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Chief Officers 3rd Sector

THE CO3 LEADERS' GUIDE TO FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

Building Sustainability Through Diversified Income

INTRODUCTION
ABOUT CO3

CO3 is the leading representative body for the leaders of the Community & Voluntary sector all over Northern Ireland. We work to increase skills, capacity and the visibility of the third sector through a collaborative model that creates a space for information sharing, training, development and support.

CO3 has 900 members comprising chief executives, senior managers, chairs and trustees of community and voluntary organisations. We connect and convene members and decision makers together to learn and share from one another through a range of forums, events and networking opportunities.

Established in 1985, CO3 has a long history of supporting, developing and representing the leaders of Northern Ireland's charities, community organisations and social enterprises.

OUR VISION

...what success looks like

'a fair and connected society with a vibrant, valued third sector, led by influential leaders, delivering outstanding impact.'

OUR MISSION

...we will achieve our vision by

'Developing inspirational, innovative and highly skilled third sector leaders.'

OUR VALUES

- Courage
- Empowering Leadership
- Unity
- Quality
- Social Justice
- Integrity

This CO3 Leaders' Guide to Financial Resilience sets out the key principles of successful income generation to support sustainability. It is designed for community and voluntary sector leaders and provides an essential toolkit and reference complete with real life examples of great practice and successful income generation.

A key aspect of our support for leaders in the sector is providing vital resources and education on developing and sustaining a financially resilient organisation.

The CO3 Leaders' Guide to Financial Resilience is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ALICE GARRAD

With over 35 years' experience, Alice Garrad is a seasoned fundraising professional, trainer and mentor with a track record of achievement as both consultant and practitioner. Based in Northern Ireland since 1997, Alice has also worked extensively in GB, ROI and internationally.

Alice's trademarks are her breadth of vision and sound judgement gleaned from working with charities, large and small, local, national and international, spanning all sectors. Her excellent interpersonal skills have created long standing relationships with clients, and within the sector generally, both sides of the Irish Sea.

Before setting up her own consultancy, Alice led Save the Children's London-based corporate fundraising team. Under Alice's leadership, income doubled to £6 million per year. She also pioneered Save's first major donor campaign, laying the foundations for today's multi-million-pound programme.

Alice's early move from a successful career in commercial marketing into a career in fundraising is testament to her life-long passion and commitment to making a difference. Her fundraising career has generated many millions for causes as diverse as international development, learning disability, hospice care and human rights.

Through this publication, and as a long-standing mentor for CO3, Alice is now focused on sharing her knowledge and experience with VCSE leaders starting out on their fundraising journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks go to the Pro Bono Editorial Panel - Amanda Horton-Mastin, Jennie Meadows, Alison Pavier and Helen Varma whose time, wisdom and immense fundraising knowledge has enriched this publication beyond measure.

And a huge thank you to Tim Kerr for his patience and encouragement.

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CONTRIBUTORS

KAREN GALLAGHER

Karen Gallagher has 27 years' experience in the Northern Ireland VCSE sector as a senior fundraising practitioner, fundraising consultant and interim leader.

In her consultancy role, Karen advises charities and NGOs on how to achieve funding sustainability and improve return on investment across their income generation channels. Clients include Children in Crossfire, USPCA, East Belfast Mission and Cancer Fund for Children.

Since participating in CO3's Interim Leadership Development Programme, Karen has also held interim leadership roles in organisations as diverse as Christian Aid Ireland and Children's Heartbeat Trust, building a reputation as an effective and resilient leader.

Karen serves on Trócaire Ireland's Board and is currently studying for a Level V ILM Qualification in Coaching & Mentoring.

NADINE CAMPBELL

Nadine Campbell is the Director of Philanthropy and Fundraising for The Community Foundation Northern Ireland, where she champions community and collaboration.

Formerly Chair of The Chartered Institute of Fundraising, she has a strong background in promoting best fundraising practice in the sector. As a Lean In Leader for the Belfast Network, Nadine fosters an inclusive environment that supports women in leadership.

Her commitment to empowering local communities and driving positive change through strategic philanthropy makes her a vital force in the charitable sector. Nadine's passion for collaboration inspires others to make a lasting impact.

NIGEL HAMPTON

Nigel Hampton has been the CEO of incredABLE for 21 years, overseeing the charity's remarkable growth from a small project to an organisation that now serves over 600 individuals annually. Under his leadership, incredABLE has expanded its reach across the Southern Trust region, increasing its turnover from £30,000 to £2.5 million in 2024.

Nigel has spearheaded key initiatives, including the merger with another small charity and the development of social enterprise hospitality services.

Nigel also serves on the Boards of several other charitable organisations, bringing extensive experience in governance, strategic planning, and organisational management to his role.

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WELCOME TO THE CO3 LEADERS' GUIDE TO FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH DIVERSIFIED INCOME

This is a tough time to lead a VCSE organisation in Northern Ireland. Government funding is under extreme pressure, European funding has fallen away post-Brexit and competition for funding is increasing exponentially. In response, organisations are searching for new and sustainable sources of income to build their financial resilience.

This Guide is here to help. It is clear, jargon-free and experience-based, a practical guide to use as you explore your income generation options, helping you make informed choices about where best to invest.

The Guide follows a clear logic, leading you from the key principles of successful income generation to a step-by-step guide to developing a diversified income generation strategy and writing your Case for Support.

Chapters on the principal income generation methods follow, each with a definition, an overview, critical factors for success and key steps to take.

The Guide concludes with a comprehensive Resource Library, organised by income generation method, signposting you to a plethora of useful sources of information.

We hope you find this Guide useful and it becomes a close companion on your journey to financial sustainability.

AUTHOR ALICE GARRAD

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CHAPTER ONE

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CHAPTER ONE

KEY PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESSFUL INCOME GENERATION

Income generation is the way in which charities ask for, and receive donations, or other financial support, from the public, businesses, grant making foundations, government and through trading goods or services.

Successful income generation can take many forms. Charities will generate income in different ways depending on the nature of the cause, the level of funding needed, their connections, strengths and resources.

At the heart of successful income generation is a strong compelling need and contented donors who enjoy their giving, see the difference they are making, feel appreciated, and trust the charity they are supporting. They are inspired to offer support that can last a lifetime.

EIGHT KEY PRINCIPLES UNDERPIN SUCCESSFUL INCOME GENERATION:

1.  Communicate your cause clearly, with commitment and passion
2.  Put income generation at the heart of your organisation
3.  Invest wisely in income generation
4.  Know your donors and nurture long term relationships
5.  Thank, thank, thank
6.  Prioritise record keeping
7.  Learn from others and value your fundraisers
8.  Stay legal and ethical, earning the trust of your donors

1 COMMUNICATE YOUR CAUSE CLEARLY, WITH COMMITMENT AND PASSION

Effective income generation depends on donors both understanding and believing in the need for funds. The Case for Supporting your charity must be clearly expressed in jargon free language which communicates your commitment, passion and impact.

Almost every charity uses jargon, often unconsciously, to describe what it does and the people it supports. Be alert to this, using critical friends, outside your charity, to help jargon-bust your messaging.

Always remember that people give to people. Businesses, grant making foundations and major donors are made up of ordinary people, just like the rest of us, with feelings and opinions. Work hard to see the world from their perspective, think about what motivates people to give, use stories and the power of lived experience to illustrate your work. Above all, communicate the positive difference you are making rather than describing what you are doing.

Be as clear and specific as you can and make sure you spend the money raised in the way you said you would, communicating any change in direction clearly and promptly.

2 PUT INCOME GENERATION AT THE HEART OF YOUR ORGANISATION

Charities which ensure that income generation is understood, taken seriously and embedded at all levels, including trustees, staff and volunteers, will have greater fundraising success.

No charity can fulfil its mission without money, so income generation should play a central part in your strategic planning process.

Your charity's agreed strategic priorities, informed by the charity's mission, will define what you will generate income for, shape your Case for Support (see Chapter 2) and quantify how much money you need, and when. Your income generation strategy (see Chapter 2) will then set out clearly how you plan to raise funds to meet the agreed income target(s). Monitoring your progress against agreed targets will be essential. Taking this planned approach will ensure your fundraising stays focused on your organisation's priorities.

Successful income generation is a collaborative process. Your Senior Management Team should include your Income Generation Lead. As a result, those with direct responsibility for income generation will be fully involved in setting (and reviewing) income targets and plans whilst other senior colleagues remain connected to the fundraising challenges.

3 INVEST WISELY IN FUNDRAISING

A successful income generation programme will require careful investment in staff, materials, marketing and promotion, IT, research, and, potentially, consultancy expertise.

Income generation costs will vary by fundraising method and can be higher in the earlier stages of development. The time it takes to recoup initial investment and generate funds will also vary.

Take time to investigate thoroughly the relative pros and cons of the various income generation methods available to your charity, taking into account your strengths and weaknesses, the nature of your cause and the range of supporters to whom you could feasibly have access.

Income generation from grant making foundations, legacies and high net worth individuals tend to yield the best return on investment. Meanwhile, less cost-effective methods, like fundraising events or direct marketing, boost awareness and profile which can, in turn, build longer term support.

A 2024 Benchmarking Study (GB) from AAW Group in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising (RL1) shows an average return on investment across all fundraising methods of 5.5:1. So, for every £1 invested in income generation, you should expect to raise £5.50. Meanwhile, the average income raised per full time fundraiser was £276,876[1].

It will be important to strike a balance between relying on one single income generation method and spreading your limited resources too thinly across multiple fundraising methods.

When making the case to your trustees to invest in fundraising, you will need to be clear about the likely return on investment (both overall and by method) and the time it will take to generate income and recoup your investment.

When planning your mix of methods, consider whether the income generated will be restricted or unrestricted. Unrestricted income gives organisations the freedom to choose how the funds are spent whilst restricted income is earmarked to specific programmes.

Be open and transparent about what you spend on resourcing income generation and be prepared to explain those decisions to your donors and the wider organisation.

4 KNOW YOUR DONORS AND NURTURE LONG TERM RELATIONSHIPS

Your existing supporters are your best future supporters and warm contacts are always better than cold. Take deliberate steps to deepen and broaden your relationships with donors, of all kinds, over time, inspiring them to support you for a life-time.

Strong, long term donor relationships bring so many advantages. Committed supporters create a bedrock on which to plan, inspire others to give and offer a valuable sounding board for new ideas.

Donor relationships don't stand still. Lives change, and so should your relationship with your donors. Avoid pigeon-holing donors, instead work collaboratively, and in a planned way, offering new ways to engage the donor and increase the value of their support over time. For example, someone who ran a marathon in aid of your charity might then be persuaded to sign up for a direct debit or asked to promote a Christmas fundraiser in their workplace. Over time, that same donor may be persuaded to increase their giving and, ultimately, leave a gift in their will.

Thank donors promptly and warmly, report back on how you used their donation and its impact. If you know their area of interest, make this your focus. Listen to your supporters and bring them as close to your cause as you can, perhaps through showing them the work at first hand. Be careful not to inundate donors with communications and, above all, don't only get in touch when you want money!

[1] *For organisations with fundraising incomes up to £10m p.a.*

5 THANK, THANK, THANK

A genuine, thoughtful and personalised thank you is a powerful thing which donors will notice and appreciate, deepening their connection, their sense of trust and making them feel part of your charity's family.

Thanking is not an administrative function but an effective fundraising tool so taking time and trouble with your thanking is a great investment of resources.

It is remarkable how many charities fail to thank their donors properly. At worst, forgetting altogether, or sending a cursory thank you weeks later. Meanwhile, regular supporters receive the same, or similar, thank you letters time and time again.

Smaller charities tend to know their donors better than bigger ones, making it possible to thank in ways that are genuinely personal. Make the most of every thanking opportunity, always writing bespoke emails or letters, making a thank you phone call, writing a hand-written note or even organising small thank you events.

Always thank promptly (within three days), think about what motivated the person to give and try to tap into that motivation. Show your donors how their generosity has helped you tackle the problem, using a quote from someone who has benefitted, and prepare the ground for future contact.

Make thoughtful, personalised thanking a priority for everyone, involving staff outside the Income Generation team, including the CEO.

6 PRIORITISE RECORD KEEPING

Your supporters want to feel known and valued by your charity, whether they are individuals, corporates or grant making trusts.

To build long term relationships with donors, and give them new opportunities to engage, you need to know what they have already given, what communications have been sent, who they are connected with and what is planned. To make this happen, you need a fundraising database. For small charities, this might be a set of simple, shared, constantly updated spreadsheets, or, for larger organisations, a more complex database. Choosing the right fundraising database that suits the size and structure of your charity is an important investment decision. Fundraising Magazine's annual survey on Customer Relationship Management systems (CRM) is a useful source of information (RL2).

Try to create a culture where everyone involved in income generation, at all levels, understands, values and is trained in the importance of keeping accurate, up to date records.

Always take care to handle and store data appropriately, respecting your supporters' stated preferences and making sure relevant staff are trained in, and aware of, all legal requirements. See Principle 8 below.

7 LEARN FROM OTHERS AND VALUE YOUR FUNDRAISERS

At its best, income generation is a collaborative, generous process which inspires people to give, and keep on giving, to causes that they care about which make a difference to the world in which we live.

The best income generation teams will be prepared to share their fundraising experiences with others, to talk about what's worked and what hasn't, to look for ideas in the market place and make them their own.

Make maximum use of the networks within the sector in Northern Ireland, ROI, in GB and globally. Engage in networking events, attend conferences, take advantage of mentoring opportunities to share ideas, seek inspiration and benefit from the wisdom of experience.

Think carefully about the skills you need in a good fundraiser. Income generation is not the same as selling or marketing a product. It demands heart, soul and rigour. Your best fundraisers will combine excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to meet and beat targets, driven by a genuine commitment to your cause.

Once recruited, take care of, and value your Income Generation team, celebrating their successes and investing in their skills. Reward and build their motivation by showing them, at first hand, the impact of the money they raise. And, keep them close to the centre of operations.

8 STAY LEGAL AND ETHICAL, EARNING THE TRUST OF YOUR DONORS

Public concern about how charities ask for money has changed the way fundraising is viewed and regulated across the UK, resulting in the establishment of the Fundraising Regulator (RL3) which publishes The Code of Fundraising Practice (The Code) (RL4).

Charities which generate income must take time to understand and follow The Code which governs charity fundraising across the UK keeping up to date with any changes as they arise.

