



Want a Fundraising Board? Give Them the Tools They Need to Succeed

By William Cordery

Here's an new tool developed by the Board Development Committee of Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice that provides options for participation, establishes clear expectations, and sets board members up for success. Many thanks to Will and Astraea Foundation for sharing this resource!

BOARD DEVELOPMENT PLANS SERVE SEVERAL FUNCTIONS. They engage the governing leadership in strengthening the capacity of the organization by increasing revenue and supporting fundraising efforts. They also facilitate board members bringing in new donors and members to the organization by helping them plan doing outreach to their respective networks.

Utilizing a board fundraising work plan can help remove what are often personal barriers to organizational fundraising—alleviating fears around asking for money and creating a culture of collective ownership of an organization's financial health. An effective work plan will set clear expectations for board fundraising and provide a marker to measure their efforts.

Using the Template

An effective board development plan template has to be user-friendly and accessible. The various ways to support fundraising should be easily recognizable, clearly explained, and create space for eliciting a response from each board member.

This sample template is just over two pages and briefly articulates each way that a board member can engage in fundraising for your organization.

Major Donor Prospects

However your organization defines a major donor, several elements remain central to identifying individuals with the potential to provide larger donations. I was trained to determine a donor prospect's **relationship, interest and capacity**.

If possible, identify each prospect's **relationship** to the organization, its work, and/or its leadership (including your board

members), and determine what about your work **interests** them. The interests can be specific to your organization's programs or may be more general interest. Finally, research what their giving **capacity** may be. If they are philanthropic and support similar organizations to yours, it may not be too difficult to find out just how much their other major gifts are. You may also have sense of their capacity based on other indicators—such as their jobs, access to resources (earned or inherited), giving history, or size of past gifts. The stronger each of these indicators is, the more likely the individual will make a major gift to the organization.

Organizational Fundraising Efforts

Board members are uniquely positioned to increase revenue through organization-led fundraising drives and events. They can provide personalized follow up to individual donors they know to encourage renewal of their support. Board members can also strengthen new relationships for the organization by following up with unknown or new donor prospects to secure a contribution. Equally vital, board members can demonstrate their leadership by reaching out to their individual networks to bring new supporters to the organization. These efforts can be advanced through annual year-end member drives, unique opportunity campaigns, and special events.

With this tool, board members can commit to supporting each of these fundraising mechanisms for your organization. Once committed to supporting the organization's fundraising efforts, they should be equipped with whatever they need to write, call, email, tweet, Facebook, blog, etc.



Board of Directors Individual Fund Development Plan 2014

The operating budget for Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice consists of contributions from foundations and individual supporters. The foundation is open to receiving financial support from government agencies and private corporations to further advance its mission for LGBTQ liberation. In order to maintain a successful fundraising program, all board members are expected to make their own personal gift and to participate in activities to raise money from individual donors.

Please complete this as your 2014 fundraising plan, by confirming your personal gift, choosing the fundraising activities you will participate in, and setting goals in those areas.

Individual board fundraising plans should be completed before or by November 15, 2013 and submitted to the Board Development Committee (Devo Committee).

• **Individual Donor Prospects.**

Below, please list individual donor prospects whom you can cultivate a relationship to Astraea and solicit for financial support over the next 12 months. Ideal donor prospects will have a relationship to you and/or the foundation, interest in supporting the work of the foundation, and the capacity to support the work with a meaningful financial contribution. The Devo Committee is available to work with fellow board members to identify and vet viable donor prospects.

NAME OF PROSPECT	RELATIONSHIP	INTEREST	CAPACITY
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

• **Donor Cultivation & Stewardship**

Solicitation and stewardship of major donors and prospects often include a face-to-face meeting. Board Members play a key role in these meetings as both governance leadership and as fellow financial supporters, both of which successfully leverage increased support for the foundation.

