

## Partnerships: a successful strategy for libraries

**Theresa Denton**

Senior Librarian, Rocklands Library, City of Cape Town, South Africa

[theresa.denton@capetown.gov.za](mailto:theresa.denton@capetown.gov.za)



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### **Abstract:**

*This study examined the way partnerships can contribute to the success of library services. This project illustrates how partnerships form the solutions to communal and funding challenges. It will also prove how successful partnerships can contribute and transform the library world. Considering modern funding constraints, this can be best done by collaborating and partnering with other local organisations, communities and businesses. Each public library has a different community to serve and therefore has different priorities and needs.*

*With library budgets not expanding to keep up with growing needs and demands, libraries cannot successfully drive change to enhance the quality of life for children and youth. The quality of library services rendered in the province consequently suffered, because of the unfunded mandate. The mission of the library with respect to young adult services is to assist the individual in achieving a successful transition from childhood to adulthood by providing both access to resources, and an environment that meets the specific needs of young adults for intellectual, emotional, and social development. (UNESCO/ IFLA PUBLIC LIBRARY MANIFESTO, 1995)*

*To meet this goal libraries need dynamic, innovative and inspiring partnerships. These relationships will inevitably transcend the traditional role of the library as an isolated entity. The libraries could no longer operate in a vacuum or a silo. They need to interact with other agencies, institutions, and groups to create partners, develop co-operative initiatives and work together.*

**Keywords:** Partnership, local solutions, funding challenges

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## **INTRODUCTION**

It remains a challenge to ensure sufficient funding to eventually cover the full unfunded mandate for all City libraries in the Western Cape. Partnerships allowed us to strengthen our relationships with communities by organising sustainable programmes, extra furniture for children and youth. We could not do this without successfully partnering with organisations in and around our communities.

Although we have received funding and donations from various businesses and organisations I will only discuss a few.

The benefits of libraries collaborating with other organisations brought new patrons to the library and raised awareness in a wider segment of the community. This paper will elaborate on how to form partnerships, the social responsibility of organisations, how to design a strategic plan, the reasons why people give, how to contact funders, how to deal with the 'regret letter' and how to write the winning proposal.

## **WHAT IS A PARTNERSHIP?**

A partnership is an arrangement where parties, known as partners, agree to cooperate to advance their mutual interests. The partners in a partnership may be individuals, businesses, interest-based organisations, schools, governments or combinations thereof. Collaborations start with relationships; it is all about interactions between people. Being visible not to just those who are library patrons but also to those who can provide funding. There is added value in working with other organisations.

## **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Social responsibility is an ethical framework which suggests that an entity, be it an organisation or individual, has an obligation to act for the benefit of society at large. Social responsibility is a duty every individual has to perform so as to maintain a balance between the economy and the ecosystems. Social responsibility entails developing businesses with a positive relationship to the society which they operate in. According to the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), this relationship to the society and environment in which they operate is "a critical factor in their ability to continue to operate effectively." It is also increasingly being used as a measure of their overall performance.

## **SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

We are all aware of the social problems confronting our society, massive unemployment problem, decline in health care, formal education, drug abuse, gangsterism, etc. All this is compounded by a weak economy that is shedding jobs, privatisation, the move of companies into off shore investments, etc.

Lack of management and leadership capacity, lack of vision and proper mission, lack of planning skills, staff and volunteers who are demotivated with a low morale, no proper accountability systems and many more are haunting these organisations.

## **PARTNER: SABINET**

SABINET (South African Bibliographic and Information Network) was founded in 1983 as a non-profit organisation. Initially, SABINET was aimed at improving resource sharing and supporting bibliographic control in South Africa by means of a central computerised union catalogue and a computerised network consisting mainly of libraries.

In January 1997, a new private company, SABINET Online Limited was formed to address the changing needs of the online information community and to keep pace with rapidly changing technology. The company currently provides extensive services, including cataloguing and interlending support, various bibliographic and citation databases, online full-text resources, electronic document ordering, consulting services and training.

