

Friend and Fund Raising at Biological Field Stations

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Tools to Identify, Develop, and Communicate with Your Field Station Audience

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Empowering Friends to Become Donors at Field Stations

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Closing the Deal with Donors at a Variety of Events

Our concurrent session on *Field Station Friend and Fund Raising* is geared toward helping participants to plan and complete the next step in their development pathway by our next OBFS annual meeting in September 2021. We all have a different starting point and we are encouraging and expecting you to move forward on your development journey. We will present subtopics on identifying and communicating with your field station audience, empowering friends to become donors, finding funding sources for international field stations, and closing the deal with donors at a variety of events. We will also include new information on fundraising in the time of COVID-19. Our small group of concurrent session leaders is from a variety of field stations across the Americas and we will connect with you. We will each present a short summary on our individual topic, but our goal is to facilitate a group discussion to provide you with immediate feedback and direction to empower you to take the next step.



Tools to Identify, Develop, and Communicate with Your Audience (Brian)

Identification: where to look for contacts to connect?

- 1) University/College donor databases and alumni contact information
 - a. Tools such as Raiser's Edge
- 2) Friends of Field Station membership lists
- 3) Collaborative Organization memberships: garden clubs, mountain biking teams, home school networks

Communication: who is your target audience?

- 1) Age 50+: email, web pages
- 2) Age 35 to 50: text, web pages, email, social media
- 3) Age 20 to 35: social media, text, zoom, web pages, email

Development: what to do to initiate and build relationships?

- 1) Science cafes and science taverns to build relationships and collaboration
- 2) Weekly/monthly seminars/virtual seminars and information sharing to grow knowledge
- 3) Special Events such as hiking tours, bird watching, canoe trips, etc.

Empowering Friends to Become Donors at Field Stations (Tom)

There is a science to donor development!

1. Keep a database of friends and donors. Include information on their backgrounds and interests, and if known, their history of giving
2. Have a plan to follow up, including a plan for showing recognition if they do give
3. Look at long-term strategies: how to move them through the pipeline (y-axis is their commitment to your organization, x axis is their “life spectrum”) to the upper right quadrant!

Have a plan for the “ask”

1. Know what you are going to ask FOR! Have different projects for different interests. Have multiple price entry points available. Your ask must be sincere or people will see through it.
2. Who is going to do the ask? Are you the asker, or the talent?
3. Do not be afraid to show the need, warts and all. Sometimes friends are very willing to become donors but they do not know there is a need because they only see the polished version of things.

Avoid viewing people through a transactional lens

1. Most of us do not like to talk about money or ask for money. It feels icky. That is ok.
2. Many people view their giving as a way to support something they cannot do, e.g. I give money to SPLC because that is work that I cannot do, but I can support their work financially. Give your donors a reason to feel good about supporting your organization.
3. Cannot stress this enough- have multiple price entry points for giving. People of lesser means may still want to support your organization and they should feel valued.
4. Remember the platinum rule: treat others how they want to be treated
5. Protect people’s dignity when putting together events, seating arrangements, etc. When people do give, no matter how much or how little, make them feel great about it.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR STORY HEARD IN A NOISY WORLD?

*“PUT IT BEFORE THEM BRIEFLY SO THEY WILL READ IT,
CLEARLY SO THEY WILL APPRECIATE IT, PICTURESQUELY
SO THEY WILL REMEMBER IT, AND ABOVE ALL,
ACCURATELY SO THEY WILL BE GUIDED BY ITS LIGHT.”*

-JOSEPH PULITZER

Resources for International Field Stations (Paul)

National Geographic Society

AI for Earth Innovation. Next deadline: 21 October 2020. National Geographic seeks to support projects that create and deploy AI tools to improve the way we monitor, model, understand, and ultimately manage biodiversity and climate change risk.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/funding-opportunities/grants/what-we-fund/ai-earth-innovation/>