Are you willing to attend donor meetings? YES _____ NO _____

_____ **I'm not ready for this yet, but with training and practice I would like to participate in donor meetings in the future.**

• **Engagement through Special Events & Staff-Led Efforts**

This includes Astraea's annual June Pride Party, Righteous music benefit and annual fundraising appeals. Individuals can be engaged through ticket sales, sponsorships, and/or in-person appeals.

I will raise funds for the following:

June Pride Party: YES _____ NO _____

Writeous benefit: YES _____ NO _____

I will raise funds for the Spring/Fall Appeals through the following activities:

Donor Portfolios: YES _____ NO _____

I can commit to ____ (insert number) of donors based on relationships I have with current or prospective major donors.

The donors that I will be in touch with throughout the year are: _____

My own contacts: YES _____ NO _____

Social media promotion: YES _____ NO _____

Other: _____

My \$ goal to raise through Special Events & Appeals: \$ _____

• **Hosting a House Party**

House parties are used to educate our friends and donors about the work advanced by Astraea’s grantmaking and is a ripe opportunity to raise money and cultivate new donor prospects. By hosting a party, Board members underwrite the cost of food and drinks and open up our homes/spaces to the foundation and help generate attendance by inviting prospective donors in our networks.

I am available to host a house party: YES _____ NO _____

Best time of year: Winter _____ Spring _____ Summer _____ Fall _____

I have a friend/colleague who I will ask to host a house party: YES _____ NO _____

The name of my friend is: _____

My goal to raise through a house party \$ _____

• **Thank-You Calls to Donors & Supporters**

This new program involves calling donors just to say “thanks.” It’s not a pitch for money, but just an opportunity to thank the donors for their support, answer any questions they may have, and learn more about the donor. You will be given information and assistance to make these thank you calls.

I will make thank-you calls to donors and supporters: YES _____ NO _____

• **Other Ways to Support Fundraising**

I have expertise in the following areas: _____

I have foundation and/or corporate contacts that I can share with Astraea: _____

• **Personal Contributions**

Board members are each expected to make an annual financial contribution. There is no minimum amount, and we ask that you consider an amount that represents a significant gift to you. To make this gift, consider pledging an amount early in the year, and making pledge payments over the course of the year. You should also include any gift match possibilities from your employer if applicable

My personal donation for 2015: _____ I will pay my pledge: _____ at one time, by _____ (date); _____ in 4 quarterly payments; _____ in 12 monthly payments.

My employer match for my total gift to Astraea: _____

____ I'd like further support in setting my fundraising goals—Devo Committee, please contact me!

Additional Comments:

I agree to fulfill the above-stated fundraising goals to the best of my ability for the stated calendar year.

Board Member

Date

Board Chair

Date

Board-led Fundraising Initiatives

Board-led fundraising initiatives can bring in new members and donors that are sometimes beyond the reach of the organization's staff and current membership base. For example, when a board member hosts a house party, they will likely call on their network of friends, family, and peers to attend. Board members may also ask some of their peers to co-host a house party to increase the likelihood of them inviting their respective networks. In this fundraising plan template, ask board members to commit to hosting a party and to pinpoint approximately what time of the year would be best for the event. This strengthens their commitment to follow through with the party, while providing the development staff a window of lead-time to prepare any needed supporting materials. Encourage them to have a numeric goal for money raised and/or new donors signed on at the event.

Making a Personal Financial Contribution

Finally, it is important for board members to include their personal annual financial commitment in their development plan. A fundraising board must also be a giving board. Individual finan-

cial investment shows commitment to the organization's work, direction and leadership. It also helps to empower board members to ask others to give. You cannot effectively ask someone to financially support a cause if you are not invested yourself. Donors and funders now become peers. Present all of the options in which board members can make contributions—once a year, quarterly, monthly, and so on. They should be encouraged to take advantage of any matching gift programs their employers may have as well.

Providing fundraising opportunities for all levels of organizational leadership will have positive lasting effects in creating a more financially sound organization. You will diversify your income streams, freeing your programming and organizational strategies from being guided or defined by a single funding source. As your board becomes more involved in fundraising, their investment in the work will deepen and your relationships with constituents and supporters will be stronger. ■

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