



“It shows that people care”

The insider’s briefing





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Introduction

The guide *“It shows that people care”: LGBTI organisations fundraising from individuals in Europe and Central Asia* is available to the public. Think of it as a general brochure.

By contrast, this private briefing is your user manual and starter pack.

It is based on interviews with fundraisers and grant-makers, and offers advice on strategic aspects of fundraising not discussed in the guide.

We hope it will be valuable to activists and grant-makers alike.

△ It's only made available to LGBTI organisations and their funders. Please share it only to relevant contacts, and don't make it public or available online.

1. The activist's briefing: Lessons from peers, advice from funders

45 min. read



Any funder's dream is for their grantees to become financially independent.

Adrian Coman, Arcus Foundation

Whatever your level of experience, good fundraising requires continuous learning (including from mistakes or failure!). These pages explore crucial points on your fundraising journey: preparing, strategising, planning, targeting, asking, managing donors, troubleshooting, and (more!) useful resources. This is just a starting point, and we strongly encourage you to continue exploring.

Start with this essential preparatory work

Before you even decide to fundraise, you should take these three elementary steps. Regardless of whether you raise money in the end, these exercises *will* strengthen your organisation and make you and your team better advocates.

First, **map your network.** This is as simple as asking, together with your entire staff and board (and maybe volunteers): "Who do we already know?" Don't write down individual names (unless there are very special individuals who significantly impact your work), but categories: past event guests, mailing list subscribers, fans on social media, Pride-goers, party guests, parents of board and staff members, journalists, members of parliament, artists... For

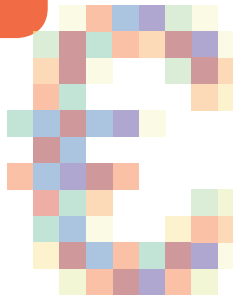
each one, ask yourself: could they help you fundraise, or could you ask them for money directly? How do they fit in your fundraising plan?

Second, **map your resources**. There's a universal fundraising equation:

$$\text{Money collected} - \text{Initial investment} = \text{Benefits}$$

Maximising your benefits requires keeping your initial investment as small as possible (and you'll always have to provide an initial investment, if only time and energy – but very often, money too). To keep your initial investment as small as possible, list the resources you already have. For example:

You have...	You could...
Free access to a large venue?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a fundraising party • Host a pop-up fundraising gallery exhibiting local artists donating some or all of their benefits
The support of a local artist or personality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them to sell some of their art or organise a private concert, and give you some or all of the benefits • Organise a book reading or Q&A in your local bookshop with a small entrance fee or suggested donation going to your organisation



You have...	You could...
Good relationships with a café or caterer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a fundraising tea and cake afternoon • Ask them to provide free or cheap catering for your next fundraising event
Good relationships with a company?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them to donate whatever they sell – books, hotel nights, flight tickets, spa vouchers –, and sell these at an auction or organise a raffle with these prizes • Ask them to match any money their employees raise for you
Good relationships with the municipality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them for a room to host your event • Ask the mayor to speak at your next fundraising dinner
A graphic designer, web designer or community manager in your board or volunteers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them to design the graphics/website/ social media content of your next fundraising campaign • Ask them if they have clients who could be interested to donate to, or sponsor, your fundraising efforts

You have...	You could...
Sporty friends or members?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put a team together for the next local competition, and ask them to fundraise for your organisation
Fearless and outgoing volunteers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train them to go out on the street with a collection box and a large smile on their face
...	

You get the idea: list everything, and use your collective imagination. For more inspiration, check out publications by the LGBT Foundation and Stonewall in the main guide.

Finally, **work out your elevator pitch**. An elevator pitch is your best shot at describing what your organisation does, with the aim of convincing someone to donate – all in the fraction of a minute it takes to ride an elevator. It’s what you’ll use to convince people face to face, online, at a fundraising dinner, when selling merchandise, when meeting an unexpected potential donor... In short, in *any* form of fundraising.



Start by testing your elevator pitch with friends or existing supporters. It will help build your confidence and adjust your pitch, making you ready to ask strangers.

Addison Smith, Wellspring Advisors

Don't aim for perfection; the months to come will give you plenty of time to rework your pitch if needed. But doing this at the start will help you define your unique selling points, and why people should support you.¹

If you've mapped your network, mapped your resources, and worked out your elevator pitch, congratulations: you have a first loose fundraising plan.

