

WHITE PAPER: Choosing a Fundraising Consultant

Who We Are

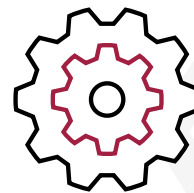
Fox Advancement is a fundraising consulting firm based in Minneapolis, MN. We provide customized fundraising counsel to clients across the nation who want to win more grants, achieve ambitious campaign goals, and access the unprecedented influx of funding from the federal government.



Why Fox Advancement

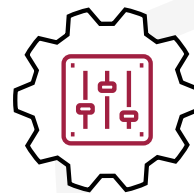
Integration:

We are the leading fundraising consultancy offering robust expertise in grants, individual giving, and public funding to nonprofit clients.



Customization:

We pride ourselves in marrying fundraising best practices with innovative tactics tailored to your unique needs.



Talent Management:

We've identified the very best grants and campaign consultants around the nation so we can link you with an expert whose background aligns with your project.



WHITE PAPER: Choosing a Fundraising Consultant

Hiring a fundraising consultant is an important decision! Asking the right questions can help you select a consultant that fits your organization's goals and culture. We advise asking consultants the following questions:

1. **What is your process?** While there are best practices that guide many aspects of fundraising, effective consultants will marry best practices with innovative tactics that are customized to your organization's unique needs. Look for consultants who enthusiastically describe a process that is solutions-oriented and tailored to the problems you need to solve.
2. **What is your level of expertise in our sector?** Consultants who have experience in your sector will have the inside track on the messaging and funding sources that apply to your mission. For example, consultants who consistently work with food shelves will know how to connect with donors who are passionate about food security, and they will quickly identify private and public funding opportunities that should be on your list.
3. **How do you measure success?** Identify both the qualitative and quantitative measures of success used by the consultant. Be wary of consultants that rely solely on numbers – while everyone wants to secure grants and raise individual gifts, there is sometimes a runway needed to achieve these results (especially for young programs). Aim to work with someone who will assess success holistically through systems built, processes implemented, and asks made.
4. **Would you be the primary consultant for my project?** Ensure you understand your main point of contact. Consultancies can range from sole practitioners, to small teams, to large firms with hundreds of employees. Know who you will be communicating with day-to-day. Are you comfortable with this person? If your main contact can't answer a question, do they have a team or network who can help brainstorm a solution?
5. **How would you work across teams within our organization?** Few fundraising problems can be solved with fundraising staff alone. Your consultant should be ready and willing to collaborate with executive leadership, program staff, and volunteers. Most importantly, the consultant should confidently and courteously distill information from all parties and make recommendations based on what was shared.



WHITE PAPER: **Choosing a Fundraising Consultant, cont.**

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- 6. Do you see your clients as partners?** Consultants who work in partnership with their clients are consistently focused on achieving common goals, listening effectively, and admitting when they don't know the answer. Likewise, organizations who are open to advice from their consultants will experience a more fulfilling and productive relationship.
- 7. How will you identify diverse funding sources to increase my organization's revenue?** Very few organizations can sustain themselves on one funding source alone. Identify a consultant who will examine all possible funding sources, including individual gifts, sponsorships, grants, public and federal funding, and events.
- 8. If your process identifies that our organization is not ready for the next step (e.g., a major grant, a capital campaign, etc.), how will you help us get ready?** You may not always receive the answer you want from a consultant – they may tell you not to proceed with a major project because you don't have the donor base, staff, or infrastructure to support it. Take in their recommendations, and then ask for the roadmap. A good consultant will help prepare your organization for the next big step.
- 9. What is your pricing structure?** Some consultants bill hourly, and others use a monthly retainer model. Be transparent about the budget you have in place for consulting and ask the consultant to provide a detailed scope of work and price point for their services.
- 10. Can you share your references?** A consultant should be willing to connect you with current or former clients who can share their experiences.

Looking for a fundraising consultant to help you prepare for a major campaign, build your grants program, or even serve as an interim development director? Email inquiry@foxadvancement.com to discuss your needs and find a solution!

