Fundraising Tips and Tricks for Small to Medium Sized Organizations

As a nonprofit organization, seeking a grant to support research, a fellowship, or other funding from a charitable organization is key to your daily operations. Understanding what type of funding is right for your organization is important to the growth and sustainability of your work.

Types of Fundraising and Revenue Generation

1. Federal Nutrition Program Reimbursements
2. Community Fundraising
3. Grants

Federal Nutrition Program Reimbursement

Participating in a federal nutrition program provides reimbursements to sponsors for meals served. This reimbursement covers food and operation costs. Non-school community organizations can participate in the Summer Feeding Service Program (SFSP) or the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to receive reimbursement for meals served to children aged 0-18. If program sponsorship is not an option for your organization, consider becoming a site under another organization's sponsorship. This allows your program to provide meals without the burden of purchasing or procuring meals. Need help becoming or finding a sponsor? Reach out to bestpractices@strength.org.

- [Learn more about SFSP](#)
- [Learn more about CACFP](#)

Community Fundraising

Donations can come from local businesses and community members. Donations tend to be unrestricted funds and can come in many forms, from event ticket sales, online fundraising campaigns, and planned giving. Listed below are examples of different types of community fundraising and where you can learn more about implementation.

Event-Based Fundraising

Events can range from a small backyard picnic with neighbors to a formal fundraising gala. The size and scope of your event will depend on your fundraising goals and staff capacity.

Community Fundraising

Online Fundraising
Add a "donate now" button to your website, digital newsletters, and social media handles to allow fast and easy collections of donations.

Social Media fundraisers can be a quick way to engage your audience in fundraising without utilizing a large amount of staff capacity. Facebook and Instagram allow individuals to create fundraisers on their profiles that encourage their followers to donate to a specific nonprofit.

Matching Donations
Encourage donors to have their gifts matched by their employer if qualified. Automate the matching donation process through a follow-up email or text message after an individual donation. Ask donors to share their receipts with their employer to encourage the employer to match the donation.

Outreach
The same promotion you do to inform the community of your organization's programming can be used to solicit donations. Showing the impact of your work through news stories, radio ads, social media, and other avenues can increase brand recognition and potential donations. Include a call for donations in all external media communications.

Planned Giving and Estate Bequests
Remind current donors or add a page to your website with basic reminders to consider leaving a gift via their will or beneficiary designation through insurance or an IRA account. Include suggested language like "I give and devise to NONPROFIT located in State, XX (Tax ID #YY-XXXXX) the sum of $ ____ to be used for its general purposes."

Want to learn more? Explore trainings and resources focused on fundraising skills building and innovation.
- Network for Good
- Get Fully Funded
- The Fundraising Authority
- M+R's Guide to Effective and Ethical Direct Response Creative
- Planned Giving

Grants

Grants are a way for governments, non-profits, foundations, and other companies to fund specific projects or organizational work. Grants typically require a grant proposal where the organization outlines its project, budget, and rationale for the funds.

Application

To be considered for funding, the grantee must submit an application (sometimes called a proposal or grant) by a specific deadline. Sometimes, a funder will only accept applications by organizations it has invited to submit. Other funders have an open application policy. *Funders are very unlikely to provide a grant to support work outside their specific mission or priorities.*

Grant Guidelines

Each funder creates unique guidelines (or questions) that the grantee must answer in their application. These guidelines usually pertain to how the funds will be spent, the communities impacted, and expected outcomes.

Budget

Most grants require a budget of projected project costs in the grant application. Commonly, a percentage of organizational overhead costs can be included in the project budget.

Grants Review

Once you submit your application, the funder will review and score it based on how thoroughly you answered the application question and how closely your request fits the funder's mission. You will receive written notice that you have been awarded the grant or if your application has been denied.

Reporting & Stewardship

If you have been awarded a grant, you are required to report on your progress throughout the grant term, how you used the money, and any other measurable impacts the funder requires. Through the reporting process, you can also provide impact information that can help you to seek renewed funding from the funder.

Want to learn more? These organizations specialize in teaching grant writing and reporting.

- Candid Learning
- Nonprofit Ready

Looking for grants? Subscribe to No Kid Hungry's Center for Best Practices What's New Newsletter. Many non-profits, foundations, and government agencies advertise their grants through email listservs and websites. Subscribe to newsletters to receive grant-information regularly.