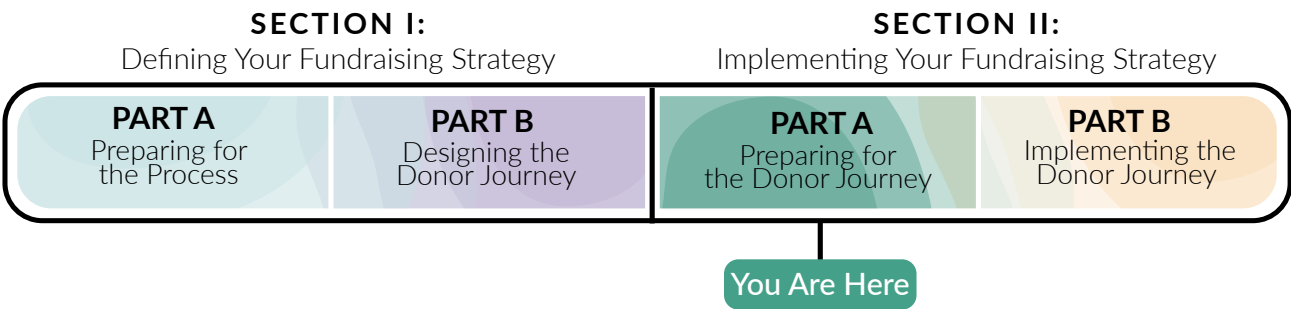
IMPLEMENTING *YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY*

PART A PREPARING FOR THE DONOR JOURNEY

PART B IMPLEMENTING THE DONOR JOURNEY



SECTION II PART A
PREPARING FOR IMPLEMENTATION



Relationship-based fundraising centres on the reality that ‘people give to people.’ Whether a donor is an organisation with lots of staff, or simply a wealthy individual, the decision to give or not give will be made by a human being. Therefore, to build great relationships with your donors, you must have a strong team of people ready to build meaningful rapport and connections.

This section will help you assess and maximise the role of your organisation’s Board and Team in the context of major gift fundraising.

INTERNAL RESOURCES:



THE BOARD



THE TEAM



The Board



INTRODUCTION TO BOARDS

Your Board of Trustees is a key organisational asset that you can – and should – leverage for fundraising success. In most cases, they are the most senior people in your organisation, who can make or break your fundraising plans, set budgets that impact your targets, approve investments that can help take your products to the next level, and provide introductions, influence, guidance and donations. For any role, it is good practice to maintain a strong relationship with the board, but for fundraising it is especially vital.

HOW CAN MY BOARD HELP ME FUNDRAISE?

Board members can sometimes feel hesitant to support with fundraising, especially if they aren't comfortable asking for money directly. It's important to help them understand the myriad of ways they can support above and beyond this. For example:

- **PERSONAL NETWORKS:** support them to map out their connections to identify new prospects, or to introduce you to already-identified prospects. If you want them to actively identify potential prospects, you can share the 'Donor Personas' you created in the section called 'Understanding Your Donors' to add clarity.
- **OPINION AND INSIGHTS:** ask for their opinion on your approach to get more buy-in and trust. Trustees see your organisation from a very different perspective, and may have unique insights into the world of donors.
- **EVENT HOSTING:** ask them to co-host events, be part of a discussion panel, network with specific attendees, and invite their contacts to events.
- **ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES:** explore any other resources and opportunities that Trustees may have access to (e.g. possibility to host an event at their home or workplace, inviting you to networking events they are attending, securing in-kind donations from corporates, etc.)
- **MAKING DONORS FEEL SPECIAL:** they can help you in stewardship and cultivation from a 'senior stakeholder' perspective, it will make your donors feel valued.

HOW SHOULD I WORK WITH MY BOARD?

To collaborate successfully with your Board, you have to carefully manage their involvement. Here are a few tips:

- **GET THEIR BUY-IN:** before they can support you with fundraising implementation, your Board has to buy-into your wider fundraising strategy. Ensure they are consulted in the strategy design process, educated on the reality of what's achievable (and by when), and happy with the finalised plan.
- **BRIEF THEM THOROUGHLY:** Board members will likely have a high-level understanding of your organisation's work and focus, but if you want their support on fundraising, they may require a more in-depth briefing of your goals, targets, weaknesses and strengths, as well as your general direction of travel. Make sure they understand the whole picture, and why their support is critical for success.
- **GIVE THEM CLEAR ACTIONS AND DEADLINES:** Board members are usually busy people, so asking them to 'help with fundraising' or 'make introductions to donors they know' might not be the most efficient way to engage them. Donors need clear, tangible requests that prompt them to think specifically. Requests like 'help us think through speakers for this fundraising event' or 'review this list of prospective donors and make introductions to anyone you know' will be much more successful.
- **EQUIP THEM WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS:** ensure your donors have the right communications assets and tools to advocate for your organisation in their circles of influence. At a bare minimum, they should know your organisation's pitch and have access to a high-level pitch deck they can use and share quickly.
- **PRIORITISE WHAT YOU ASK FROM THEM:** Board members are busy people so make sure you're asking them to support with the most critical elements and not overwhelming them with too many competing tasks.



PERSONAL SKILLS AUDIT

If you are planning to engage your Board of Trustees in fundraising activities, you first need to understand the following:

- **SKILLS:** what they do (and don't) know about fundraising
- **COMFORT:** what they feel most comfortable doing with regards to fundraising

OBJECTIVE

To assess your Board's readiness and confidence to support your organisation's fundraising efforts.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

List out all the tasks and skills you and your team can think of that are essential for the successful cultivation of your priority donor audiences. Examples are included in the following templates:

TEMPLATE 1: FUNDRAISING QUESTIONNAIRE

STATEMENT	TRUE	SORT OF TRUE	SORT OF FALSE	FALSE	NOT SURE
I enjoy (or think I would enjoy) the process of fundraising.					
I feel comfortable explaining exactly what our organisation does, and how and what we need support with.					
I have an in-depth understanding of our organisation's fundraising strategy.					
I understand the day-to-day process of major gift, relationship-based fundraising.					
I feel very clear about my specific role, and what is expected of me, with regards to our organisation's major gift fundraising strategy.					
I understand the stages of fundraising (identification, motivation, cultivation, solicitation, acknowledgement, stewardship) and how I can be helpful in each one.					
I would like to improve my fundraising skills.					
I am happy to attend meetings with donors, and am making a direct 'ask' myself.					
I am happy to attend meetings with donors, but I prefer not to make a direct 'ask' myself.					
I have a strong personal network of people that are viable donor prospects for our organisation – and I am comfortable making these introductions.					
I need to thoroughly understand the donor journey (i.e. how my contacts would be engaged) in order to feel comfortable making introductions.					
I fully understand regulation and risks around fundraising (e.g. information management, GDPR).					

TEMPLATE 2: SKILLS QUESTIONNAIRE

For the following activities, ask your Trustees how confident they would feel doing them. This will give you a sense of how comfortable they would be performing specific fundraising tasks, and where they could add the most value. If appropriate, add or remove tasks and skills to reflect your organisation's needs.

TASK / SKILL	VERY CONFIDENT	QUITE CONFIDENT	NOT SO CONFIDENT	NOT CONFIDENT AT ALL	NOT SURE
Identifying new donor prospects (e.g. through network mapping)					
Making introductions					
I have an in-depth understanding of our organisation's fundraising strategy.					
Networking at events					
Having 1:1 meetings/coffees					
Building meaningful relationships with potential donors					
Directly asking for money					
Speaking in detail about the organisation's programmes, activities					
Speaking in detail about the organisation's fundraising ambitions					
Speaking in detail about the organisation's impact					
Speaking about why I'm passionate about the cause					
Being a speaker at an event					
Hosting an event at my home					

STEP 2

If you are comfortable doing so, share the self-assessment quizzes with your Board members. If you think this is not appropriate, you can always collect the answers to those questions through an informal conversation, or during Board meetings.

STEP 3

With the knowledge you have gathered, you will now be able to organise the answers and get a clearer picture of:

- Who on your Board feels most comfortable doing what, and their willingness to support.
- What training opportunities you could provide to support your Board's fundraising efforts.

WHAT NEXT?

You can now include your Board members in your fundraising activities by allocating tasks to each person, based on their individual preferences and skills. If they indicated a lack of knowledge to perform specific activities, you can also invite them to read relevant sections of this Guide, do some of the proposed activities together, or organise internal training sessions to share your fundraising knowledge with them.



The Team



INTRODUCTION

The management of fundraising teams, and the development and support of staff, differ greatly between organisations and countries. Some common themes and challenges in the less successful contexts point to high workloads, tight budgets, too little training, high staff turnover, and disproportionate expectations and targets. But how to address these?

The following pages include several exercises, tools and resources for you to use as a manager of fundraisers, or with your colleagues if you're a junior fundraiser, to create a strong, resilient and collaborative working environment set-up for fundraising success.



PERSONAL SKILLS AUDIT

The key to a strong fundraising team is to ensure all the right skills are represented within it. This doesn't mean every person must have every skill, but everyone should be supported to make use of their existing skills, and build them where they don't already exist.

OBJECTIVE

To define the most important skills your team members have and identify where support is needed.

YOU WILL NEED

- A computer with a programme that allows you to make data tables, such as Excel

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

List out all of the skills you and your team can think of that are essential for your priority donor audiences, and fundraising within your organisation. These can differ greatly, but you should focus broadly on what your donors, co-workers, leaders and end-users need. For example:

Identifying
new donor
prospects

Doing
research on
prospective
donors

Networking at
events

Having 1:1
meetings/
coffees

Directly
asking people
for money

Public
speaking at
events

Managing
the day-to-
day of donor
relationships

Managing
the
administration
of fundraising
activities

Sensitively
working with
end-users to
tell their
stories

Influencing
the Board
to support
fundraising
activities

Working with
budgets and
data

Building
meaningful
relationships
with donors

Supporting
co-workers to
stay motivated

Writing
high quality
proposals and
reports

Speaking
about the
organisation's
impact

Speaking
about the
organisation's
fundraising
ambitions

Speaking
about the
organisation's
programmes,
activities and
strategy

Ensuring
fundraising
is compliant
with relevant
regulation

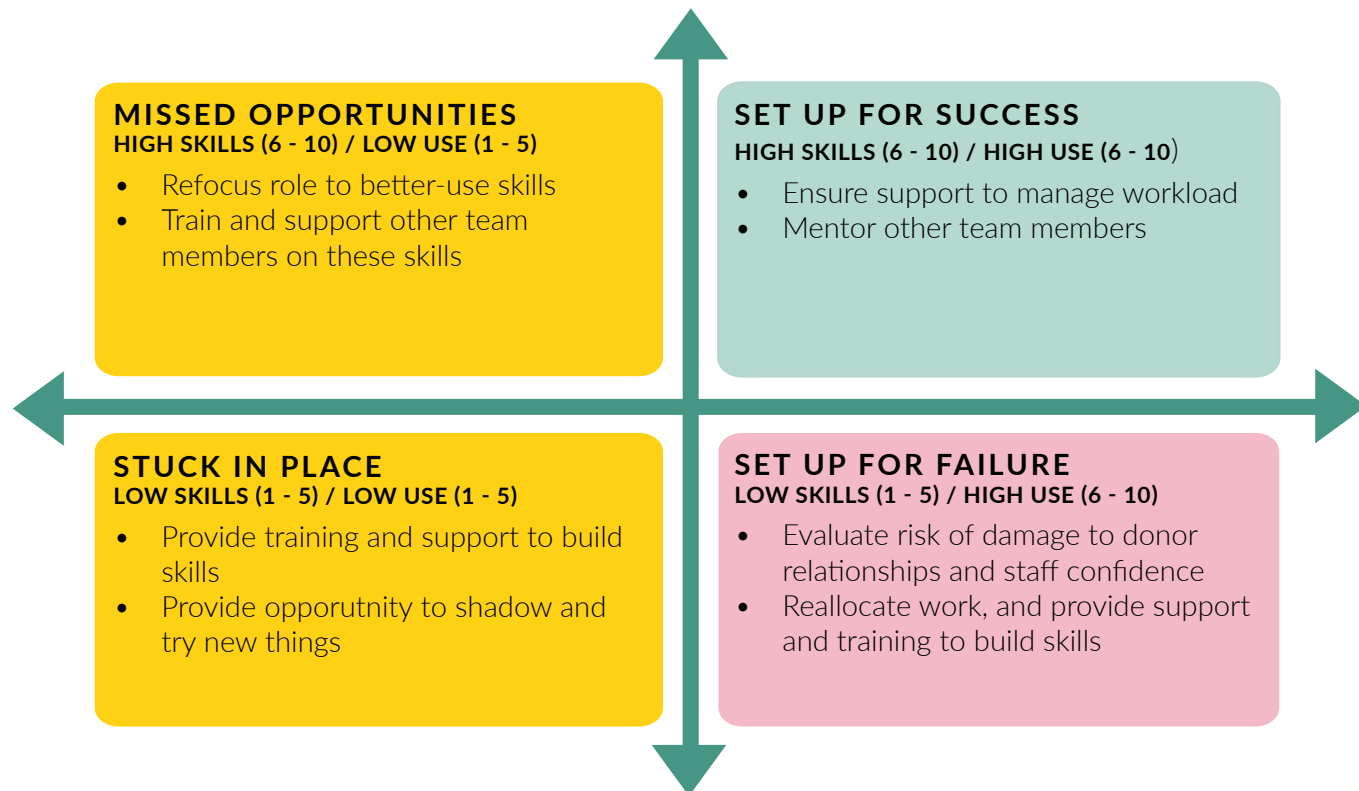
STEP 2

Once you have a final list, create a table with each of the skills listed, and two columns for 'Skill Level' and 'Use Level', and ask each team member to complete it from their own perspective, with a score from 1 – 10:

SKILL	SKILL LEVEL	USE LEVEL
	1 (Novice) to 10 (Expert)	1 (Never Use) to 10 (Always Use)
Writing high quality proposals	8	10
Speaking at events	2	1
Etc.	-	-

STEP 3

In pairs with colleagues, or with a line manager, discuss the skill ratings together, and use this matrix to map and identify areas where action is needed to better use, build or share skills:



STEP 4

As a manager (or, if appropriate, as a carefully facilitated group discussion), compare skill lists across the team, and identify skill areas where:

- **TRAINING IS NEEDED:** if there are no 'high skill' ratings against a particular skill.
- **EXPERIENCE IS NEEDED:** if there are no 'high use' ratings against a particular skill, even where there are 'high skill' ratings.
- **SUPPORT IS NEEDED:** if there are a lot of 'high use' ratings against skills with 'low skill' ratings.

STEP 5

Agree as a team where training, experience and support can be given through activities like workshops, shadowing, mentoring and external courses. Invite everyone to set measurable personal objectives to build-up a low skill score, and support a co-worker to build up one of theirs, too.

WHAT NEXT?

We encourage organisations to do this activity at least once per year, perhaps during an Away Day or team-building session. Not only can it open up useful conversations, and invite commitments to create meaningful changes, but it can allow everyone to track their progress in vital skill areas over time!



PREVENTING BURNOUT

Fundraising can be a reasonably stressful profession. Being rejected by donors, having ambitious targets and worrying about the consequences of not securing income can all lead staff to feel pressure and stress. In a supportive environment, this is not usually a problem, but too much stress for too long causes burnout. Burnout can lead to staff leaving, underperforming and becoming ill, and should be avoided as much as possible.

WHAT IS BURNOUT?

Burnout is emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when you feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained and unable to meet constant demands. There are a number of common signs of burnout:

- Constant tiredness
- Depression and sadness
- Not wanting to go to work
- Finding tasks more challenging than usual
- Feeling angry or resentful about your job or colleagues
- Headaches, stomach aches and digestive discomfort
- Getting more emotional than usual
- Lowered immune system, and more frequent illness
- Memory problems
- Sleep problems
- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Impatience

HOW DO I AVOID BURNOUT?

The number one way to avoid burnout is to ensure you have enough staff to deliver the work you want done. However, operating in a budget-conscious environment might mean that is not always possible. The ideal goal should be high job satisfaction, commitment, energy and creativity from your teams, and you can cultivate this with:

- **CELEBRATING WINS:** encourage your team to take time to pause and celebrate when gifts come in, targets are met, and projects get funded. This will help with morale, and enable everyone to feel more resilient to the next 'no' they hear.
- **DEFINING AN 'END POINT':** fundraising can sometimes feel like it is never done, because there is always more money to raise. Defining regular 'end points' to specific fundraising projects, or organising your work into 'sprints' can help fundraisers feel a sense of progress.
- **BUILDING CAPACITY:** ensure training and development opportunities are given to everyone, including shadowing in other teams, away-days and paid-for training sessions.
- **TAKING BREAKS:** this one sounds obvious, but too often the workplace culture for fundraising can be skipping lunch, working late and not resting. Don't let this happen. Encourage your team to take breaks, and see out-of-hours working as a sign of a problem that needs addressing.
- **HAVING STRONG, SUPPORTIVE MANAGEMENT:** a good manager should be able to ensure your team members have reasonable workloads, help them to reprioritise and rethink their approaches, and support when they need it.
- **CONNECTING WITH IMPACT:** many fundraisers are motivated by the cause they work for, but are not often exposed to the ultimate impact. Just like you should try to provide your donors with opportunities to connect with the impact of what you do, ensure your fundraisers can see and feel proud of what they are helping make possible.



FUNDRAISING KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Many organisations and fundraising teams use just one indicator of performance: money raised. Whether a team or individual has been successful during the year is often viewed as a simple 'yes or no' question, based on whether they met their targets. However, we know that fundraising success is much more complex than this, and needs to be measured in more nuanced ways. For example:

- **PROGRESS:** a newly established fundraising team might not cover their own costs right away, but could be making great progress in building a loyal donor base.
- **MARKET-ADJUSTED TARGETS:** targets that are set based on organisational need (i.e. how much we want), rather than market viability (i.e. how much is out there), can lead to a perception of failure when a fundraising team is actually performing at a high level based on what is possible.
- **NON-FINANCIAL TARGETS:** financial targets being met, or exceeded, might not always mean your team is doing well, as these numbers don't show things like burnout, high turnover or gaps in your pipeline.
- **RELATIONSHIPS BUILT:** a donor might not have given funding within the year, but the relationship that has been built with them over time could lead to a bigger donation later on, and that work should be measured and celebrated, too.

OBJECTIVE

To establish your organisation's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

YOU WILL NEED

- A computer with a programme that allows you to make data tables, such as Excel

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Ask each of your colleagues, in different teams or areas, including finance, communications, programmes, leadership and the Board, one simple question: **'Other than money raised, what does successful fundraising look like from your position in the organisation?'**

You might get answers such as 'clearer forecasts of projected income', or 'more consistent messages about our work' or 'key questions to answer in programme reports'. Note them all down.

STEP 2

As a group or on your own, think from your donors' perspective, especially considering your Donor Personas if you have created them, and answer the question: **'What does a successful relationship with the fundraising team look like?'**

You might suggest things like 'hearing updates from projects', 'having time to get to know each other', 'knowing the difference my money can make', and 'feeling special'. Note all of these down.

STEP 3

Summarise all these 'successes' into one list, and add any others you think are missing from the perspective of a fundraiser. Some examples might be 'adding names to the pipeline', 'securing meetings with donors', 'feeling motivated'.

STEP 4

Create a KPI table for each success measure (you might want to group or simplify some of them into categories), such as the following example:

AREA	OUTCOME	INDICATORS	TARGET	DATA SOURCE	WHEN TO MEASURE	BENCHMARK
Donors	Donors feel special	Time spent with donors Donor satisfaction feedback	One meeting or call per quarter 80% of donors say they're satisfied	Database Donor survey or meetings	Annually	Year 1: one meeting per year Year 1: no donors were asked
Finance	Budgets are set with realistic projections	Fundraising team involvement in budget process Level of confidence in meeting budget requirements	Fundraising involved at every stage High level of confidence High level of understanding	Experiences of staff Self-reported confidence level of staff Skills Audit Examples of engagement with budget in creation of donor materials	Annually	None

STEP 5

Prioritise the list by the most important ones, agreed between you and your team. Aiming for a Top 10.

WHAT NEXT?

Now you have your list of Key Performance Indicators. Use these to report on your progress in fundraising, and paint a fuller picture of how things are going. This can be used in discussions with your Board members, or your other funders, to show how you are doing beyond the single annual target figure. It can also be used to track areas where you are falling short of what's needed to be successful for the future (even if you are meeting your financial targets!), and support you to focus on improving those.



PORTFOLIO SIZE & WORKLOAD

One of the most important ways of ensuring your fundraising team is able to do a good job, and preventing them from burning out, is to keep their portfolio to a manageable level. A ‘portfolio’ refers to the number, stage and type of donor relationships a person is responsible for. There is no ‘magic number’ of donors a fundraiser should have in their portfolio – the answer is different for every organisation, and depends on the level of engagement you are providing, and the level of income you need to justify each paid staff member. The following exercise will support you in identifying what can be reasonably expected in your specific context, and help you put together a plan.

OBJECTIVE

To determine the right portfolio size and workload for each team member in charge of fundraising.

YOU WILL NEED

- A computer with a programme that allows you to make data tables, such as Excel

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

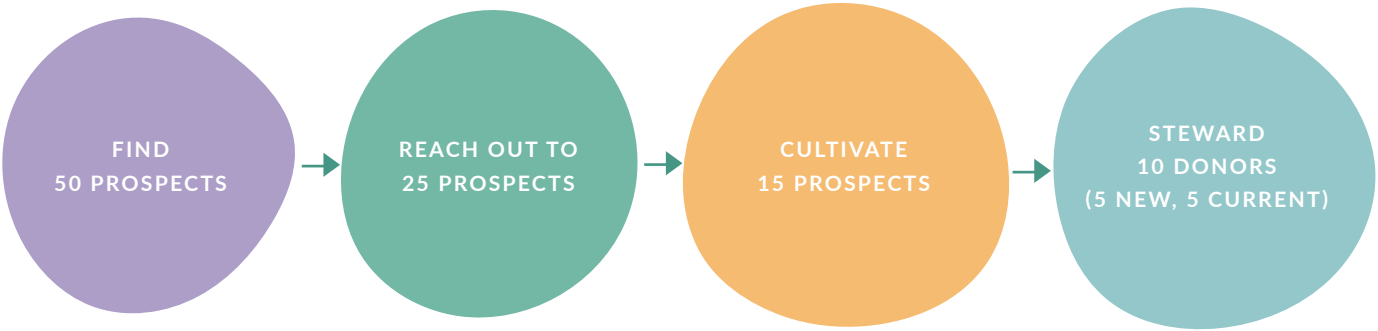
Estimate, as a team, the amount of time (in working hours) it takes to effectively complete each of the following steps for 10 donors for one year at each level on this matrix (if you have very few donors, you could do this for one donor for one year).

This is going to take some *educated guesswork*, and it’s okay to not be completely exact.

	LOW VALUE	MID VALUE	HIGH VALUE
PROSPECTING	0.1 hours	5 hours	10 hours
OUTREACH	2 hours	2 hours	5 hours
CULTIVATION	5 hours	20 hours	40 hours
STEWARDSHIP	10 hours	40 hours	50 hours

STEP 2

Using your Gift Table if you have one (if not, you can find a template in the ‘Financial Targets’ section), or your pipeline, list out how many donors you need to be engaged at each stage of this process for the next 12 months in order to meet your targets. Don’t forget to include your current donors in the ones who need to be stewarded! For example, for high-value donors, you might say:



This step can also be done using a calendar method, to view multiple relationships and their stages (**P**rospecting, **O**utreach, **C**ultivation and **S**teewardship) over time. For example:

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP	
DONOR 1 (NEW)	P	O								
DONOR 2 (NEW)		P	O	C	C	C				
DONOR 3 (NEW)		P	O	C	C	C	C	S	S	
DONOR 4 (NEW)			P	P	O	C	C	C	C	
DONOR 5 (EXISTING)	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	
	TOTAL									
PROSPECTING	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
OUTREACH	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
CULTIVATION	0	0	0	2	2	3	2	1	1	11
STEWARDSHIP	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	11

STEP 3

Using the figures from Step 1 and Step 2, work out how many hours of work are needed to deliver on your targets and pipeline. For example, for high-value audiences:

	NUMBER OF DONORS	NUMBER OF HOURS PER 5 DONORS	TOTAL HOURS PER STAGE
PROSPECTING	50	10	100
OUTREACH	40	5	40
CULTIVATION	110	40	880
STEWARDSHIP	110	50	1100
TOTAL FOR YEAR			2120

STEP 4

Use the total number of hours needed for the year in Step 3, to figure out the number of staff you need to be able to deliver on your pipeline.