Build your strategy

Building towards donations takes time and coordinated effort, so it's essential to develop your loose plan into a solid strategy.

A good strategy for fundraising is clear, researched and realisable. This table can help you put together a first draft (but you should feel free to adapt it to your needs):

Section	Why?	Ask yourself...
Rationale	<p>Start by deciding why you're going into fundraising. Your strategy will be different if it seeks to fund a shelter for LGBTI people, respond to a crisis abroad, or collect funds for your core budget.</p> <p>The elevator pitch you developed (above) should make this easier.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What project, action or cause will we fundraise for? • Are we ready to build our community of supporters through fundraising? • Can we link fundraising to at least some of our priorities or other work?

1. See the '**Resources**' section in the main guide for links to relevant useful information for your elevator pitch.

Section	Why?	Ask yourself...
<p>Opportunity</p>	<p>Are people in your close circles of supporters ready to donate? If they aren't, it's unlikely others will. Float the idea of fundraising with a few trusted people, or put out a survey to your members or Facebook followers to find out if there's an opportunity.</p> <p>If you mapped your resources (above), this should be easier.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we have a stable community of supporters? • What precise groups will we target for fundraising? • Do these groups respond well to the suggestion of fundraising? • What can we offer them that's inspiring, attractive or valuable?
<p>Objectives</p>	<p>Establish measurable objectives (e.g. money to collect) and/or key performance indicators (e.g. number of new donors per month) to help you measure progress while you fundraise. Good objectives are aggressive but realistic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much do we ideally want to collect? In what time? • How will we measure progress while we fundraise? • What will we do if we don't reach that goal? Is it still worthwhile trying?
<p>Activities</p>	<p>What activities will you run to collect money? Will this be online? At specific fundraising events? At Pride? How many of them will take place, and how will they complement one another?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What approaches best fit our community and our organisation? • How can we create and maintain momentum for our fundraising campaign?

Rationale: Always involve beneficiaries directly

Are you planning to fundraise for another group, whether in your country or abroad? This is commendable, but you must spend the money collected following the wishes of the communities first affected. Never fundraise for a crisis or a cause that's not your own, and then use or send the funds without consulting reliable actors among those directly affected.

The same principle applies to any fundraising: if it's for a shelter for LGBTI young people, involve them in the decision-making and design of your own fundraising campaign. If it's for LGBTI refugees, involve them too. If it's for queer people from religious minorities, include them too. It's a basic principle of good activism, and your fundraising will be stronger for it.

Objectives and activities: Stay local

Don't try replicating success rates or amounts raised from other countries, especially if they have little in common with yours. The best indicator of what you can hope to collect is similar campaigns by NGOs in your local context, or proper research on fundraising (not only LGBTI fundraising) in your country or region, if this exists.

The same goes for the activities you'll run: the best fundraising is fundraising that belongs to the local culture. Is knitting popular where you live? Organise a campaign with a sponsor donating for every centimetre knitted. Are Sunday afternoon tea at home popular? Host a tea party with a box to collect donations. Does your country have a "1% tax donation" law? Encourage people to use it.



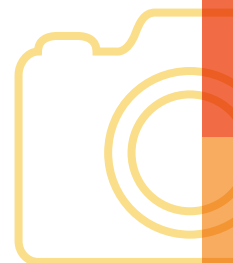


Your objectives and fundraising model must fit your organisation and your culture. It's a losing game to try replicating others' efforts – particularly if they're far away from your culture.

Charlie Rounds, Mossier Social Action & Innovation Center

Do-cu-ment!

When you run fundraising events – galas, happenings, races, home parties, fundraising booths at Pride... –, don't forget to take pictures and videos! This will help show future donors that you've been active, show them that you're successfully engaging your community, and enable you to post video clips from a great event you ran on your website (in turn encouraging web visitors to come next time or donate online). If you can, get voluntary help from a professional photographer/videographer: it will make your communication measurably more attractive and professional.



Get ready for thorny questions

Holding money means holding power, and things can get complicated if you're not prepared. For example, one organisation we interviewed was offered a donation for a project that couldn't use any additional money. Despite an explanation, the donor insisted that their money could only

be used for that project. The organisation refused the gift, because it couldn't accept those conditions.

What would you do if a donor offered a large sum of money for a HIV-related project, but only to help white seropositive gay and bisexual men, not people of African descent? Or that it can't go to trans women? Or that it can't go to someone who's Muslim? Would you refuse the money? Or take it and abide by the donor's wishes (a legal requirement in many countries)?

