



General Fundraising Guidelines for Chapters

Overview

- It takes time to build a strong/lasting donor
- *If you make the right ask, and follow up, you will see results.*
- It generally takes four “touches” to get a response: email, follow up email one week to ten days later, call/voice mail, email saying you left a voice mail
- It’s OK to follow up until you receive a response or decline
- Your goal: Make it easy to say yes. Don’t give decision maker any reason/excuse to decline. Provide all information in a positive, professional manner – consistently and in a timely manner/process.
- It’s great if you can get a meeting, but you’ll most likely have/need to get your contact on the phone. However, email is critical to the process and sometimes the only way you can reach busy professionals.
- Don’t take it personally, your email probably won’t be read or will be parked and forgotten. As you know, communications and requests are coming from multiple platforms constantly. It’s a lot about getting folks attention at the right time that’s why follow up is so critical.

Direct your ask to the right person.

- If you have a valid contact with their title, email and phone, that’s a good place to start.
- Always be on the lookout to secure referrals – a great way to start an email saying you were kindly referred by so and so....
- Do your research on Google, LinkedIn, and company websites. Generally, you are looking for senior executives in the company, Director/Vice President and up – search for community/public affairs, corporate social responsibility contacts. Who makes the funding decisions?
- It’s rare that you can get names, titles and email when calling a company for information. If you have a name and can guess at their email address based on web search, admins will often correct the email for you – which is helpful.
- Obviously, having a contact referred to you is ideal, but if not, Google, LinkedIn and company websites are your best friends.

Who makes the funding/sponsorship decision in the company?

- Is there more than one contact you can approach?
- Don’t be afraid to email multiple contacts in a company and cc admin/gatekeeper or additional colleagues
- If you obtain a new contact at a company, don’t be afraid to send (another) request to them (to the company).
- Remember there may be multiple budgets in a company that might fund your request. It’s generally easier for folks to approve a pledge less than \$1500.

The Ask

What is your ask? Is the purpose to: Explore opportunity to work together or straight out funding for a specific event or program?

- Keep it brief
- Be clear early on in the email/phone call what your ask is
- If there is any way you can establish how or why your mission and the recipient/company are connected or aligned, be sure to include that
- Make sure your ask is complete – citing all *and only* the information needed to include links, websites, attachments – answer who, what, when and where
- Be sure your ask is correct – be sure of how company, point of contact(s) names are spelled. Used Google, LinkedIn and Company website to be sure.
- Do your research – Find out where company is currently giving or what their giving priorities are from their website (look for community/corporate social responsibility) and Google: “(company name) sponsor” and see what comes up.
- Make sure every word counts/is necessary, only include information needed/compelling..who, what, why, when and where with key points on how/why the prospective donor should invest

Follow Up is Key

- Always forward your original email to include content and attachments when following up.
- Keep it brief and ask them to please review “the email we sent from day/month below and attached.”
- Good to follow up citing a reason or additional fact you want to share- deadline to sponsor, update or additional information you can provide about your program or event, when might a decision be made or is there a colleague you might approach??

Sample Text

Dear,

On behalf of the CHAPTER NAME, a chapter of the United Spinal Association, I’m writing to connect you with our mission to serve individuals in our area impacted by spinal cord injury and disorders (SCI/D) – including veterans and all wheelchair users. We know XCOMPANY is active in our region to promote the well-being of our community, and we ask your support to sponsor our X OR donate to expand our X program.

Two – three sentences with highlights of your event or program. Position information to reflect why your contact should be interested in supporting this program or event.

We appreciate your kind review and your direction for a best next step to consider this exciting opportunity to support people with disabilities, specifically the SCI/D community in our region. We are happy to schedule a call to further discuss the X and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Logo