The Code is a comprehensive guide to the standards which apply to all fundraising, including how to handle donations safely and securely, how to process data in line with data protection and GDPR legislation (RL5) and how to decide who to accept money from. The Code also covers the standards which apply to specific fundraising methods.

Informed by The Code, The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland publishes its own guidance for trustees and members of the public (RL6,7).

CHAPTER TWO

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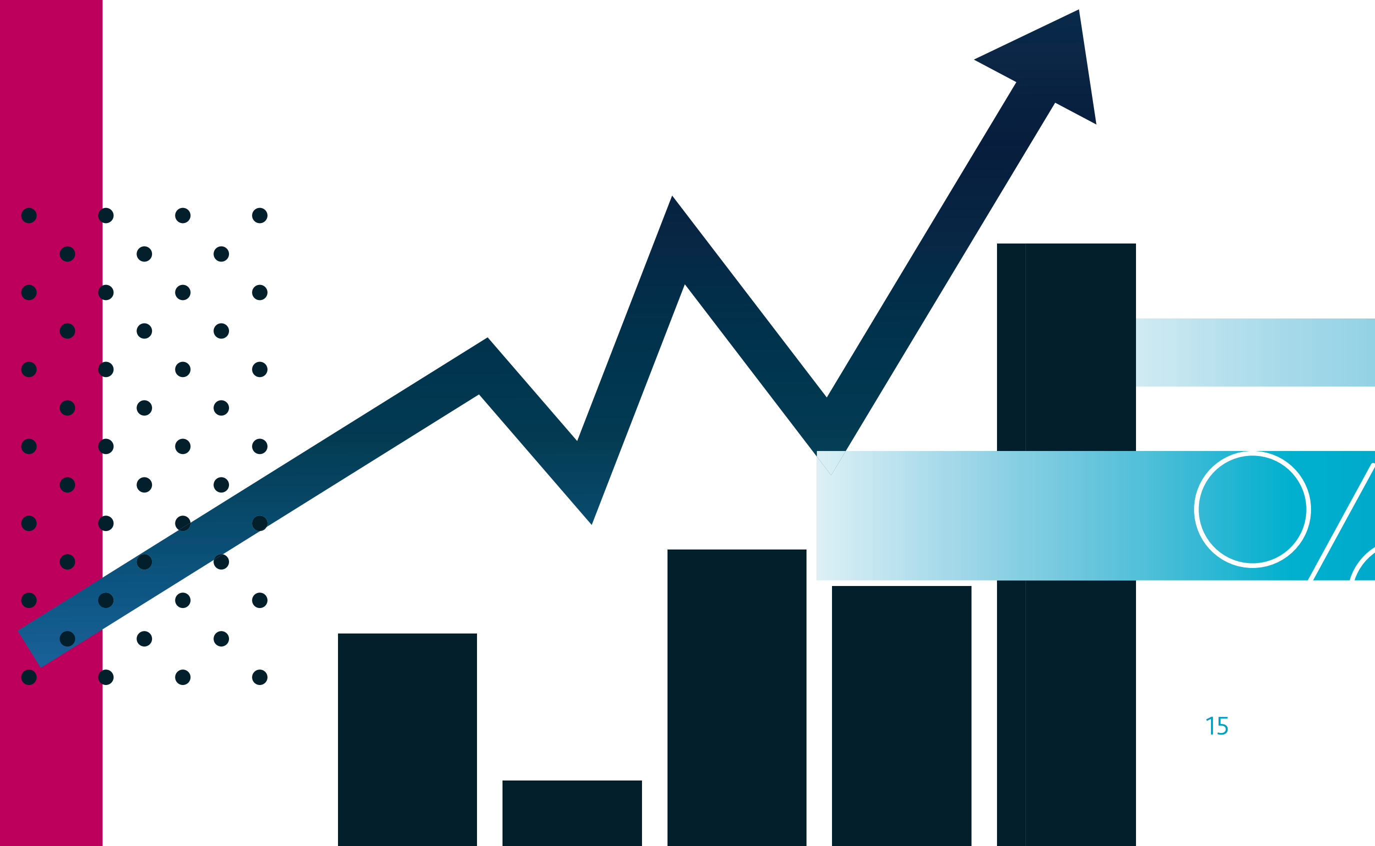
DEVELOPING A DIVERSIFIED INCOME GENERATION STRATEGY

A clear, achievable income generation strategy, understood and owned by everyone, from your trustees and Leadership Team to each member of your Income Generation Team, will be key to your fundraising success.

Income generation has a central part to play in your organisation's overall strategic planning process, ensuring that income targets are realistic and achievable. Your charity's agreed strategic priorities, informed by the charity's mission, will define what you will generate income for, and quantify how much money you need, and when. Income generation strategies can be for one, two or three years.

Your income generation strategy will set out clearly how you plan to raise funds to meet the agreed income target(s), striking a balance between relying on one single income generation method and spreading your limited resources too thinly across multiple fundraising methods.

A tried and tested eight step process will help you develop your income generation strategy.



STEP 1
Develop your fundraising Case for Support and budget

STEP 2
Assess the external and internal context that impacts your income generation (IG)

CHARITIES AT AN EARLY STAGE OF IG

CHARITIES WITH EXISTING IG PRGRAMMES

STEP 3A
Consider mix of potential IG methods

STEP 3B
Analyse your existing IG programme and identify gaps

STEP 4
Assess the relative costs of each IG method

STEP 5
Decide on your mix of IG methods

STEP 6
Set targets and timescales and create action plan

STEP 7
Seek trustees' sign off

STEP 8
Implement, monitor, evaluate and repeat

STEP 1 DEVELOP YOUR FUNDRAISING CASE FOR SUPPORT AND BUDGET, REFLECTING YOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Successful income generation depends on prospective donors both understanding and believing in the need for funds.

So, your first step is to write a compelling, coherent Case for Support with accompanying programme/project budget which appeals to both head and heart, convincing people with its logic and evidence whilst moving people to give. Take time to think about the information you need to develop your Case for Support and who, within your charity, can help you find it. You will need to balance hard-headed evidence and research with stories, testimonials and quotes.

The Case for Support is not a brochure, it is the source for all materials that are produced to support your fundraising (and your communications) in writing, face to face, and online. You will draw on the Case for Support for everything, from trust applications to corporate pitch proposals, from promotional material for events to direct marketing propositions, in general fundraising materials, on your website and on social media.

It usually works best to start by writing a longer, six-page, version, distilling it down to three pages, one page and finally a paragraph.

It takes time and effort to write a strong, concise, jargon-free Case for Support and prepare a clear programme/project budget. It's a team effort drawing on the knowledge and experience of colleagues including the CEO, your Programmes, Communications and Finance teams. Testing the Case for Support and budget on an external critical friend is often a good idea. An agreed Case for Support and budget ensure that everyone involved in the fundraising process (staff, volunteers, trustees) is 'singing from the same song sheet'. You will be amazed how liberating, and time-saving, it is, once you have it.

Based on experience, the key headings for the Case for Support are:

- **Why we need the money?** Describe the needs your charity is addressing within society as a whole and for the people you are supporting.
- **Why we need it now?**
  Tell us why these needs are urgent and what will happen if you don't address them now.
- **Why us?**
  Explain what makes your organisation the best one to take on this challenge. What are your key achievements? What makes your approach distinctive? Why can you be trusted to deliver?
- **What we will do to meet the need?**
  Describe, in brief, your proposed activities.
- **What difference will we make to the world?**
  Explain the impact your programme will have, both for the people you are working with and for society in general.
- **What will the programme cost?**
  Share a coherent, well-costed budget including both programme and core costs.

STEP 2 ASSESS THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS IMPACTING YOUR INCOME GENERATION DEVELOPMENT

Before you can consider how you will generate income, you need to think about both the external and internal context.

Using face to face idea generation, begin with an external PEST analysis, examining the Political (e.g. change of government), Economic (e.g. cost of living crisis), Societal (e.g. rise in number of elderly people) and Technological (e.g. growth of Artificial Intelligence) factors which impact your fundraising.

Next, move on to an internal SWOT analysis which looks at your charity's fundraising Strengths (e.g. skilled fundraising staff), Weaknesses (e.g. patchy record keeping), Opportunities (e.g. networks of Board members) and Threats (e.g. dwindling number of volunteers). Be sure to include colleagues from teams outside Income Generation.

Used in combination, the PEST and SWOT will help you shape your income generation strategy. For example, your PEST analysis will identify the technological trends that create new fundraising opportunities, whilst your SWOT analysis will evaluate how well your charity can leverage your strengths and overcome your weaknesses to take advantage of them.

PEST ANALYSIS

POLITICAL e.g. change of government	**ECONOMIC** e.g. cost of living crisis
SOCIAL e.g. rise in the number of elderly people	**TECHNOLOGY** e.g. growth of artificial intelligence

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS e.g. skilled fundraising staff	**WEAKNESSES** e.g. patchy record keeping
OPPORTUNITIES e.g. network of Board members	**THREATS** e.g. dwindling number of volunteers

STEP 3A CONSIDER YOUR MIX OF POTENTIAL INCOME GENERATION METHODS

For charities at the early stage of developing their income generation

Now that you have your Case for Support and budget in place, you have analysed your external context and are clear where your strengths and weaknesses lie, you are ready to research and evaluate your possible methods and decide which mix of methods best matches your charity's strengths.

Start by investigating what other charities, already active in your chosen method(s), are doing and how? SOFII, Showcase of Fundraising Inspiration and Innovation, is also a great source of global experience https://sofii.org/ (RL8).

Always remember, Rome wasn't built in a day. The big household name charities have spent years, and large budgets, building diversified fundraising programmes. Your aim, over time, is to build a programme which plays to your strengths and builds your financial sustainability, reducing the risk of over-reliance on one single source.

The principal methods from which to choose are:

- Fundraising from individuals - individual giving programmes, major donor fundraising and gifts in wills (legacies)
- Trusts and foundations
- Corporate partnerships
- Community fundraising
- Fundraising events
- Social enterprise

Each of these methods is described in more detail in Chapters 3-10.

For each potential method you will want to consider carefully:

- How much you think you can raise and the likely pitfalls
- What staffing (frontline and support) and other resources you will need (see Step 4 below)
- How well the method aligns to your own context, strengths and weaknesses
- Whether the income generated will be restricted (to specific projects) or unrestricted (can be used to cover core costs)

STEP 3B ANALYSE YOUR EXISTING INCOME GENERATION PERFORMANCE AND IDENTIFY GAPS For charities which already have a diversified fundraising programme

Now that you have your Case for Support and budget in place, you have analysed your external context and are clear where your strengths and weaknesses lie, your next step is to evaluate your current fundraising performance.

The Boston Matrix, originally developed by US consulting firm, Boston Consulting Group, is a useful tool to help you make informed decisions about which income generation methods to focus on and invest in, which to maintain and which to discontinue.

It has four quadrants – Star, Question Mark, Cash Cow and Dog.

- **Stars** are successful net income earners with more room to grow. They still need significant investment of time and money to fully develop.
- **Question Marks** are net income earners which show promise but have yet to prove themselves. They will need significant time and investment to prove their worth.
- **Cash Cows** are solid, established net income earners where growth has slowed but costs are low.
- **Dogs** have outlived their usefulness with a low return and no growth. They are a drain on resources.

Plotting each of your existing fundraising methods on the matrix (whether few or many) – government, trusts and foundations, corporates, community, events, individuals, social enterprise - will reveal where your funding comes from, which methods are performing well, which are emerging and which are flagging. It will also expose any obvious gaps in your spread of fundraising methods which you can address - see Step 3a - Consider your mix of potential income generation methods

The Boston Matrix

The Boston Matrix is also useful to evaluate a group of activities within each method. For example, if you are running several different events each year, you can plot them on the matrix and compare their performance.

The aim, over time, is to move your fundraising activities systematically through the matrix, with a solid base of Cash Cows, a sprinkling of Stars, and a handful of Question Marks which you are testing and refining either to become Stars or to divest as Dogs.

STEP 4 ASSESS THE RELATIVE COSTS OF EACH INCOME GENERATION METHOD

A successful income generation programme will require careful investment. The cost of generating income varies by fundraising method as does the time it takes to recoup initial investment and generate funds.

Realistic budgeting, method by method, will help you make informed decisions about your best mix of methods.

Good fundraising is people-intensive so staff will be your biggest cost - both front line fundraisers to bring in, and then steward, supporters, and staff in support roles.

Other budget headings are likely to include:

- IT (hardware, software, subscriptions, database, giving platforms, web site, social media channels)
- Fundraising materials (copy writing, design, print)
- Marketing and promotion (on and off line advertising, mailing costs, photography/video)
- Consultancy (design, PR, direct marketing, copy writing)
- Research (subscriptions to research sources)
- Training (conferences, professional development)
- Travel
- Core costs attributable to Income Generation team (office, heat, light, utilities, HR, finance)

Remember that seeking gifts in kind to cover specific costs can be a helpful way to make your budget go further.

The resources required, the likely cost to income ratios and time-scales are explored for each method in Chapters 3-10 . The Fundraising Benchmarks Report published in June 2024 by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising is a useful source of guidance (RL9).

STEP 5 DECIDE ON YOUR MIX OF METHODS

Based on the analysis and research in Steps 2-4 above, you can now make informed decisions on where to put your effort and investment. Your mix of fundraising methods should:

- align with your Case for Support and budget
- play to your strengths and respond to your external context
- have the potential to raise the funds you need at a reasonable return on investment
- strike a balance between generating restricted funding and unrestricted income
- recognise the need to think ahead, developing new methods as established methods mature and dwindle

STEP 6 SET TARGETS AND TIME-SCALES AND CREATE ACTION PLANS

Your overall income target, and the time-scale over which you raise the money, will be dictated by your agreed Case for Support, accompanying budget, and analysis of your existing and potential donor base.

Your final step, therefore, is to set individual income targets and expenditure budgets phased across the year for each of your chosen methods. You will also need to draft a short action plan for each method with SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) and clear key performance indicators (KPIs) which will help you track your progress against your objectives. The KPIs will vary method by method.

Chapters 3-10 outline key steps to take to develop each income generation method.

STEP 7 SEEK TRUSTEES' SIGN-OFF

Your trustees bear ultimate responsibility for the financial robustness of your organisation. To meet their responsibilities, they need to understand and prioritise income generation, approve and monitor your strategy, and be confident that it complies with the law and is not exposing the charity to any risk. The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland publishes essential guidance for Trustees (RL10).

To ensure compliance with Trustees' responsibilities, your Income Generation Strategy and budget should be formally signed off by the Board or via a Fundraising Steering Group with responsibility designated by the Board.

