

Your Fundraising Investment “Whys:” Building a Compelling Case for Support

By Carol A. Poore, Ph.D., MBA

Why do successful organizations catch the attention of investors and result in major funding, while other nonprofits and start-ups lack the capacity to raise funds? Your Case for Support makes ALL the difference. Here’s my formula for a successful Case for Support.



1. Executive Summary

Your executive summary needs to be brief, compelling, and consist of two to three paragraphs briefly explaining the crux of your proposal.

2. Introduction

The executive summary will be followed by you’re an exciting, authentic introduction which must include your organization’s vision, mission and background.

3. Case for Support

This section – your “Case for Support,” is the most important part of your proposal with respect to convincing your potential funder of your program to be funded. This section will feature both external elements – such as trends, major community issues, and data-driven problems, with internal elements – the rationale for how your organization can provide a transformational difference for your community, state and world.

First, articulate the problem and state the problem in a pristine way. You’ll want to articulate community needs, which builds the case of why your project is important.

Describe your program as a problem solver. In this section, you will list the name of your program, and you’ll describe it in detail. State why your program or organization meets critical needs at a critical time. Show the flip side: What would happen if your organization went away? That’s a tough question – but answer it! Show how your organization or program is absolutely CRITICAL.

Enclose a high-level budget if appropriate. There’s no need to get too detailed with the budget at this stage. If the donor is interested, you can follow up with a much more detailed work plan based on discussion, the donor’s level of interest and gift amount.

4. What will private investment from the (XYZ Company) make possible?

In this section, describe in full what the funder’s investment will produce. Show measurable returns and outcomes including social, economic, and cultural impact.

Reaffirm the current status now, and your goals with private investment – what will be changed with the donor investment.

5. What will (your organization) invest?

List what your organization is prepared to do to make the program successful. What is your organization's skin in the game? For example, your organization may commit to new community partnerships, well-recognized programs, excellence in research, or investment in volunteer resources to provide a donor "match" in valuable resources.

6. Together, we can achieve our vision

This is a summary section showing how your organization and the funding source can, together, make a difference. Tell how private support provides for an excellence not possible solely within your organization's resources. Tie this success back to your organization's vision and mission statements. Share implications and emphasize partnership.

7. Finally, note (high level) the donor recognition that your donor investor can expect to receive.

Do not list specific recognition commitments in great detail. Remember, this is only a concept paper to stimulate further discussion. You do not want to paint yourself into a corner at this initial stage. Donor benefits depend on the investment level!

However, donors DO need enough specificity to understand large donor benefits, with smaller details stated in generalities – for example, "national and local media story placement" – rather than listing specific publications.

In this section, if appropriate, list or share contact information for the next step. This is a paper that you would ideally present face-to-face. If you cannot arrange a face-to-face presentation where this is personally shared, you can enclose a cover letter and list the contact point person in this high-level concept paper. For example: For further information, please call (name) at (phone number) or e-mail (phone number). We would be delighted to provide an organization tour and can share in person our detailed program budget.

One final tip: You can include an appendix to the Case For Support with more data about your organization's accomplishments and impact. This provides additional details that otherwise would bog down your Case For Support philanthropic investment proposal.

Full Article: <http://bit.ly/2u7xSlz>

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Contact: Carol A. Poore, Ph.D., MBA, President
Cpoore5@cox.net