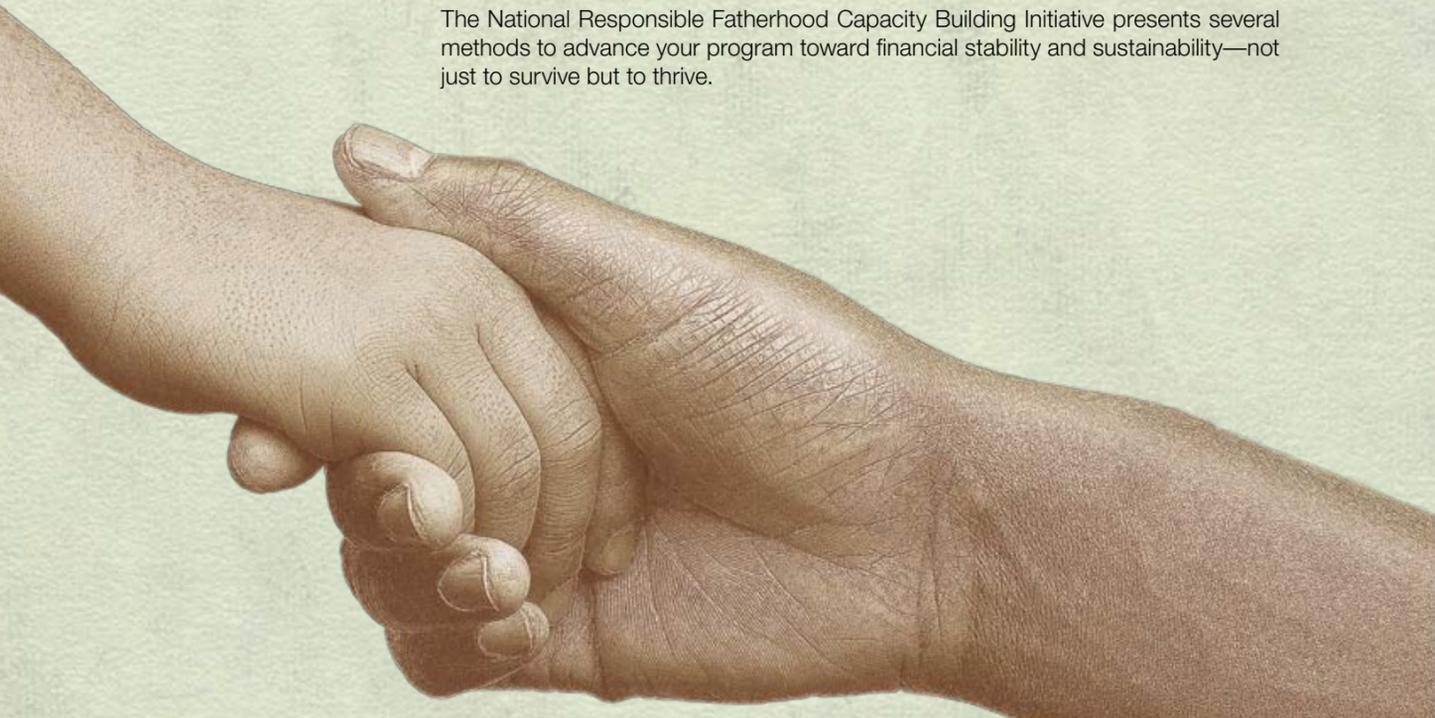


# 6

## Actions Programs Can Pursue to Build Sustainability

To support current operations and new initiatives, programs must have adequate funding. Fund development can be key to your program's success in fulfilling its mission. In today's fiercely competitive funding environment, programs must be more purposeful and creative than ever before.

The National Responsible Fatherhood Capacity Building Initiative presents several methods to advance your program toward financial stability and sustainability—not just to survive but to thrive.



### Building Capacity for Programs that Promote Responsible Fatherhood...

Leadership Development

Organizational Improvement

Program Enhancement

Community Engagement



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Family Assistance

National Responsible Fatherhood Capacity Building Initiative  
101 Lake Forest Blvd., Suite 360  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
Phone: 301.948.0599  
Fax: 301.948.4325  
[www.fatherhood.org/capacitybuilding](http://www.fatherhood.org/capacitybuilding)

National Responsible Fatherhood Capacity Building Initiative subawardees are encouraged to request technical assistance for organizational capacity building by contacting the National Fatherhood Initiative.

This project is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance to assist States and communities as they promote and support responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage. All opinions are those of the authors and do not reflect the opinion of the sponsoring agency.