Another organisation talked about the issue of equity. Different board members contribute different financial amounts to the organisation. Should this mean their voices weigh as much as their contribution, or is it "one person, one vote"?

These questions require time and careful deliberation to reach an agreement. Good answers are those that your whole team agrees to, and that align with your and your organisation's values.

Planning your resources and time adequately

Look at your list of activities: **what will you need to make things happen?** This can mean a budget for initial purchases or to organise your first event from scratch. Very often, it also means the time that no one seems to have. Be ready for almost all activities to take longer than planned, and to decide who will provide this time: which staff, which board members or which volunteers?

Some organisations choose to hire a **development officer**. This is especially interesting if you plan to scale up your fundraising. Fundraising could also be the part-time

responsibility of existing staff members – but beware: it requires very specific skills.²

One organisation we spoke to risked **reaching capacity** soon, preventing them from accepting new donors. Why? Because they send out personalised thank-you letters to over 10,000 donors at the end of each year. Last year, this alone kept three people busy for two weeks: preparing six different letters, segmenting, printing, signing, packing each one, posting them... That organisation's president also interacts with regular donors through meetings or phone calls three to four times a week... almost once a day. This is a great success, but they reckon they won't be able to welcome more donors without hiring more staff.

Timing: It will probably take longer than you think...

Consider these example scenarios for just one fundraising activity (bear in mind you'll probably want to run each more than once):

• **Raising funds for a Pride event: 6 months**



- Months 1–3: Planning; messaging; writing, designing and printing leaflets; recruiting and training volunteers; setting up online donations
- Months 4–5: Collecting money at events, on the street and online
- Month 6: Closing campaign; announcing results; thanking donors; building or updating donor database

2. "Fundraising" isn't a skill: it's a discipline. It requires many skills, including for example: setting up and managing databases; doing personalised electronic and paper mailings; budgeting; marketing; asking for money; managing events; managing volunteers; etc.

• Crowdfunding for a community project: 8 months

- Months 1–2: Planning; messaging; identifying key audiences, and main messages and requests for each one
- Months 3–4: Designing social media posts, graphics and/or pictures; securing advance support from leading users/celebrities; setting up the crowdfunding page
- Months 5–7: Running the campaign online; asking leading users and donors to share; communicating about the campaign on parallel channels (e.g. radio or events)
- Month 8: Closing campaign; announcing results; thanking donors; building or updating donor database

• Running a fundraising gala: 12 months

- Months 1–4: Putting the team together; planning; creating the concept and programme; budgeting; inviting speakers/performers; finding and booking a venue; approaching and securing sponsors and partners
- Months 5–7: Securing sponsors and partners (continued); messaging; planning marketing and communication; creating and designing event materials; securing providers, including for food and drinks; planning the fundraising prior to, during and after the event (e.g. a raffle, an auction, a competition, collection boxes, matching donations, follow-up fundraising...); confirming details with speakers and performers; announcing the event
- Months 8–10: Running the registration campaign; advertising the event; buying materials; finalising details of the event; rehearsing and hosting the event
- Months 11–12: Thanking guests, donors and team; announcing fundraising results; building or updating donor database; settling invoices and accounts



Targeting: Choosing who you'll ask

How do you decide who to ask? Start by pulling together contacts from all the files and databases you have and whom you have the permission to contact: mailing list subscribers; past event attendees; people who have been in touch with your organisation; etc. To that, add staff and board members' close circles of supportive friends and professional networks.

Among all these groups, try to identify likely donors. Make groups of contacts or establish general profiles, and consider whether and how to approach each group or profile.

Mind the law, including EU law

In the European Union, the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) enters into force in May 2018.

Processing an individual's data (email, address, personal information...) and contacting them about fundraising will require their clear and unambiguous consent (e.g. opting in to receive communications on your website).

Make sure you have permission to contact your prospects in compliance with all legal requirements. If necessary, ask larger and better-established NGOs or consultants for advice.

Local vs international

Who will you ask for money: locals in a country where fundraising is rare? Or foreigners in a far-away country, but where fundraising is common?

There is no obvious answer to this dilemma. **Fundraising from locals** will make it harder to obtain money. But in

the long run, you will build relationships that will prove irreplaceable to support your cause, and change hearts and minds.

