

How to fundraise when it's not your usual day job

Webinar Notes

1. The impact of coronavirus on charities and fundraising:

Difficult economic climate: increased unemployment, job uncertainty, pay cuts, decreased working hours, furlough leave, housing market has dipped, investments are down. All of these factors mean that some individuals have less money to give, corporates are focussing on surviving the pandemic and charitable trusts are seeing an increase in applications at a time when investment are down. There's no doubt about it, this is a tough time to be fundraising.

Short staffed and under resourced: Many NGOs have had to furlough staff and are currently working through who they can bring back, and whether any redundancies are needed. Many NGO's income is down. Staff are needing to do more with less resource.

Change in service delivery models: many organisations are cutting services due to decreased income, as well as changing how services are delivered to allow for remote contact with people. In some areas it can be difficult to fundraise when organisational plans are evolving quickly. It can make it more challenging to create a clear call to action for supporters.

Additional pressures on staff: managing child care, job uncertainty, changed roles and responsibilities, illness, death of loved ones, cancelled plans and celebrations, uncertainty on an international scale, – all of these factors means that charity staff are understandably feeling under pressure.

Increased competition for funding: NGOs are needing to increase their fundraising activity which means more organisations are applying to Trusts and Foundations and statutory bodies at a time when investments are down. Corporates are in survival mode and focussed on re-configuring their business models and staffing. Charitable support and CSR has fallen down the priority list. Individuals face more uncertainty with their wealth.

Environmental NGO's needed now more than ever: The environmental and climate crisis hasn't gone away, and yet the movement may have lost some momentum due to COVID-19 taking up so much individual, community and Government time and focus. Some donors are focussing on supporting causes that directly support COVID-19 survival.

2. Giving trends:

There have been some big shifts in donating behaviour. The CAF survey shows that in May 2020:

- While cash giving has rapidly declined, web and debit card giving have increased rapidly.
- Donations to 'Hospitals and hospices' went up significantly relative to the April average for 2017-19 (41% compared with an average of 21%).

- Most donors plan to maintain—or even increase—the amount they donate to charity this year.
- Most donors do not plan to shift their giving to different organisations in light of the pandemic; they will stay the course by continuing to support their favourite nonprofits.
- Charities must talk about their work in terms of Coronavirus. They must acknowledge what we are all going through, but show how they are mitigating the impact of the virus.
- Some people are frightened about the impact on their finances. But others are spending much less on themselves and can afford to give much more
- [CAF finds that](#) 22% of people say they will likely donate more than they usually do over the next six months in the wake of the outbreak, with 14% saying they'll likely donate to charity less than usual.

Useful resources on giving trends:

- <https://www.fidelitycharitable.org/insights/how-covid-19-is-shifting-donor-giving.html>
- <https://www.coronavirusandtheeconomy.com/question/what-are-likely-effects-crisis-charitable-donations>
- <https://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/guidance/coronavirus/round-up-giving-and-fundraising-insight/>
- <https://www.about-loyalty.com/post/covid-19-sentiment-tracker>
- <https://queerideas.co.uk/2020/04/why-do-people-give-talking-to-donors-during-the-coronavirus-crisis-with-amber-nathan.html>

Five things charities should do:

- **Charities need to make themselves visible** – show what you are doing. Donors think charities have been quiet. They want to know what you are doing.
- **Charities need to ask for help** – if they need it. Not a single donor had felt they had been directly asked to support work to tackle Coronavirus, though younger donors had seen appeals on social media. Committed donors will not stop supporting organisations that they value, even if there is no direct relevance to Coronavirus. Be authentic in all communications.
- **Charities should give people a chance to show that they are part of the solution** – many older people feel they could do more. Giving is a safe and relevant way for them to help. They want to be useful and be seen as useful. Your copy should ensure the donor feels part of a wider group so offer a sense of collective identity.
- **Charities should, where possible, be relevant** – show how you are mitigating the impact of the virus. As an aside, no one had been asked to fund medical research into developing a vaccine, though this would be a very attractive offer.

- **Charities should plan their communications now** – think about what changes the country will go through in the coming weeks and months and adapt your communications to answer donor needs. Show donors what help is required and – most importantly – show donors what THEY are achieving by giving to you. They want to be part of beating Coronavirus. You can give them that opportunity.

3. Where should I focus my time:

Gather stories that demonstrate the need for your organisation/project and stories that demonstrate the impact it has/will have. Be tooled up to speak and write persuasively about your cause. No need to wait for detailed strategies and plans. Stories convey the need just as well and are more compelling.

Keep it simple – be clear on what you're fundraising for and focus on that. Balance immediate need with long term plans. There's little point raising money for future projects if your organisation is in financial difficulty right now. Focus on where the need is greatest. Seek guidance and direction from your Trustees and other senior stakeholders.

Reach out and strengthen relationships with supporters and lapsed supporters. Arrange as many virtual cups of coffee as you can!

Fundraising is everyone's business – everyone needs to see how they can play a part. Front line experts, office staff, service users, and so on, all have a role to play in advocating for the charity and spotting potential fundraising opportunities.

4. How do I find the time?

- Eat that frog! <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Eat-That-Frog-Important-Things/dp/1444765426>
- Focus on where there is the greatest need. Be clear about what you're NOT going to do.
- Manage your energy and structure your day accordingly
- Focus on your why. Incremental actions amount the big change
- Your mindset and beliefs about where supporters fall in your priorities will have the greatest impact

5. How do I increase my confidence?

- Be able to talk authentically about why your cause matters. Align yourself with the cause every day
- Remember, you're not asking for money. You're asking if they want to help achieve the outcome.
- Seek support from a mentor, colleague, coach

Other great resources:

Written at the beginning of COVID, this blog is still highly relevant:

<https://summitfundraising.co.uk/a-call-to-show-you-care/>

A podcast about what people have been getting from post-Covid lockdown conversations with supporters

<https://www.fixingfundraising.uk/2020/05/07/season-2-episode-6-louise-morris/>

In this podcast Rob Woods interviews individual giving expert Rachel Hunnybun about a particular personalised thank you project, and the difference it made to everyone involved.

<https://www.brightspotfundraising.co.uk/episode-4-rachel-hunnybun-we-recognised-their-stretchand-then-giving-increased-174/>