# 6

## Ways

## to Expand Fund

## Development



NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD  
**CAPACITY BUILDING**  
I N I T I A T I V E

## 1 Prepare a Plan

Effective fund development is based on knowing your program and what it needs. Begin fund development by translating your program's mission and strategic goals into financial requirements. Schedule brainstorming sessions that include board members, staff, and select volunteers. Use brainstorming to generate ideas that will be the basis for an action-oriented fund development plan. Draft a document that will be a useful internal tool as well as an excellent representation of the program's vision, mission, values, and goals. Before providing funds, donors and funders will want to know that you have a plan of action for the future. A solidly constructed plan makes it easy for donors and funders to understand what you want to accomplish, that you have the means to do it, and that all that is lacking is the funding. While some programs spend months developing a plan, others might take a day or less. A fund development plan does not need to be elaborate. In a simple table format, list the fund development objectives, strategies to achieve them, possible activities, assignments, a timeline, and anticipated costs.

## 2 Set Objectives

A reasonable fund development plan aligns funding needs with program goals and helps a program avoid crisis fundraising. Your plan should outline a set of fundraising objectives that reflect the resources necessary to reach the program goals you identified during strategic planning. In other words, objectives help determine the amount of funding you want to pursue to produce the desired results. Objectives clearly communicate expected fund development performance. Objectives are measurable and time-related (increase the amount of funding from new sources by at least \$50,000 per year for the next 5 fiscal years; within the next 6 months, schedule two mailings to corporations within a 50-mile radius of program headquarters) and require continual monitoring. Engage board members, staff, and volunteers in determining realistic objectives. Do not be too ambitious and know the largest amounts you might expect from donors or funders.

## 3 Devise Strategies

A strategy is a broad method or approach to be taken to accomplish a particular purpose. Because individuals, agencies, or foundations usually do not just give funds away, you must design strategies that effectively ask them to give. Rather than targeting short-term contributions or awards, fund development strategies should focus on building long-term relationships with donors and funders, based on shared commitment to the work of the program. Determine at least one strategy for achieving each of your program's fund development objectives. Overall, good strategies feature a mix of funding sources (public and private; local, regional, or national; individuals, corporations, and foundations) and techniques (submitting proposals, group presentations, seasonal direct mail campaigns). As you identify a variety of potential funding sources, also learn the particular fund development strategies each prefers. The most important aspect of any fund development strategy is guaranteeing audiences have a strong, positive impression of your program. Focus on the unique features that set your program apart from others seeking funds.

## 4 Assign Tasks

Careful management of the fund development process is crucial for carrying out strategies and achieving objectives in a timely manner. Establish an organizational structure that includes an outreach or marketing committee that will work collaboratively with other stakeholders. The organizational structure also might designate key positions such as a volunteer coordinator or accountant. Ensure the board is deeply involved in fundraising planning and implementation and recruit the program director, staff, volunteers, and community members to be responsible for particular tasks outlined in your plan, such as identifying and booking space to hold a raffle. For many programs, contracting with a professional fundraiser to perform some fund development tasks helps prioritize responsibilities and take better advantage of in-house assets and resources. Be specific in assigning tasks so potential funding sources do not become overwhelmed or irritated by repeated communications from different people associated with your program. Remind those who are coordinating fund development tasks that, in all their interactions, they are acting as representatives of and advocates for the program.

## 5 Take Action

Successful fund development is not magic—it takes commitment, preparation, common sense, and hard work. To earn funding, you must demonstrate your program's value. Although new techniques for reaching target audiences have emerged, the fundamentals of effective fund development have not changed. Programs gain sustainability by identifying and launching long-term relationships with prospective funders. Simple, traditional approaches such as one-on-one meetings with funding decision-makers can be just as powerful as sophisticated methods such as online fundraising. Whether you schedule personal visits, launch a donor-friendly Web site, submit proposals to Federal and State agencies, solicit in-kind donations, or kick off a multi-year capital campaign to generate funds for a new building will depend on your program's goals and resources. Consider the costs involved in many fund development activities. For example, sponsoring an art auction will incur costs for advertising, printing tickets, and other staging essentials. Also, from direct mail to e-mail, ensure all your communications look, read, and sound as if they come from a single source.

## 6 Establish Deadlines

While some programs can grow or survive without a fund development initiative, most benefit significantly from a process that creatively envisions the future, creates the roadmap for getting there, and builds buy-in along the way. The process also should incorporate a timeline for implementing strategies and methods. In addition, a timeline facilitates tracking progress toward meeting fund development objectives. Prepare a fund development calendar that might span more than one year, depending on your objectives. Each planned action should appear on the calendar with a target date or deadline. Noting the individuals or committees assigned to the task also can be useful. The calendar should be realistic because fund development takes time, patience, and resources. However, if done well, fund development will go a long way toward securing the growth and impact of programs that promote responsible fatherhood.