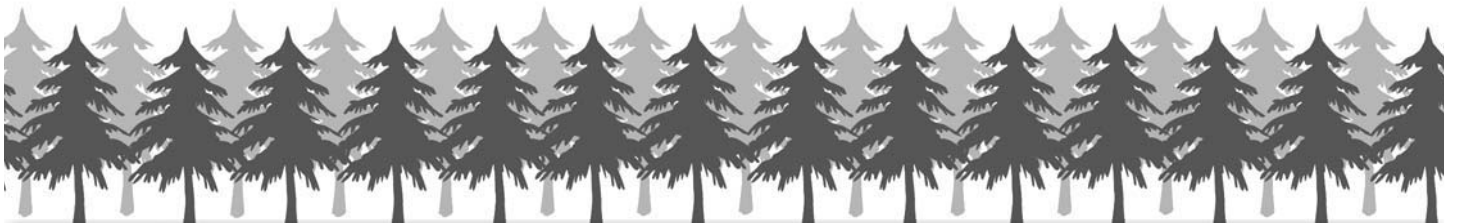

13. Fundraising



13. Fundraising

Introduction

Fundraising, a necessary component of many organizations' financial picture, can be undertaken using a variety of approaches. Community groups often rely on local fund raising and/or grants from established funders as their main source of fundraising and have long-term relationships with them. In other cases, funding and fundraising involves generating revenue from other sources. Here are a few examples:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Donations of money• In-kind donations• Sponsorship• Ticket sales (to events or shows)• Earned revenue (money from selling whatever the group's product or service is) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raffles and draws• Income from a separate but connected business venture (i.e. a food booth at a game)• Special fundraising events such as dinners or dances |
|---|--|

A combination of fundraising efforts can be pursued, and may vary from year to year depending on the state of the overall budget of the group and community capacity to help undertake fundraising or respond to requests. As well, a balance needs to be maintained in the types of fundraising efforts and the return on the investment of time. Sometimes fundraising is done for a one occasion event (i.e. take youth to the First Nations Games) and other times it is to augment or increase the regular budget.

Fundraising Strategies

Regardless of the amount of revenue needed or the number of activities you are going to attempt, a fundraising strategy is recommended. The strategy (fundraising plan) will help to identify: potential sources of funding; the approach to be used to access it; who will do the presentation (sometimes called "the pitch"); and who will make the actual request (sometimes called "the ask").

A board of directors may have a fundraising committee that takes the lead role on fundraising, or the senior staff person may play a significant role, and in some cases a professional fundraiser may be hired. The rule of thumb is the higher the amount of funding, the more involvement necessary from the most senior people in the organization, and the more need for professional advice. An example of a large fundraising project might be a capital campaign to build or renovate a building and a smaller one could be a bake sale run by a church or school.

Industry and businesses in the north usually have a community donation fund and a set policy that outlines what they will support and how much they can give any one cause or request. Knowing your community and having a solid fundraising strategy makes it possible to approach a variety of people, groups and companies for many things big and small.

Some of the key things to consider in a strategy are to:

- Try to do the same thing at the same time each year if you have annual fundraising drives.
- If an activity works well, do it again – if it doesn't work, find out why and figure out what would.
- Fundraising should be linked to marketing efforts and visible community activities.
- Be honest in your fundraising materials.
- Using professional assistance for fundraising might be a good investment.

How to Fundraise

Most people donate either time or money to worthwhile causes on a regular basis. Generosity and support can take many forms so no contribution should be overlooked. We sometimes think that fundraising should be part of the normal business of the organization and that anyone can do it, when in fact the opposite is true. It takes time and careful thought and there are specialized skills involved. If your organization is not good at fundraising or is doing it for the first time, get some advice from another similar community organization that has this experience. Fundraising should not be casual or careless.

Soliciting funds through a fundraising strategy, with dedicated people to implement it, will show the community or potential donors what you are aiming for, why it is important to donate or get involved, where their money will be used, who endorses the group and who is ultimately accountable for the funds. Brochures or posters are common tools to support larger fundraising events, as are testimonials or champions who will endorse the group or the fundraising activity. Successful fundraising comes from careful planning to identify the best options and approaches, the message you want to deliver and the ways to deliver it.

Northerners often say. . . “charity or asking for money for a good cause is one thing but giving people a chance to win something really gets people reaching for their wallets”.

Keep in mind that when seeking larger amounts of money from investors, sponsors or donations, they will want to see a business plan or an overview of what they are investing in. Credibility needs to be established so that everyone trusts that the money will be used in a way that makes sense and, most importantly that it will be used and accounted for based on why it was requested. It is not a good idea to raise funds for one thing and spend it on another. Reporting back after the fundraising activities are complete is one way to thank everyone and let them know where the money, effort and time went – and often it helps build support for next time.

