

Resource Development Roles for Nonprofit Board Members

Each member of the Board of Directors of a nonprofit organization typically has two kinds of fundraising responsibilities:

- **Give an annual gift** – sometimes a set minimum sum, other times a “personally significant” contribution that recognizes differences in member financial status
- **Get funds** – assisting the staff in fundraising

Fundraising roles for Board members can be extremely varied, and depend on Board policies and on each individual Board member’s affiliations, contacts, roles, and expertise. However, sound practice is for all Board members to make an annual contribution and for all to help in some way with resource development. Here are some common roles:

1. Contributions:

- Make a personally significant individual contribution to the organization each year
- Arrange for a matching gift from the Board member’s employer where possible

2. Resource development planning and coordination:

- Help in developing an annual resource development plan for the Board – and urge its approval by the Board
- Serve on the Resource Development Committee, which helps to coordinate and motivate Board fundraising activities and to ensure that it is coordinated with staff resource development activities

3. Identification and solicitation of potential donors:

- Provide staff the names of individuals to approach as individual donors, and in some cases help to “solicit” these donors through personal meetings, phone calls, e-mails, or letters
- Provide names of potential “major donors” (people who can give at least a specified sum such as \$1,000 or \$5,000) and help to approach them
- Provide corporate and foundation contacts and help open doors to these funders

4. Resource development support/assistance:

- Accompany staff to meetings with foundation or corporate givers to provide support on behalf of the Board or affiliates
- Be present when potential donors make site visits to the organization
- Provide written support for a pending proposal (e.g., an affiliate describing the importance of a particular program)

5. **Special events assistance:**

- Help choose and design a special event
- Help recruit corporate or other sponsors for the event
- Sell tickets and encourage attendance
- Assist with publicity
- Serve as an event volunteer
- Help run – or contribute items to – a silent auction
- Provide event-specific assistance (e.g., bus transportation to a conference, mini-gifts for participants of an awards dinner)

6. **In-kind Contributions:**

- Provide or arrange *pro bono* services for the organization – e.g., free public relations or marketing assistance, printing, etc.
- Provide or seek product donations (e.g., computers, other equipment, office supplies) based on staff-identified needs
- Obtain travel vouchers from airlines
- Make other cost-saving contributions based on their unique situations – for example, tickets for staff travel, hotel discounts, vouchers for office supplies, meeting or conference space, perhaps based on a staff “wish list” compiled several times a year