The name of the company was changed back to SABINET in 2006. Although SABINET offers Legal services and products and have various library management services, a cataloguing service (SabiCat), Interlending support service (ReQuest) and electronic publications I will only discuss the Sabinet Chairperson's Fund for the purpose of this paper.

The Sabinet Chairperson's Fund was established in 2003, as a way to ensure that the social responsibility initiatives undertaken by Sabinet achieved their primary objectives, remained impactful and delivered long-term tangible results. To this end, at least 10% of Sabinet's pre-tax profit is donated annually to the Chairperson's Fund. The mission of the Chairperson's Fund is to contribute to the educational, social and economic upliftment as well as the development of deserving communities in South Africa. "We strive to undertake projects where we can make a sustainable and discernible difference and in order to achieve success; we partner with other successful organisations and concentrate our efforts on a small number of projects."

The Chairperson's Fund endeavours to:

- promote and support community development through identification and support of established and effective organisations or entities who specialise in our area of operation;
- Inspire and motivate employees by increasing their involvement in social responsibility initiatives.

The Fund invites libraries in all the regions within the South African borders to submit proposals for funding of projects in community libraries. This year the following five projects were supported: Projects undertaken in 2013/14 include enterprise development; Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET); community library assistance; mathematics tuition through the SabiMaths Kids programme; and support of the various charitable organisations that contribute to the improvement and empowerment of our community.

- **Elsie's River and friends of the library from the Western Cape** - "Improve literacy, cultivate a love for reading and creating Einstein's" This organisation was founded to uplift the community and make them realise the possibilities to improve themselves academically and the knowledge base within the community. The funds donated were utilised to fund the Einstein Programme.
- **Elgin Library from the Western Cape** - "To refresh the collection of educational and story books with new and updated resources"

The Elgin Learning Foundation is a non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation whose vision is to provide sustainable development through value-driven learning. The funds awarded to this organisation were used to support this function.

- **Rocklands Library from the Western Cape** - "Uplift the community and empower individuals." Rocklands community faces many challenges such as drug abuse, illiteracy, gangsterism and violence. The funds were awarded to the library to host their annual reading competition where they invite all the grade 7 learners in Rocklands to participate.
- **Saulsville Library from the Western Cape** - "Educational Toys and Games for remedial classes at various schools." The funds awarded to this library were used to support their efforts around their community. This library offers holiday programmes and conducts school visits.

#### **PARTNER: GARDEN CITIES**

Since its incorporation 95 years ago, Garden Cities has been committed to excellence and high quality. Their work is dedicated to the development of entire suburbs, the construction of houses and public buildings and the nurturing of education equality through providing school halls to redress decades of disadvantage. Their objective through this striving for excellence is to positively influence and support high standards in the vital industry in which they work and the communities they serve. The Archway Foundation is Garden Cities' corporate social investment project providing essential school halls to children of the Western Cape living and being educated in historically disadvantaged communities. The Foundation has achieved an average delivery of five school halls a year since its establishment. It remains dedicated to alleviating the still enormous shortfall. This Foundation has assisted various libraries with funding towards their reading programmes and has successfully acted as a partner.

#### **ESKOM (Electricity Supply Commission)**

ESKOM is the largest producer of electricity in Africa and among the top seven utilities in the world in terms of generation capacity and among the top nine in terms of sales. What does ESKOM and libraries have in common. ESKOM and libraries has a history of exceptional service to the development of South Africa and its people. ESKOM has now for years been a funder for The City of Cape Town's Library and Information Services finals of their Reading competition for Grade 7

learners. The aim of the competition is to award a winner in each of the City's three official languages who will be crowned the 'The City of Cape Town & Eskom Grade 7 Reader of the Year'. The competition hopes to improve the relationships between City libraries and schools and to instil a love of reading among school children.