STEP 8 IMPLEMENT, MONITOR, EVALUATE AND REPEAT

To thrive, you will need to track your progress against your income targets and expenditure budgets on a month-by-month basis.

Keeping a close eye on figures will ensure that any changes, positive or negative, can be communicated, and acted upon, by you and your team. Crucially, regular, accurate financial information will also be shared with the leadership team, feeding back into the overall strategic planning process.

The value of measuring and recording fundraising performance increases exponentially over time. Data spanning several years can highlight critical long-term trends which will influence your fundraising strategies.

Successful fundraising is an evolving process of planning, action and review. It is a cycle rather than a linear process. Each stage of the process should be revisited at least every twelve months, so that your strategy remains realistic and reflects current circumstances.

CHAPTER THREE

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FUNDRAISING FROM TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

DEFINITION – WHAT IS FUNDRAISING FROM TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS?

Fundraising from trusts and foundations involves convincing and inspiring the trustees of grant making charitable trusts to support your charity to meet revenue, or capital, needs (sometimes both). Grants can be single or multi-year and range from a few hundred to many thousands of pounds.

Whilst there are some legal differences between trusts and foundations, the two terms are often used interchangeably.

OVERVIEW

Grant making trusts exist to give away money, making them unique amongst your possible fundraising sources, and an obvious priority.

In 2019 the Association of Charitable Foundations reported 10,000 grant making trusts in the UK, giving £6.5bn per annum, with new ones created each year, many of which could, if approached, support charities in Northern Ireland.

There are few major trusts based in NI, with some notable exceptions including The National Lottery Community Fund, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, Children in Need, Halifax Foundation NI and Ulster Garden Villages. Trusts based in the Republic of Ireland are similarly scarce. Recent research by Benefacts Legacy reports 164 in total (RL11).

Grant making trusts are a broad church. Some are simply a tax effective structure through which a family (or organisation) proactively makes gifts, whilst others employ a full staff team to run sophisticated, multi-million-pound grant programmes.

The application process is similarly wide-ranging. Some have multi-stage, on-line application processes, with clear criteria and deadlines, planned assessments and detailed reporting. Others simply request a covering letter and a short project summary with budget. Whatever their application process, your job is to meet their requirements to the letter.

A number of themes characterise trusts' grant making. They are often drawn to organisations with strong and visionary leadership whose judgement they trust; they like new methods of tackling entrenched problems or work which is hard to finance through conventional fund raising. They tend to steer clear of work which, they believe, should be funded by government and avoid very long-term commitments (beyond 3 years). One-off purchases or projects are popular, as are short/medium term initiatives which bring long term benefit. They often prefer to fund alongside other trusts, sometimes matching other trusts' contributions and sharing responsibility for the project.

Covid, and a greater understanding of the importance of racial equity, colonialism and user involvement, have precipitated changes in the way trusts are working, putting their application practices and investments under scrutiny. Many have reviewed and revised their giving strategies. Grants for core costs are becoming more common, trusting organisations to make their own spending decisions (as they did in the pandemic). Grantees which can demonstrate diversity in their leadership, governance and beneficiaries are prioritised and there is increasing emphasis on genuine involvement by people with lived experience. Evidence of tight financial controls and long-term sustainability, including future income sources, is key.

A 2024 Benchmarking Study (GB) from AAW Group in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising (RL12) shows an average return on investment for trusts fundraising of 5.99:1. So, for every £1 invested, you could expect to raise £5.99, making trusts one of the most cost-effective income generation methods.

A successful trusts fundraising operation needs appropriate resourcing. This is likely to include a staff member (or long-term freelancer) to research funders, develop networks and a prospect pipeline, prepare applications and budgets (alongside other colleagues), look after, and report to, funders. Annual subscriptions to research databases will also be required.

CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

To succeed in raising money from trusts and foundations, you will need to:

1. Start with your Case for Support

Sustained success in trusts fundraising is not about chasing money, but finding funders whose criteria genuinely align with your priorities as expressed in your Case for Support and budget.

Too often organisations start with the question, 'how much money can we get from this funder and what projects can we squeeze into their criteria?'

A more useful question might be, 'what difference are we trying to make, how much will that cost and which funders can we identify who are interested in the same things.'

2. Make your application as good as it can be

The Association of Charitable Foundations reports that trusts are 'deluged with large numbers of poorly targeted and poorly executed applications.' Carefully targeted, unhurried, thoroughly researched and well-argued grant applications are the exception, not the rule.

Competition for grants is increasing exponentially. To maximise your chances of success, invest effort in making your application the best it can be, allowing the time to involve others.

3. Use clear language, avoid jargon

Trusts are not faceless organisations. They are run by people (staff or volunteers) who want to give their funds away to worthy causes. Your job is to convince them to support your organisation.

Like any donor, they are more likely to give if you describe what you do, why you do it and the impact it makes, with passion and clarity and without jargon. Try to make your application as concise as you can (don't feel you have to meet the maximum word count), leaving enough time to refine earlier drafts.

4. Relationship building

Your existing trust supporters are your best future supporters and warm contacts are always better than cold, so take time to build close relationships with trust staff and trustees.

Charities are often reticent about reaching out to a trust, yet getting to know the grantees is an important part of a grant manager's job. Connecting with trustees of your target funders can also be very useful. Try to build strong links before, during and after the application process and be sure to communicate any concerns or changes (e.g. timing or budget). Intelligent questions will help get you on their radar, so don't be afraid to pick up the phone. Once you have a good relationship with them you might also encourage them to share suggestions of other trusts to approach.

Make it your business to know if your grant manager moves on and take time to get to know their successor.

Many trusts and foundations state that they do not accept unsolicited applications. Consider researching their trustees to see if you can find a connection amongst your own networks, or with your own trustees. Personal contacts can help recommend organisations worthy of support.

KEY STEPS TO TAKE

1. Develop your Case for Support

Your Case for Support, and accompanying budget, will be the source of all your trust applications. Your case should appeal to both head and heart, convincing people with its logic and evidence, whilst moving people to give.

Chapter 2 – Developing a Diversified Income Strategy – takes you through the process of developing a Case for Support.

2. Research potential trusts whose criteria align with your Case for Support

Once you are clear on what you want to find funding for, your next step is to identify a pipeline of potential funders. For each funder you will need to know:

- Contact details
- Name of grant manager and trustees
- What the trust likes to fund – areas of interest - revenue, capital, core
- How their application process works - staged or single application
- Average grant size and length of funding (single or multi-year)
- When they make their decisions (frequency and deadlines)
- Whether they have supported you in the past
- Any connections you have to the funder
- Priority ranking based on alignment with your Case for Support

NICVA's grant tracker https://www.grant-tracker.org/[1] (RL13) is the only NI specific funder database and is your best starting point. It gives a snap shot of each funder with links to trusts' own websites. Other resources for UK, ROI, Europe and the US are listed in the Resource Library (RL14).

Always take time to revisit and review the websites of trusts that you know and/or have supported you in the past. Staff, criteria, deadlines and giving strategies often change.

Complete your research by visiting the Charity Commission NI and/or the UK Charity Commission websites (RL15) where you can search for Trusts' annual accounts containing vital information on how much they give, to whom and how often. Trustees' names are also published there.

3. Plan your application process

Start the application process by reading your target trust's criteria and guidance carefully, more than once.

In the light of their guidance, think carefully about how you will manage the application process and who you will need to involve (typically Finance and colleagues in Programmes or Services departments).

Excellent applications take time. Schedule a planning meeting for everyone involved and create a time-table working back from the deadline date, agreeing who does what and by when.

4. Answer the questions fully

Whilst most application forms will broadly follow the logic of your Case for Support, they are all different. It is essential to read the entire form carefully and then answer each question fully (including all its sub-heads) and in line with each trust's guidelines.

It always helps to work off line and then paste back into the online form when you're finished, saving a copy. If you are working with others, be rigorous about numbering and dating each version and make sure any collaborators have, and use, the funders' guidance when drafting their contributions. Be sure that one person takes overall control. If time permits, share your final draft with an external critical friend.

5. Prioritise your budget

Applications are often rejected because the budget fails to convince the assessor. Always develop your budget alongside the narrative using the same language to describe activities and staff posts, and make sure everything mentioned in your narrative also appears in your budget.

Base all your figures on real, researched costs (not guestimates), include a 'notes' column showing how costs were calculated and make sure you include an allowance for inflation (in multi-year bids) and VAT.

When funders allow it, include core costs in your budgets (known as full cost recovery). Take time and care to calculate the real costs of delivering your programme (finance, HR, utilities, staff time etc.), explaining your figures in your notes column.

Double check your budget adds up (assessors say they often don't!).

Most of the time you will be approaching several trusts and foundations to part-fund your project. You will therefore need to explain how you plan to raise the balance and include the names of other trusts you plan to approach (or have already approached). You should also state how much has been raised to date (if any).

Sometimes trusts will ask you to outline your contingency plan if you fail to raise the full amount the project requires. This needs to be credible.

Always keep copies of your applications and budgets including notes on how you arrived at your calculations.

6. Think through monitoring and evaluation

Funders need to understand how you will know you are successful.

Think about the information you will collect about your activities and how you will measure progress towards achieving impact. Share information on how often you will formally evaluate the project and how you will use the evaluation results to shape the future.

7. Make sure your charity's accounts are clear

Sometimes, applications fail because funders are confused by your accounts. Make sure you provide clarification for anything that might raise questions, for example, big fluctuations in income, previous deficits, high, or low, levels of reserves (especially unrestricted).

8. Prepare for assessments

If you are offered an assessment (by phone or face to face), make sure you take time to prepare for it properly. Start by asking your grant manager what to expect and what documents you need to have ready.

Hold a pre-meeting with everyone involved in the assessment at which you review the original application and budget and think through the likely questions.

Think about the best way to showcase your organisation and your project. Can you organise a tour and/or involve people with lived experience in your assessment meeting?

And make sure you have supporting documents to hand e.g. annual accounts and key policies (equal opportunities, child protection).

9. Thank promptly

If you are successful, thank your grant manager promptly for their efforts on your behalf and send a thank you letter via your grant manager to trustees. Be sure to confirm how the trust wishes to be acknowledged for its support. Always make sure your collaborators are told the good news.

If you are unsuccessful, seek feedback from the trust so you can learn for the future.

10. Report on time and keep in touch

Charities that report promptly and thoughtfully earn the trust of their funders which makes repeat funding more likely. Diarise report dates and carve out time to report comprehensively. If there's scope to do so, attach a covering letter to add the personal touch.

For smaller funders it's always good practice to prepare a short report, even if you're not asked for one.

Be sure to let funders know immediately if there are any problems or changes during the grant period. Share news and updates in between reporting periods, though avoid a deluge!

Always make sure you keep good records of the details of the grant, and your interactions with the funder, to make future planning easier.

For further useful information on Fundraising from Trusts and Foundations, see RL16.

[1] *The annual cost of NICVA's Grant Tracker in 2024 is £145 for non NICVA members and £100 for members.*

CHAPTER FOUR

FUNDRAISING FROM INDIVIDUALS 1
INDIVIDUAL GIVING PROGRAMMES

DEFINITION
WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUAL GIVING PROGRAMME?

Individual Giving programmes encourage members of the public to make a gift of money to a charity, either as a one-off donation, or by making a regular commitment, usually by direct debit.

OVERVIEW

Individual Giving programmes are described in different ways by different charities. Donor Marketing, Donor Giving, Donor Development or Direct Marketing are all common terms. Whatever the terminology, the principal fundraising methods are:

- Appeal letters sent by mail (often called Direct Mail)
- Face to face approaches in public spaces
- Appeal advertising on TV and radio
- Telephone fundraising
- Appeals on digital platforms

Successful Individual Giving programmes can result in valuable, long-term relationships which warmly engage your donors whilst raising predictable, (often) unrestricted, income for your charity.

However, Individual Giving programmes need significant investment which will include dedicated staff to plan and manage donor recruitment and relationship building, administrative back-up, marketing (e.g. print, airtime, design) and IT (database). Consequently, Individual Giving programmes tend to work best in bigger organisations which can invest appropriately and tolerate the required level of risk.

A 2024 Benchmarking Study (GB) from AAW Group in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising (RL17) shows an average return on investment for Individual Giving programmes of 2.3:1. So, for every £1 invested, you could expect to raise £2.30. This compares unfavourably with other methods like Grant Making Trusts or Corporate Partnerships.

CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

If, after careful research, you decide Individual Giving programme are for you, there are a number of critical factors for success:

1. Understand your target audience

Your audience comes first. You need to understand who you are appealing to and what they are motivated by. Most often this is their lived experience of the issues your charity is addressing.

Use this understanding to develop appeals which your audience is likely to respond to, rather than focusing on what you, the charity, likes best.

2. Prioritise your existing donors

All too often, charities spend time and money recruiting new supporters who give once and never again. Actively build relationships with your existing donors over time. People who give regularly will always be the life-blood of successful Individual Giving programmes.

How ever well you nurture your donors, some will naturally fall away, so make sure you complement your active stewardship with recruitment campaigns to fill any gaps.

3. Think about timing

Choose the right time for your appeals. This will vary charity by charity depending on your cause. Seasonality is important and Christmas is a key time for giving.

4. Make the need clear and tangible

Show a clear need for the money you are asking for. Your donor needs to feel your request is important, whether it is helping the charity they care about survive or enabling a project that matters to them to go ahead. Use tangible examples to show how their gift will make a difference.

5. Show emotion

Remember that people give to people, so it makes sense for your appeals to pack an emotional punch. Successful Individual Giving programmes will make people feel something strong inside, a sense of injustice, fear or empathy, powerful feelings that will motivate people to take action.

Stories of people affected by the issues your charity is tackling, perhaps presented by people directly involved in working with your charity's beneficiaries, are often the simplest and most emotive way to present the need.

6. Convey a sense of urgency

It always helps if you can give donors a sense that it matters that they give, and give now.

7. Be personal

Try to make your appeals as personal as you can. Authentic, personalised communication is a powerful thing. Consider, for example, writing a letter which refers directly to how much your supporter has given in the past and what they contributed towards.

KEY STEPS TO TAKE

1. Assess the opportunity (and potential risks) and plan investment

Chapter 2 – Developing a Diversified Income Generation Strategy – outlines a careful, step by step process to decide on the mix of fundraising methods that aligns best with your charity's strengths.

If Individual Giving programmes match your strengths, you will need to start by working out how much you need to invest, how much you could raise, and over what time period. You will also need to assess the level of risk.