On the other hand, **fundraising abroad** in more fundraising-friendly cultures – say in the United Kingdom or United States – will make it easier and faster to access money. (Though mind that your intermediaries, whether foundations or online platforms, will always charge a small percentage of your earnings.) But in the long run, you won't build relationships that are as meaningful, and you won't have changed your fellow citizens' views.

The art of asking

The way you ask individuals for money is as important as all your preparatory work until this point. And the stress of asking doesn't help.



It takes personal leadership and commitment to raise funds from individuals. This applies to anyone, from directors to volunteers: you build individual relationships with donors one by one, make friends with your future supporters, show them they can trust you. Don't take 'no' for an answer: adapt, come back with other ideas. But always with charm and kindness.



Charlie Rounds, Mossier Social Action & Innovation Center

Build up to the ask

Ideally, plan for repeat conversations. Money won't appear the first time a supporter encounters your organisation, because they don't know or trust it yet. You need to plan several activities so supporters cross your path several times: through a tweet, a newspaper column or advert, an event, a Pride, an e-mail. All of these count.

When a supporter first encounters your organisation, **tell** them about your work.



When they meet you a second time, ask **how** they would like to get involved in the organisation.

When they meet you a third time, and if they previously indicated they wanted to help, **ask**.

Ask

Countless books, articles and blog posts will help you ask individuals for money. This briefing doesn't offer exhaustive advice, but consider these three aspects:

- 1. Openness about your work:** Be clear and open about what you need the money for and how it will be used. If you're fundraising for your core budget and don't want to commit donations to a specific project, explain how you work in detail, and why you're the best organisation to do what you do.
- 2. Openness about your needs:** Be clear and open about what it costs to do your work, and what money you already receive from governments or other sources. Help donors understand how their donation will fit in the big picture.
- 3. Openness about their donation:** If you ask someone to give €100, they'll feel inadequate if they can only give €10, and you'll have missed an opportunity if they could have donated €1,000. Instead, ask an open question: "How much do you feel you can contribute today? Any amount will be helpful." And next time, ask if they would like to donate a little more.

Thank

"Say 'Thank you'": important for children, vital for fundraising. Will first-time donors want to give again if you don't acknowledge their first gift properly? Will repeat donors continue to trust your organisation if your thanks are too obviously mechanical, or if you forget to acknowledge that they've supported you for the last five years?

Thank donors by showing them your results: a Pride that could take place thanks to them, a shelter opened, a book published, an archive centre saved from destruction. Tell donors this is what they helped achieve, and how important their support has been. Mean every word.

There are many channels to thank donors: e-mail, letter, tweet, face-to-face thanks, making a phone call... Whatever approach you choose, it's essential to genuinely acknowledge every single donation.

The best way to learn: Donate yourself!

Even if it's a small amount, go ahead and donate to an organisation or cause you care about (LGBTI or not!), and see how it feels.

Is it easy to find the right page online? Is it a pleasure to buy merchandise from that organisation? Are they reassuring? Do they make you want to donate? Is it easy, clear, fast? Do you know how your money will be used? What information did you get after donating: is it enough? In the right tone? Does it make you feel like donating another time?

Simply doing this will help you walk a mile in your donors' shoes, and help you understand their perspective. An invaluable experience to design your own fundraising.

Managing donors

The last area that should receive your attentive care is the way you manage data linked to your fundraising. This means, first, **a purpose-built file or database** of donors allowing you to list all existing donors along with their personal details, donation history, and relationship to you. And second, a solid process to interact with donors, and use and update this file every time.

Right after thanking, be sure to **track incoming donations**. One organisation we spoke to had received money on their bank account, but didn't know how donors had been invited to donate. This complicates thanking them and staying in touch.



Update your database frequently so information about your donors remains accurate. Log all relevant information: one organisation we spoke to keeps a database of thousands of donors, but regret not tracking donors' communication preferences (whether they prefer being contacted by e-mail, letter or phone).

Secure your data. You're responsible for making sure you comply with applicable laws when collecting and processing this data (including the EU General Data Protection Regulation if you are in the EU). This probably means having donors' consent for their data to be processed. It also means protecting your donors' data from theft or hacking (see **Mismanaging data** in the table below).

Use your data well. One organisation we spoke to wanted to thank a donor for their bank transfer. They sent a thank-you letter to the address linked to the bank account, which was... the address of the donors' parents, to whom the donor wasn't out yet. (Thankfully, the standard envelope hadn't been opened.) To avoid this from happening, take the time to list how donors want to be contacted, and abide by their wishes.

