



12 Ways to Attract New Donors

Now for the heart of the matter—outreach. You've identified your top prospects. Now it's time to plan your approach to achieve optimum engagement.

- 1) Relationship mapping. Your current donors, board members, and volunteers are your best link to finding new donors. Who are their guests at events? Who shares your social media posts? Sincerely cultivating your existing relationships is good donor stewardship and has the added benefit of building your reputation in the community.

- 2) Research, research, research. Read your local newspapers and magazines. Who is already active in your community who you'd like to get to know better? Stay current with key new hires and promotions at prominent local companies. These announcements offer opportunities to introduce yourself, offer your congratulations, and start a conversation. Donor lists are often published in annual reports, artistic playbills, and fundraising event programs. Research the people on these lists to discover where their interests intersect with your mission. Take the time to meet and engage them. Build a relationship before you ask for a donation.

- 3) Be where they are. Find out what social media your prospects use, where they get their news, and what other organizations they support. Take part in these same activities.

- 4) Build partnerships. Collaborate with like-minded organizations to build trust with an extended audience.

- 5) Get out in the community. If you're an introvert, don't think about having to "work the room." Start by meeting one or two new people at each event. Move up to challenging yourself to make five new connections before you leave an event. Before you know it, you'll recognize familiar faces and build your network.

- 6) Host cultivation parties. Ask board members and donors you have a close relationship with to throw house parties and invite friends and colleagues. Use a brief portion of the evening to share your organization's work with the room. Ask your host

to speak about why they support you and encourage others to give. Set out a guest book (or laptop) to sign in so you can collect mailing addresses and emails. Provide goodie bags that include a donation buck slip and stamped remit envelope. Follow up the next day with guests to say how good it was to meet them. Invite them to something else right away, while you're fresh in their memory.

7) Leverage your volunteers. They're already giving you their most valuable gift—their time. Get to know why they volunteer, where they work, what your common interests are. If you're not including them in your fundraising appeals, you're missing a golden opportunity.

8) Turn your board into advocates. Share tips with your board about how to bring you up in casual conversation with friends and colleagues. Give them the tools they need to feel comfortable talking about you.

9) Host free events. Start a community Open House or Town Hall discussion series. Invite people to your office or partner with a local café or bookstore. This is a wonderful opportunity to gather contact information, increase engagement, and hear firsthand what people think and feel.

10) Launch a peer-to-peer campaign. The power of social media, combined with the ease of online giving, has contributed to the rise in popularity of peer-to-peer fundraising. Encourage dedicated donors to spread the word among their friends and family. These initiatives introduce you to new donors through a respected, trusted referral.

11) Cultivate the next generation. Start a young professionals group and host more casual events like happy hours, book clubs, and social activities. Add purpose to your party by providing relevant information and a call to action. The Millennial and Gen X generations are active in their communities, have large networks, and are serious about making lasting change. Recruit regular attendees for peer-to-peer campaigns or invite them to join your board and grow your diversity.

12) Maximize corporate partnerships. If your corporate partners offer employee matching gift programs, make sure you're featured in their internal updates. What opportunities do you have that a corporate partner might be interested in supporting, thereby advertising you to their clients and customers?

Consider the pros and cons before buying or renting a list. They can be expensive and you do not have any connection to the individuals on the list. Known as "cold

prospecting," it can take multiple communications efforts to acclimate this audience to your organization/brand. And there's no guarantee they will ever donate.

Instead, ask if any partner organizations are open to doing list trades for a one-time mailing to each other's list of contacts. This is especially useful for event invitations or postcards to performances. Just remember, it's a one-time trade so you can only mail to that group once. Keep the list separate; don't upload it to your database. Anyone who takes action can now become part of your regular mailing list.

Source: <https://www.networkforgood.com>