For example, in the UK, a full-time worker (after holidays, lunch breaks and admin time) has roughly 1,200 productive hours per year. So, to meet the example of 2,120 hours in Step 3, you would need 1.8 staff members to meet the pipeline.

STEP 5

If you don't have enough staff to meet your targets, you need to think about recruiting new staff, or adjusting your targets.

If you already have enough staff to meet your targets, you can begin to plan the allocation of those relationships across each individual's portfolio. Do this by making little paper 'building blocks' of donors, using Post-Its, and allocating them across your staff team based on their budget of hours, and their skills and experience. For example:

ATIFA
1,200 HOURS

- 10 High Value Donor Prospecting
- 5 High Value Donor Outreach
- 5 High Value Donor Cultivation

DAN
1,200 HOURS

- 20 Mid Value Donor Prospecting
- 20 Mid Value Donor Outreach

JAMIE
600 HOURS

- 30 Low Value Donor Prospecting
- 100 Low Value Donor Stewardship

WHAT NEXT?

Once you have discovered whether you have enough fundraising staff to meet your goals, you will know whether your strategy needs to address recruitment (see next exercise), or reallocation of donor engagement work across your team.

You can also use this data and information to start discussions about what your team members want to be working on, and make best use of their skills and experience by building a portfolio that brings out the best in them. For example, some people like to have a mix of donor types, others prefer to do all the face-to-face work, and others like to do writing.



RECRUITING

If you have decided that a new team member is required for you to meet your fundraising goals, you will now need to go about recruiting them. This can feel like a daunting process, and finding the right person might seem risky and difficult. However, don't forget there are many professional fundraisers out there, and even more people with transferable skills from other industries who could be the perfect fit for your team!

The key things are to ensure you are clear on the minimum skills you require, how much support you can give someone once they're in the role, and the amount of time you are comfortable waiting for their work to bear fruit. That latter point is extremely important, because rushing fundraisers to deliver in too short a time period (e.g. 'cover your own costs in the next 12 months') is likely to result in an unhappy team member and lower performance.

OBJECTIVE

To recruit a new fundraising team member.

YOU WILL NEED

- A computer with internet access
- A word processing document to summarise and file the information

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

The first step is drafting the job description for the new role. This should be really clear, standardised for every staff member with the same title, and an accurate representation of what is expected. The document should cover the following elements, and an example is included at the end of this section.

Background on the Role

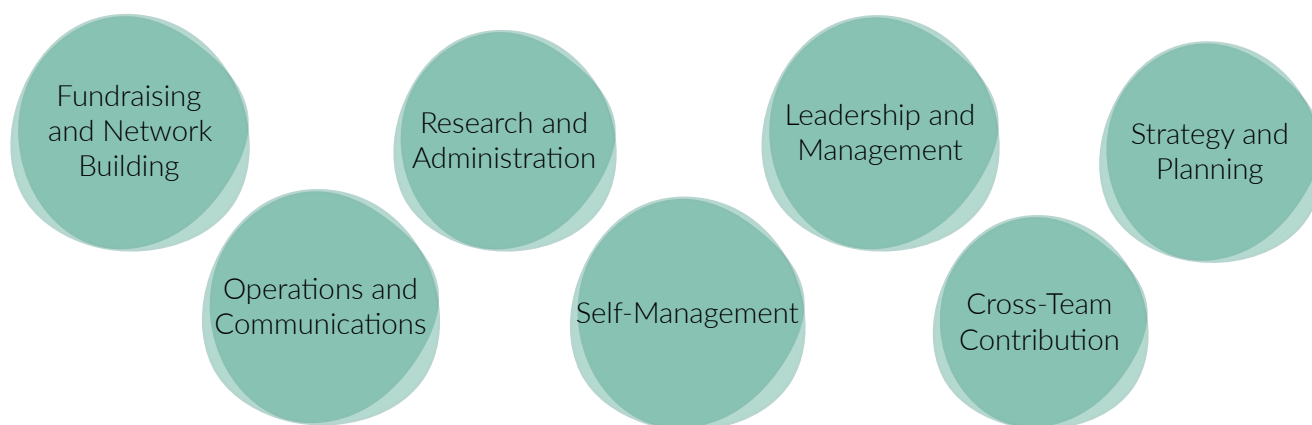
Provide applicants with some background on why this role is open. Did the previous person leave? Is it a new role? What is the organisation aiming for that this role is part of? What support and resources will the successful candidate be working with? Are there any targets set for this role?

Successful Candidates

Give a brief description of the kind of person you are looking for – bring the criteria and bullet point list to life!

Responsibilities

Making use of your RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) Framework. If you haven't done one, you will create it in the Roles and Responsibilities exercise later in this section, or simply list out the key activities you would need this person to deliver or oversee, and draft a job description that addresses the activities within the following categories (add more if you need them):



Key Stakeholders

List out the key internal people this role would need to manage relationships with.

Knowledge and Experience

List out the things the successful candidate must already know, or have experience of doing. You might want to separate this list into 'Essential' and 'Desirable'. Be realistic here, and don't focus too hard on 'money raised' – focus more on their experience of building relationships, thinking strategically, and other core skills that are the right fit for your team.

Skills & Competencies

List out the things the successful candidate must know how to do, or be able to demonstrate. Don't forget more subjective things like friendliness, negotiation and optimism!

STEP 2

Research similar roles that have been advertised in your city, and country, to see the salary range that candidates might be expecting. In some countries, hiring fundraisers can be quite competitive, and so higher salaries might be expected, but you should focus on what is appropriate for your context.

Note: in many countries it is forbidden to pay fundraisers on a commission basis, and this is because of the ethical challenges with asking donors for money that will then be used, in part, to pay you commission. We do not recommend using this model.

STEP 3

Circulate the job description internally to ensure you have buy-in from everyone who would be working with the candidate, and it includes all activities needed by the team.

STEP 4

If you have the budget to use a recruitment agency, you can ask them to advertise the role and put forward some suggested candidates. If you do this, we would recommend using a non-profit or fundraising specific agency.

If you plan to advertise the position yourself, we recommend putting the job description in as many online places as possible, targeting the industries you want to recruit from. In many countries there are specific charity job boards, but social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter can be great places, too.

Finally, ask your Board, leadership and, where appropriate, donors to circulate the job description with their networks.

STEP 5

Shortlist your candidates based on the job description, scoring each applicant against each bullet point on the knowledge, experience, skills and competencies. The highest scoring candidates should be invited to interview.

STEP 6

Plan your interview process to focus on the knowledge, experience, skills and competencies that are most essential for your organisation. We recommend drawing these out through a combination of exercises, tests and conversation:

- **EXERCISES:** these can include things like donor roleplays, donor proposal writing, budget reviews, SWOT analyses, and other components of the job. The key is to provide interactive, unpredictable, but realistic scenarios in which candidates can demonstrate their skills.
- **TESTS:** these can include writing, proofreading, numeracy and other skills-based tests.
- **CONVERSATION:** ask candidates to share examples of times they have demonstrated the key skills and experience you need, as well as posing hypothetical situations and asking how they would approach them.

The interview should be conducted by the people who will engage most closely with the role, including their line manager, a senior person, and if possible, anyone they would be managing.

STEP 7

Once you have selected your chosen candidate, and they have accepted the role, don't forget to plan a clear and thorough induction process for them, so they can start off strong!



EXAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION



FUNDRAISING DIRECTOR

NEW . POSTED 17 HOURS AGO . 11 APPLICANTS

APPLY

REPORTING TO: CEO

BACKGROUND ON THE ROLE

We recognise our ambitious strategic goals mean we need great people. Our organisation offers a meaningful giving opportunity for funders who want to make the world a fairer place, and help those in need. We are looking for an experienced, creative and ambitious fundraiser to help us enhance this experience for our donors and partners, and work to bring even more people into our work.

This role will be central to how we think about and do fundraising in the future, building on the great work our team has done so far, and supporting us to systemise and grow our fundraising. You will have the opportunity to both shape and grow quickly with the role and the wider organisation, as we enter our exciting next phase.

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

To be successful, you will have previously demonstrated your skill at cultivating fruitful and sustainable relationships with donors in a non-profit environment, as well as thinking strategically and long-term about income generation in a multi-stakeholder context. You will be as comfortable advocating in Board-level discussions and negotiations with prospective donors, as you are building friendly rapport with frontline project leaders and thinking creatively about communications assets. You must possess excellent communication skills, including the ability to speak and write persuasively, and be able to quickly develop strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders in a busy and passionate team.

SALARY

Competitive

HOW YOU MATCH

SKILLS

- SKILL 1
- SKILL 2
- SKILL 3
- SKILL 4
- SKILL 5
- SKILL 6
- SKILL 7
- SKILL 8
- SKILL 9
- SKILL 10

CONTACT THE JOB POSTER



JOB DETAILS

SENIORITY LEVEL

Mid-Senior level

INDUSTRY

Non-Profit

EMPLOYMENT TYPE

Full Time

JOB FUNCTION

Philanthropy, Fundraising

RESPONSIBILITIES

FUNDRAISING & NETWORK BUILDING

- Identify, engage, cultivate and solicit individual, foundation and corporate donors to secure five- and six-figure gifts, and develop partnerships with financial and non-financial components.
- Support our leadership and Board to cultivate relationships with donors and partners, providing briefing, brainstorm and best practice guidance.
- Form and maintain relationships with donors, and key philanthropic connecting institutions such as banks, family offices, funds and law firms.
- Act as an ambassador for our mission and strategic priorities at events and conferences.
- Manage all donor and partner relationships, implementing and embedding an invigorated donor journey and rigorous stewardship practices to ensure consistency.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

- Develop and lead the implementation of an ambitious fundraising strategy that ensures growth across a diverse range of income streams.
- Ensure a strategic fundraising lens is considered in all operational and project discussions and decisions.
- Collaborate with the leadership team to develop an optimistic, yet manageable KPI framework as the basis for fundraising performance management.
- Work to build on existing examples of excellent fundraising practice in the team, and further embed a positive fundraising culture.

OPERATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS

- Develop, refine and manage the pipeline of donors and prospects, championing the use of a CRM across the team.
- Coordinate, track and report on fundraising progress against target(s), preparing reports and delivering presentations to the senior leadership team and Board.
- Draft and edit funding proposal templates and bespoke pitches as necessary, working with the Communications team to ensure consistency.
- Prepare stewardship report templates, and bespoke reports for donors and partners on the progress of our work overall, and their respective funding areas.
- Simplify, refocus and repackage our Case for Support, Case for Need and Impact Statements to appeal to a variety of funding audiences.
- Work with the Finance team to incorporate realistic central and thematic budget forecasts into the fundraising process, monitoring income against these forecasts and focusing fundraising on emerging gaps.

SELF-MANAGEMENT

- Work to and regularly report on an agreed annual workplan, meeting targets and milestones, and proactively highlighting challenges.
- Prioritise and manage own workload.
- Take responsibility for personal development and seek out opportunities for training and support.

TEAM CONTRIBUTION

- Contribute to the overall vision of our organisation and develop and maintain positive relationships as an ambassador for the cause.
- Contribute to the welfare and wellbeing of staff and volunteers, wherever relevant.
- Uphold commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion in all aspects of your work.
- Take part in meetings, discussions, training and workshops as appropriate and required.
- Other duties as may reasonably be allocated by leadership team or Board from time to time.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- CEO
- Finance Director
- Communications Manager
- Project Manager
- Volunteers

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- Previous experience in a similar position, or in an organisation at a comparable stage of growth.
- Minimum of 5 years of experience in fundraising role(s).
- Experience of cultivating and securing at

least five figure gifts from donors.

- A record of success in establishing financial goals, organising and implementing strategies, analysing and identifying problems, and formulating creative solutions.
- Experience in managing a team is desirable.

SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

- A great communicator with excellent writing and public speaking skills.
- An outstanding relationship-builder with great negotiating skills, and the ability to network and influence at the highest level.
- An inclusive and motivating team-player, with the ability to work independently.
- Solid understanding of trends and priorities in fundraising, philanthropy and corporate impact, and an ability to keep up to date on these.
- Confidence in operating in a strategic role, and representing and engaging with senior level staff internally and externally.
- Excellent time management, organisational and prioritisation skills with the ability to juggle a wide range of competing demands and deliver to deadlines.
- High levels of computer literacy, as well as proficiency in donor / client management databases (e.g. Salesforce), Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook.
- Ability to evaluate problems and display good, sound and confident judgment.
- Mature, confident and well presented, with a sense of humour.



