



## THE SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING

### Notes from Wendy Smither's toolkit session at the hub's One Dayer at Cecil Sharp House on 12th September 2014.

Before anything else:

- Know how much you need! You need a target.
- Control your own money as far as possible. Loans, grants, etc come with restrictions.

Top ten tips

- 1) Start with a good idea – and be able to express it quickly and concisely. Something strong, easy to grasp, fun; i.e. memorable.
- 2) Reality and focus. Authentic to your own passions and interests. You will be more believable and you won't come unstuck when investors discover the real you...
- 3) Be passionate about it. You must care if it doesn't happen! Being able to communicate your own personal belief will sell the idea, create excitement and interest.
- 4) It's not about you. You must be able to communicate that you've done your homework on them; referencing their values and interests will create the possibility for connection.
- 5) Don't be boring. Think about the presentation of your content as well as the content itself. Videos, images, sound, something exciting. Not just a link to a load of text.
- 6) Don't make silly mistakes. i.e. spelling mistakes, not answering their questions, not enough turnaround time, not actually asking for money...
  - a. Turnaround time is key for grant applications and this should be matched to the amount: a month for £5/6k might be OK but for £100k, it's not doable.
  - b. Communicating the idea, creating interest is good; communicating the practicalities is just as important. Tell people what you need straight away.
- 7) Know your worth. Don't put yourself in a master-slave relationship by default. Treat funding relationships as two-way partnerships. This includes letting funders know what you have achieved, what value they have created.
- 8) Don't assume... Understand who you are pitching to; don't assume that they understand who is pitching to them. Avoid jargon and technical terms, unless relevant and clarified.
- 9) It is a journey. This involves building up trust and establishing a relationship over time. You are investing time in the possibility of them investing money. Acquiring new donors is harder, and more expensive, than maintaining the partnerships you already have in place. In the charity world, 40-60% donations come from people who donate regularly; 20% from lapsed donators; only 2% from those who've never donated.
- 10) It needs a route map.



- a. Time: A clear plan to reach your target. Show income and outgoings. Numbers and timetabling is key.
- b. Place: Connections to particular environment, communities. Also knowing the lay of the land in the funding world – can you reference the right people? Why aren't you working with x, y, z. Showing the relationships you have in place.

#### Funding sources

- Arts council (1/4 – 1/6 applicants are successful)
- Esmee Fairbairn (1/20 applicants successful)
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Prince's Trust
- Lottery (1/3 applicants <£10k successful)
- PRS have multiple funding streams available
- Kickstarter works – but it needs continuous management. You must have someone dedicated to pushing it across multiple channels.

---

#### Q&A

A lot of grants are restricted – it must be used for a particular purpose (e.g. can't be used on costs of office upkeep). Unrestricted income (from donations, sales, etc) can be used how you wish (therefore much more desirable).

Arts Council are good at feedback to unsuccessful applications. Intermediaries don't necessary have an obligation to provide feedback. Generally, with public money, feedback is good practice.

Arts Council particularly look for social outcomes – developing artists and audiences. With other funders, make sure you know what they're looking for.

---

*Notes by Toby Bennett*