Avoid these common risks

Like everything, raising money from individual donors involves some risk – ranging from wasting your time, money or energy to (very rarely) landing in serious legal trouble.

The risk	Reducing or avoiding the risk
<p>Starting fundraising without your organisation's full support. Some of your fellow staff, board or volunteers may question the utility of fundraising, undermining your efforts.</p>	<p>It's important that everyone (or at least the vast majority) in your organisation support the effort. Fundraising is hard enough without having to convince or negotiate with your own board or colleagues.</p> <p>Talk with your whole team about why fundraising is important, how it can contribute to your organisation, and build your community in unique ways. It's also a matter of governance: who will be responsible for fundraising? Your staff, your board, both? All three have advantages, and agreeing on this sometimes requires extensive discussion.</p> <p>Also consider starting small: it's better to start with small, successful projects to demonstrate the value of fundraising. This will help you build a culture and habit of fundraising in your organisation.</p>

The risk	Reducing or avoiding the risk
<p>Thinking fundraising is only one person’s job.</p>	<p>Fundraising isn’t a task, it’s a system.</p> <p>Here are things that can be one person’s job: creating messages; organising a fundraising event; managing the donor database; updating your website or social media; thinking of your next fundraising campaign. But all of these are included in fundraising, and each requires different skills.</p> <p>Furthermore, everyone in your organisation – staff, board, volunteers – should be able to ask for money. Why is this important? Because if it’s only one or two people’s jobs, when they leave, your organisation will lose that skill.</p> <p>So make sure everyone in your organisation can articulate its mission and impact in their own way, and that newcomers learn this too.</p>

The risk	Reducing or avoiding the risk
<p>Underestimating the costs, or overestimating the return on investment.</p> <p>The costs can be greater than you had anticipated (for example, spending too much on an event), and/or you can invest in these costs and see little funding materialise in return (for example, the event doesn't generate any money).</p>	<p>Plan your fundraising strategy as best you can, research your target donors thoroughly, and plan to raise funds over a long period.</p> <p>Also remember that "returns" don't include money alone: fundraising helps grow your base of supporters, and make LGBTI communities more resilient and more likely to support themselves.</p>
<p>Mismanaging data.</p> <p>Data about your donors could be sent to the wrong people (by mistake or willingly), leaked, hacked or stolen. This is a grave risk for your donors' own privacy, as well as for your reputation (see below).</p>	<p>Before collecting and storing data (names, addresses and e-mails, payment details...), make all reasonable arrangements to keep it safe from hackers, thieves, or a hostile government (don't store this database on a laptop you take to the airport of an unfriendly country, for example). Otherwise, don't build a database of donors. It will make your fundraising more difficult, but your donors' safety is paramount.</p>

The risk	Reducing or avoiding the risk
<p>Going against the law or facing hostile authorities. You can run afoul of complex laws on financing or money laundering, or authorities can try to shut down your campaign, or confiscate the money you collected.</p>	<p>This is rare, but it could happen. From the start, study the applicable laws or get professional advice on what rules you must observe when collecting money from individuals. The ministry of justice, larger NGOs or professional fundraisers could all be good sources of information. Do authorities make it hard for you to fundraise from individuals? Consider changing your legal form or creating a new one specifically for your campaign; hosting your campaign with a large, respected and stable NGO; or basing your campaign abroad. In any case, don't put yourself, your team or your donors at risk.</p>

The risk	Reducing or avoiding the risk
<p>Harming your reputation.</p> <p>Fundraising isn't straightforward, and can be done badly. This can include poor communication, not enough time to thank donors, not explaining well enough what your needs are or how the money will be used, suffering a data breach... Any of this could damage your organisation's reputation.</p>	<p>Be prepared, and don't start fundraising without proper organisation and resources. Remember that raising money relies on donors believing in your cause, and trusting you and your organisation. This trust is hard to gain in the first place, and very hard to rebuild.</p> <p>So learn more about fundraising, test your ideas, plan your fundraising campaigns with experienced people, seek external advice, and take a step back to check that you planned to avoid problems – or can face them if they arise.</p>

Even more useful resources!

Obtaining technical assistance (training, coaching...)

- **ILGA-Europe** helps LGBTI organisations in Europe and Central Asia explore fundraising from individual donors, understand how it can apply to their context, and access relevant resources, including training and technical assistance. Please get in touch with our Fundraising Manager at donate@ilga-europe.org.
- Charlie Rounds and his team at the **Mossier Social Action & Innovation Center** are seasoned consultants who can help you set up, run and improve your fundraising.