FUNDRAISING CULTURE

There's a famous quote from Peter Drucker, made famous by Mark Fields, President at Ford, that says "culture eats strategy for breakfast", and nowhere is this more true than in fundraising. What Drucker meant was: no matter how good your strategy or planning is, if your team can't work together effectively, it won't get delivered or succeed. Often a poor culture can hold back progress, demotivate people and stop teams from collaborating, and donors can be scared-off or worried if they sense your team isn't a cohesive group. Positive culture helps you to attract and keep great staff, motivate people to go above and beyond for you and your donors, and support each other to achieve big things. This is true of culture within your fundraising team, as well as the 'fundraising culture' across your wider organisation.

WHAT IS CULTURE?

Culture is the character and personality of your organisation. It's the unique result of combining your organisational values, traditions, beliefs, interactions, behaviours and attitudes.

Fundraising culture is the extent to which your fundraising team has a healthy culture, and the extent to which your organisation understands the needs, behaviours and attitudes required for successful fundraising activities.

WHAT DETERMINES FUNDRAISING CULTURE?

1

LEADERSHIP

The way senior team members and the Board act and engage with others, what they prioritise, communicate most about, celebrate and ignore will inform what staff think of as good and bad behaviours and attitudes to bring to your organisation. If a leader ignores fundraising or champions it, it will make all the difference. Leaders who refer to fundraisers as ATMs or annoyances will not support a healthy functioning organisation.

2

MANAGEMENT

How your organisation and teams are structured and managed, and the systems, hierarchy, processes and goal-setting in place will determine how empowered and motivated your team can be, and the level of effort, engagement and performance they put into fundraising activities. It is important for managers of fundraising teams to have great relationships with other team managers.

3

WORKPLACE PRACTICES

The way the organisation does recruiting, selection, onboarding, pay reviews, recognition, training, promotions, performance management and tradition will impact the way staff engage with each other. Celebration around fundraising successes is a big way to instil positive practices here, as well as ensuring onboarding processes give staff exposure to other teams.

4

PEOPLE

The types of people you bring into the organisation (their personalities, beliefs, values, skills and experiences, and everyday behaviors) will be the core of your culture. Prioritise diversity of thought, and experience, rather than aiming for the same type of person over and over, but ensure the core values of the organisation (especially those around collaboraiton, support, communication) are reflected in every hire.

5

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Ensuring your organisation has really clear - and widely understood - mission, vision and values is essential to creating a positive culture for fundraising. How else can your fundraisers live these values, or engage donors with them? Ensuring these are inspiring, consistent and emphasised is key. Supporting your fundraisers to champion these, and the need to fund their delivery, is important.

6

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Whether you're virtually working, or have an in-person office environment, the items, decor, signage and use of space will impact the extent to which people can work together, understand each other, form bonds and anticipate each others' needs.

7

COMMUNICATIONS

The ways communication happens between team members, especially between the fundraising team and others, will impact how the fundraising activity is viewed, and how well everyone is able to perform their roles together. The Finance and Communications teams are often the trickiest to integrate, but are the most important, especially when it comes to transparency in sharing information and making decisions.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: RACI FRAMEWORK

Generating income requires many different skillsets and activities; one of the biggest challenges within a team can be the allocation of this work, and establishing clear lines of management and approval. A RACI Framework can help you do this – it stands for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed, and is a way to distinguish between the varying levels of involvement in specific activities that need to be done.

OBJECTIVE

To allocate tasks and determine roles for each team member involved in fundraising activities.

YOU WILL NEED

- Post-It Notes
- Coloured sticky dots, or coloured pens, with enough colours for all the people and roles involved to have one each
- A wall, or whiteboard

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Invite everyone to individually write down all activities that must be done to fundraise within the organisation, with one per Post-It. This should be specific, such as 'write funding applications' and 'schedule meetings with donors', rather than general, such as 'get grants' or 'cultivate donors.'

STEP 2

Have everyone share their Post-Its, three at a time, and group them on the wall with similar suggestions as you go. Once you've collected all the ideas, ask everyone to suggest anything that is missing.

STEP 3

Provide everyone with a page of sticky dots each, or a coloured pen each, making sure each person's colour is easy to distinguish from everyone else's. Then, have everyone place a sticky dot, or draw a symbol, on any of the Post-Its that have a task they feel they are involved with in any way.

STEP 4

Ask each person to complete a RACI Framework from their own, individual perspective, looking at the Post-Its with their own dot or symbol on for guidance (see RACI template below). This means looking at each activity they are involved with, and deciding whether they are:

- **RESPONSIBLE:** implementing this activity, in charge of actually doing it
- **ACCOUNTABLE:** managing this activity, in charge of ensuring it gets done
- **CONSULTED:** providing input and approval where needed for this activity
- **INFORMED:** kept up to date on the progress and completion of this activity

STEP 5

Work together as a group to create one central RACI Framework for your current fundraising activities. This might require simplification of some activities, and debate and discussion to arrive at a shared understanding.

STEP 6

Work together to adapt the RACI Framework to what you would like your future fundraising activities to look like.

Things to think about include:

- Ensure there are no blanks for 'responsible' (otherwise they might not get done!)
- Ensure there are no blanks for 'accountable' (otherwise there could be no support or oversight given to those responsible!)
- Ensure that where the 'accountable' person is also the 'responsible' person, there is always someone else being 'informed', to avoid siloes and paths of critical failure.
- Consolidate and combine similar or duplicate tasks, and better-allocate tasks where there are unnecessary overlaps.
- Decide on appropriateness of current job titles given each team member's RACI, and discuss alternatives, if needed.
- Check that not too many people need to be 'consulted' for tasks, as it may cause inefficiencies in your processes.

Consider whether:

- Workload could be allocated differently to achieve the organisation's goals.
- Enough support is being given to staff who are responsible for tasks that have no 'accountability' name.
- New staff are needed to provide capacity for tasks without 'responsibility'.
- Activities with multiple people 'responsible' for them need more than one, and whether the person 'accountable' is supporting them to work together.



RACI FRAMEWORK TEMPLATE

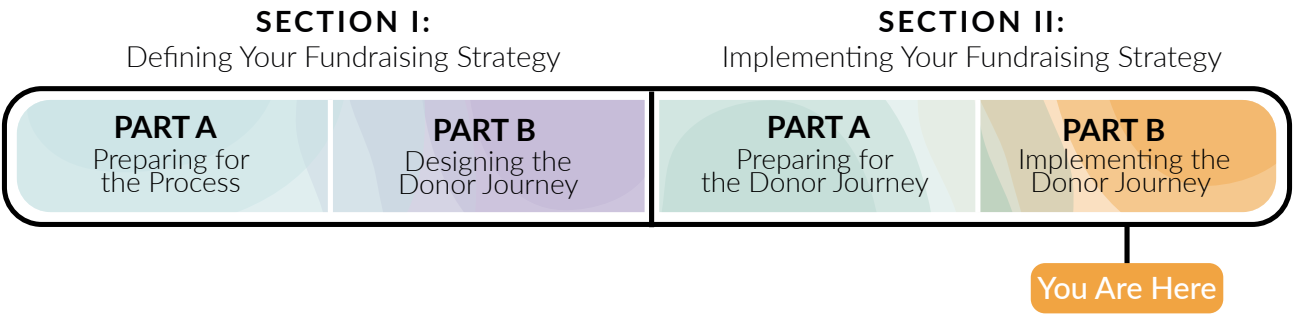
ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE	ACCOUNTABLE	CONSULTED	INFORMED

Up Next...

Your team is now ready for the Donor Journey. In the last part of this Guide, you will learn how to implement your fundraising strategy. This involves finding and connecting with new prospects, finetuning your message, identifying partnerships, creating thought leadership and organising events.



SECTION II PART B
IMPLEMENTING THE DONOR JOURNEY



This is the last part of the Guide, where you will learn how to actively implement the fundraising strategy you have been building in the previous sections.

First, you will learn how to look for the right donors and leverage your networks to reach them. Then, you will learn how to finetune your messaging to ‘speak’ to your donors. Finally, you will learn how to raise your profile by developing new partnerships, planning thought leadership and organising events.

-  **PROSPECTING**
-  **MESSAGING**
-  **PARTNERSHIPS**
-  **THOUGHT LEADERSHIP**
-  **EVENTS**



Prospecting

PROSPECT RESEARCH

Once you've defined your fundraising strategy, you need to start prospecting for real donors that meet your needs. To systematise all the information you collect during your prospect research, and track changes and updates, you need to create a prospect pipeline – i.e. a centralised database of all your current and prospective donors that align with your organisation's mission, activities and funding needs. You can find a template further on in this section.

While organisations may be at different stages of their fundraising experience and campaign cycles, the same rules apply to setting your prospect pipeline up for sustainability. Here are some key tips for successful prospecting:

- Ensure you have a diversified prospect list to give your organisation more flexibility and greater adaptability.
- Feed new prospects into the pipeline. By cultivating new donors on a regular basis, your organisation will have an ongoing stream of potential gifts.
- Utilise the networks of your staff, Board, volunteers and advisors for new prospects.
- Take advantage of data mining and donor screening tools to see the potential of a donor.
- Track where your donors are in the prospect pipeline and stay alert to bottlenecks – especially in the identification and qualification stage.
- Ensure the database is centralised so all staff have visibility of it, and ensure staff update it regularly.

WHY SHOULD I BUILD A PIPELINE?

Prospect research provides valuable information and data on a prospect's giving history and wealth, and enables you to thoroughly populate your pipeline. This will then help you prioritise your efforts to reach the prospects that better align with your overall strategy. Conducting thorough prospect research allows you to:

- Identify current donors who may be ready to make larger gifts.
- Understand who may be likely to make a gift from your consistent, long-term donor pool.
- Discover new donors who actively support other, similar causes.

HOW SHOULD I BUILD MY PIPELINE?

While prospect research is a very important aspect of effective and efficient fundraising, it is also one of the most time consuming and sometimes challenging parts of this work. There are a few ways to manage your organisation's prospect research but each comes with its own advantages and disadvantages, depending on your team's capacity and resources:

- **CONDUCT YOUR OWN DESK-BASED RESEARCH:** if your team has capacity, use online data banks that give you access to past giving, wealth markers, business affiliations and philanthropic tendencies. Some examples include Foundation Centre, and Wealth X, Funding Central (UK). This is the cheapest option.
- **ASK YOUR LEADERSHIP AND BOARD:** your organisation's senior team may have knowledge and connections with funding networks, so it's a good idea to mine them for ideas during the research phase (see the Network Mapping exercise in this section for further guidance).
- **HIRE A RESEARCHER:** hire a dedicated staff member to focus either partially or fully on prospect research. You will need to brief them and equip them with the tools needed to obtain relevant data and file it easily for others on the team to access, but it will save you lots of time.
- **HIRE A CONSULTANT:** hire a consultant to find and collate the tailored information your organisation needs by using in-house records and online databases. They have the relevant expertise, but you will need a budget for it.
- **USE A PROSPECT SCREENING COMPANY:** these companies help non-profits to quickly screen a large batch of donors. They collect information from different online databases and can share the files with your staff to input into your database or use as a standalone resource. It might be cheaper than other options and save you lots of time, but the research might not be fully tailored to your needs. You must also make sure the company you use complies to your local data laws – in some countries screening is more difficult to do within the law.



PROSPECT PIPELINE TEMPLATE

PROSPECT	RATING	CONTACT	STRENGTH OF EXISTING RELATIONSHIP	HQ LOCATION / HOME	POTENTIAL ASK*	RATIONALE	COMPARABLE ORGS THEY SUPPORT / PARTNER	HELPFUL LINKS	UPCOMING APPLICATION DEADLINES
Organisation or person's name	A,B, C	e.g. Carl (Board member)	High / Medium / Low	e.g. Cape Town, South Africa	e.g. \$50,000	Reasons why you think it is a good prospect	Org 1, Org 2, Org 3		

*Potential ask numbers are a best guess based on annual grant-making figures / turnover, grant giving history and strategic alignment with your organisation.