2. Install an appropriate CRM system

Before you start, you will need an appropriate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system in place with ongoing training and support. An essential tool for successful individual giving programmes, your CRM will be used to record detailed information about your donors (with their permission in line with GDPR).

You will then analyse the information you collect, both to inform the way you develop relationships with existing donors, and to recruit new ones.

You can find useful information on how to pick the right CRM system for your organisation in the Resource Library (RL18).

3. Plan and implement a programme to build existing donor relationships and recruit new donors

Whether developing existing donors or acquiring new ones, your Individual Giving programme plans will be informed by existing donor profiles. In essence, you want to understand as much as you can about your most loyal donors – how they were recruited (e.g. face to face, by email), why they give (e.g. lived experience), how much they give – and then use this knowledge to identify and target others who share similar characteristics.

3a Retain and build existing donor relationships

Building excellent, long term donor relationships is at the heart of all successful income generation. It costs more to recruit new donors than to retain existing ones so it also makes sound business sense.

Start your relationship with a great thank you. Consider developing a welcome pack which includes a bespoke thank you letter which welcomes your new donor, mentions the gift they made, explains how you will use their gift and lets them know how to get in touch.

Thereafter, you will need to plan and implement a schedule of appeals, perhaps three per year (some charities may send more), which takes account of whether donors are one-off or regular givers, and how they were recruited. So, for example, avoid using email for donors recruited by mail and vice versa.

To build your donors' involvement, you may also want to share impact updates and newsletters (whether hard copy or by email) and/or offer the chance to get involved in other ways like challenge events, campaigning, emergency/one off appeals and legacies.

Bear in mind, that some regular donors will inevitably cancel their regular gift. Experience shows, however, that a proportion of donors will reconsider, if they are asked. Encouragingly, many donors will also increase their gift if asked in a phone call or by mail/email.

3b Recruit new donors

How ever strong your relationships with donors, you will always need to recruit new donors to replace those that fall away.

There is a plethora of options from which to choose including appeals in the press, on radio and on TV; inserted in magazines; in leaflets through your door; via digital channels – email, text, social media, digital audio (podcasts); by phone; in the mail using purchased names and addresses; made face to face, door to door or in shopping centres or event venues.

Your choice of options will depend on the cost. You will also need to consider whether the option feels right for your cause, what aspect of your work your appeal will focus on, and whether you are asking for a one-off gift or a regular commitment.

Whatever recruitment method you use, and in line with GDPR (RL19), make sure you give donors the option to choose how they want to be communicated with, gather their email address and telephone number, and seek consent for future communications. And don't forget to offer the opportunity to add Gift Aid.

4. Evaluate and learn

Successful individual Giving programmes are powered by evidence. Make sure that every activity is reviewed to establish its effectiveness and to inform future activity. This will include measuring total income received, response levels, average gifts, income per person mailed and, finally, net income achieved.

For further useful information on Fundraising from Individual Giving Programmes, see RL20.

A CASE STUDY

Children in Crossfire is a small, Derry/Londonderry based international development NGO that works in partnership with local organisations in Tanzania and Ethiopia to improve the lives of some of the most disadvantaged young children in our world.

CHILDREN IN CROSSFIRE

For over a decade, Children in Crossfire has invested in Individual Giving with a programme of donor recruitment, appeals and relationship building (retention). There are annual newsletter mailings, monthly e-newsletters and telephone marketing to persuade existing donors to make larger gifts, to reactivate regular givers who've lapsed and to convert one off donors to regular givers.

There are two appeals every year, in spring and autumn, and a raffle each summer. The 2022 Spring Donor Appeal results are a useful example of what is achieved.

Mailed	Responded	Total Income	Response Rate %	Average Gift	Cost (excluding staff)	Net Income	Return on investment
1060	196	£20,371.61	18.49%	£53.18	£1,336.80	£9,014.81	6.66

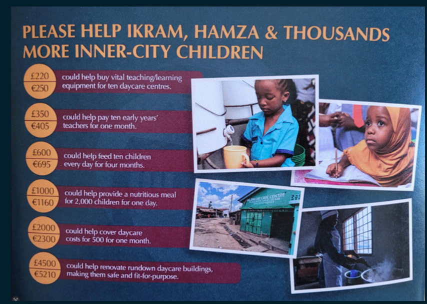
This includes a very generous donation of £10,000, which has been removed to calculate the average gift, net income and return on investment.

Children in Crossfire's major campaign rolls out at Advent with appeals to all supporters who have made a one-off gift in the past three years.

Once a year, in September, all supporters receive Insight by post or email, an eight page update on Children in Crossfire's work. An email update is sent every month to supporters, focusing on a specific aspect of Children in Crossfire's programme to ensure supporters are well briefed and motivated by the impact their gifts are making.

There is a strong, ongoing effort to recruit new donors through recurring social media across Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and LinkedIn. In October 2023, this was complemented by a face to face, door to door campaign across NI to recruit regular givers.

Children in Crossfire generates 21.56 % of its income from Individual Giving Programmes at a return on investment of 10.47:1 (not including staff costs).



CHAPTER FIVE

FUNDRAISING FROM INDIVIDUALS 2
LEGACY FUNDRAISING

DEFINITION
WHAT IS LEGACY FUNDRAISING?

Legacy fundraising is the practice of asking individuals to leave a gift to a charity in their will. The gift can be made in any of the following ways:

- A gift of an object or property called a specific gift
- A gift of a specific sum of money called a pecuniary gift
- A gift of all, or a percentage of, your estate left after all other legacies and expenses have been paid. This is a residuary gift
- A gift made to someone for their lifetime which goes to someone else after their death. This is a revisionary gift

For some time now, many charities have chosen to use the term 'gifts in wills' rather than legacies. The meaning is the same, but the simpler language makes the idea of making a gift in your will more accessible to ordinary people.

OVERVIEW

In essence, legacy fundraising is not about selling legacies. It is about making people aware of the importance of gifts in wills and making it easy for people to give in this way.

Legacy fundraising is a long-term, slow burn activity, not a quick win. Charities which do well have built their income over many years. Inevitably, it is hard to predict when the income will come in, making the impact of legacy marketing particularly hard to measure. Modest investment is unlikely to reap rewards for at least five years.

The key is to deliberately build relationships with all your target audiences over time through the various communication channels and networks you have available.

To build a successful gifts in wills programme, you will need to think about resourcing it appropriately across four areas:

- Legacy administration - the work to fulfil the legacy after the person has died
- Legacy promotion - promoting legacy giving to potential donors and within your charity
- Managing people enquiring about gifts in wills
- Accurate, long-term record keeping

Careful investment in gifts in wills can reap significant rewards. According to a 2024 Benchmarking Study (GB) from AAW Group in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising, legacies account for the biggest share (24%) of fundraising income for charities in the £1m to £10m income band at a very healthy return on investment of £49 for every £1 invested (RL21). This compares favourably with all other fundraising methods. Better still, income from gifts in wills is generally unrestricted, making it even more valuable.

CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

To succeed in raising money from gifts in wills, you will need to:

1. Build your brand and your profile

Charities that do best with gifts in wills typically have a strong track record and have built trust in their programmes over a number of years.

Work hard to build your profile, maximising media coverage of your services, stressing your effectiveness and hammering home the need. Systematically building a recognisable brand and distinct identity will help secure legacy income in the longer term.

2. Develop long term relationships with donors

A legacy is the last and, almost certainly, the biggest donation a supporter will ever make. The decision to make a gift in your will happens when a person is alive, death simply completes the process.

Concentrate on developing relationships with your donors during their lifetime so that they are inspired to make a commitment to your charity in their will. Like all other forms of fundraising, gifts in wills are more likely to come if you ask for them.

3. Demystify legacies and strive for organisational buy in

The most successful charities in legacies have made a concerted effort to talk about legacies differently, presenting gifts in wills as a simple and effective way to give.

They take an integrated approach to promotion involving staff, trustees and volunteers from the top down. This might include, for example, making presentations at staff and Board meetings to increase awareness of the value of gifts in wills and de-bunk the myths, or making sure all media interviews about the charity include gifts in will as a way of giving.

4. Build relationships with the legal profession

Whilst solicitors cannot influence their clients, it is well worth building relationships with them over time so that, if asked, they have the knowledge and motivation to suggest your charity to people interested in making gifts in wills.

Start by cultivating relationships with solicitors already warm to you inviting them to get involved by, for example, contributing articles for your newsletter on will making, offering advice at a gifts in wills event or displaying gifts in wills leaflets in their offices.

KEY STEPS TO TAKE

1. Develop your legacy proposition

Drawing on your Case for Support (See Chapter 2) develop your legacy proposition incorporating your key messages and supporting statements.

The legacy proposition should not lead on the mechanics of giving in wills but rather focus on why gifts in wills are important, explaining in clear, simple language what difference gifts in wills make to your charity. Incorporate testimonials from supporters who have already made arrangements to leave a gift in their will explaining why they did so.

2. Identify your target audiences

Gifts in wills will come from both known supporters and people unknown to the charity. It makes sense, therefore, to proactively nurture and develop known supporters towards gifts in wills whilst, at the same time, building your profile and reputation to attract new supporters.

Warm prospects are likely to include donors, your charity's beneficiaries, trustees, volunteers, staff and event participants and other supporters.

3. Promote gifts in wills

To promote gifts in wills to your target audiences, you will need to invest in marketing materials.

Start by developing a **Gifts in Wills leaflet** (both in print and online) in simple, up beat language with no baffling legal jargon as a promotional tool for use with solicitors, corporate supporters, community fundraisers and volunteers. Your leaflet is likely to include:

- your legacy proposition and key messages
- stories and testimonials demonstrating the impact of gifts in wills
- general guidance on will making
- details of a named senior contact

Use your **newsletter** and your **social media channels** to promote gifts in wills featuring heart-warming stories about past gifts in wills and the positive impact they have made, articles on how to write a will by a solicitor and stories by services staff on your work and how gifts in wills can support it.

Give gifts in wills a prominent place on your **website** and include a response mechanism directly through to a named senior contact.

Feature gifts in wills in your **annual report** and your **annual review**, every year.

Investigate the opportunities of **advertising** for gifts in wills on digital channels and in publications appropriate to your target audiences.

Consider holding small, **myth busting education events** for donors to explain the value of gifts in wills and answer questions.

Make gifts in wills 'your PS on everything'. As your materials are updated and re-designed over time, gradually incorporate your gifts in wills proposition on everything - all fundraising and events materials, all thank you letters, all services leaflets, as an email footer, on pull up banners and displays, in reception areas, on Christmas cards, on ballot tickets.

4. Thank thoughtfully

Once the gift has been received, make sure you phone the family to thank them personally for their loved one's gift. A thoughtful, personalised handwritten letter should follow, showing genuine appreciation and further deepening the connection between the charity and the family.

5. Monitor and evaluate your progress

Make sure that income targets are monitored and evaluated on a monthly and quarterly basis and make gifts in wills an agenda item at one Board meeting each year.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure progress could include the number of marketing opportunities created at which materials are distributed, the number and quality of contacts with solicitors, the number of people who attended a gifts in wills event and the number and value of actual gifts in wills received.

6. Participate in Will to Give

Join the Will to Give campaign https://willtogive.org/ (RL22) a coalition of over 60 NI charities, offering training and support and working together to encourage gifts in wills.

For further useful information on Legacy Fundraising, see RL23.

A CASE HISTORY

AWARE is the Depression Charity for Northern Ireland. AWARE has an established network of 23 support groups in rural and urban areas across the country, which are run by our trained volunteers. Support groups welcome people with depression and bipolar disorder as well as carers for people with the illness.

AWARE NI, THE DEPRESSION CHARITY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

In late 2020, AWARE developed its first gifts in wills strategy.

Key to AWARE's campaign was active involvement in Will to Give week during which the charity posted a video on social media channels. An AWARE Board member liked and commented on the video post, saying he had already made arrangements to leave a gift in his will to AWARE.

The Head of Fundraising reached out to him, asking him to share his story and take an active role in promoting gifts in wills. He has since made a video and presented at various events during Will to Give week and on International Legacy Day.

As well as activity on social media, AWARE promotes gifts in wills on their website, on donated billboard sites and at the bottom of thank you letters. They have produced a gifts in wills pack to share with supporters and enquirers and to use at both fundraising events and awareness raising events promoting AWARE's services. Staff have been trained to respond to donors or potential legators when they contact the office.

AWARE currently receives between four and six gifts in wills each year. Their biggest gift to date, of £20,000, came at Christmas 2023 and was a direct result of the legacy strategy. Their next step is a gifts in wills event for a targeted group of existing supporters.

CHAPTER SIX

Alice Garrad

CHAPTER SIX

FUNDRAISING FROM INDIVIDUALS 3
MAJOR DONOR FUNDRAISING

DEFINITION
WHAT IS MAJOR DONOR FUNDRAISING?

Major donor fundraising is about inspiring affluent people, often families or couples, to make major donations, perhaps spread over a number of years, for the benefit of your organisation, for capital or revenue purposes.

It's up to you to decide what constitutes a major donor. Smaller charities might categorise someone who gives £1000 or more as a major donor whilst for larger charities the figure might be at least £10,000.

Whatever your benchmark, the fundraising approach is always personalised and bespoke, proactive and planned. The aim is to develop long term relationships with a relatively small group (tens, not hundreds) of high value donors whom you know very well.

OVERVIEW

Major donor fundraising is still relatively underdeveloped in Northern Ireland (beyond our two universities and a handful of larger charities) but there is increasing interest in the field. As pressure builds on statutory funding, charities are looking elsewhere to fill funding gaps.

Local charity leaders recognise the flexibility of major donor fundraising and the immense value of long-term relationships with wealthy people.

Major donors often make their first donation in support of a specific project or appeal. A capital project, or a new service, can be a useful way to kick start major donor fundraising, nurturing relationships after the first gift to develop committed, long-term supporters.

A successful major donor programme needs appropriate resourcing. This is likely to include dedicated staff to manage the face-to-face work with donors (alongside other senior staff), some resource (in house or outsourced) to research potential donors, small-scale events to build donors' interest and limited printed materials (glossy brochures are not required!). Good record keeping will also be essential.

Careful investment in major donor fundraising can reap significant rewards. A 2024 Benchmarking Study (GB) from AAW Group in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising (RL24) shows an average return on investment for Major Donor Fundraising of 4.9:1. So, for every £1 invested, you could expect to raise £4.90. This compares favourably with other methods like Corporate Partnerships or Fundraising Events.

