

Finding Donors

Successful Research Systems for Small Non-Profits



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How to Use this Guide

I decided to write this e-guide after being asked, “How do I find donors AND manage fundraising?” by charity clients more times than I can recall.

My aim was to provide practical advice about how to set up a research programme without spending too much time or money, which I know is particularly important for small organisations that tend to have little of either.

I specialise in working with small charities, and know what a struggle it is for many of them to manage a proactive fundraising programme.

Competing priorities mean that research often drops to the bottom of the ‘to do’ list – but it is the foundation of a successful fundraising programme.

When charities do manage to develop a regular research programme, they consistently uncover new donors. As a result, these charities have a strong base and a sustainable approach for their fundraising.

This e-guide isn’t a magic bullet that means you won’t have to spend time looking for prospects. Research is time-consuming. You will have to dedicate resources to it.

But, rather than struggling to know how or where to start, in these pages, I give you advice about how you should structure and manage your research to make the most of your limited time and funds.

There are also tricks and tools that you can use to save yourself time in the long run (so it’s not all bad news).

By the time you reach the end of *Finding Donors*, you will have the tools necessary to develop a **systematic approach to research** that’s **easy to manage**, helping you to uncover **more new potential sources of income**.

There are exercises that aim to help you to focus on your research needs and develop a research programme that fits YOUR non-profit.

What you'll Find in the Guide

I've focused on giving you the tools to develop a tailored, manageable approach to running a sustainable research programme. This will help you to continue to find new prospects for your charity in the future.

I've given recommendations about developing a research programme (see The Resources you REALLY Need), as well as going into detail about the practical aspects of a research programme, such as where to look for potential donors and what to consider (see Research 2.0: The Tools of the Trade):

Finding Donors has been written specifically with small charities in mind, and you'll find suggestions for:

- ✓ Resources that won't cost a fortune (as well as some that don't cost anything at all)
- ✓ How to use what you already have – but better
- ✓ How to manage research as part of your on-going fundraising – without it taking over

What isn't Included

This isn't a detailed guide about the specific research resources that are available.

Why not?

I can't possibly list every single resource out there that will suit every small charity in every country in the world.

More importantly, as your non-profit is unique, with its own networks, projects and contacts, the likelihood is that while some of the research resources will be useful to you, others won't. So, I've focused on the approach that you need to take, as well as resources and avenues that are available to ALL charities – such as networks, press and social media.

I've included a list of links to some resources, particularly for those based in the UK, Europe or the USA. This is intended to provide a

starting point and generate ideas about the specific resources that could work well for your charity.

How to Use this e-Guide

To get the best out of *Finding Donors*, start at the beginning and work your way through. This means that you'll undertake a Fundraising Review specific to YOUR charity that you can then use to tailor your research programme to YOUR needs.

However, each section can be taken as a standalone, so if you're really only interested in finding out about a specific area, such as using your networks better, you can jump straight in there.

Navigate the guide in the way that will work best for you and your current fundraising needs.

The idea is that you will be able to continually refer back to *Finding Donors* as your needs change or if your approach is starting to become stale and you want to reboot your research.

The practical exercises are there to help you to develop and establish your research programme as you go through the guide, developing your programme in easy, manageable steps. Of course, if you'd rather read the whole guide first and go back to them later, that will work too.

It's your e-guide and your research programme, so you need to work through it depending on what will work best for you and your needs.

What's Covered

I've given as broad an overview as possible of the potential areas that you need to consider, starting with an introduction to research and why it's important.

- **The Resources you REALLY Need**, including advice on how to make the most of what you already have

- **Focusing your Fundraising Priorities** – by getting clear on your needs first, you will have a better idea of where to look for potential funding
- **Different Sources of Funding** – how to find them and what to consider for each
- **Research 101** – practical ideas, tools and tips to manage your research

So, here goes: you're just a few steps away from finding more donors

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