RATING CRITERIA

A: Prospect is highly aligned with your organisation's current activities and able to give large grants. Efforts should be centred here first.

B: Prospect is relatively aligned with your organisation's current activities and most are able to give large grants. Should be approached with exploratory conversations.

C: Prospect's funding priorities are not immediately aligned with your organisation's current activities and capacity to give varies. However, they are involved in your organisation's space, so should be cultivated for future potential.

Note: if your organisation fundraises from several donor types, you should create separate tabs for each audience (e.g. one tab for Trusts & Foundations, one for Governments, one for Corporates, etc.), or at least use a filtering mechanism within Excel so you can easily view audience segments.



NETWORK MAPPING

The most effective way of starting a new relationship with any funder is being introduced by a mutual contact, and ensuring your organisation or project is represented in spaces they frequent. Once you have a prioritised list of prospects, you need to start making those connections. Make sure you utilise your staff, Board members, executive leadership and volunteers as connectors (and also as resources to help you build those relationships). In order to have a clear view of which connections you can use, and spot any connections you might have missed, a network map is important to create. Below are some key steps to get you started in two scenarios:

SCENARIO 1: FINDING CONNECTIONS WITH EXISTING PROSPECTS

If you've already identified a key prospect – and just need to strategise your approach through identifying connections – each key member of your team and Board should follow these steps:

1. Firstly, look up this prospect on LinkedIn – quickly see if you have any mutual contacts.
2. If no obvious route is found – in a document, list your current key places of connection (e.g. other Boards, companies people currently or previously worked for, clubs you are a member of, Universities attended etc.) – and list out the names of key people at these places you have a strong connection with (i.e. people you would feel comfortable reaching out to via email).
3. Do the same for your prospect, highlighting any immediate overlaps. Focus on connections in your locale, initially.
4. If no connections immediately appear, repeat this exercise (for both you and the prospect), but this time by listing the organisations, projects or conferences you/they have been previously involved with as (ex)staff, trustees, volunteers, alumni, or speakers.
5. Continue until there are significant overlaps in either dataset, and list these as 'connections'.
6. Explore your connections further, checking for any red flags (see the following templates for examples).
7. Respectfully ask your connectors for advice on the best approach, whilst suggesting your preferred one. Sense-check how keen and capable they are of speaking on your behalf, and what sort of 'ask' you want made (e.g. a coffee introduction, permission to connect you via email, an event invite, etc.).
8. Make use of as many connections as possible to cultivate different people and levels. Be sure to keep your internal teams and Board in the loop about any active conversations and approaches.



SCENARIO 1 TEMPLATE: NETWORK MAPPING WORKSHEET

(FOR SPECIFIC PROSPECT)



PROSPECT

PROSPECT'S NOTABLE PEOPLE/ORGS

NOTABLE CONNECTIONS

YOUR NOTABLE PEOPLE/ORGS



YOU



SCENARIO 1 TEMPLATE: PROSPECT CULTIVATION PLAN

(FOR SPECIFIC PROSPECT)

PROSPECT NAME:

PRIORITIES		POTENTIAL MATCHES
<i>What does the donor care about?</i>		<i>Where do your work, or your ambitions, overlap?</i>
STAFF & LEADERSHIP	NOTABLE CONNECTIONS	YOUR CONNECTIONS
<i>Who are their key people?</i>	<i>Which people or organisations are they connected to?</i>	<i>Which connections do you have with them, or their network?</i>
NEED TO LEARN	NEED TO SHOW	ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES
<i>What do you need to get to know about this donor?</i>	<i>What is important for this donor to learn about you?</i>	<i>Which events, spaces and forums do your networks overlap in? What are you hosting that you could invite them to?</i>

SCENARIO 2: IDENTIFYING NEW PROSPECTS

If you are looking to comb through your network to identify prospects not already on your radar – you should follow these steps:

1. In a document, have your team, senior leadership and Board to list their current key places of connection (e.g. other Boards, companies people currently or previously worked for, club memberships, Universities attended etc.) – and list out the names of key people at these places there is a strong connection with (i.e. people you would feel comfortable reaching out to via email).
2. Keep going until everyone has a map of connections around them within which key names (e.g. big companies, foundations, wealthy individuals) appear.
3. Research the giving history and potential of each name to determine the viability. Strategise the approach using the connections and equip yourself with all relevant materials.

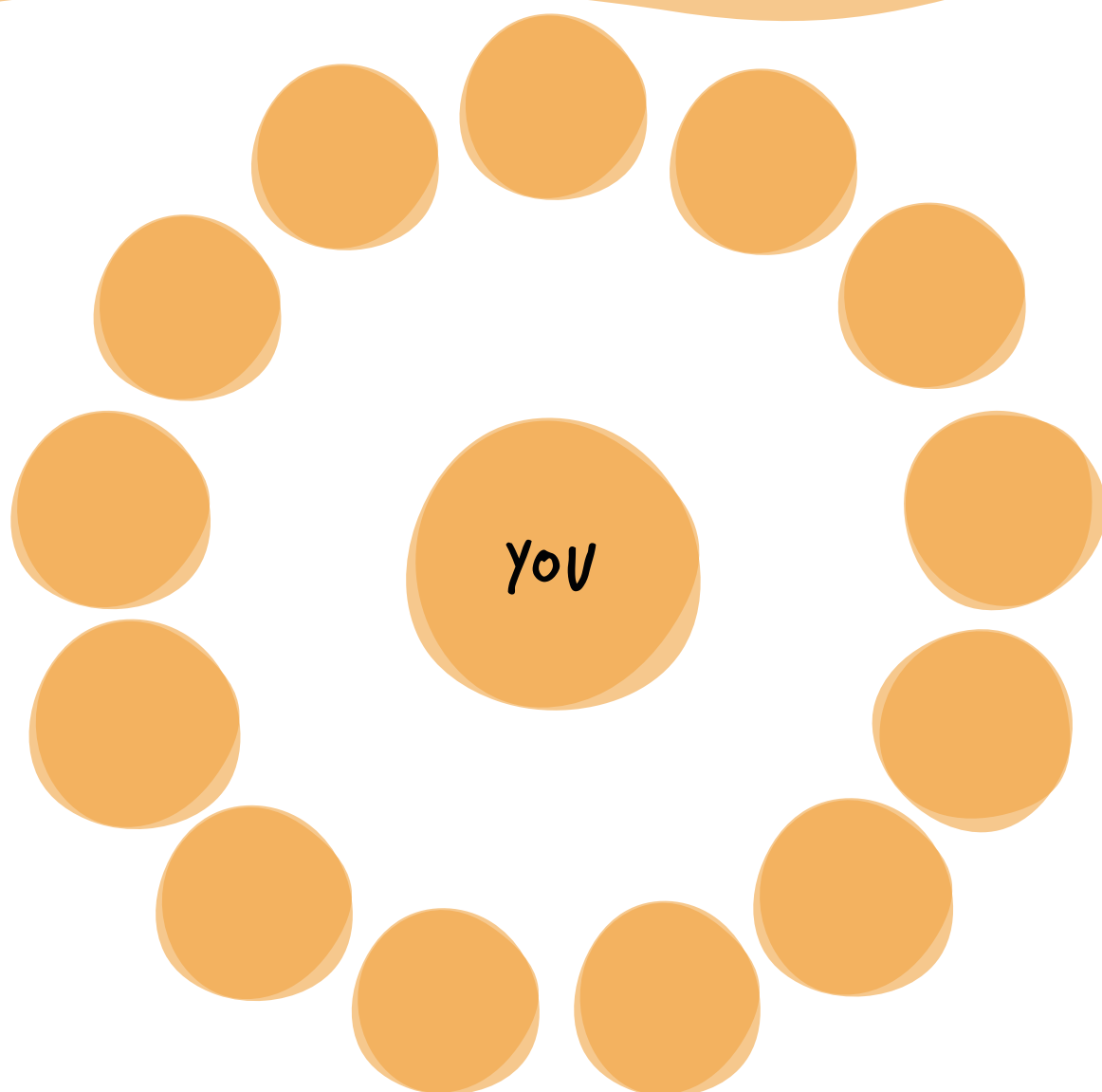
STANDARDS:

- A 'strong' connection is someone who you know well, and who knows the prospect well.
- A 'positive' connection is someone who likes your organisation, and who the prospect would respect the opinion of.
- Potential red flags for a connection include: bad relationship or employment history between two individuals or organisations (e.g. being fired), a public disagreement on any topic (e.g. contradictory op-eds), reputational doubt on your connector, and any vested interest for the connector (e.g. commission, separate business dealings).



SCENARIO 2 TEMPLATE: NETWORK MAPPING

(FOR FINDING PROSPECTS)



SOURCES

- LinkedIn is the number-one tool, and provides built-in data privacy and consent for research on donor prospects.
- Depending on the country, many official government websites can tell you who is on the Board of any company or charity (including Foundations).
- Google-search their name alongside keywords such as 'donates', 'supports', 'invests', 'conference', 'gala', 'event', 'sponsor', and anything else relevant to your network.



Messaging



INTRODUCTION

Strong donor communications are essential fundraising practice. While the in-person relationship building elements are important (if you're able to have them), you need to ensure the clarity and passion of your message translates across all mediums.

There are many kinds of donor communications, some formal and some informal, which we'll detail in this section. Before we get into the specifics, here are some general tips for best practice in donor communications:

- Personalise every communication as much as possible.
- Create pre-approved templates you can repurpose quickly, and at scale.
- Keep communications clear, brief and well-structured.
- Design communications in your organisation's branding.
- Avoid walls of text, and use visuals and media to break up lengthy paragraphs.
- Highlight or bold calls to action so they immediately stand out from the page.
- Avoid jargon and technical language, and explain any acronyms.
- Let your personality shine; your communications should give donors a sense of the people behind the mission they're investing in.
- If you're not sure about what a donor is expecting from a certain communication – ask!

FORMAL COMMUNICATIONS

By formal communications, we mean the official documents donors receive from your organisation. At a minimum, we recommend having the following:

1. CASE FOR SUPPORT

A Case for Support is essentially a well-written, compelling proposition that highlights everything a donor needs to know to make an informed decision about a gift. You can either use this document as a proposal itself, or as a 'language bank' you can repurpose if you need to submit a proposal in a donor's format. To make your proposal writing efficient, a good Case for Support should include the following information:

- Mission*, history and key activities
- Leadership, governance and team
- Cause area landscape supported by stats and data, where available
- Your approach to solving the need
- Your Unique Value Proposition (i.e. why your organisation's approach is different from that of other peer organisations in the space)*
- Key accomplishments and impact achieved to date*
- 3-5 strong case studies illustrating impact in practice and highlighting end-user testimonials**
- Monitoring and evaluation practices*
- Call to action and high-level details of a partnership opportunity



If you need more help creating your Case for Support, check out **this short Guide** by Inspiring Fundraising.

*If you need support thinking through any of these sections, you can find some valuable resources in the Warm Up.

If you need more help illustrating your impact through storytelling, browse through this **Checklist by Global Giving.

2. IMPACT REPORT

Reporting back on impact after a gift has been made should be done with great care, as these are often the communications that motivate donors to continue their support. An impact report should be a 'stand-alone' piece, meaning your donor should be able to share it with someone who has no context on your partnership, and that person should be able to understand it. A good Impact Report should include the following information on your organisation:

- Mission, history and cause area landscape
- Scope of funded activities
- Impact, outputs and outcomes of these activities (see Impact Measurement in the Warm Up to understand the difference between these terms)
- Challenges and solutions
- Financial expenditure
- Other partnerships that contributed to the impact
- Future plans



If you need more support when drafting an Impact Report, check out **this short Guide** produced by a coalition of UK organisations.

3. WEBSITE

Your organisation's website must be a place donors can visit and use. From a relationship-based fundraising perspective, a good website should:

- Have its own webpage purely dedicated to current and potential donors.
- Make it clear that your organisation is actively seeking support, with a 'Donate' section.
- Detail, at a high level, the ways donors can get involved, and what experience they receive in return.
- Detail, at a high level, your organisation's impact and future plans.
- Include functionality that allows donors to give directly through the website, which can often be achieved by using a third-party add-on or widget.
- Include the personal contact details of a staff member assigned to major gift cultivation (no *info@email.com* - there must be someone's name in the email).



