



Access Panel Network

Training Guides

A guide to
fundraising

Fundraising is essential to any group or project if it is to survive or succeed. In this guide we look at how you can make the most of your fundraising activities.

Develop your fundraising goals

You should have goals for the amount of money you need to raise, plus what the money will be used for.

- Will you use it for renting buildings, paying people or travel expenses?
- To fund an ongoing or new project?
- To develop an emergency fund for a future rainy day?

You will likely have a number of goals. If so, develop a fundraising plan for each one. Goals should be developed with your trustees, and have the trustee's approval. Having your trustees involvement will also encourage them to participate in the fundraising itself.



Write down your fundraising plan

It is important not to just fly from one fundraising scheme to the next. Develop a written plan that states how much you need to raise, who you will get this money from, and how you will do it. Don't worry; the plan can be changed as you develop your project. Not all of your ideas will work out, or you may find new ways of raising funds along the way.

Start with your current projects and current funding. Do you have enough money or is there a gap? Do you want to do more but don't have the funds? This first stage of financial accounting will help you to work out what your goal should be for your more fundraising.

Estimate how much your fundraising project will cost

Include costs such as postage, creating a website, running special events and managing the volunteers who will help you raise funds.

Be realistic when estimating costs, but plan to use cost-efficient methods so that costs don't use all your fundraising proceeds. Most experts recommend that fundraising and overall administrative costs should not exceed 25% of your overall operating budget. In other words, three-quarters of your expenses should be spent on doing what you were meant to do!

Develop a timeline for your fundraising plan

Fill in a year's calendar with specific activities, and identify who will manage each of those projects. Go further by developing timelines for each fundraising activity, such as the direct mail campaign, the online activity, or a special event.

The timeline will change during the year, but having one to start with will ensure that you get something accomplished. Make sure you keep your plan up-to-date.

Identify funding sources

Make the most of the money you already have. Can current resources be spread out to produce more income? Are there audiences you are not tapping into? Have you considered government grants? Community groups, churches or universities? How about product sales or other ways of achieving earned income? Do you have the capacity to ask for funds online?

Evaluate your fundraising plan during the year

Evaluation will improve your results. Plan to evaluate what you are doing every few months. Develop what criteria you will use, such as amount raised, number of new sponsors, how many contacts you've made with organisations, improvement in fundraising activities. What accounted for the biggest successes? What were the biggest challenges? What should you change, drop, or add? Most importantly, what did you achieve?

If you want donations you have to ask for them

Newspaper articles don't raise much money, and only the very best newsletters raise money. A donation box at the back of the annual report doesn't raise much money either.

Asking people directly and passionately raises money. There are few shortcuts to this. And here's the downside – the most effective ways of raising money today are also those that tend to upset people. Stopping people in the street and asking them for money is highly effective – but many people don't like it.

So if you want to raise money you have to ask people for it. You can't do this under your breath, in passing, 'would you just', 'could you just' type of asking. You need to be proud, direct and passionate when you ask, whether it is in person, over the telephone, by letter or to a room full of supporters. And who should do that asking? The Convener and trustees are often the best people to do it. Sponsors like to meet the Convener and feel flattered if they are asked by them. Trustees are even better: they give their time for free because they care so much about the cause.

So, fundraising involves asking, and the trustees, guided, coached and helped by the fundraisers, are often the best people to do it.

Why do people give?

For an organisation that is trying to raise money, understanding why people give is useful. Here are a few of the most important reasons why people give:

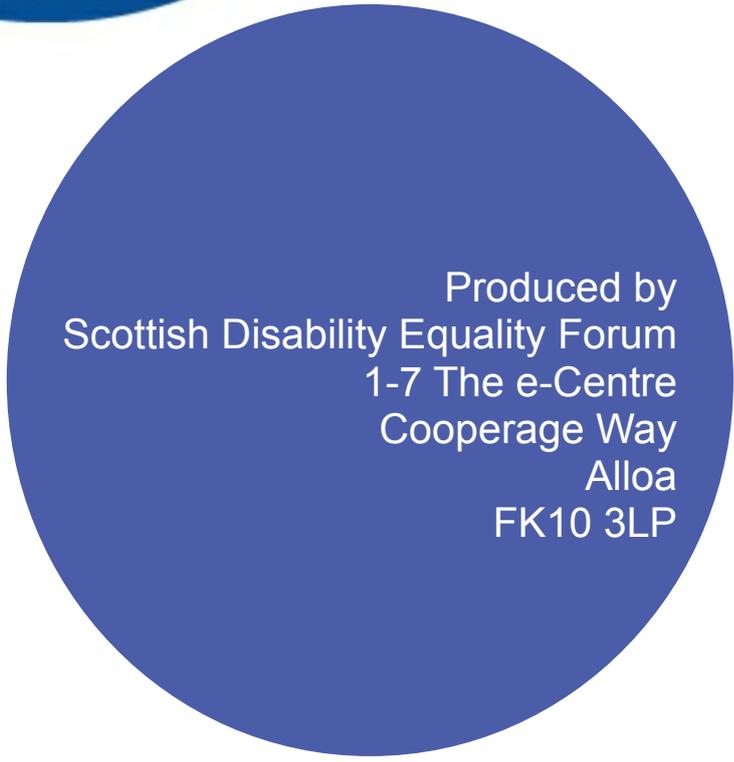
- They are personally affected by the cause (think cancer or heart disease).
- They are thankful that they aren't affected by the cause (think cancer or heart disease).
- They want to have fun and be part of something (think Red Nose Day).
- They share the values and ideals of the organisation (think human rights).
- They empathise with the victims or beneficiaries (think Haiti earthquake).
- They can get a bargain (think charity shops).
- They want to help their community (think school fundraising).
- They trust the person asking (think street fundraising).

This doesn't cover every reason why people will give money, but perhaps the important thing to emphasise is that when you are raising money, it really helps to understand what might motivate the people you are appealing to. If you're not sure what is motivating people, perhaps they won't be sure why they should give.

For further help on funding, see also: [A Guide to Funding](#)



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