

# Fundraising 101

Once your budget is in place it is time to plan how you will fund your vision. A well-crafted fundraising plan not only outlines your financial goals but also energizes your team to reach them.

Before you start:

- **Set Clear Goals and Understand Your Value Proposition:** Define how much you need to raise and why. Break this down by category; projects, travel, events, etc.
- **Develop your Pitch:** The problem you are trying to solve? What are you doing about it? What do you need, be specific. How will this funding help the problem you are addressing?
- **Strategy First:** Develop a clear strategy for each fundraising goal. This might include events, partnerships or grants and ensure you can deliver on what you are asking for funding for.
- **Understand the infrastructure to receive funds:** Financial institution information, process, acknowledgment of funders, and charitable tax receipt.

A great resource is the [FUN-draising.presentation](#) from Catherine Fowler, President & CEO of Enactus Canada.

## Identifying Funding Sources

Funding is out there, you just need to know where to look and do your research.

Look for:

- **Affiliation:** proximity to the cause
- **Connection:** do you have a shared experience / problem?
- **Capacity:** What amount of gifts have been given in the past? Donor listings, financial statements, gifting timelines.

### Team-Led Funding Opportunities

- **Run Revenue-Generating Projects:** Develop social enterprises that generate income while making an impact.
- **Host Events:** From bake sales and scavenger hunts, to networking galas and silent auctions, events can be a fun and effective way to raise funds for your team.

## Funding Through Strategic Partnerships

- **Partner with your academic institution:** Secure funding through your school campus entrepreneurship or innovations centers, or senior leadership.
- **Local businesses:** Banks and service clubs are looking for ways to give back.
- **Innovation or Employment centres:** Watch for opportunities to participate in accelerators within the community that help local businesses

## Grant-Writing

- Explore institutional, government, foundations, trusts and community grants. Tailor your applications to align with their goals for a higher chance of success.

Do your research and be thorough before you develop your proposals:

- Check donor and supporter pages on aligned organization websites
- Search annual and impact reports
- Use online resources like LinkedIn and Crunchbase
- Review Boards of Directors

Build your prospect pipeline before you build your proposal.

# Developing a Proposal

Writing a proposal is your opportunity to ignite passion in potential partners. It is not just about asking for money, it is about sharing your project's purpose, expected outcomes and vision.

## Crafting Your Proposal:

- **Research Your Audience:** Understand what potential supporters care about and align your proposal with their values. Make a connection and build trust.
- **Be Clear and Concise:** Outline your project, the problem it addresses and how their support will make a difference.
- **Highlight Benefits:** Make sure your proposal clearly states what is in it for them. How will partnering with your team benefit their business or brand?
- **Follow Up:** After sending your proposal, follow up to keep the conversation going. Show your professionalism and commitment. Sending a thank you within 48 hours of receiving a gift inspires a 90% year over year retention rate.

## Helpful Tips:

- Think of this as a sales pitch, sell your ideas with enthusiasm!
- Ensure it is professional, clear, and concise.
- Provide a packet with information on Enactus, your team's history and your goals.
- Follow up after a reasonable time to show your professionalism and keep the relationship strong.

# Making the Pitch

## Before the Pitch Meeting

### Do

- Request a meeting
- Tell them you are going to ask
- Minimal materials
- Prepare options
- Research
  - Know what is important to **them**.

### Don't

- Send a long email
- Ask in an email
- Give out merch/fancy materials
- Outnumber them
- Over-promise on benefits.

## During the Pitch Meeting

### Do

- Listen more, talk less
- Ask confidently
- Stop talking, listen again
- If they say yes, be clear on timelines and follow up

### Don't

- Be in “pitch mode” from beginning to end
- Be creepy about things you know about the person from your research
- Ask awkwardly
  - They need to trust you are confident in your project/product
- Keep ‘pitching’

**Tip: Don't take rejection personally. It isn't you. And it is (hardly) ever forever)**

## After the Pitch Meeting

### Do

- Make it easy to give
- Say thank you immediately - even if they say no.

### Don't

- Ask before you're ready to receive
- Overthink your thank-you
- Bend over backwards

### Stewardship is Fundraising

- Maintaining and strengthening relationships with supporters, stewardship ensures that donors feel valued, informed, and connected to the impact of their contributions. Strong stewardship builds trust and loyalty, laying the foundation for continued support and long-term fundraising success.
- It costs more to acquire a new donor than to retain an existing one. Lasting relationships drive sustainable fundraising.