It takes time to build a successful major donor programme so it's important to manage your Board's expectations.

CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

To succeed in raising money from major donors, you will need to:

1. Be bold and brave and believe it's possible

Successful major donor fundraising is not just the preserve of big, household name charities. It takes guts and staying power but it is perfectly possible for any charity that rigorously follows a proven step by step process (see below) to generate income.

At the heart of successful major donor fundraising are inspiring leaders who believe in the process, enthusing donors with conviction and passion.

2. Make major donor fundraising a team effort

Major donors are typically successful people who have either inherited wealth and/or made money in their chosen career. Their drive, incisiveness, and natural curiosity often plays out in their giving too. Before they give, they will often want to meet your senior team so that they can fully understand what your charity does and, crucially, what impact you make.

To secure major gifts, you will need to be prepared to involve your senior leadership, including your trustees when appropriate, in meeting prospective donors, building their interest and asking for a gift. The role of the Fundraiser is often to stage manage this process rather than lead it.

3. Tailor everything

Nothing about major donor fundraising is standardised. Your approach is tailored for every donor and will vary according to their motivation.

Perhaps their desire to give comes from their own experience, or they want to be a catalyst for change; maybe they feel duty-bound to share their wealth, or they enjoy the public recognition that giving brings.

4. Know your stuff

Major donors are usually smart people who will expect you to be able to answer all their questions. They will often have their own views about how an issue should be tackled so you need to be prepared to negotiate with diplomacy.

Make sure you really know your organisation (income, expenditure, challenges, programmes, impact) and the Case for Support for which you are seeking a gift. Take time to understand the potential tax advantages for the donor.

The table below is a fantastic tool used by major donor fundraisers across the UK. It shows the impact of gift aid and tax relief on a donation made by a higher rate, 40% tax payer. Interestingly, donors' own accountants are often unaware of the tax advantages on charitable gifts.

A tax effective giving plan for 40% tax payers

Pre-tax donation to charity	Tax charity recovers on the donation from Gift Aid	Total received by charity	Tax recovered by 40% tax payer	Net cost to donor
£	(25p per £1 given equates to basic tax rate)	£	(Difference between higher & standard rate tax = 20%)	£
50,000	12,500	**62,500**	12,500	**37,500**
25,000	6,250	**31,250**	6,250	**18,750**
15,000	3,750	**18,750**	3,750	**11,250**
10,000	2,500	**12,500**	2,500	**7,500**
5,000	1,250	**6,250**	1,250	**3,750**
1,000	250	**1250**	250	**750**

KEY STEPS TO TAKE

1. A clear set of needs

Successful major donor fundraising starts with a clear set of needs, known as the Case for Support. Your Case for Support, and project budget, should appeal to both head and heart, convincing people with its logic and evidence, whilst moving people to give.

The Case for Support is covered in detail in Chapter 2 page 15 - Developing a Diversified Income Generation Strategy.

2. A well researched and carefully evaluated constituency

Once you have prepared your case and your budget, you need people who could, potentially, give. Sadly, there is no quick fix or published list of rich people to turn to. So, it's a systematic process of identifying those closest to you with an affinity to your cause.

Your existing supporters are always your best future supporters so start by identifying people who are already warm to you, or to people close to you. You can do this by:

- analysing your existing database (or spreadsheets) looking for people who give sizeable gifts regularly, those who've made substantial one-off gifts over the last 3 years and any well-known names.
- setting up face to face meetings with people close to your charity to explore their networks and contacts (staff -past and present, trustees and committee members, volunteers, beneficiaries). Building rapport with people who can open doors for you is always a great investment of time.

Once you have compiled your initial list of names, find out as much as you can about your potential supporters – their interests and motivations, their affinity or connection with your cause, their contact details, family situation, career and 'extra-curricular' roles, making sure nothing in their background makes an approach inappropriate.

You will find this information through the people who know them and through research sources like Google and Wikipedia. Always take care to adhere to data protection and GDPR legislation (RL25).

Building a picture of your prospects will help you decide how best to build their interest, how much to ask for and who should make the approach.

The process of building a list is ongoing. As your network grows, so will your list. It is common to aim to identify three prospects for each gift.

A giving table is a useful tool to plan your fundraising and plot your prospects.

Sample giving table to raise £250,000 from major donors

Gift level required £	Number of gifts needed	Total income £	Number of prospects needed 3:1 ratio	Current Prospects Insert names
50,000	2	100,000	6	
25,000	2	50,000	6	
10,000	5	50,000	15	
5,000	10	50,000	30	
	19	**£250,000**	**57 prospects**	

3. Well planned cultivation of prospects

Your next step is to build each person's interest and involvement (known as 'cultivation') before anyone is asked for a gift, a process which may have several stages and take some months.

Take time to work out, in advance, the various ways your charity can cultivate donors and then create a programme for each donor which takes account of what motivates them.

So, could you, for example, take someone to a project to see your work in action, arrange a meeting with people benefitting, attend a policy briefing or media launch or meet a celebrity supporter? Listen carefully and always ask questions to tease out their motivations.

4. Effective asking

At the heart of major donor fundraising is a face-to-face meeting when a direct ask for a gift is made. This is not a cold approach but the end of a process of cultivation. By the time you reach this point, the person will be expecting, and often wanting, an ask to happen.

The best person to ask for a gift is the one most likely to succeed. This could be a trustee who knows the potential donor well, one of your leadership team, your Fundraiser, or, perhaps two people working together (with a clear plan of who does what). It is ideal if the person asking has given themselves.

Prepare for these meetings carefully and involve the potential donor's 'other half', if you can. It always works best to ask for a specific, agreed amount ('we were hoping you might consider making a gift in the region of £x….') and encourage donors to give tax efficiently and spread their giving over a number of years.

Be ready to present your Case for Support concisely, stressing the impact of what their gift will do. Always answer questions honestly, making sure you explain the tax benefits.

Don't expect instant answers but do try to make sure you agree next steps before you close.

5. Thanking and keeping in touch

Thank every donor promptly and thoughtfully in a style that's in tune with their motivation. A genuinely personal letter, with a real signature, received in the post still packs a punch.

Think about other interesting ways to thank like a personal phone call from the CEO, a handwritten card, a photograph of the project they've supported, a thank you video message from staff and users, a thank you coffee.

Above all, keep your donors with you. Don't forget them once they have given, and you have thanked them. Plan year-round communications that show the impact of their donation, create opportunities for involvement and prepare the ground to ask again. And make sure you keep good records of every step for future fundraisers to build on.

For further useful information on Major Donor Fundraising, see RL26.

CHAPTER SEVEN
Alice Garrad

CHAPTER SEVEN

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

DEFINITION
WHAT ARE CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS?

A corporate partnership is the coming together of a charity with a business for mutual benefit.

Businesses can support your charity in a range of ways:

Through their staff

- Staff fundraising (including events), sometimes matched £ for £ by the business (often up to a threshold)
- Staff volunteering
- Involving their staff in your charity's events (e.g. entering teams for a challenge event)
- Setting up/promoting payroll giving schemes (sometimes matched)[1]
- Offering skills like business planning or HR

Through their business

- Making a corporate donation
- Giving goods or services (in-kind support such as meeting space, media time, etc.)
- Encouraging their suppliers and/or clients to give or to fundraise
- Partnering as part of a public sector contract (see Overview below)

Through their marketing

- Running a cause-related marketing initiative when a business features your charity's branding on their packaging, or in their communications, making a specified donation for every product or service bought
- Sponsorship of your charity's events

Or by adopting you as their charity of the year, or long-term charity partner, supporting you in any, or all, of the ways outlined above, achieving both individual and shared goals.

When a business derives a commercial benefit (e.g. through sponsorship or cause-related marketing), there are important tax and VAT implications which your charity must consider. For specific guidance, see Resource Library (RL27).

OVERVIEW

Partnerships with businesses can bring many benefits but they are not usually a quick win. It takes time, commitment and resources to generate significant income. So, it is important to manage expectations about the speed and scale of potential income.

In Northern Ireland, the vast majority of corporate partnerships raise less than £10,000 (in cash) over the course of a year. Only a handful of major corporate partnerships will generate six figure sums requiring very significant input from the charity.

This is a time of change in business. The way businesses interact with their customers, staff, investors, and the communities in which they operate is in the spotlight, creating opportunities for partnerships with charities. Increasingly, staff are looking to work for organisations that have a social benefit.

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards, which measure a business's impact on society, are an important consideration for potential investors. A partnership with a charity helps companies achieve these targets.

Since January 2021, it has been mandatory for all businesses tendering for public sector contracts to invest 10% (soon to rise to 20%) of the contract value in activities which deliver social value under four key themes – secure employment and skills, building ethical and resilient supply chains, delivering zero carbon, and promoting well-being. The Procurement Act 2024 builds on earlier legislation with its commitment 'to deliver greater value for money and improved social value'.

Charities whose programmes match these themes have a real opportunity to develop partnerships with businesses which are tendering for contracts. To learn how this works in practice, visit Procurement - Social Value NI (RL28) hosted by the Strategic Investment Board. To find out more about Government tenders, go to https://etendersni.gov.uk/epps/home.do

A successful corporate fundraising programme needs appropriate resourcing. This is likely to include staff time to research potential prospects and dedicated staff to secure, manage, nurture and grow a pipeline of corporate supporters. You will need charity branded merchandise and materials to support your fundraising (e.g. An A-Z of fundraising ideas) and stories and video material showing the difference your charity makes. A fundraising database for excellent record keeping is essential.

Careful investment in corporate partnerships can reap significant rewards. A 2024 Benchmarking Study (GB) from AAW Group in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising (RL29) shows an average return on investment for Corporate Partnerships of 4.47:1 So, for every £1 invested, you could expect to raise £4.47.

CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

1. Be comfortable with the principle of mutual benefit

At the heart of successful corporate partnerships is the explicit understanding that both parties will benefit. This is not pure philanthropy with no strings attached. Partnerships will flourish when both the business and the charity are clear about what each wants to achieve and what each can offer.

It is vital that your Board, your leadership team and your staff are comfortable with this principle before you invest time and resources in corporate fundraising.

2. Be clear what businesses want from the partnership

Start by putting yourself in the company's shoes and think about why a partnership with your charity makes business sense.

Partnerships with charities offer businesses a powerful way to fulfil their Corporate Social Responsibility commitments by:

- publicly demonstrating their commitment to the diverse communities in which they operate
- improving their staff morale and building staff loyalty through involvement in fundraising and volunteering
- growing its profile as a business that cares, boosting staff recruitment and retention and increasing customer loyalty
- creating opportunities for positive PR (on and off line and on social media)
- strengthening their brand values through joint marketing

3. Be clear what you want and what you can (realistically) offer

Corporate partnerships can deliver money, gifts in kind (products and services), access to business skills and volunteers (with careful management and coordination).

In return you can offer assets which businesses want, and which have a commercial value. By taking a business-like approach, which clearly articulates what you bring to the partnership, you can negotiate from a position of strength.

Assets will vary depending on the nature and scale of your charity but might include:

- association with a well-known, well-loved charity with a recognised brand and logo
- association with an organisation with strong community connections in locations across NI
- volunteering opportunities for company staff
- a programme of motivating fundraising events which staff can get involved in
- a strong media presence – on and off line and on digital platforms - offering visibility to corporate partners
- resources to support the partnership – a staff member, fundraising and communications materials

Always be realistic about what you can offer a business. Over promising will create frustration and potentially sour relationships.

4. Develop clear ethical guidelines

Your charity's profile, reputation and track record are priceless and could be jeopardised by an inappropriate corporate partnership.

Take time to develop ethical and risk guidelines agreed at Board level, and understood by all staff, to protect your organisation and help you decide which companies to target and which to avoid. Make sure you agree who will make the final decision within your charity.

Always have a written agreement which outlines the nature of the relationship, how you will fundraise and income targets.

[1] *For more information on payroll giving, go to https://www.payrollgivingmonth.com*

KEY STEPS TO TAKE

1. Research companies which are a good fit for your charity

Once you are clear what you can offer, take time to identify and research a pipeline of companies which are a good fit. You will need to know:

- What is the company's structure and ownership. Is the business a PLC, a private company or, perhaps, a partnership? Is there a parent company? If so, where is it based? (It is often more difficult to negotiate partnerships with decision makers outside NI)
- Are there branches or sites across NI?
- Is it an established company or a start up?
- What does the business do and how does it market its products or services? (Do your 'brand values' align?)
- Is the company financially sound?
- How many staff are employed and where?
- Does the company have specific Corporate Social Responsibility policies?
- Is there any history of charitable involvement – if so, what and when?
- Does the company adopt a charity of the year - if so, what is the process for applying? Could you speak to past beneficiaries?
- Is payroll giving in place?
- What are the names and titles of the directors? Who deals with charities?
- What is their financial year end? (this will help you decide when best to approach)
- What reputation does the company have in the community and with their staff?
- Has there been any adverse media coverage and, if so, what about?
- Does the company tender for public sector contracts?

You can find this information on the company's website, through Company's House https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/companies-house and through Google. LinkedIn is great for staff profiles and try talking to anyone you know who works for the company too.

Follow local business news and events on X and in business publications like Business Eye and Ulster Business and don't miss the Belfast Telegraph's annual Top 100. Participate actively in local business networks.

2. Develop ideas

Once you have identified and researched a group of suitable companies, use brainstorming to come up with a bank of opportunities which combine your understanding of what businesses need with your charity's strengths and assets.

The aim is not to develop detailed, formal proposals, but rather generate ideas to stimulate their interest and start discussion about the benefits of partnering with you.

For example, your research has identified a business which has just moved into your area, and wants to raise its profile, attract customers and recruit staff. Partnering with a well-known charity with a calendar of local events makes perfect sense.

3. Use leverage to open doors

Companies are inundated with partnership approaches so try to use leverage to open the door.

Invest time in face-to-face network mapping with your stakeholders (Board, volunteers, staff) to identify contacts within companies on your pipeline. Request your introducer makes the first move with a phone call suggesting an initial meeting. If using email (definitely second best), suggest your introducer writes from their corporate email address, not yours (much more likely to elicit a response).

4. Make the first meeting work

It is always better to have your first meeting face to face, rather than online, if you possibly can.

Informed by your research, the objective of your first meeting is to understand more about the company, explore their expectations of a partnership, present your top-line ideas and seek their feedback.

Remember that you are dealing with people, as well as organisations. Appeal to their hearts, and their heads, inspiring them about your cause and its relevance to their objectives.