SPOTLIGHT: CHARITY: WATER'S DONOR-FRIENDLY WEBSITE

Charity: water is an international non-profit that provides clean, safe drinking water to people in developing countries. Its website is a brilliant example of how to centre donors at the heart of your organisation's messaging, because it is:

- **CLEAR:** the first thing viewers see upon entering charity: water's website is a compelling call to action, asking viewers to 'join an unstoppable community of monthly givers.' There are also many colourful action buttons throughout, prompting viewers to 'donate' or 'learn more' about partnership opportunities.
- **PERSONAL:** throughout the website, charity: water addresses its viewers directly (i.e. 'you can fully fund a water project'), which creates an authentic personalised experience.
- **SIMPLE:** Charity: water uses a small handful of round number figures to illustrate the need for its work, and its impact. For example, '1 in 10 people lack access to clean water'; and 'for £8,000 or more you can fully fund a water project for a community or a school. 100% funds clean water projects.' Furthermore, charity: water breaks down its methodology and process into clear, simple infographics, supported by 'feel-good' pictures that are incredibly easy to digest. This is an effective strategy, as it breaks down an enormously complex issue into simple packages donors can easily get behind.

Sponsor an entire water project

For £8,000 or more you can fully fund a water project for a community or a school. 100% funds clean water projects.

[LEARN MORE](#)



4. DONOR EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

The final key piece of recommended collateral is a short, branded document, tailored to high-value donors, that is not publicly available on your website. Think of this as your 'pitch deck' – a document that illustrates the partnership opportunities available, and can be sent as a follow-up material after a first meeting. This overview should:

- Be no more than two pages long (the shorter and sharper, the better).
- Feature images and colour.
- Highlight your organisation's mission, history and cause area landscape.
- Highlight your organisation's impact, at a high-level.
- Highlight the experience of being a donor to your organisation.

INFORMAL COMMUNICATIONS

By informal communications, we mean the other ways you interact with donors that don't necessarily feature on branded documents. These take many forms, and here are some general dos and don'ts:

	DO'S	DON'TS
ELEVATOR PITCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure this is short, structured and consistent • Detail mission, activities and impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go into too much detail • Ramble or speak on a tangent
THANK YOU NOTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say 'thank you' at least twice (beginning & end) • Personalise them • Speak about impact • Make donors feel valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include too much text • Send anything generic • Forget to send one!
EMAILS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalise them • Ensure key information and actions stand out visually, using bold and italics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email a donor after they've asked not to be contacted • Include too much text that is difficult to read quickly • Send anything generic
CALLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be warm and open • Listen to your donor and validate their perspective • Ask questions, be curious 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assume your donors are comfortable being called if they haven't said so
SOCIAL MEDIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand which platforms your donors actually use • Use social as a way to share stories, impact and announcements • Thank your donors regularly for their support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post about, or tag, a specific donor without their consent



If you want to learn more about how to make the most of social media to engage your donors, take a look at **Make it Social**, a comprehensive guide designed by I.G.'s sister company, Social Misfits Media. Social Misfits Media is a social media agency working with purpose-led organisations to help them think strategically about their digital presence.



(ELEVATOR) PITCH PERFECT

An elevator pitch is a brief, persuasive speech that you use to spark interest in what your organisation does. The only way to get good at elevator pitching is practice!

OBJECTIVE

To finetune your elevator pitch.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Use the below template to fill in your organisation's details:

- **INTRODUCTION:** speak to your organisation's mission (max 2 sentences).
- **BACKGROUND:** give a brief history of your organisation work and team.
- **ACTIVITIES:** detail the key categories of your work. Remember: three is the ideal number, as people tend to retain information more when it's provided in lists of three items:
 1. We <do activity #1>
 2. We <do activity #2>
 3. We <do activity #3>
- **IMPACT:** detail your high-level impact and position in the cause-area ecosystem.
- **CURRENT SUPPORT NETWORK:** briefly acknowledge that you're honoured to be supported by a brilliant network of funders who share your values and vision for what's possible, and are looking to expand this.

STEP 2

Then practice on your own, in front of colleagues, and in front of someone you trust who doesn't know your organisation well.

Here is an example of an elevator pitch of a non-profit working in the education space:

Our organisation is on a mission to reimagine and transform the way we support young people across the country, as our education system needs to do more to prepare the next generation for the world and the jobs of the future.

Education is a big area, so we focus on listening, researching and learning in order to connect forward-thinking donors with early-stage projects that have the biggest capacity for creating change. Right now, these are:

- 1) *Project A;*
- 2) *Project B; and*
- 3) *Project C.*

And throughout all of this, we make sure our approach includes and accounts for the various socio-economic barriers that keep young people behind (because when you look at the stats, education reform is really a matter of economic and social justice).

It's definitely ambitious, but we work hard to do things differently to a typical charity. We focus on building and leveraging an incredible network of partners to ensure that we, and the projects we support, are able to prove a new way is both possible and powerful. So far, we've created an incredibly strong movement of people, organisations and businesses who believe young people deserve better, which is really inspiring to see.



If you're looking for support on how to actually pitch for funding, visit the Pitching exercise in the 'Making an Ask' section.



Partnerships

INTRODUCTION

There are many different reasons why non-profits choose to collaborate with other organisations and form partnerships. It is undisputable that partnerships – or strategic alliances – can have significant benefits, when implemented effectively. Depending on your 'endgame' (see 'Feasibility Assessment: What is Your Endgame?'), an effective partnership could lead to greater efficiency and use of resources, wider geographic reach, improved services, a stronger voice, influence and organisational sustainability, and ultimately greater impact for the overall sector.

For fundraisers, working in partnership with others can lead to heightened visibility and awareness, new donors, and larger gifts. That said, if managed poorly, partnerships can end up causing more work, damage reputations and wasting resources. Therefore, finding and forming the right ones is key.

WHAT TYPE OF PARTNERSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE FOR NON-PROFITS?

Different types of partnerships satisfy different needs. Depending on factors like the size of your non-profit and your willingness to collaborate with other organisations, specific types of strategic partnerships might serve your goals better than others. Below are some examples of the most common ways in which organisations partner:

- **ASSOCIATIONS:** these are groups that choose to come together to accomplish a specific objective, and include consortiums, coalitions and collaboratives. Some directly support and identify with a specific community, whilst others are more focused on centralising common functions.
- **JOINT PROGRAMMING:** this is a structure where two or more non-profits collaboratively launch and manage responsibilities of a programme. Whilst these non-profits maintain independence around their own programmes, they share joint decision-making power of their common programmes.
- **SHARED SERVICES OR ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLIDATION:** non-profits jointly hire or agree to share operational resources such as IT, office space or accounting. This is for non-profits that are looking to increase efficiency. With this type of partnership, organisations would enter a formal agreement to exchange and share services.
- **MERGER:** in this scenario, non-profits combine into one by integrating one organisation into another, or by creating a brand-new organisation.

These are just a few of the types of strategic alliances that a non-profit can consider. Others include, but are not limited to, affiliations, joint ventures, networks and co-sponsorships. Embarking on a new partnership is a decision that requires careful thinking, lots of due diligence and thorough risk evaluation. Whilst this is not something that can be decided in the short-term, we recommend discussing this opportunity with your team.

If you decide to explore new partnership opportunities for your non-profit, the approach you should adopt would be very similar to that of donor relationships. Like for prospects, you should populate a pipeline of potential partners, prioritise your list based on affinity to your organisation, and then do a network mapping exercise to identify mutual connections with people running those organisations. If you can get a personal introduction, you are more likely to get a conversation going. Finally make sure you have communications materials ready to introduce your organisation and highlight the value of collaborating with you.



SPOTLIGHT: A CROSS-MOVEMENT PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN FONDO SEMILLAS AND FASOL

Two Mexican non-profits – **Fondo Semillas** (women's fund) and **FASOL** (environmental fund) – are an excellent example of two non-profits that joined forces to step up their fundraising game. A few years ago, the two organisations started observing a general increase of grassroots group projects led by and for women that incorporated environmental justice and sustainability into their approach, and a need for financial support at this intersection.

Fondo Semillas and FASOL identified an opportunity to collaborate, and responded to this need by co-creating a 'Gender and the Environment' programme. The goal was to strengthen knowledge of environmental justice among grassroots women's rights activists, and add a gender lens to work carried out by local environmental justice groups. From a fundraising perspective, this cross-movement alliance brought several benefits to both organisations:

- **REACHING NEW DONORS:** both partners were able to reach new donors they wouldn't have reached on their own. Semillas managed to attract the attention of Mexican funders who were interested primarily in environmental sustainability, and viewed women's empowerment as a plus.
- **LOWERING FUNDRAISING COSTS:** instead of carrying out isolated or overlapping efforts,

this approach allowed the two organisations to plan a more efficient investment of resources, and therefore lower their fundraising costs.

- **LOWERING FUNDRAISING COMPETITION:** working to strengthen philanthropy in Mexico and forming partnerships with emerging local donors helped them to reduce competition for external funding. Despite being broadly acknowledged as counterproductive to effective organising, this phenomenon is very common among Mexican NGOs (and also globally).
- **INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE SECTOR:** the partnership influenced the grant-making processes of Mexican donors, and unlocked new local funding sources for grassroots activists in Mexico.
- **SHAPING LOCAL PHILANTHROPY:** even though foreign funding is much larger (and therefore more desirable), by channelling efforts to build a funding collaboration with a national foundation, the two non-profits contributed to shaping Mexican philanthropy from a rights-based perspective. This cultural shift has an impact far beyond annual fundraising numbers.

Although the joint grant-making programme ended, the two organisations continue to collaborate with each other, reflecting on and sharing experiences, processes and learnings.

WORKING IN CONSORTIA

Joining a consortium is an option that could be especially relevant for smaller non-profits or non-profits that operate in a saturated space. Consortia are structures that enable organisations to join forces or pool their resources to achieve a common goal. From a fundraising perspective, joining a consortium can offer several benefits, including:

- The potential to share business contacts across members.
- The opportunity for members to raise their profile amongst donors, in the media and in the wider industry.
- The ability to reach more potential donors and acquire new ones.
- The opportunity to achieve a larger fundraising goal (and therefore greater impact) because the consortium members are speaking with one voice.



SPOTLIGHT: THE LIVE-IN CARE HUB CONSORTIUM

The Live-In Care Hub is a consortium comprised of 21 live-in care providers that work together to improve social care for the elderly. It is a non-profit organisation that is dedicated to raising the quality of care in the UK by giving people the opportunity to be cared for in their homes. Its main objectives include:

- Raising awareness of Live-In Care by sharing information and becoming the authority on live-in care.
- Making hub members the first port of call for people needing full time care.
- Improving quality and standards of care within the industry.
- Delivering improved outcomes for people in care.
- Creating career and job opportunities within the sector.
- Increasing recognition and awareness of live-in care as a valued profession in order to grow the number of carers choosing this career option.

Through this consortium, members combine their knowledge, experience and reach – which enables them to benefit more people than any organisation would be able to do on their own. As a consortium, these companies have access to industry events where they might otherwise be excluded due to their size, and they can learn from one another. Together, they have been able to produce thought leadership and collect comprehensive data that has increased their position as credible leaders in the industry, and in the wider community.

Their combined experience and expertise have enabled the organisation to develop resources that include impartial advice and information to support elderly people and their families in the journey to decide what options are available. Without the consortium, they would not have been able to reach their objectives as effectively as they have as a group.



Thought Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Thought leadership is a strategic investment in both fundraising and impact – it enables your organisation to influence the conversation around your cause area, and it raises your profile among audiences that matter to you.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOUGHT LEADERSHIP AND RESEARCH?



Rigorous & academic
Critically evaluating something
Publishing something new

Taking an opinion or stance on something, usually for purposes of influencing.

Generally speaking, thought leadership is simpler to approach and resource. Unless you have a significant research budget, or research is your non-profit's core activity, we would recommend focusing on thought leadership.

WHAT TYPES OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP ARE THERE?

There are many different types of thought leadership you will want to consider. The most common ones include:

- Timely blogs in response to current events
- Blogs on broader topics
- Opinion pieces in external media publications
- Hosting your own events or webinars
- Being a featured speaker or panellist at someone else's event
- Being interviewed on the radio or on podcasts (or even starting your own show!)

HOW DO I DECIDE WHAT TO FOCUS ON?

Before diving into a thought leadership piece, take time to consider its strategic value:

AUDIENCE: who is the key audience for this piece and what topic do you want to influence them on?

