TELLING YOUR STORY

TO RAISE FUNDS FOR YOUR LIBRARY

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Are you effectively telling your story and promoting funding priorities for your library to your constituents and stakeholders? Here are some easy ways to ensure that your constituents remain aware of your current and future funding priorities for your library. Also, learn easy ways to maintain strong relationships with your donors. What's great about these suggestions is they are cost- and time-efficient!

Case for Support
Ensure that you have a concise case for support for the variety of funding priorities for your library. Briefly describe the funding priorities (i.e. needs) and explain why they are needed and how they will benefit your library, your constituents, your community, etc.

For example: *Due to increased demand from our users, the Smith Library needs to purchase new equipment for our makerspace. Last year, 200 people utilized the makerspace! A gift of $2,000 will enable us to purchase two PRUSE CORE ONE 3D printers. Our library users utilize these printers to create models, adaptive equipment, etc. Learn more about this amazing technology by clicking here. Please contact us at 555-555-5555 or at development@smithlibrary.edu to learn more!*

Website
Promote funding priorities for your library on your website.

- Do you have a "Support the Library" icon on your homepage? If not, consider creating a landing page that focuses on your funding priorities, ways to give, ways to contact your library with questions about giving, etc.
- Include a hyperlink to your online giving site in your email signature line.

A "Did You Know?" List
Creating a menu of funding priorities for your library with a brief description is a great way to easily promote giving. This can be shared via social media, email, your website, or presented at board/civic group meetings.

Example: *Did You Know?*

- *A gift of $100 can fund two children's collection activity/reading events?*
- *A gift of $500 can purchase 20 new hard copy editions for the circulating collection?*
- *A gift of $1,000 can purchase a new 3D printer for the makerspace?*
- *A gift of $10,000 can name the conference room (or preservation lab, makerspace, etc.)*

Ways to Give
Promote the variety of ways donors can financially support your library:

- Outright support via check, credit card, debit card, etc.
- Donor-advised funds.
- Transfer of appreciated stocks.
- Life Insurance and Retirement Fund beneficiary designations.
- Bequests via one's Will/Estate**.**

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Friends of the Library

Effectively utilize your Friends of the Library Board to serve as fundraising advocates for your library.

- Provide board members with "talking points" regarding your top funding priorities.
- If funding allows, hire a consultant to work with your board to help them learn more about the vital role they play in helping with library fundraising and to provide hands-on training for them to practice their "elevator pitch." You never know when a board member may have an opportunity to have a meaningful conversation with someone who could be your next big donor!
- Invite board members for VIP/Behind the Scenes tours of your library so they can learn more about the inner workings of your library… from Collection Development procedures and conservation to the book drop!
- Encourage board members to help introduce potential donors from their networks to the library.
- Ask board members to host events at their home or office so you can tell your story to new potential donors!

Donor Engagement

Stay engaged with your donors!

- A handwritten thank-you note or get-well card makes a tremendous impact on the library-donor relationship.
- Create an email distribution list of your donors/stakeholders and use it to update them with snippets of library news, updates, short and long-term funding priorities, etc.
- Send brief videos to your donors to wish them happy birthday, thank them for their recent gift, congratulate them on a life event, or provide a personalized video tour of a renovated space that they haven't been able to see yet. Your smart phone is an amazing tool in your fundraising toolkit!
- Create donor profiles (with the donor's permission).
    - A donor profile explaining why a donor supports and loves your library is a wonderful way to steward (i.e. thank) that donor. Also, donor profiles can motivate others to give as well.
- A cost-effective way to engage your donors is to personally invite them to your library events, special occasions, behind-the-scenes tours, etc. These opportunities enable you to not only maintain a personal connection with them, but they also enable the donor to see first-hand how the library is operating and how their additional philanthropic support can benefit the library. A donor who is invested in your library will continue to be a loyal donor.

Sharing the story of your library funding priorities is vitally important to securing philanthropic support. It also ensures that you maintain a consistent "pipeline" of new potential donors. Donors give because they are moved by a case for support, because they are invested in the library, because they are kept engaged, and because they are asked. Don't be shy! Proudly tell your story and see increased donor support for your library.