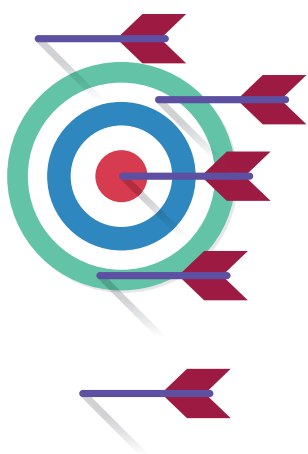
Obtaining funding

Don't wait for funders

If you have ideas and the motivation to start fundraising, don't wait for a funder! There are countless things you can do without additional funding, including vital preparatory work. While you wait for funding that may not come, opportunities might disappear.

- First and foremost, talk to your existing funders.³ They know you already, and may be interested in helping you develop a fundraising programme.
- If your existing funders aren't keen to help you develop your fundraising, the **Global Philanthropy Project** offers a **global list of funders** who support or have supported LGBTI work. They may be interested in supporting your fundraising efforts.

A final word: Try!



Strategy and careful planning are important... But there is also great value in seizing opportunities and just trying out fundraising: if you've read this guide and briefing, and if you're eager to start and see an opportunity, go ahead and try! Some spontaneous ideas can hold a lot of value, as can learning from mistakes. Seizing opportunities can generate a lot of energy, interest, momentum... and donations.

3. Governments and international institutions are usually less keen to support individual fundraising efforts, although this may vary. Private foundations are more likely to be open to the suggestion.

2. The funder's briefing: Current and future considerations for the field 15 min. read

Coordinated efforts to support LGBTI fundraising in Europe started around 2013, and these efforts have borne fruit. Now four years later, early initiatives and conversations are taking place in different parts of the movement, and three convergent trends point to the growing importance of fundraising:

- **Grantees want to diversify funding.** Continent-wide, LGBTI organisations have felt the post-2009 decrease in public funding for their issues. Private funding has developed, but remains competitive.
- **Grant-makers want to increase grantees' sustainability.** Although this is nothing new, funders encourage grantees to seek money from different sources, or generate it through different models. Fundraising is one of them, and provides one piece of the long-term, large-scale puzzle of movement-wide sustainability.
- **The comeback of community organising.** In a context of increasing liberalisation and globalisation, many LGBTI activists recognise the importance of caring for one another, and go back to the grassroots to organise their community. (This also carries the minor risk of a divided community in which well-established, mainstream organisations receive state or international funding, or fundraise from a few rich donors; and more radical, social justice-oriented organisations fundraise from their community or less-endowed foundations.)

One overarching need emerges: buttress the development of fundraising in the European and Central Asian LGBTI movement. This promises a twofold return on investment.

Financially, it will encourage organisations to raise their own funds and reduce their dependence on traditional funders. Community-wise, it will create a cycle of community-building that will reinforce organisations' connection to their constituency and circles of supporters, an investment that will have positive effects on hearts and minds over several years.

To serve this overarching need, two complementary objectives emerge: in the short term, increase some organisations' capacity to fundraise. In the long term, develop a strong regional ecosystem to nurture LGBTI individual fundraising.

The 5-year view: Increase organisations' capacity to fundraise

The challenge

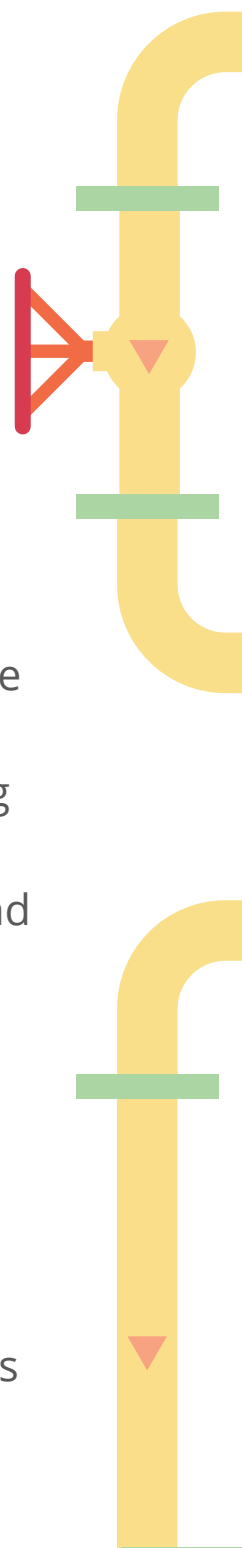
Most organisations raising funds from individuals do so through one-off projects. They forgo both culture and infrastructure, and fail to cultivate expertise and skill.