Equity and the Natural World. Next deadline: 21 October 2020. National Geographic seeks proposals from around the world that will illuminate and document underrepresented communities that have traditionally been given less consideration in stories of the environmental movement.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/funding-opportunities/grants/what-we-fund/equity-and-natural-world/>

Stories of Tropical Rainforests. Next deadline: 21 October 2020. This RFP will support storytelling projects that highlight ecosystem-scale stories and solutions-oriented attempts to mitigate or reverse human impacts around tropical rainforests. Local storytellers are highly encouraged to apply.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/funding-opportunities/grants/what-we-fund/tropical-rainforest-story/>

Big Cats Conservation. Next deadline: 21 October 2020. The goal of this fund is to identify projects that will help reduce the decline of African big cats in the wild.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/funding-opportunities/grants/what-we-fund/big-cats-conservation/>

Recovery of Species on the Brink of Extinction. Next deadline: 21 October 2020. National Geographic seeks proposals from around the world that will implement IUCN SSC Species Action Plans as well as conservation actions that are endorsed by the relevant IUCN SSC Species Specialist Group.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/funding-opportunities/grants/what-we-fund/species-recovery/>

Enduring Impacts: Archaeology of Sustainability. Next deadline: 21 October 2020. The Enduring Impacts: Archaeology of Sustainability RFP focuses on the gathering and analysis of archaeological, paleoenvironmental, and paleoclimatological data for the purposes of increasing our understanding of

human-environmental interactions over time, to ultimately contribute to mitigating contemporary environmental and climatic crises.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/funding-opportunities/grants/what-we-fund/enduring-impacts/>

Coming Soon: Reducing Ocean Plastic Pollution. This RFP will support projects that are directly addressing the threat of plastic pollution in our waterways—before it reaches the ocean.

Exploration Grant. Next deadline: 20 January 2021. An Exploration Grant application is a request for funding by an *experienced* project leader in the areas of conservation, education, research, storytelling, and technology. The applicant and his or her team members are expected to demonstrate successful completion of similar projects with measurable and/or tangible results. If you have received a grant from National Geographic in the past, you may submit a new proposal after you have closed your previous grant record.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/funding-opportunities/grants/what-we-fund/>

Early Career Grant. Next deadline: 21 October 2020. Early Career Grants are designed to offer less experienced individuals an opportunity to lead a project. Grant projects last one calendar year or less. Projects are typically funded for US \$5,000 and cannot exceed US \$10,000.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/funding-opportunities/grants/what-we-fund/>

Microsoft's AI for Earth. AI for Earth awards grants to support projects that use AI to change the way people and organizations monitor, model, and manage Earth's natural systems. To date, we have awarded 508 grants to projects with impact in 81 countries, and we are committed to growing this community of grantees.

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/ai/ai-for-earth>

USAID's Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (USAID/ASHA) provides assistance to schools, libraries, and medical centers outside the United States that serve as study and demonstration centers for American ideas and practices.

<https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/business-funding/grant-programs/american-schools-and-hospitals-abroad>

U.S. National Science Foundation

www.nsf.gov

NSF Office of International Science and Engineering

<https://www.nsf.gov/dir/index.jsp?org=OISE>

NSF Partnerships for International Research and Education (PIRE) The PIRE program is currently paused for revision of the solicitation. We anticipate release of a new solicitation in late FY 2020, with funding in FY 2022. Details will be available when the updated solicitation is published.

https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505038

NSF Directorate for Geosciences (GEO) also supports international collaborations and partnerships.

https://www.nsf.gov/geo/adgeo/intern_l.jsp

Directories

Terra Viva Grants Directory. Develops and manages information about grants for agriculture, energy, environment, and natural resources in the world's developing countries. <https://terravivagrants.org>

Resources for non-profits

NEW Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan

<https://www.new.org>

Your Thriving Nonprofit Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/535957226792368/>

Nonprofit Leadership Lab

<https://nonprofitleadershiplab.com>

Closing the Deal with Donors at a Variety of Events (Sarah)

Setting the Table:

- Offer a variety of events at different price points to include people of all ages and interest levels. Do not limit it to science events: art shows including nature photography, historical events, film festivals, farm to fork dinners outdoors, active events like bike rides, stand up paddle races, and fun runs, kid's programs (kite competitions), and film screenings can attract new donors and new fans.
 - *COVID-19 adaptation:* consider “**non events**” some organizations are doing this brilliantly: Often people really don't want to come to something else, especially now, but you can have fun with it: examples:
 - <https://www.valeomarketing.com/the-non-event-fundraiser-throw-an-event-your-alumni-want-to-attend/>
 - [Lassen Park Foundation Leap Day Non-Event](#); encouraging people to give the amount they would give a baby-sitter, or pay for a new outfit, or buy a ticket, or buy a table. Funny and effective.
 - Virtual events: online cooking events are especially fun- mail ingredients to households and hold a cooking webinar; can also do virtual bird-a-thons or walk-a-thons.
 - Online auctions
 - Outdoor events
 - Crowdfunding is on the rise. [[“Be a Gator Donator”](#)]
- Consider setting membership levels that give annually to your organization (5 K, 10K) that let those members attend exclusive events and have special access to scientists (Bird banding, geology tours, lake water chemistry). Do not forget simple yearly membership people and treat them to yearly updates and newsletters as well as at least one yearly event.

- Remember people are busy and have many competing requests for their time and money.
- Tax Incentives: “New tax law resulting from the CARES act: “special CARES Act provision now gives a tax incentive to all taxpayers (even if you don’t itemize) to give at least \$300 to charity during 2020”

The Main Course: How do you convince people to Fund your organization?

- Get to know what they are interested in scientifically and in the world
 - Help them understand what your organization is doing and why that is important to the community and to them
 - When possible, link your work to humans and human health and current events
 - Make sure you communicate fiscal responsibility, vision for the organization, and the value of the donation. Make sure they understand it is an investment and express that return in tangible numbers (# of projects done, economic opportunities, grant funding leveraged, jobs created, students supported)
 - If you are not passionate and enthusiast, they will not be; get across your motivations for supporting the project or field station, tell them why you are doing this (personalization).
 - COVID UPDATES from the **Chronicle of Philanthropy**: Don’t Give Up!
 - August 25, 2020: “Among donors who gave more than \$2,500 to charities in 2019, 70 percent said they expect to give at least the same amount this year as in 2019, while 18 percent said they expect to give more this year than last year.”
 - July 8, 2020: “Big virtual galas are giving way to small, low-cost events that are helping groups build ties to supporters, raise money, and provide intimate connections to the mission for big and small donors alike.”
 - Mixed bag: in some circles planned giving and bequests have increased sharply. In other areas- giving has grown for medical and poverty and health issues and declined for environment, education, and conservation.
 - “Even though a lot of people are struggling financially right now, many people whose finances have stabilized want to do whatever they can to help out. And they're not waiting until the end of the year to make their gifts. "A lot of things are driving people to be generous, and our numbers prove it," says Kim Laughton, president of Schwab Charitable, which runs Schwab's donor-advised funds. From January through June 2020, its donors recommended over \$1.7 billion in 330,000 grants, almost a 50% increase in the dollars granted and the number of grants compared to the same period in 2019. "There's great need out there, and people are stepping up."
- <https://money.usnews.com/money/personal-finance/taxes/articles/new-rules-for-charitable-giving>

After the Meal: Welcoming donors to be part of the family

- Check back in with the donor by phone and via letter
- Ask them what types of events they like

- Ask their advice when appropriate for strategic planning, include them in “town Hall” type updates, send them newsletters and blogs and help them feel like part of the family.
- **Adversity brings people together:** Check in on them more frequently for health checks ups, or regarding natural disasters like floods, fires, and hurricanes. Share with them how you and your organization are adapting to equity issues, COVID-19, fires, students learning remotely, or other issues in the news when appropriate (providing shelter or polling places).
- Consider holiday themed parties as a yearly thank you (and reminder to donate)
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