RELEVANCE: is the piece attractive to key stakeholders relevant to your organisation, either from an impact or fundraising perspective?

FEASIBILITY: is this piece easily created, or are there key challenges to overcome? Are they worth it?

PERSONAL INTEREST: are you excited and energised by the piece?

CHALLENGES: are there any other considerations, barriers or challenges you might need to consider?

HOW DO I CREATE THOUGHT LEADERSHIP PIECES?

When thinking about your organisation's wider thought leadership strategy, we strongly recommend:

- **FULL TEAM EFFORT:** generating thought leadership is often the first thing to get de-prioritised when team capacity is low. To ensure it remains consistent, relevant and timely, share the responsibility of content creation across your whole team, potentially with a formal rota.
- **CENTRE COMMUNITY VOICES:** make sure you're centring the voices and perspectives of the community your organisation serves as much as possible (e.g. ask your service-users to guest write a blog or take over your social media accounts for a day).
- **PUBLISH OUTSIDE YOUR 'ECHO-CHAMBER':** a great way to generate attention and build pipelines of new support is to publish thought leadership pieces in a diverse array of media outlets – and as much as possible, outlets outside the 'echo-chamber' of your cause area space.
- **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FREE TOOLS:** blog platforms such as **Medium** and **WordPress** let you publish beautifully formatted pieces for free, and resources like **Unsplash** have stunning banks of copyright-free images.



SPOTLIGHT: G(IRLS)20'S THOUGHT LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

For some thought leadership inspiration, head to the pages of **G(irls)20**, a Canadian charity that places young women at the centre of decision-making spaces. From the blog on its website, to its social media pages and external profiles – G(irls)20 is doing thought leadership right:

- They regularly publish timely blogs and opinion pieces on current events (e.g. **the effect of COVID-19 on young women**).
- They host events and webinars to convene their network and discuss important topics (e.g. **G(irls)20 Annual Leadership Forum**).
- Their CEO, Heather Barnabe, was featured in Air Canada's EnRoute airline magazine, in a hugely credible, impressive piece.
- They introduce and profile their team to give stakeholders a sense of who's behind the mission they're investing in.

- They aggregate their thought leadership content on their **website blog**.
- Their social media profiles are excellent, with fantastic community management and engagement (**Instagram, Facebook & Twitter**).





Events



INTRODUCTION

Events can often be a valuable component of fundraising, helping you cultivate, steward, acknowledge and even solicit donors. That said, events aren't the right solution for every organisation, and there are many misconceptions about the value they bring from a fundraising perspective. This section lists the pros and cons of event organising to help you figure out if they are the right choice for your non-profit.

EVENTS: WHY?

Events can bring enormous strategic value to your fundraising efforts:

- **RAISE YOUR PROFILE:** they can generate media attention, and raise awareness among key stakeholder groups.
- **RECRUIT NEW DONORS:** they are an efficient way to bring new people 'through the door'. Sometimes donors prefer to attend events and learn more about the organisation before committing to a one-to-one meeting – it's less pressure.
- **CULTIVATE AND STEWARD DONORS:** they allow you to share your successes and stories of impact, and provide learning and networking opportunities to your donors, as well as thanking them publicly for their support.
- **REWARD YOUR TEAM:** they provide a great platform to praise and recognise your staff and volunteers by showcasing the work they do.
- **GIVE YOUR SERVICE USERS A VOICE:** if your organisation supports individuals, events are a great way for them to share their stories with a broader audience and raise more awareness on a specific issue.
- **MAKE DONORS FEEL SPECIAL:** events, particularly intimate ones, can help you make donors feel special and more connected to your organisation.
- **SOLICIT DONATIONS:** depending on the local culture, and the nature of the event itself, events can offer an opportunity to solicit donations. However, this is not appropriate in all countries and circumstances.

EVENTS: WHY NOT?

As we mentioned, events are not always the right fundraising solution, especially if you are a very small organisation with limited capacity and a small budget. If you are planning to host one, here's what you should watch out for:

- **TIME:** organising a great event can take up a lot of time (usually more than you think!), steering attention away from other vital tasks.
- **MONEY:** unless you have hosted one before and know what to expect, events often end up costing more than expected.
- **STRESS:** there are so many moving pieces to the puzzle. Events can be stressful, particularly in the days leading up to them, when the pressure is higher on the team.
- **RISKS:** there are many risks involved, and you need to be ready to mitigate them. Always have a plan B (or C) ready to respond to 'unforeseen circumstances'. (e.g. main speaker not showing up, bad weather for outdoor event, etc.).
- **EXPECTATIONS:** events do not usually translate into instant donations. You need to be prepared for the long game, and manage expectations within your team. If what you are looking for is quick income generation, events are probably not the right answer for your organisation.

SHOULD I ORGANISE AN EVENT?

If you are considering the option of hosting an event for your non-profit, but you aren't sure if this is the best way to invest your resources right now, this checklist will help you and your team assess the opportunity:

- What is the goal of this event?
- Can we achieve this goal in a cheaper or more effective way?
- Do we have capacity to organise the event prep and follow up?
- Do we have the necessary internal resources to execute the event well (e.g. venue, speakers, etc)? If not, do we have the budget to pay for these resources?
- Is this the right / best time of the year for it (make sure to avoid summer, school holidays, festivities, etc.)?
- Do we have a solid list of invitees for it?
- Do we know what we need to do to get the 'right' people to attend?
- Considering the investment (time, resources), what would be the 'return on investment' of this event? Does this ROI justify the effort?
- What are the risks involved with hosting?

HOW DO I ORGANISE A (LOW-COST) EVENT?

If you decided that hosting an event is the right choice for your non-profit, here are a few quick tips to organise it successfully:

- **PLAN, PLAN, PLAN:** start as early as possible, and make detailed to-do lists with clear task allocation for your team members (creating a RACI framework can be very helpful).
- **SET OBJECTIVES:** ask yourself what success looks like to you and the team, so you can measure against your targets after the event. Remember, don't be overambitious when it comes to fundraising. Events are part of a long-term game, and are often not quick income generators.
- **SET A BUDGET:** set a budget limit, with plenty of contingency factored in (at least 10%).
- **POPULATE YOUR GUEST-LIST:** you need be strategic about who you invite, and create A-, B, and C-lists. If your venue has capacity limitations, you need to prioritise invitations to your A-list, and ask invitees to RSVP before you extend your invite to your B- and C-lists.
- **FOCUS ON THE USER EXPERIENCE:** if you want your event to be memorable, it needs to be engaging. Depending on the kind of event you are organising, this could involve having interesting speakers, a stunning venue, great nibbles and drinks, fun activities, etc. Make sure it's something you, yourself would be interested in attending.
- **ALWAYS FOLLOW UP:** getting the event done is just half of the work! Make a note to follow up with all your attendees to gather some feedback and get a few 1-1 catch ups in your diary.

HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO KEEP YOUR COSTS LOW

- **USE YOUR OWN SPACE:** if you have an office space, even if not perfect, it can serve as an event venue and even make donors feel closer to 'where the real action happens'.
- **SECURE SPONSORSHIP:** ask your network (Board, long-term supporters, donors and partners) if they can give you access to a free or discounted-rate venue and catering service.
- **BE FLEXIBLE:** if you start planning early, and you are flexible enough, you can benefit from discounted venue hire rates by picking off-peak time slots.
- **RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS:** if possible, leverage volunteers and internal staff as much as you can to make the event happen.
- **BE INFORMAL:** sometimes we think of donors as important people who will only attend high-profile, polished events. In reality, they'll most often attend an event because they care about the cause, or want to learn more. Having a fancy meal or venue is not essential for their experience.



SPOTLIGHT: EXXPEDITION'S LOW COST EVENTS

eXXpedition organises all-women sailing trips around the world, exploring the impact of and solutions to plastic in our ocean. In combination with its global sailing and science programme, the non-profit runs extremely successful on-shore events such as socials, talks, panels, workshops and clean-ups, aimed to engage, educate and drive action. Over the years, its small team has perfected the art of event planning by leveraging their strengths:

FORMING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: to make the biggest impact with the smallest budget, eXXpedition collaborates with venues, partners, media and local groups all over the world. These partnerships are made with key stakeholders who have the same aim (stopping plastic pollution), and therefore who benefit from promoting their work to an-already receptive audience. This creates the conditions for partners to justify their costs and involvement.

CURATING ENGAGING EXPERIENCES: eXXpedition wants to ensure the people involved in their events are feeling energised by them (both those supporting and attending). To do this, events are carefully curated, and the team always ensures

the format and venue suit the local culture of the country they are visiting, as well as the intended audience.

LEVERAGING ASSETS: by virtue of being a sailing expedition non-profit, eXXpedition has access to some great and exciting venues. In the past, the team have run events on their own boat, and at aquariums, beaches, science museums, marina offices, university lecture theatres, co-working spaces, dive shops, and more. The organisation is very flexible, and able to adapt to more 'unusual' circumstances, if they are financially convenient.

ADAPTING TO CHANGES: with the outbreak of COVID-19, eXXpedition had to move all its events online. This has given the team an opportunity to not only run panels and talks they were already planning, but also to test new (and low-cost) ways of engaging its audiences. For example, they have organised working groups and networking across country borders – something which is going to create an even bigger impact in the long-term.



Up Next...

Congratulations – you are officially done! But before you go, check out our Cool Down section for some bonus fundraising resources and a final reflection on (and celebration of) your progress.



COOL DOWN & FINAL REFLECTIONS

Congratulations – you have made it to the end of the Guide! We really hope you enjoyed the experience, and that you have learnt some valuable lessons for your non-profit, but also for your personal growth as a fundraiser. In this final section, you will find some additional bonus resources, as well as have the opportunity to re-assess your fundraising knowledge and skills to evaluate (and celebrate) your progress so far.

- **BONUS RESOURCES**
- **FINAL REFLECTION**
- **RE-ASSESSMENT TEST**
- **THANK YOU & SEE YOU SOON!**

Bonus Resources

Throughout the Guide, we recommended several resources that offer a more in-depth view into certain topics, and there are few final ones we think you should check out before you go:



WHAT DONORS WANT: A PODCAST BY I.G. ADVISORS

The premise of our podcast is simple: to have fresh, dynamic (and slightly irreverent) conversations about major gifts fundraising with donors themselves – giving fundraisers advice straight from the donor's mouth. Each episode, we interview a different kind of donor and get right down to it: what do they actually want from the fundraisers who cultivate them?

With past guests ranging from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to the Hewlett Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Walmart.org, and several philanthropists, we've had a tremendous response from organisations across the world who use the show as a training resource. You can find the show on **iTunes** and **Spotify** – and if you have a burning question you'd like to ask one of our future guests, please submit it **here**!



NON-PROFIT FUNDRAISING ESSENTIALS: ACUMEN ACADEMY

Twice a year, our friends at the **Acumen Academy** run a free six-week '**Non-profit Fundraising Essentials**' course, which nicely complements the key lessons you have learnt in this Field Guide. The course is a great opportunity to connect with other fundraisers who are facing similar challenges, and will help you consolidate your knowledge on:

- The importance of an entrepreneurial mindset for non-profit fundraising and why you should not feel fear or shame when asking for money.
- The different sources of non-profit funding.
- The process of developing a budget and recognising your funding gaps.
- Potential donors who share your values and how to build lasting relationships, rather than transactions.
- How to share your non-profit's impact with storytelling strategies and win supporters for your social or environmental cause.

Make sure you check out their website to find out when you can next enrol!



Final Reflection

START, STOP, CONTINUE

The last activity we want to invite you and your team to conduct is called 'Start, Stop, Continue.' This is an opportunity to reflect on – and celebrate – what you've learnt through this Guide and make key decisions around your organisation's fundraising priorities. It will allow you to gather your team's inputs on what activities, systems and processes your organisation needs to start, stop or continue doing or using, and agree a process for future implementation.

OBJECTIVE

To agree on the activities, systems and processes your organisation should start, stop or continue doing to improve fundraising success.

YOU WILL NEED

- A room (or a virtual meeting) in which to discuss as a group
- Post-It notes, or scraps of paper
- A wall, whiteboard or digital whiteboard (e.g. **Google Jamboard**) to share and sort ideas

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE

STEP 1

Divide the space on your whiteboard or wall into three areas and label them as follows:

Start

Things you should start doing, which would improve the quality of your work and contribute to making your fundraising strategy more effective

Stop

Things you realise are not the best use of your time, detrimental to your organisation, or prevent you from successfully pursuing your fundraising goals

Continue

Things that you already do, and you believe you should continue doing, as they make your fundraising efforts efficient and effective

STEP 2

Ask your team to take some time to reflect on everything you've learnt during the process of reading the Guide. Think about any 'aha moments', or anything that caught your attention and made you want to change the way you do fundraising at your organisation. Give everyone 10 minutes to write down as many ideas as they can, one per Post-It.