Culture and infrastructure

First, encourage grantees to see fundraising as both culture and infrastructure (arguably the main point of this guide). Fundraising efforts may start as one project; but producing financial benefits over time requires creating **a culture of fundraising** in the organisation (all or most staff, board and volunteers can make a case for small financial support to strangers, and recognise the importance of fundraising).

Beyond organisations themselves, creating this culture requires making it increasingly normal for activists to ask for money, and for the public to be asked and give.

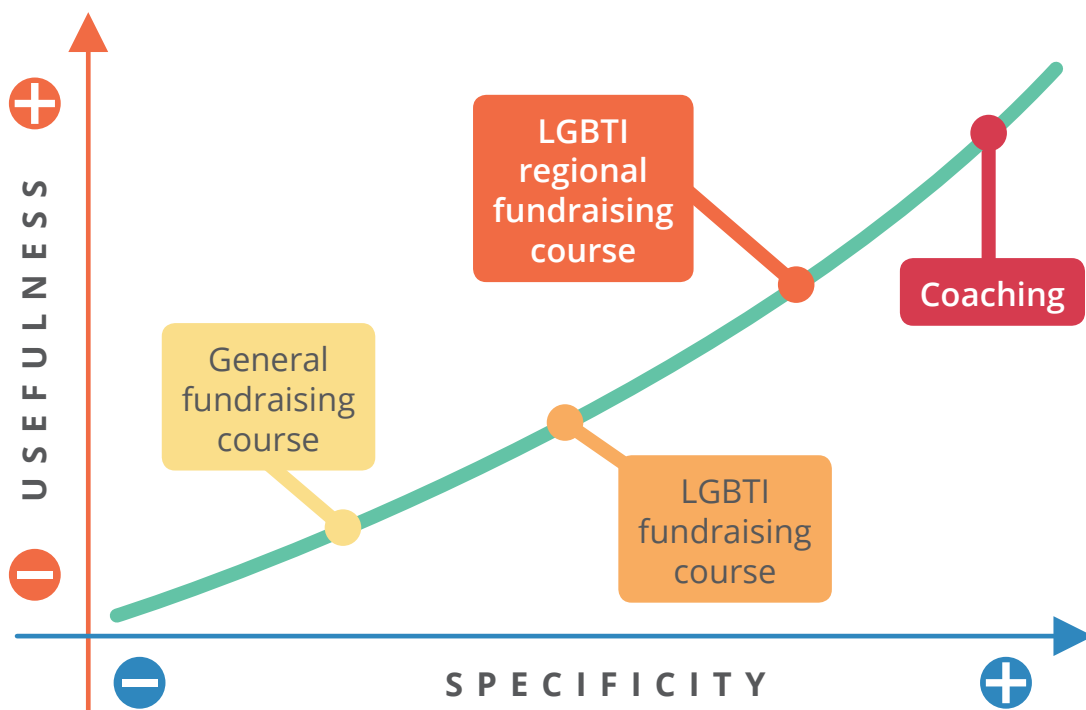
It also requires **the right infrastructure** to steer and manage fundraising efforts: software, skills and procedures to plan fundraising, track donations, manage donors and communicate.




Expertise and skill

Second, encourage the creation of **talent pipelines**: generate fundraising expertise and skills through technical assistance such as training courses or coaching, and allow LGBTI organisations to retain people with those expertise and skills so they crystallise learning and help grow the organisation. This means, in part, allowing your grantees to pay highly-qualified staff attractively so they remain in the organisation.

LGBTI organisations and their funders credited **technical assistance** – training courses and individual coaching – for some, much, or great progress in fundraising efforts. Technical assistance can benefit one-off projects; but its most impactful use is in helping LGBTI leaders recognise the importance and value of fundraising. The more specific the assistance, the more useful:





Without the appropriate skill and expertise pipelines, organisations will burn resources by continuously recreating, regenerating or re-hiring those skills and expertise, paying a compounded price for talent loss.

For best results, technical assistance should be multi-pronged. For example, a training course should be followed by individual coaching; or coaching be complemented by peer exchange and learning among fundraisers in comparable countries. Both approaches will help crystallise learning, and ensure these investments genuinely pull LGBTI organisations upwards.