After the meeting, use your discussions, and the insights you gained from your research, to develop a specific proposal which meets their expectations, plays to your strengths and generates appropriate income.

Working in this way creates a conversation, a negotiation, not a yes or no response to a fixed proposal.

5. Build relationships

Once you bring a corporate partner on board, invest time and effort in building a relationship with your key contact, making sure you also keep the chief executive in the loop.

Charities that are responsive, and stay in touch, earn the trust of their corporate partners which makes long term partnerships much more likely.

Hold a planning meeting at the start of the partnership so that you, and they, are clear about what's expected. Schedule regular update meetings throughout the year, not just in the run up to fundraising events, and stay in regular touch by phone and email.

Encourage the business to have strong internal communications so that staff are informed and motivated as the partnership progresses. Always make sure the business is correctly acknowledged in all communications.

Be responsive and helpful when they need something (within reason) and thank everyone involved as promptly and personally as possible, giving examples of the difference their support is making.

Keep the business posted on your charity's news and achievements and invite them to your charity's events.

In essence, work hard to make them feel part of your team.

6. Evaluate your partnerships

Always take time to formally evaluate corporate partnerships (with the business, and internally), learning from mistakes and recognising achievements.

Make sure you write a case history of each partnership and seek testimonials from key contacts, useful tools to attract new supporters.

Always keep good records of the details of the partnership, and your interactions.

For further useful information on Corporate Partnerships, see RL30.

A **CASE HISTORY**

Cancer Fund for Children supports children and young people impacted by cancer across the island of Ireland. Whether at home, in the community, on the ward, or at Daisy Lodge, our vision is that no child should face cancer alone. At Cancer Fund for Children, we understand the devastating impact a cancer diagnosis can have on the whole family, and that beyond the essential medical care, there is a family life that needs to be rebuilt.

CANCER FUND FOR CHILDREN AND THE HENDERSON GROUP

Bronagh Luke, Head of Corporate Marketing said

'Our partnership with Cancer Fund for Children goes from strength to strength. Not only have we raised over £1.7 million for young people impacted by cancer but our partnership has worked for our business too, bringing our staff together in ways which boost engagement and retention, helping build a loyal customer base, and enhancing our brand and media presence. It really is a win-win.'

In 2011 Cancer Fund for Children (CFFC) was chosen as The Henderson Group's (EUROSPAR & VIVOXTRA) charity partner. The partnership has blossomed since, raising an impressive £1.77m to support children and families impacted by cancer throughout NI whilst delivering on Henderson's Corporate Social Responsibility commitment to make a positive social impact.

The dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work demonstrated by Henderson's staff have been outstanding. Staff have embraced the fundraising challenge, enthusiastically participating in Cancer Fund for Children's events like The Bog Run and organising their own fundraising events in their local communities, from cold water swims to spinathons.

Henderson's flagship Community Coffee Morning has been a resounding success. In 2023 over 80 community supermarkets hosted coffee mornings, raising crucial funds, boosting profile and motivating staff.

By uniting staff and communities behind a common cause, The Henderson Group has created a sense of togetherness and mutual support within the communities served by EUROSPAR/ViVOXTRA stores.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Nadine Campbell

CHAPTER EIGHT

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

DEFINITION
WHAT IS COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING?

Community fundraising is a collaborative effort to raise money for a cause, project, or organisation by engaging the collective resources, energy, and support of a community including individuals, businesses, schools, religious groups, and other community organisations.

OVERVIEW

Community Fundraising is one of the oldest, best known and most resilient forms of fundraising. Often the public face of a charity, community fundraising can mobilise large numbers of supporters, raise substantial sums and increase awareness of, and engagement in, a charitable cause.

The success of community fundraising relies on broad participation. The more people are involved, the greater the potential. It often works best in support of local causes which touch the lives of those taking part.

Community fundraising can take many forms:

Events: Fairs, concerts, dinners and ticketed gatherings, sporting events, auctions and raffles.

Crowdfunding: Online fundraising which allows communities to contribute small individual amounts towards a collective (often significant) target.

Campaigns: Organised efforts like door-to-door and street collections.

Whatever mix of fundraising method you choose, it is vital to understand, and follow, the relevant sections (Events, Volunteers, Online Fundraising Platforms, Collections) of the Code of Practice published by The Fundraising Regulator. For more information, go to the Resources Library (RL31).

Community Fundraising brings both benefits and challenges.

At its best, as well as raising money and awareness, community fundraising can strengthen the social fabric of the community, creating lasting relationships, greater civic engagement, and a stronger, more connected community.

However, it can also be labour (and time) intensive, putting pressure on over-stretched charities. Volunteers are at the heart of community fundraising so, to keep duplication of effort to a minimum, community fundraising needs to be well organised, coordinated and communicated. And it needs lots of imagination and energy to keep momentum and enthusiasm alive.

Successful community fundraising is usually a partnership between staff and volunteers and requires appropriate resourcing. You will need a staff member to manage the overall programme (including event logistics) and to recruit and manage volunteers. You will need communications support to promote events and generate stories and video material showing the difference your charity makes.

You will also need a budget to cover:

- event costs (including public liability insurance)
- marketing materials – charity branded merchandise, event materials and general fundraising materials
- a fundraising database for excellent record keeping
- the costs of fundraising platforms like Just Giving, Enthuse and GoFundMe

Careful investment in community fundraising can reap significant rewards. A 2024 Benchmarking Study (GB) from AAW Group in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising (RL32) shows an average return on investment for Community Fundraising of 6.11:1 So, for every £1 invested, you could expect to raise £6.11.

CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

1. A clear and compelling case

Effective community fundraising starts with a strong and compelling cause or project which resonates with the community and gives local people a powerful reason to give, and to take part. This is known as your Case for Support.

The Case for Support is covered in detail in Chapter 2 page 15 - Developing a Diversified Income Generation Strategy.

2. Strong leadership, management and volunteer effort

Successful community fundraising requires strong leadership to inspire and manage the fundraising effort, working to an agreed fundraising plan and budget.

It also needs a team of active doers (often volunteers) to manage events, spread the word, and galvanise support. Volunteers have a crucial role to play. Their passion and commitment can boost community fundraising significantly.

3. Broad community engagement

The more people involved, the greater the potential for success.

Invest time and effort in engaging as wide a range of community members as you can. Local businesses, schools, sporting and community organisations will broaden your reach, boost your fundraising and create strong networks on which to build for the future.

4. Variety is the spice of life

Aim to use a variety of fundraising activities, appealing to all tastes and pockets!

A diverse mix - online campaigns, events like car boot sales, golf days, car washes, tractor runs, family fun days, walking and running challenges - will broaden your appeal.

Try to be adaptable and open to new fundraising ideas which emerge from the community as momentum builds.

5. Build trust and confidence

It is crucial that the community trusts the organisers and the cause.

Regular updates on the progress of the campaign/activity, how money has been spent and the impact of donations are vital to build donors' trust.

KEY STEPS TO TAKE

1. Define your purpose and your goals

Start by deciding what you will be raising money for and write your Case for Support and budget (See Critical Factors for Success above).

In tandem with the Case for Support, determine the financial target and agree other objectives, such as raising awareness or building community engagement, making sure your goals are specific, measurable, and realistic.

2. Put together a fundraising team

Begin by identifying what staff resources (if any) are available within your organisation and whether there are volunteers in your existing network with both the time and the passion to take an active part.

Working through existing networks and contacts, actively recruit a group of committed individuals who are passionate about your cause. The team could include paid members of staff, volunteers, local leaders, and representatives from various community groups.

Appoint a leader and clearly define roles and responsibilities within the team, such as event planning, communication, volunteer coordination, and financial management.

3. Develop a fundraising plan and budget

Develop a clear fundraising plan and expenditure budget to keep your campaign/activity on track and ensure everyone involved is clear and focused.

Create a timeline for the fundraising activities, including key milestones and deadlines, being clear who does what and by when.

Draw up a budget - estimate the costs involved in the fundraising activities and make a plan to meet them (this may include sponsorship and in-kind contributions).

Choose the most appropriate methods for fundraising, such as events, online crowdfunding, or partnerships.

If you are fundraising for a long-term project, or ongoing cause, always plan ahead for the next campaign/activity, building on the momentum and relationships already established.

4. Engage the community

Start spreading the word early through social media, local media, flyers, and word of mouth, making sure the messaging is consistent and compelling.

Seek out collaborations with local businesses, local media and other organisations to extend the reach of your campaign and bring in valuable additional resources, such as funding, promotion, and in-kind donations. Sponsorship by respected local businesses adds credibility and profile.

Mobilise volunteers to help with various aspects of the campaign, such as event management, promotion, and donation collection.

5. Execute the fundraising activities

Plan and execute fundraising events, ensuring all logistical details are managed and relevant guidance and codes of practice are followed.

Consider using online platforms such as Just Giving and Facebook to galvanise fundraising. Create a compelling campaign page with a clear call to action and promote the campaign widely through social media and email. For more information, see Resources Library (RL33).

Keep track of fundraising progress against the set goals.

6. Communicate progress and promote events

Use multiple channels including social media, local newspapers, radio, and community newsletters to promote events and schedule regular updates to help maintain momentum and engagement. For more information on using social media to promote fundraising, see Resources Library (RL33).

Ensure all communication reflects the goals and purpose of the campaign/activity. Highlight the impact of donations and how the community benefits.

7. Thank and appreciate

Your existing supporters are always your best future supporters, so take time to recognise and appreciate them, and your volunteers, throughout the campaign, and after it ends, keep them informed about the ongoing impact of their contribution.

You can never say thank you enough! Personalised thank-you notes, public acknowledgments, or small tokens of appreciation will all help reinforce relationships.

Volunteers are the mainstay of community fundraising. Acknowledge the efforts of volunteers publicly. Consider hosting a thank-you event or providing certificates of appreciation.

8. Track and report results

Keep accurate records of all funds raised and expenses incurred. This is crucial for transparency and accountability.

Share the results of the fundraising efforts with the community, showing how the funds will be, or have been used, and the impact they are making.

Gather feedback from participants, donors, and volunteers to understand what worked well and what could be improved.

9. Evaluate and reflect

Conduct a thorough evaluation of the campaign's success, including financial outcomes, community engagement, and the achievement of other goals.

Capture insights and lessons learned for future campaigns. Understanding what contributed to success and what challenges were faced will help improve future efforts.

For further useful information on Community Fundraising, see RL34.

A CASE HISTORY

We are the charity that helps children and young people (0-25) and their families find the strength to face whatever cancer throws at them.

We know everyone's different, so we work hard to provide support that's easy to access and meets individual needs.

THE LOGUE FAMILY SUPPORTING YOUNG LIVES vs CANCER

Paddy and Theresa Logue and family at the Guildhall for a special reception celebrating their amazing fundraising efforts, hosted by the Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District

For over 20 years the Logue Family in Derry/Londonderry has organised an annual 5k walk in memory of their son Gerard who sadly died from childhood cancer.

From small beginnings, with only twenty people attending, the event has gone from strength to strength. So far, the Logue's event has raised an amazing £200,000 for Young Lives vs Cancer (formally Clic Sargent) to support other families with a child undergoing cancer treatment.

Endorsed and supported by the Young Lives vs Cancer team, who offer branded materials, PR and communications support, two generations of the Logue family have worked tirelessly to grow the event. Younger members of the family are now leading the fundraising effort, creating a new lease of life - building awareness through local media and on social media, involving other community groups like the local football club and adding a family fun day after the event and a fundraising raffle.

Through the efforts of the Logue family, and the broader community, the event has become a popular annual event in the local calendar raising vital funds for a cause so close to the family's heart.

CHAPTER NINE

Alice Garrad

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

DEFINITION – FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Fundraising events are a popular way to raise (usually unrestricted) money, increase awareness, reach new audiences and bring people together.

They may be one-off or recurring, stand-alone or part of a bigger campaign, face to face, online (or both). They may be organised by paid staff, volunteers, or a combination of staff and volunteers. Some events, particularly treks and sporting challenges like cycle or running events, are organised by a third party and bought-in by a charity.

Fundraising events are a broad church ranging from small local events like car boot sales to glitzy events like 'gala' balls, dinners and auctions.

To maximise income, fundraising events are often sponsored, in full, or in part, by businesses who agree to cover event expenditure, typically in return for branding or promotional opportunities.

Small-scale community events are covered in Chapter 8 - Community Fundraising. Our focus in this chapter is on larger scale fundraising events initiated and managed by a charity.

OVERVIEW

Fundraising events are often the default option for charities seeking to develop their income generation. Almost everyone has attended a fundraising event, fuelling the belief that events are a sure-fire way to generate cost-effective income.

The evidence tells a different story. Whilst well organised, profitable fundraising events can (and do) raise significant funds, they are often an expensive and labour-intensive way to generate income, contributing the lowest return on investment of any of the methods explored in this publication.

A 2024 Benchmarking Study (GB) from AAW Group in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising (RL35) bears this out. It shows an average return on investment of 1.84:1 So, for every £1 invested in fundraising events, you could expect to raise £1.84. This compares unfavourably with, for example, Trusts and Foundations (5.99:1), Corporate Partnerships (4.47:1) or Legacies (49.1).

So, before you invest, take time to consider whether events are the best income generation choice for your charity. Is the time and effort involved in creating, and running, a fundraising event a wise use of your resources? Do fundraising events align with your charity's strengths – your profile, your networks, your media links, your corporate connections? Are there other income generation methods which better suit your cause?

If, after careful research, you decide fundraising events are for you, you will need to invest in appropriate resources - a staff member to manage the event(s) logistics with strong administrative back-up, corporate fundraising expertise to bring in event sponsors, and communications support to market events and generate publicity.

You will also need a budget to cover:

- event costs
- design and marketing – event branding, event publicity materials and general fundraising materials
- a fundraising database for excellent record keeping
- the costs of fundraising platforms like Just Giving, Enthuse
- the cost of relevant insurances and permits

CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

1. Make events as good as they can be

Fundraising events are competing with all other leisure activities for the public's attention.

Supporting a good cause is not, in itself, a big enough draw. You need to persuade people that coming to your event is a better option than staying in to watch Strictly or going to the pub!

Strive for innovation and quality, trying to find a point of difference, a reason to attend. Take time to brainstorm new event ideas and unusual locations. Look at what's popular (with other charities and commercial events) and add your own slant. The recent Air Ambulance Runway Run, a 5K run on the Belfast City Airport runway, is a great example of a fresh twist on an old favourite.

Keep your ideas simple – some of the most successful fundraising events, like Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day, are also the simplest.