STEP 3

Ask each team member to stick all their Post-Its on the wall, under each category, depending on whether they'd like to start, stop or continue doing that activity. Try to group ideas into thematic clusters so clear patterns emerge.

STEP 4

Once everyone is done, facilitate a group discussion to collectively reflect on all the learnings and agree on what needs to be changed (start & stop), and what should remain the same (continue). If there are too many ideas to sort through, have everyone vote for their top three.

WHAT NEXT?

Make sure all ideas are captured and any action points are allocated to the relevant team members who are going to ensure these changes actually take place. You can use the RACI Framework to agree on who should be Responsible, Accountable, Consulted or Informed for each of those action points.

Re-Assessment Test

INTRODUCTION

In the Warm Up, we invited you to take a test to assess your general knowledge about the Donor Journey and your readiness to start the process. We'd now like to invite you to re-take some of those tests after completing your journey through the Guide to evaluate your progress on:

- 1. Your understanding of the Donor Journey and what that means for your organisation's fundraising strategy.
- 2. Your knowledge, skills and confidence as a fundraiser.

Bonus: even better if you can take this test a third time in 6 months, once you have started implementing your strategy and have had a chance to put your learning into practice.

DONOR JOURNEY

Rate the 6 sets of statements below on a scale 1-5. Then add up your totals and compare the results against the ones you obtained in the Warm Up phase.

IDENTIFICATION	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We know who our priority donor audiences are / should be (e.g. foundations, governments, etc.)					
We can articulate the specific qualities of our ideal donor(s)					
We have a systematised list of potential donors (i.e. a prospect pipeline)					
We know what information to look for when researching prospective donors					
We have a network of people who can help us meet our fundraising goals (e.g. by donating to our organisation, introducing us to other donors, etc.)					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

MOTIVATION	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We know what drives our donors to engage with our cause area, and organisation					
We know what our donors need or want from our organisation					
We feel comfortable asking our donors about their motivations for giving					
We know what our donors' concerns or worries about our work might be					
Our communications (e.g. social media, articles, website, reports) are written with specific donor audiences in mind					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

CULTIVATION	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We know how to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with donors					
We have an internal system that helps us plan and manage relationships with donors and other external stakeholders					
We have an existing 'offer' of experiences to engage your donors					
Our organisation is ready / equipped to organise engaging donor events					
Our team members have everything they need to confidently engage with donors					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

SOLICITATION	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We have a defined organisational pitch and donor materials to use when we want to make an 'ask'					
We know the right time to make an 'ask' with our donors					
We know the right way to position an 'ask' with donors					
We know how to write dynamic and inspiring funding proposals					
We know how to appropriately respond to a rejection					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We have effective ways to recognise and thank our donors that feel personal and unique					
The way our organisation acknowledges donors reflects our values and mission					
We know how our donors like to be acknowledged and recognised for their contributions					
We know how to write emails and thank you notes for our donors					
We know whether our donors feel valued and acknowledged					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

STEWARDSHIP	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
We have a personalised and diarised engagement plan for our donors					
We have compelling experiences we can offer donors					
We fully leverage our organisation's existing assets to engage our donors					
We are able to meaningfully keep our donors in the loop when our plans change or things go wrong					
We know how to write dynamic and inspiring funding reports					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT: HOW MUCH DO I KNOW ABOUT FUNDRAISING?

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT TEST	I STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	2	3	4	I STRONGLY AGREE 5
I have a thorough understanding of how relationship-based fundraising differs from fundraising from other sources					
I have a thorough understanding of the practical, day-to-day elements of relationship-based fundraising					
I have personally built and managed relationships with high-value audiences – either in this role or in a past role					
I fully understand what is needed from me to support my organisation's fundraising ambitions					
I feel I have the time and skills needed to fulfil my organisation's expectations					
I feel like I have enough professional development opportunities to improve my fundraising skills					
I enjoy the process of fundraising					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

Thank You & See You Soon!

Thank you for using our Field Guide to Relationship-Based Fundraising! We hope you enjoyed reading it– and that you took this opportunity to develop your fundraising skills, and build a successful and achievable fundraising strategy for your non-profit.

If you'd like to share your experience with us, or have any further questions, please reach out to the I.G. team at info@ig-advisors.com, or give us a shout on **Twitter** (@IG_Advisors) and we'll be happy to connect with you.

Until then – happy fundraising!





GLOSSARY

Throughout the Guide, we use lots of fundraising terminology and want to break this down for you.

- ANNUAL BUDGET:** a plan for an organisation's expenditures over a fiscal year, which balances income with expenses.
- ASK:** a request you make to a donor for support.
- ASSET MAPPING:** identifying the assets that are unique to your organisation and could be leveraged to successfully engage donors.
- CASE FOR SUPPORT:** a well-written, compelling proposition that highlights everything a donor needs to know to make an informed decision about a gift. You can either use this document as a proposal itself, or as a 'language bank' you can repurpose if you need to submit a proposal in a donor's format.
- CONSORTIUM:** a structure that enables organisations to join forces and / or pool their resources to achieve a common goal.
- CULTIVATION PLAN:** a tactical plan that outlines 'touch points' for donor engagement activities. These include sharing relevant content, or inviting them to a meeting or event.
- DONOR JOURNEY:** a framework that helps you identify your target donor audiences (identification) and understand why they make the giving choices they do (motivation), as well as track how and when you communicate to them (cultivation, solicitation, acknowledgement, stewardship).
- DONOR OFFERING:** the range of experiences and benefits you offer donors to keep them engaged during the cultivation and stewardship phases.
- DONOR PERSONA:** a detailed profile of an existing or aspirational donor. Typically, it addresses key facts that are relevant for you when tailoring your fundraising approach.
- DONOR-CENTRED APPROACH:** a relationship-based fundraising approach that puts your donors and their needs at the centre of your thinking process.
- ELEVATOR PITCH:** a brief, compelling speech you use to quickly spark interest in your organisation.
- ENDGAME:** the specific role your organisation wishes to play in confronting an overall impact challenge in your sector.
- FISCAL SPONSOR:** a registered entity that has tax-exempt status and can accept donations from your donors on your behalf.
- FULL COST RECOVERY:** a budgeting process that enables non-profits to calculate what they should 'charge' donors to recover a portion of their overhead costs when submitting a project-based proposal.
- FUNDRAISING STRATEGY:** a plan of action designed to generate income for non-profits.
- GIFT TABLE:** a tool to break down the gift sizes and timelines needed to achieve overall budget targets.
- HIGH-NET-WORTH INDIVIDUAL (HNWI):** an individual person that holds financial assets with a value greater than \$1 million USD.

HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN:	<p>a creative process to design new products, which consists of three phases.</p> <p>1.INSPIRATION: you conduct research and learn directly from the people you're designing for (i.e. your donors) by speaking to, or interacting with them to deeply understand their needs.</p> <p>2.IDEATION: you make sense of what you've learned, identify opportunities for design and prototype possible solutions.</p> <p>3.IMPLEMENTATION: you bring your solution to life.</p>
IMPACT DASHBOARD:	a tool you can use to collect and monitor data to measure your impact.
IMPACT:	the positive change your work specifically has created in the world.
IN-KIND:	any type of non-financial support given by a donor (e.g. venue space, software, skills, etc.)
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs):	the indicators used to measure an individual's or team's progress and success. In the context of fundraising, these should not be limited to the amount of money raised.
MAJOR DONOR:	an individual who makes a gift (often a HNWI).
MISSION STATEMENT:	a brief description of what your organisation does, how it does it, and who it does it for. Ideally this should be no more than 12 words and include at least one active verb.
NEXT GENERATION DONORS (I.E. NEXT GENS):	younger wealth holders (or inheritors), usually High-Net-Worth Individuals between the ages of 20–45.
OUTCOMES:	what happens as a direct result of your outputs.
OUTPUTS:	the activities done by your organisation.
PESTLE ANALYSIS:	the assessment of the external factors (Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental) that may potentially impact your organisation's success and sustainability.
PITCH DECK:	a document that illustrates the partnership opportunities available to your donors, and can be sent as a follow-up material after a first meeting.
PITCHING:	the art of selling an idea or request to someone.
PORTFOLIO:	in the context of fundraising, it refers to the number, stage and type of donor relationships a person is responsible for.
PROSPECT PIPELINE:	a database of all current and prospective donors that align with your organisation's mission, activities, and funding needs.
PROSPECTING:	researching prospective donors to build a donor pipeline.
RACI FRAMEWORK:	it stands for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed, and is a tool used to distinguish between the varying levels of involvement of team members in specific activities.

RELATIONSHIP-BASED FUNDRAISING:	an approach to fundraising and partnership building that focuses on the relationship between a non-profit and its donors, and centres the human element.
RESTRICTED FUNDING:	funding that is ringfenced to a specific programme or project.
RISK-ADJUSTED FORECASTING:	an approach to income forecasting that factors in the probability of success for each prospect.
SMART GOALS:	a framework used to ensure the financial targets you set for your strategy are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-based.
SWOT ANALYSIS:	the assessment of your organisation's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.
TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS / TAX-EFFICIENT GIVING:	contributions of money or goods to a tax-exempt organisation, such as a charity. Tax deductible donations can reduce taxable income.
THEORY OF CHANGE:	a tool you can use to articulate your work (Outputs) and connect it to your bigger goals (Vision). Your Theory of Change should outline causal linkages between the Problem you are trying to solve, your activities (Outputs), your Outcomes and your broader Aims and Vision.
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP:	a type of content where you tap into the talent, experience and passion of your organisation and community to explore key thematic questions for your target audience.
ULTRA-HIGH-NET-WORTH INDIVIDUAL (UHNWI):	an individual person that holds financial assets with a value greater than \$30 million USD.
UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION:	your Unique Selling Points (USP), or the description of what makes your organisation compelling to donors and partners, particularly in comparison to other comparable non-profits they might choose to support.
UNRESTRICTED FUNDING:	funding that is not ringfenced to a specific programme or project, and allows you to be more responsive and independent.
VISION STATEMENT:	a brief description of the ultimate goal and version of success your organisation is working towards (i.e. the world it wants to see).

References

RESOURCES MENTIONED THROUGHOUT THE GUIDE:

- Acumen Academy: Nonprofit Fundraising Essentials
- Adelphi University, Centre for Profit Leadership: Board of Directors Assessment.
- Anand Giridharadas: Winners Take All
- Cass Business School, University of London: Cost recovery Tools for success: Doing the right things and doing them right
- Edgar Vilanueva: Decolonizing Wealth
- Global Giving: Checklist - Master Nonprofit Storytelling Fundamentals
- Grantspace: What is fiscal sponsorship? How do I find a fiscal sponsor?
- I.G. Advisors: What Donors Want Podcast
- IDEO: Human-Centered Design
- Inspiring Fundraising: Writing a Case for Support
- Rogare: The donor-centred baby and the community-centric bathwater Is an accord between the two philosophies possible?
- Small Charity Finance: Budgets, Management Accounts & Cash Flow Forecasting
- Small Charity Finance: Principles of Good Impact Reporting
- Social Misfits Media: Make it Social - Tips & Tricks for #SocialMedia Success
- Stanford Social Innovation Review: Getting Results: Outputs, Outcomes and Impact
- Stanford Social Innovation Review: What's Your Endgame?
- Top Nonprofits: Example Mission Statements
- Top Nonprofits: Example Vision Statements
- CAF Venturesome and European Venture Philanthropy Association: Social enterprises: A hybrid spectrum

TECH SOLUTIONS MENTIONED THROUGHOUT THE GUIDE:

- Medium
- WordPress
- Unsplash
- Google Jamboard

Developed by:

Jasmine Awad
Rachel Stephenson Sheff
Emily Collins-Ellis
Alisha Miranda
Lauren Gross
Gabriela Cervera
Amy Whight
Emma Nilsson

With special thanks to Jasmine Awad for her leadership on this project.

Designed by:

Felicity Hamilton, Social Misfits Media

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