

9 fundraising tips for NPOs

By [Soraya Joonas](#)

7 Oct 2021

Non-profit organisations (NPOs) have always been the backbone of society, but are under huge pressure to deliver even more services as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. Despite their contributions, however, many NPOs are struggling financially due to diminished funding.



Inyathelo finance director, Soraya Joonas. | Source: Supplied.

According to Inyathelo, an NPO established in 2002, it is more important than ever for NPO leaders to nurture relationships with potential donors, to be thoroughly prepared for a meeting with a prospective funder and to follow up in a professional manner.

Referring to the fifth volume of Inyathelo's *Attracting Support Kit for NPOs* on fundraising meetings and writing proposals, Inyathelo finance director Soraya Joonas offers nine crucial tips to help NPOs to hold successful fundraising meetings:

1. Do your research

Joonas advises NPOs to check that the individual, company or foundation shares common values with their organisation.

“Have they visited your projects, met a Board member or donated in the past? Many donors’ circumstances have changed. If a company is laying off staff, it is unlikely to have funds,” she says.



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2. Build a relationship

Joonas says donors give money to organisations they know and like. If someone is already aware of your organisation and has confidence in it, they are far more likely to support it.

3. Set up a meeting

Joonas says NPOs Ensure you can provide plenty of information on your NPO and its programmes, and the project you require funds for. Allow time for the potential donor's comments and questions.

4. Meeting attendance

Joonas says it is vital for NPO CEOs, executive directors, finance directors or project leaders to attend fundraising meetings to answer specific questions. "This will enable you to work as a team and talk to one another's strengths and knowledge," she says.



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5. Prepare for likely questions

Joonas advises NPOs to be prepared with appropriate facts and figures on the following topics:

Stories: Capture the voices and perspectives of recipients who have benefitted from your work. This could be letters of thanks, a video clip, a short interview or feedback in your monitoring and evaluation reports.

Statistics: How many people does your organisation help?

Budget: Size of your organisational budget and the programme/project budget range

Other donors: Who else supports your organisation?

Staff: How qualified and competent are they?

Impact: What has changed in the community due to your work?

Sustainability: What is your sustainability plan and how can the donor be assured that you will be a partner with longevity?

6. After the meeting

Joona advises NPOs to write a short contact report for their organisation on the meeting, write a thank you and confirmation letter to the potential donor and follow up with a funding proposal.

"Ideally this should reach the recipient a week before the due date so that the recipient can check it and make comments to improve it," she adds.

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7. Statement of need

Joonas says the statement of need should accurately describe the problem to be addressed and show you are passionate about the issue as it will encourage the prospective donor to read the rest of the document.

8. No response?

Politely email to confirm whether they received the proposal and if there has been any progress. Do not nag, Joonas says, it could be that your proposal may only be considered at a board meeting scheduled for later on in the year or for when a new budget is allocated.

9. Not successful?

Joonas advises NPOs to ask the potential donor politely if there was a specific reason why a grant was not made. She urges the NPOs to have internal discussions on where they can improve and not take rejection personally.

“Remember that even if a donor is unable to support you now, they may be able to within their strategy in the future or be able to extend a network to those that could support your work now,” Joonas concludes.

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