Proposal Writing

When applying for grants, an application must be filled out, often accompanied by a proposal. It helps to consider that any fundraising approach is basically a proposal – meaning that you (your organization) is proposing that someone invest in your activity, group or cause either in kind or in dollars. The tools required could be anything from a basic proposal explaining what you are asking for to a formal written proposal outlining what the organization is all about, why you need money, how it will be used, where and how it connects to the funders mandate, what the benefit to the community will be, how many people will benefit and who will be responsible for the funds once they are received.

Most recognized funders have their own grant or proposal format and want to have basic information provided in that way. It doesn't hurt to put additional promotional materials in with a proposal, particularly if the material is professional and adds value. Fill in the blanks on the application form as clearly and concisely as possible, ensuring that you answer the question being asked in the grant application. Use the proposal as a supplement or additional piece of information.

If the proposal is being written as the sole tool for funding, make sure that it is as complete as possible, outlining successes of the organization, who it serves and why it is important to the community as well as why it is important to the people from whom you are requesting funding and how it supports their mandate (what's in it for them).

A plan is also a good addition to proposals as it outlines the immediate and long-term goals, the financial overview and projections, and it provides names and contact information for the board of directors of the organization applying for funds. All of these tools can be written into a conventional paper proposal and/or made into an attractive power point presentation or short video. Use technology and pictures as much as possible to show the “story” – and to be clear about what you want and why you want it – and to show them (the potential funder, sponsor or donor) why they want it too.



The Northern Context

Northerners are good fundraisers, mostly because we have to be. We are also hard workers when it comes to volunteering for events that are designed to raise money. In the north, fundraising is done in the context of knowing what sorts of things people might be interested in investing in or giving money for and knowing who can be approached and for what. And, because most communities are small and closely knit, there is a need to share, take turns and be aware of limits and competition for funds.

Normally there is a great deal of common sense and a whole lot of fun associated with fundraising events in northern Saskatchewan. Finding activities for fundraising that suit northerners is not difficult. Promoting things based on our northern values, interests and wallets (and being careful to not have too many groups seeking public donations at the same time) are all worthwhile considerations. In the north things cost more and as the level of involvement in sport, culture and recreation increases, so too will the need for more diverse and sophisticated fundraising.

13. Fundraising

What's Important to Know?

- ★ Fundraising and grant seeking should be linked to your organization's vision and mandate – don't just chase money for the sake of having it.
- ★ State the specific need and how funds will be used – not just “we need to raise money”.
- ★ Fundraising takes skill, a plan and dedicated and credible people to implement it.
- ★ Grants change – keep a list of funders and what works best for each one.
- ★ Community can get overloaded with funding requests; work with other groups and partners to coordinate efforts.
- ★ Foundations are a good source of funding but they take a bit of research to locate.
- ★ Champions (credible, famous, representative of your cause) are good motivators for donations and fundraising.

Tips and Advice

1. Keep notes on each person or group's donation and what they donated.
2. Raising money is one thing but accounting for it is another – be good at both.
3. Develop a basic funding proposal and tweak it for different audiences.
4. For each request provide contact information and the timeline for donations.
5. Leave a brochure or promotional material behind as a reminder of your request.
6. Try to find annual contributors and establish good relationships with them.
7. Follow up reports take time but are very important, so is saying thank you!



Story

Northern communities have to raise a lot of money for sport, culture and recreation, and they do it well. Hatchet Lake raised \$4,000 for their recreation program this winter through Bravo Bingo and Bravo Crib Tournament. Stanley Mission are also good community fundraisers. Their annual poker rally raises approximately \$20,000.00 each year. Everything that Canoe Lake does requires fundraising. The majority of fundraising is done through bingos and raffles. Some comes from wild rice harvesting and grants such as the Saskatchewan Lotteries Community Grant or the Northern Lights Community Development Corporation Grants. They raise approximately \$200,000 each year.

“Sandy Bay needs employment in our community. If not for grant programs, students will not have jobs. The past few years, our grant programs have been successful with on-going summer programs. It keeps our students, youth, and elders active and busy all summer.” – Paul Morin, Sandy Bay

“Without fundraising in northern communities our children and families would not be able to participate in anything. It takes a lot of money to have a community cultural festival or take youth to a provincial games program or conference.” – Derek Sylvestre, Turnor Lake

Toolbox Connection

In the toolbox you will find the following tools related to this section:

- Fundraising Events Checklist
- Seven Common Errors With Grants
- How To Write A Proposal
- Overview of a Grant Proposal – Template Example
- Seven Things To Do Before Writing Your Grant Proposal
- Sections of the Grant
- Do's and Don'ts of Proposal Writing
- Writing and Layout Tips