KENT VOLUNTEERS

Fundraising in challenging times
Part I - An introduction

With grants few and far between, a cost of living crisis, limited resources, and the ever increasing need to raise funds, how do you maximise your impact? Kent Volunteer Partnership has created three short guides to help you fundraise in challenging times. The first in this series is for anyone completely new to the topic…

BACK TO BASICS

Whether you're new to fundraising, or your organisation is new, let's begin by looking at the most typical sources of support:

- Trusts and Foundations - these typically have strict criteria for who can apply and for what.
- Statutory funding - this comes from local or national government, typically in the form of contracts or grants, to meet their own statutory responsibilities.
- Companies - many business support charitable work to meet their own Corporate Social Responsibility commitments.
- Individuals - from ad-hoc givers to significant supporters.
- Earned income - otherwise known as trading, this is essentially the exchange of goods or services for money, such as a charity shop.

Now let's look at each off those in more detail…

Trusts and foundations

There are over 10,000 charitable trusts and foundations in the UK, so trying to find details of them could send you down a rabbit hole. Instead, you could start with these helpful resources which list locally-available grants.

Kent 4 Community

Kent County Council's Inside Track

Kent Community Foundation

Funding for All

For a fee you could also sign up to a nationwide database such as Grantfinder, Grants Online or Funds Online.



Why not find organisations doing similar work and look at their accounts on the Charity Commission website to see who they have been funded by.

Statutory funding

If you think your work might be eligible for statutory funding, you can sign up for contractsfinder.service.gov.uk. However, applying for this type of funding can be quite different and might take some time to get to grips with. A good starting point is to speak with another local charity that receives this funding and learn from their experiences.

Corporations

Corporate fundraising can take many forms, and it tends to evolve over time, so it's important to build strong relationships. What might start with a donation of stock or some staff volunteering days could lead to the sponsorship of events, staff fundraising events or even payroll giving.

The best place to start is by finding a company that has some connection to your charity. For example, a homeless charity might find support from a housebuilding charity. You could also register on Neighbourly, which connects charities with businesses that have volunteer time, money or product surplus to donate.



You can find out more about this topic from the Chartered Institute of Fundraising.

Individuals

Donations from individuals can also take many forms. It might be a one-off donation from a collection box or a raffle; it could be a regular monthly or annual donation; perhaps a major gift to show their support of your work; or even a gift left in their will. As with corporate fundraising, building a strong donor base requires time and patience. The first step is to create a database to manage your supporters, and you need at least one donation platform such as JustGiving or Give As You Live so you can add a link to your website.

It's worth thinking how you will find your individual donors - will you locate them online through digital fundraising, via events that you hold, or through sponsorship?

Don't forget to also identify your current supporters - determine how they have given in the past and if there is a way for them to make more regular donations, such as through a monthly lottery or continual giving scheme.

Most importantly, ensure every donor is thanked appropriately.



For a more detailed look at individual giving, check out the Directory of Social Change's comprehensive guide.

Remember to process individuals' data correctly. The Fundraising Code of Practice gives some good guidance on this.

Next steps

If you want to take things further, the third of our fundraising handouts will look at creating a long-term fundraising plan. And have you checked out our Fundraising Easy Wins handout?