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the power of voice

## TIPS FOR LIBRARY FUNDRAISING

1. A great campaign uses clear and consistent messages.
2. A great campaign connects with your library's broader communication and operations activities.
3. Use facts well—in ways that are relevant to people and that tell your library's story. Make sure they are **right**.
4. Create staff ownership and understanding of the execution of the campaign.
5. Don't underestimate the importance of managing a comprehensive and current donor database.
6. Use the library's fundraising entity as the preferred repository for all gifts.
7. Establish a clear policy indicating that private donations are above and beyond public funds.
8. Libraries are uniquely positioned for planned giving—build endowment and sustainability strategies into the fundraising campaign.
9. Harness the power of opening events and link them to sustained fundraising strategies.
10. Create an "event-conducive" library with event space, presentation equipment and space for catering. Make sure that the serving of alcohol is in the facility charter so the library can be used/ rented for special events. Ensure that lights can be dimmed in major event spaces.
11. Large urban libraries can fundraise statewide with philanthropists, civic leaders and higher education alumni groups.
12. Libraries have a large and diverse constituency that includes, but goes beyond, the "usual suspects."
13. Distinct communities of interest, ethnicity and profession create affinity naming opportunities for collections and programs.
14. Every gift "counts"—plan to leverage all gifts through public recognition and publicity.
15. Strong community partnerships (public broadcasting, cultural and humanities organizations, etc.) can help identify donor prospects and support the campaign. Propose a list trade.
16. Public-private partnerships are a necessity for a great library. First-time donor support depends on clearly communicating that public dollars provide quality, and private dollars determine the margin of excellence.

Strategic Communication

Resource Development

Intercultural and  
Cross-Cultural Communication

Organizational Development

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Metropolitan Group crafts strategic and creative services that empower social purpose organizations to build a just and sustainable world.

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17. Users want an “experience” that’s consumer-friendly—coffee, open stacks, comfortable seating, and areas to visit and gather. These features provide excellent opportunities for private partnerships and donor recognition.
18. Corporate sponsors and media partners can significantly enhance a library’s marketing capability and results during the campaign. Don’t be hesitant to engage them.
19. Bookstores are allies, not competitors
20. Consider electronic screening of your cardholder database for wealth and income.
21. Challenge gifts work—campaigns need a leadership challenge gift and an “every donor” challenge gift.
22. A set calendar of regular cultivation events is critical to success. Donor dinners, hard hat tours and author dinners are very effective.
23. Library staff members are great storytellers and effective presenters to donor prospects. Engage them in your campaign.
24. Provide tasteful and consistent donor recognition—bookplates, bookmarks, flexible donor wall, donor plaque, on furniture, and in rooms and areas.
25. Furniture and shelves are tangible “sales” items that provide an opportunity to leverage “step-up” gifts with payment options.
26. A new building will increase usage—consider making your campaign an opportunity for funding new collections.
27. Remember that public art is fundable.
28. Specialized program funding and national funds are available (Kresge, IMLS, Gates, NEH, Starbucks, etc.).
29. Many potential major donors do not have current library cards but they do **value** libraries and have a library story in their past.
30. Libraries are “cradle-to-grave” service organizations, that connect people with their life transitions (student days, raising kids, career path, major travel, retirement, etc.). Keep this in mind for planned giving connections.
31. Book groups are excellent prospects and need to have an incentive to self-identify.
32. Extend outreach to grandparents—a strong source of disposable income to support children’s programs, collections and capital.
33. Do not undersell the children’s library and areas. Create multiple named giving opportunities for them and seek leadership level contributions.
34. Native American tribes can be good prospects for specialized collections and program support.
35. Library staff, present and retired, are good prospects.

36. Most donors are more motivated by libraries and books than libraries and technology, but the technology-oriented donors must receive the case in their language.
37. Free speech/pornography/First Amendment issues are usually tempests in a teapot, and should be avoided during a campaign.

*Metropolitan Group provides a full range of services for libraries, including fundraising, marketing and branding, public relations, public affairs, strategic planning, outreach to new and diverse audiences, online communication and graphic design.*