



Bar Foundation Best Practices: Donors—How to Get Them and How to Keep Them

Just ask. The “ask” may be the most difficult piece in fundraising for many bar foundation executives and board members. Creating a script and a well-structured and compelling case for support can help, as can training on making asks, researching donors before face-to-face meetings, targeting donors who have given over the years, targeting individuals who have personal connections to foundation board members and staff. Once the homework is done, set up an opportunity to make the ask. State the need for support, describe benefits of giving, and ask for a specific amount. Wait for an answer, or follow up.

“Keeping donors interested and excited about their philanthropy is a fundamental task for a community foundation. After all, donors are your best source for additional gifts and larger ‘legacy’ gifts in the future.”
Council on Foundations

You have donors, now what? Maintaining relationships with donors is essential. Plan in advance to reach out to donors long after they give. Provide detailed information about how their gifts were used by grantee organizations and, more importantly, by individual clients and attorneys. Stewardship allows for ongoing donor education, creating well-informed donors and strong supporters of bar foundations. Donors who feel connected to the work of the foundation are more willing to give, and over time, willing to give more.

Tips from Bar Foundation Executives:

- Targeting Donors
 - Focus on large firms
 - Involve the judiciary
 - Create a Young Lawyers Giving Program
 - Unusual Prospects
 - Generate a list of businesses and other non-lawyer donors
 - Create incentives for business donors – public relations (e.g. press releases), marketing
 - Plan events specifically for non-lawyer donors
 - Donor Appreciations
 - Host both formal and informal recognition events
 - Award and recognize major donors
 - Seek donors for advice and/or participation on projects
- Other Tips:**
- Discuss with donors the kinds of gifts that will strengthen your impact
 - Set up quarterly meetings with donors to discuss the progress of implementing their gifts
 - Invite donors to join an advisory committee or to hear presentations by grantees

In partnership with  **ALPS**
Foundation Services

References:

ALPS Foundation Services, www.foundationservices.com

American Bar Association, <http://www.abanet.org/>

Association of Fundraising Professionals, http://www.afpnet.org/resource_center/resource_tools

Council on Foundations, <http://www.cof.org/>

Foundation Center, <http://foundationcenter.org/>

The Philanthropic Initiative, <http://www.tpi.org/>



In partnership with  **ALPS**
Foundation Services