Make sure your event sits comfortably with your mission and makes maximum use of your networks and contacts. See TORC Case History below.

At the event itself, take care to balance enjoyment with fundraising. Pick your moment to tell your charity's story and avoid bombarding supporters with fundraising messages and asks.

Have an eye for detail, taking time to think through every aspect of the event, from start to finish. For example, for a gala fundraising dinner, arrange for taxis to be outside the venue at the end of the evening so that your guests are not left waiting, spoiling the magic of the evening.

Prioritise excellent administration, making it easy for people to buy tickets /register as a participant, receive pre and post event information and get prompt answers to any queries that arise.

2. Think profit, not turnover

It only makes sense to run fundraising events if they make a genuine profit at a level which justifies the investment of time and resources.

Charities often report that their event raised an impressive sum when, in reality, the gross amount raised is reported with neither the costs of running the event, nor the staff costs, factored in.

At the early planning stage, have the courage to calculate the true costs of an event including staff time and direct event costs.

An honest understanding of the cost to income ratio should help you decide whether to go ahead or not.

3. Use your events as a springboard

See your fundraising events as a springboard for your charity to meet other strategically important goals like reaching new people, raising awareness and nurturing relationships with existing supporters.

Cross-sell your events through all your supporter networks. Working within GDPR legislation - See Resource Library (RL36), find ways to communicate with event supporters after the event, thanking them for coming, sharing the amount raised and explaining what you have achieved with the money. Try not to pigeon hole event supporters. Offer them other ways to get involved too.

Always make sure you keep excellent records which show supporters' interactions with your charity, including attending events.

4. Secure senior support and buy-in

Make sure your leadership team, your Board and other key stakeholders are well briefed about, and supportive of, your events.

Make them aware of what you plan to achieve and how your charity will benefit and enlist their help in selling the event through their networks.

5. Stay legal

All successful fundraising is based on trust and, to earn that trust, it is essential that your charity follows all the guidelines and legal requirements which apply to events.

You can find all the relevant information here Events | Fundraising Regulator and in the Resources Library (RL37). Issues to consider will include:

- Making sure all required licenses and permissions are in place
- Ensuring event venues are accessible and fit-for-purpose
- Following all health and safety legislation
- Making sure relevant insurances are in place
- Drawing up agreements for volunteer-run events
- Making sure organisations and participants in challenge events are clear about risks and their respective responsibilities
- Ensuring guidance on raising money through online fundraising pages is followed
- Ensuring compliance with HMRC guidance about whether or not a planned fundraising event qualifies for VAT exemption

KEY STEPS TO TAKE

DEVELOP A PLAN AND TIMELINE

A detailed plan and realistic timeline are essential for all events. Allow at least 9-12 months to plan major events and never be cajoled into running an event without adequate planning time.

Working back from the date of your event, develop a detailed timeline covering all the elements outlined in points 1-12 below. Make sure responsibilities are allocated to named individuals with specific completion dates and set regular monthly meetings (more frequent nearer the time) to check on progress.

1. Agree your event concept and assess the risks

Agree your event concept taking time to explore fully all the income generating opportunities - tickets, participant fees, auctions, raffles, merchandise, etc. See critical factor 1 above for event ideas.

Brainstorm what could go wrong e.g. poor ticket sales, bad weather, low numbers, celebrity guest pulling out at the last minute, and think through appropriate mitigations.

2. Agree proposed date and timing

To avoid clashes, research other charity, community or public events planned for your chosen day/time including school holidays, half terms, bank holidays, and major sporting events.

3. Set clear measurable objectives

Set objectives against which to evaluate your event, agreed and shared with staff directly involved and your leadership.

Your primary objective is likely to be to raise £x net of costs, at a return of investment of at least 3:1

Other objectives might include:

- Attract x number of corporate sponsors, each bringing in £y
- Attract x number of new event supporters
- Retain y number of existing event supporters
- Raise profile by securing x number of mentions/posts in the media/social media

4. Make a realistic assessment of resources required

Think carefully about how your proposed event will be organised – during planning, in the run up, at the event, after the event. If you can, consult a charity which has successfully run a similar event.

Consider:

- Who will take overall responsibility?
- Do you have the staff capacity to organise the event logistics (in the run up and on the day), manage event administration, market the event, bring in and manage sponsors, generate pre and post event publicity?
- Will you need to recruit a volunteer committee to work alongside the staff? (If so, what skills do you need, how do you get them?)
- Should you consider outsourcing? If so, who to and at what cost? Who is responsible for managing contractors?
- What volunteer support do you need for the run up, the day itself and the clearing up?

5. Assess income, costs and break-even point

Make a realistic assessment of costs and income based on previous years (if you have run it before) and/or research similar events run by others.

Consider:

- **Income:** What is the overall income target for this event? How does income break down across income streams – e.g. ticket sales/entry fees (give careful consideration to pricing), raffles, auctions, corporate sponsorship, individual sponsorship
- **Costs:** What will the event cost? Take care to include all costs – venue, catering, drinks, printing, publicity, VAT (if relevant to your event), etc. Base costs on real quotes not guestimates. Build a contingency into the budget and calculate your budget based on paying for everything (even if you plan to seek gifts in-kind and corporate sponsorship)
- **Net income:** Deduct the total costs from the total income to arrive at the net income for the event. Consider staff costs too
- **Break-even point:** Calculate how much you need to raise to break even and, balancing fundraising goals with other objectives like raising profile, determine whether or not to go ahead

6. Pick your venue

Take time to find the right venue to suit your event and your budget, being careful to ensure you comply with all the relevant guidance – See Events | Fundraising Regulator and the Resources Library (RL37). Make sure you have a written contract with the venue.

KEY STEPS TO TAKE

7. Select your suppliers

Research and book suppliers (catering, entertainment, printing, transport, etc.), making maximum use of contacts and networks for recommendations, discounts and, potentially, gifts in-kind. Make sure you have a contract with suppliers.

8. Develop a sponsorship plan

Consider the opportunities for corporate sponsorship to cover costs, in part, in full and in kind. Working through your Board and other stakeholders, explore potential corporate contacts which could be approached and manage the introduction process.

Think through the benefits you can offer in terms of branding at the event, recognition in publicity materials. Remember there are important tax and VAT implications from sponsorship. For specific guidance, see Resources Section (RL38).

9. Develop an event brand and promotional plan

Using design expertise (whether that's you, a colleague or an outside designer) create a look and feel for your event. Your event brand will be a consistent thread through all your event marketing and publicity.

Consider how you are going to promote your event, both to sell tickets/attract participants and to generate publicity.

Think about who the event is aimed at, why you think the event will appeal to them, and how you will attract them.

In the light of your analysis, select the various tools at your disposal and create a plan of action and timeline for promotion.

Depending on your target audience, your marketing plan is likely to include reaching out to your existing supporters, and new contacts identified through networks. Typical marketing tools are social media, local media, printed materials like posters and fliers, through your website and on email.

Make sure you make the most of any existing contacts within the media and with well-known faces who might help you raise profile.

For more information on how to use social media to support fundraising – See Resources Library (RL39).

10. Run your event

Create a detailed plan for the run up, the event itself and the follow up, making sure all logistical details are properly managed and ensuring all legal, insurance, health, safety, and security issues are covered. (See Critical Factor 5) above and Resource Library (RL37).

Allocate clear roles and responsibilities to everyone involved, both staff and volunteers.

11. Thanking and appreciation

Take time to recognise and appreciate everyone who has helped at your event – staff and volunteers. Think about creative, personalised ways to thank staff and volunteers to deepen your relationships and make future involvement more likely.

Let everyone who attended your event know how much was raised, how the money will be spent and the difference it will make. Keep accurate participant and donor records within GDPR restrictions.

12. Evaluate and reflect

Conduct a thorough event evaluation against your agreed objectives and capture insights and lessons learned for future event planning. Make sure recommendations for improvement are easily accessible to staff planning future events.

For further useful information on Fundraising Events, see RL40.

A CASE HISTORY

The purpose of Trauma and Orthopaedics Research Charity (TORC) is to continually improve the provision of holistic care for all those with musculoskeletal injury or disease in Northern Ireland. We aim to do this through our strategic aims:

Research: to deliver leading edge, high-quality research which will contribute to best practice as well as improved outcomes and experience for patients.

Education: to assist in the provision of education and advice to all those involved in musculoskeletal health.

Support: to be recognised for the top-quality support services we provide to patients and clinicians involved in musculoskeletal injury or disease.

TRAUMA AND ORTHOPAEDICS RESEARCH CHARITY WALK (TORC)

Amanda Watson TORC Charity Manager said:

"It's great to see the support the charity receives from past patients, friends and family. Everyone, including hospital staff and volunteers chip in to make this event a success. It's a great opportunity for staff to catch up with our valued supporters, past patients, family and friends."

For over 20 years, TORC has run their popular annual sponsored walk. Open to anyone who has benefited from orthopaedic surgery, their family and friends, the one-mile course takes place in Musgrave Park adjacent to the hospital. Participants complete as much of the course as they can, at their own pace. It is not a race! After the walk, there are refreshments, music, craft stalls, face painting for the kids and a chance to find out more about the charity.

For many of the walkers, surgery has drastically improved their quality of life and they are grateful to be active again. Taking part in the one-mile walk is like running a marathon, a huge achievement.

The strong personal motivation is key to the event's success. Since 2001 (with a 4 year break due to Covid restrictions), TORC has raised an amazing £1m.

The cost to income ratio is very healthy. The one-day event costs less than £1,000 to run, with venue and catering all supplied free of charge or donated in-kind. And there's a great team of volunteers made up of research and clinical staff to help with logistics on the day. The event is advertised throughout Musgrave Park Hospital. Posters and newsletters are mailed to the donor database. Each year, as soon as the word is out, the donations start to come in.

CHAPTER TEN

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

DEFINITION – WHAT IS SOCIAL ENTERPRISE?

A social enterprise is a business model designed to achieve social or environmental objectives through commercial activities.

Unlike traditional businesses, which put profit first, social enterprises balance making a profit with a mission to address society's problems.

OVERVIEW

Social enterprises operate across various sectors, including healthcare, education, environmental sustainability, and economic development. They can take multiple legal forms, such as Limited Companies, Community Interest Companies (CICs), and Industrial and Provident Societies.

The primary goal of a social enterprise is to drive systemic change, often targeting under-served communities, or addressing issues that traditional businesses or public sector interventions have not adequately solved.

Social enterprises share a number of key characteristics which set them apart. They are:

- **Mission-Driven:** Their primary purpose is to achieve a social or environmental mission.
- **Revenue-Generating:** They engage in commercial activities to generate revenue, sustaining their operations and funding their mission.
- **Profit Reinvestment:** Profits are reinvested into the enterprise, donated to linked charities, or used to further social objectives rather than being distributed to owners or shareholders.

CRITICAL FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

There are a number of critical factors for aspiring social entrepreneurs to consider:

1. Clear mission and vision

A well-defined mission and vision provide direction and purpose, guiding the enterprise's strategies and actions.

Clarity in your mission helps align stakeholders and maintains the focus on social goals. The most successful social enterprises often align closely with their parent charity's existing mission and vision.

2. Sustainable business model

Financial sustainability is crucial. A robust business model ensures that the enterprise can generate consistent revenue streams to fund its operations and mission.

3. Impact measurement

Effective mechanisms to measure and demonstrate social, economic or environmental impact are vital. This validates the enterprise's efforts, attracts funding, and engages stakeholders.

4. Strong leadership and governance

Competent leadership and a strong governance framework are essential. Leaders must possess a blend of business acumen and a deep commitment to the social mission.

5. Stakeholder engagement

Building strong relationships with beneficiaries, customers, investors, and the community fosters trust and collaboration, which are critical for long-term success. Existing supporters can be a key customer base for developing your social enterprise.

6. Innovation and adaptability

The ability to innovate and adapt to changing environments enables social enterprises to stay relevant and effective in addressing evolving social challenges.

KEY STEPS TO TAKE

1. Identify the social issue/enterprise idea

Understand the specific social or environmental issue you aim to address. Conduct thorough research to grasp the problem's scope, root causes, and impact on communities. Seek opportunities for social enterprise that best align with your organisation's mission and vision.

Charity personnel should explore the myriad of ways to bid for contracts. Since January 2021, it has been mandatory for all businesses tendering for public sector contracts to invest 10% (soon to rise to 20%) of the contract value in activities which deliver social value. This development offers charities the opportunity to tender as standalone entities or partner with commercial businesses to deliver social value.

For further information and opportunities go to the Social Enterprise NI Website

https://socialenterpriseni.org/ Social Enterprise NI's interactive social enterprise directory https://socialenterpriseni.org/directory/ and Social Value NI Portal- https://socialvalueni.org For public sector contract opportunities, go to ETenders Portal on https://etendersni.gov.uk/. See Resources Library (RL41).

2. Develop a business plan

Create a comprehensive business plan outlining your mission, target market, revenue model, operational plan, and impact measurement strategies. Ensure that the plan integrates both social impact and financial sustainability.

3. Legal structure and registration

Carefully consider the legal structure of your social enterprise and the linkages and potential relationships between the charity and the social enterprise. Consider various options, whether integrated within or segregated from the charity. This is crucial for good governance and managing potential risks.

Seek professional legal advice to choose an appropriate legal structure (e.g., Limited Companies, CICs, or Industrial and Provident Societies) that aligns with your mission and operational model. Register the enterprise according to local regulations.

4. Secure funding

Explore various funding options such as grants, loans, impact investments, crowdfunding, and revenue from commercial activities. Building a diverse funding base enhances financial stability.

5. Build a strong team

Assemble a team with diverse skills and a shared commitment to the mission. Effective team dynamics and shared values are crucial for driving the enterprise forward. Individuals with commercial business experience will add substantial strength to the team.

6. Establish partnerships

Collaborate with other organisations, government agencies, and private sector entities. Partnerships can provide resources, expertise, and networks that amplify your impact.

7. Implement and monitor

Launch your activities with a clear implementation plan. Regularly monitor progress, evaluate impact, and adapt strategies as needed to ensure continuous improvement.

8. Communicate impact

Transparently communicate your impact to stakeholders through reports, case studies, and storytelling. Effective communication builds credibility and support for your social enterprise.

9. Cultivate a business mindset

Social enterprises must think differently. While charities have become more business-focused, they often rely on donations or grants. Although grant assistance may be available to 'pump prime' a social enterprise start-up, profitability needs to be continually monitored to ensure long-term sustainability.