The 10-year view: A strong ecosystem for LGBTI fundraising from individuals

The challenge

LGBTI organisations in Europe and Central Asia don't have the fundraising ecosystem as charities do in Anglo-Saxon countries: guides, training courses, conferences and other experience-sharing programmes, consultants, abundant professional expertise, and generally high skill levels.

Such ecosystems are essential (a) to generate expertise and skill, (b) for practitioners to share and cross-pollinate their knowledge and actions, and (c) for a movement to value learning, improvement and excellence.

These ecosystems also hold the promise of long-term return on investment: once established, they offer a movement-wide culture of perpetual learning, improvement and excellence. **In short, a fundraising ecosystem will buttress the LGBTI movement's long-term strength and independence.**

Reproducing the U.S. or British ecosystems for LGBTI fundraising in Europe and Central Asia won't work: they're inseparable from their respective single legal and tax frameworks, single language, and single culture. But a regional ecosystem is both desirable and realisable.

How do we build an ecosystem? By supporting effective fundraising where it happens (see [The 5-year view](#) above), and fostering a movement-wide culture that feeds on and nourishes fundraising initiatives.

Fostering a movement-wide culture of effective fundraising

“Culture” is about linking individual initiatives, and painting a shared vision for them to exist in.

Fostering a regional culture of effective fundraising means starting and fuelling conversations between practitioners. This can take the form of **communities of practice** in which fundraisers exchange with peers from comparable countries to improve their practice. This can take the form of a single workshop on fundraising at a conference, regular online conversation, a series of training courses... It doesn't have to be formal or official. Since this will compete with countless urgent priorities, it will only work if the urge partly emerges from fundraisers themselves, and if there's a clear benefit for cohort members to take part over time.

This comes in addition to **continued technical assistance**, particularly coaching. Training courses only provide value if they are specialised/localised, or part of a long-term programme for a stable cohort. Both coaching and a cohort approach can help deal with failures and personal embarrassment, which can be great and require genuine support. This assistance should encourage taking smart and calculated risks. And any form of technical assistance is best provided in tandem with another to crystallise learning.

It also entails **generating local expertise**, for example by inviting “star” fundraisers to provide trainings to their peers in the same region and with similar languages. This also means enabling grantees to hire and retain staff with fundraising expertise and skill.

Finally, fostering such a culture ideally requires grant-makers to **loosely coordinate** actions and priorities, if only by discussing them at appropriate forums (such as within the Global Philanthropy Project, at ILGA-Europe's annual donor conferences, or in Ariadne)

What can I do today?

The challenge

If you'd like to support the development of fundraising among LGBTI organisations, both funders and grantees have considered the following helpful:

- **Provide seed funding** for grantees seeking to start fundraising. This could be 100% of the funds to strategise, plan and produce communication materials for one fundraising campaign; 75% of the funds to host a first fundraising gala; or 50% of a full-time development officer position for an organisation which demonstrated its ability to fundraise. These funds should be flexible, and allow grantees to meet unforeseen challenges when getting their fundraising off the ground. In short, (project, or preferably core) grants should allow grantees to spend adequate time and resources on fundraising.



Encourage building local donor bases

The philanthropic sector sometimes facilitates fundraising from locations with higher “giving scores”, such as the United States. This makes for quick wins, but happens at the cost of building donor bases in countries where changed hearts and minds greatly matter. Fundraising locally is a much sounder long-term investment.



- **Provide matching funding** for grantees to fundraise two, three or more times the amounts donated by individuals. This is greatly encouraging for both the organisation and individual donors. It's also very effective: research has

shown that the presence of “lead funders” in a matching funding scheme directly increased individual donations.⁴

- **Fund technical assistance** for grantees seeking to learn about fundraising, planning campaigns, managing donors, using special software, improving their ask, or all these. Training courses should be as context-specific as possible, and are best deployed for a stable cohort of learners who will learn together over several months. Offer individual coaching to grantees demonstrating good potential for improvement. Ideally, offer multiple complementary forms of technical assistance, always in consultation with grantees to identify the best form of assistance.
- **Support network-wide efforts** to develop a culture of fundraising. This includes sharing good practices, peer learning and communities of practice among grantees, funders, and both together.

4. “Matched Fundraising: Evidence from a Natural Field Experiment” (*Journal of Public Economics*, 2011, available from <http://bit.ly/1q98t4F>)

Download the main report from:

www.ilga-europe.org/fundraisingresources