The Board and key personnel should also consider their appetite to risk. Social enterprises can carry a greater degree of risk which some charities may traditionally avoid. As Bruce Deel, pioneering leader of City of Refuge which transformed one of Atlanta's toughest neighbourhoods, said *'Risk is the enemy to the fulfilment of purpose. If I'm unwilling to engage in the risk, I will never experience the joy of the purpose being fulfilled in my life.*"

10. Ensure sustainability and growth through strategic decision-making

Make informed decisions now and in the future that promote the long-term viability and scalability of your social enterprise. This includes exploring opportunities for expansion, diversifying revenue streams, and continuously adapting to market and social changes to sustain and enhance your impact over time.

For further useful information on Social Enterprise, see RL42.

A CASE HISTORY

incredABLE is a leading charity and social enterprise based outside Armagh, operating across the Southern region of Northern Ireland.

incredABLE

We manage a diverse range of social enterprise trading businesses, including three cafes, two self-catering residential centres, and several other micro social enterprises producing various products, like branded chocolate lollipops.

All these initiatives are designed to provide training, employment, and meaningful daytime activities for people with learning/intellectual disabilities and/or autism. The income generated is either reinvested in the social enterprise or donated to the parent charity.

Today, incredABLE turns over £2.5m with a staff team of 100.

Our story began in 2016 when, determined to diversify our income, we started exploring social enterprise trading as a vehicle for growth. The opportunity arose to take over a small social enterprise café and training facility on the verge of collapse and we took the plunge.

From the very start we took a commercial approach, applying entrepreneurial skills and business acumen to further our mission, and develop our organisation. Key to our expansion was the decision to provide services traditionally delivered by the public sector and then working with these agencies to secure service level agreements to finance the work.

In 2017, Armagh City, Banbridge, and Craigavon Borough Council announced plans to open a multi-million-pound leisure centre and integrated water-sports facility in Craigavon. Initially scheduled for summer 2020, the project faced delays due to Covid-19. Early on, we began engaging with political representatives and Council officers to advocate for the inclusion of social value clauses in the Council's procurement process for selecting a new catering operator. Despite the setbacks and challenges of the pandemic, incredABLE participated in, and won, a competitive tendering process to provide catering services at the centre.

Winning the tender has been a game-changer for IncredABLE, significantly boosting visibility of our organisation and our beneficiaries. It has also fostered valuable synergies between incredABLE, the Council and the community, enhancing our impact across various initiatives.

We have found that incredABLE's mission to create opportunities for people with learning/intellectual disabilities and/or autism to live fulfilling, empowered lives is clear and compelling, resonates with consumers and stakeholders. Our brand is built around our social mission, attracting socially conscious consumers and fostering customer loyalty.

We understand that quality directly impacts customer satisfaction, repeat business, and reputation. Across all our businesses, our high-quality products and services not only attract and retain customers but also foster trust and loyalty, which are essential for long-term sustainability.

We take transparency and accountability very seriously. We track the number of individuals employed and engaged in training or volunteering, and the impact it has on them.

Financial sustainability remains at the forefront. We keep a close eye on profit, focusing on the profitability metrics of each initiative and location.

We never stand still, always embracing innovative approaches—whether in our products or services, in the way we work with customers or in operational efficiency. In doing so, we attract a diverse customer base and keep them engaged with fresh and unique experiences.

ACCESS
RESOURCES

Visit our Resource Library with links Online

Chapter 1
Key Principles of Successful Income Generation

1. Fundraising Benchmarks Report published by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising in June 2024.

   https://www.aawpartnership.com/articles/fundraising-benchmarking-the-findings
2. Choosing a Fundraising Database

   Civil Society Magazine article May 2023 – analysis of CRM survey

   https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/636ca51d76b9130a7f2f0073/645b7706410a15839711c30f_Fundraising%20Magazine%202023%20CRM%20survey.pdf

   Useful information on how to pick the right CRM system for your organisation here https://www.beaconcrm.org/offer/fundraising-magazines-charity-crm-survey-results-2023?
3. Fundraising Regulator for England, Wales and Northern Ireland https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/
4. Code of Fundraising Practice published by Fundraising Regulator https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code

   Standards which apply to specific fundraising methods | Fundraising Regulator
5. GDPR briefing published by Fundraising Regulator

   GDPR briefing: Fundraising (2) | Fundraising Regulator
6. Charity Commission NI

   https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/
7. NI specific fundraising information published by Charity Commission NI

   https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/media/1540/20181002-fundraising-for-charities-a-guide-for-charity-trustees-and-the-public-v30.pdf

Chapter 2
Developing a Diversified Income Generation Strategy (including Case for Support)

8. SOFII, Showcase of Fundraising Inspiration and Innovation

   Great source of global experience https://sofii.org/
9. Fundraising Benchmarks Report

   Published by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising in June 2024.

   https://www.aawpartnership.com/articles/fundraising-benchmarking-the-findings
10. Essential Guidance for Trustees published by The Charity Commission for NI

    https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-essentials/running-your-charity-guidance/

Chapter 3
Fundraising from Trusts and Foundations

11. Benefacts Legacy Report on Trusts in the Republic of Ireland

    https://benefactslegacy.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/benefacts-philanthropy-in-ireland-report-2020.pdf
12. Fundraising Benchmarks Report

    Published by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising in June 2024.

    https://www.aawpartnership.com/articles/fundraising-benchmarking-the-findings
13. NICVA Grant- tracker NI specific funder research

    https://www.grant-tracker.org
14. Funder Research Sources – ROI, UK, Europe, US

    http://www.wheel.ie/funding - ROI Funding –paid subscription service

    https://www.grantsonline.org.uk/ - UK Grants Online - free monthly bulletin.

    https://fundsonline.org.uk – UK trust funders - paid subscription service

    www.acf.org.uk – Association of Charitable Foundations UK

    https://europa.eu/youreurope/business/finance-funding/getting-funding/eu-funding-programmes/index_en.htm - European Funding – free service

    https://fconline.foundationcenter.org/ - US Funding – paid subscription service
15. Charity Commission NI and UK Charity Commission – Charity Accounts

    https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission - UK Charity Commission – free service

    https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/ - Charity Commission NI – free service
16. Other Useful Resources for Fundraising from Trusts and Foundations

    Special Interest Group - Chartered Institute of Fundraising - Trusts and Statutory

    Code of Fundraising Practice published by Fundraising Regulator:

    https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code

    Standards which apply to specific fundraising methods | Fundraising Regulator

Chapter 4
Fundraising from Individuals 1
Individual Giving Programmes

17. Fundraising Benchmarks Report

    Published by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising in June 2024.

    https://www.aawpartnership.com/articles/fundraising-benchmarking-the-findings
18. Choosing a Fundraising Database (CRM)

    Useful information on how to pick the right CRM system for your organisation here https://www.beaconcrm.org/offer/fundraising-magazines-charity-crm-survey-results-2023?
19. GDPR briefing published by Fundraising Regulator

    GDPR briefing: Fundraising (2) | Fundraising Regulator
20. Other useful resources for Individual Giving Programmes

    Code of Fundraising Practice published by Fundraising Regulator:

    https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code

    Standards which apply to specific fundraising methods | Fundraising Regulator

    http://sofii.org - showcase of fundraising inspiration and innovation

    http://nfpsynergy.net/ - market research agency for the not-for-profit sector.

    www.futurefundraisingnow.com – blog on fact based, donor focused fundraising

    https://digitalcharitylab.org/ - digital skills for progressive non profits. Free resources available

    https://charitydigital.org.uk/ - helping charities use digital resources more effectively

    https://agitator.thedonorvoice.com/ - donor trends in direct marketing

    Books – all available on Amazon

    - Commonsense Direct & Digital Marketing by Drayton Bird
    - Relationship Fundraising by Ken Burnett
    - Retention Fundraising by Roger Craver

Chapter 5
Fundraising from Individuals 2
Legacy Fundraising

21. Fundraising Benchmarks Report

    Published by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising in June 2024.

    https://www.aawpartnership.com/articles/fundraising-benchmarking-the-findings
22. Will to Give – Coalition of NI charities promoting gifts in wills

    https://willtogive.org/ - coalition of NI charities promoting gifts in wills

    Will to Give Webinar - 2022 Overview from Legacy Foresight which was delivered in Dec 2023 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1sw4VT2uKk -
23. Other useful resources for legacy fundraising

    Code of Fundraising Practice published by Fundraising Regulator:

    - https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code
    - Standards which apply to specific fundraising methods | Fundraising Regulator

    Special Interest Group - Chartered Institute of Fundraising - Legacy and In Memory

    https://sofii.org/the-main-areas-of-fundraising/legacies-and-bequests

    https://radcliffeconsulting.org/ - Website of Legacy guru, Richard Radcliffe

    https://loveyourlegacymanager.org.uk/ - Campaign from Institute of Legacy Fundraising celebrating the value of Legacy Managers and offering support and guidance

Chapter 6
Fundraising from Individuals 3
Major Donors

24. Fundraising Benchmarks Report

    Published by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising in June 2024.

    https://www.aawpartnership.com/articles/fundraising-benchmarking-the-findings
25. GDPR and Data Protection requirements

    GDPR briefing: Fundraising (2) | Fundraising Regulator
26. Other Useful Resources for Major Donor Fundraising

    Special Interest Group - Chartered Institute of Fundraising - Major Donor

    Code of Fundraising Practice published by Fundraising Regulator:

    - https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code
    - Standards which apply to specific fundraising methods | Fundraising Regulator

    Community Foundation for NI research 2019 on major gifts in Northern Ireland

    https://communityfoundationni.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Major-Donor-Giving-in-Northern-Ireland.pdf

    The Ireland Funds - https://irelandfunds.org/ - a global philanthropic network supporting peace, culture, education and community development throughout the island of Ireland.

    Books – all available on Amazon

    - Major Donor Fundraising - Margaret Holman and Lucy Sargent, Published by Directory of Social Change
    - Richer Lives - Why Rich People Give by Beth Breeze and Theresa Lloyd
    - The Tiny Essentials of Major Gift Fundraising by Neil Sloggie published by White Lion Press

Chapter 7
Corporate Partnerships

27. Key legal points on Corporate Fundraising

    https://ciof.org.uk/events-and-training/resources/corporate-fundraising
28. Public Sector Tendering/Social Value

    For more information about how to partner with business in public sector tendering, visit the Strategic Investment Board link Procurement - Social Value NI

    To find out more about Government tenders, go to https://etendersni.gov.uk/epps/home.do.
29. Fundraising Benchmarks Report

    Published by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising in June 2024.

    https://www.aawpartnership.com/articles/fundraising-benchmarking-the-findings
30. Other Useful Resources for Corporate Partnerships

    Special Interest Group - Chartered Institute of Fundraising - Corporate Fundraisers (ciof.org.uk)

ACCESS
RESOURCES

Visit our Resource Library with links Online

Special Interest Group - Chartered Institute of Fundraising - Payroll Giving (ciof.org.uk)

For more information on payroll giving, go to https://www.payrollgivingmonth.com

Code of Fundraising Practice published by Fundraising Regulator:

- https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code

- Standards which apply to specific fundraising methods | Fundraising Regulator

Chapter 8
Community Fundraising

31. Fundraising Regulator Codes of Practice relating to Community Fundraising

    https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code/specific-fundraising-methods

    https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/guidance/topics/community-fundraising-and-events

    Volunteers | Fundraising Regulator

    Processing donations | Fundraising Regulator

    Guidance for online fundraising platforms | Fundraising Regulator

    Events | Fundraising Regulator

    https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code/specific-fundraising-methods/collecting-money

32. Fundraising Benchmarks Report

    Published by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising in June 2024.

    https://www.aawpartnership.com/articles/fundraising-benchmarking-the-findings

33. Online Platforms and Social Media

    Using Digital Tools to Promote Fundraising https://co3.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Using-Digital-Tools-to-Promote-Fundraising-prepared-by-Nadine-Campbell-October-2024.pdf

    https://charitydigital.org.uk/digital-fundraising

34. Other Useful Resources for Community Fundraising

    Special Interest Group - Chartered Institute of Fundraising - Community Fundraising

    https://thinkcs.org/specialist-forums-fundraising-compliance-digital-community-philanthropy-charity/

    Book - Community Fundraising by Sam Rider published by the Directory of Social Change

Chapter 9
Fundraising Events

35. Fundraising Benchmarks Report

    Published by AAW Group in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Fundraising in June 2024.

    https://www.aawpartnership.com/articles/fundraising-benchmarking-the-findings

36. GDPR

    GDPR briefing: Fundraising (2) | Fundraising Regulator

37. Fundraising Regulator Codes of Practice relating to Fundraising Events

    https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code/specific-fundraising-methods

    https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/guidance/topics/community-fundraising-and-events

    Events | Fundraising Regulator

    Digital | Fundraising Regulator

    Volunteers | Fundraising Regulator

    Processing donations | Fundraising Regulator

    Guidance for online fundraising platforms | Fundraising Regulator

    If you are working with a third party fundraiser on an event you should read the standards in Part 2 of the code

    Behaviour when fundraising | Fundraising Regulator

38. Corporate Sponsorship of Events

    Advice on corporate sponsorship - https://ciof.org.uk/events-and-training/resources/corporate-fundraising

    Ensuring compliance with HMRC guidance about whether or not a planned fundraising event qualifies for VAT exemption – see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-fundraising-events-exemptions

39. Using Digital Tools to Promote Events https://co3.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Using-Digital-Tools-to-Promote-Fundraising-prepared-by-Nadine-Campbell-October-2024.pdf

    https://charitydigital.org.uk/digital-fundraising

40. Other Useful Resources for Event Fundraising

    Special Interest Group - Chartered Institute of Fundraising - Event Fundraising (ciof.org.uk)

Chapter 10
Social Enterprise

41. Public Sector Tendering/Social Value

    Social Enterprise NI Website https://socialenterpriseni.org/

    Social Enterprise NI's interactive social enterprise directory - https://socialenterpriseni.org/directory/

    Social Value NI Portal- https://socialvalueni.org

    ETenders Portal- https://etendersni.gov.uk/

42. Other Useful Resources for Social Enterprise

    https://socialenterpriseni.org/

    https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/start-social-enterprise

    https://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/get-involved/start-a-social-enterprise/

    https://www.the-sse.org/resources/starting/start-social-enterprise-10-steps/

    https://www.gov.uk/set-up-a-social-enterprise

    https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/social-enterprise

COMMUNITY FUND

Chief Officers 3rd Sector

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www.co3.org.uk