### **FORMING PARTNERSHIPS: THE FIRST STEP**

Forming partnerships forms one of the most important activities in any organisation. But how many of us are trained in the art of raising and mobilising funds? When confronted in meetings with the appointment of a fundraiser or treasurer, how many of us bury our faces, too scared to be nominated? We simply hate asking for funding, too many of us are aware of the huge responsibility that such a duty imposes on us. With so many organisations issuing appeal after appeal for funds and a public that is suffering from donor fatigue, everybody dreads the responsibility of being a fundraiser.

### **FORMING PARTNERSHIPS IS NOT ONLY ABOUT MONEY!**

Yes, it is a general myth that fundraising is only about money. It certainly involves money, but fundraising is not only about money. In fact, securing partnerships is not even about money at all. Money becomes only a by-product of this process. Essentially partnerships are about building trust between people. It is in this process of building trust that people develop the desire or need to give. And to give becomes a powerful form of human expression. This form of human expression has been with us since time immemorial.

### **FORMING PARTNERSHIPS DOES NOT MEAN BEGGING**

How many people believe that forming partnerships means to beg? We are psychologically disarming ourselves even before we go into battle. When we form partnerships we do so because we want to build relationships in the service of development. Building the capacity of others to develop themselves is our business. Not begging. We have nothing to be ashamed of. There is no reason to beg.

### **HOW DO WE DEAL WITH THE 'NO' ANSWER?**

When others refuse to give, then we must respect their decision. We may disagree with it and try to persuade them to support, but they have their right to say no. Some may say no today only to say yes tomorrow! The point is that there is nothing wrong with saying no. When others say no then they actually force us to think creatively of alternative ways to secure resources for development. They compel us to look at ourselves and prevent us from becoming over-dependent. In any case, we all say no to others almost on a daily basis in our personal lives!

Behind any benefactor (a person who gives) is a human being, someone with a life of his/her own. Try to find out more about this person. Find out when they celebrate their birthdays or what their hobbies are. Get to know the person. In short, build friendships! Get to know the people behind your external funders. They are also your friends.

### **FUNDRAISING MEANS TO PLAN:**

Planning is absolutely crucial when you endeavour to find partners to fund your project or programme. Success or "failure" can only be measured in terms of what you planned to achieve. Many organisations do not even know about budget control meetings, financial planning meetings or strategic planning sessions. How organisations can survive without these basic tools of control and implementation boggles the mind!

## **THE GRAB-AND-RUN METHOD**

This method implies that you ask for funds and then disappear. The funder never hears from you again. Until your organisation finds itself in the next financial crisis of course! Make sure that you keep your funder up to date with the most current information about your project. Send them newspaper articles, newsletters, letters, photographs, etc. Feed them with information. An informed funder is one that will give. And they will continue to give. Funders want to know what impact their funds are making. They have the right to know! Don't only think that your progress report will inform them. That is not enough. Design special funder updates. Show them that you want them to know!

## **ARE YOU PREPARED TO FUND YOURSELF?**

What does this mean? It simply means that you learn to submit your funding proposals first to yourself as an organisation and then decide if you are prepared to fund yourself. If you should have access to the amount of money being requested in your funding proposal or even if it is your own personal money, are you prepared to sacrifice it for your organisation? Get a committee together in the organisation and play out this scenario. If, for any reason, there is doubt amongst your own members about the feasibility and "fundability" of your project, then please do not submit it to an external funder. Do not waste their time if you are yourself in doubt about your own proposal.

## **THE VISION AND MISSION:**

Out of the need to exist develop the vision and mission. The vision is your dream of a reality that does not yet exist. Your mission is the implementation of that dream. It is the day to day, minute by minute actions that you take to realise that dream.

## **ASSESS THE NEEDS OF YOUR ORGANISATION:**

Once your vision and mission are clearly defined and correct, then you need to establish what you require to realise your dreams. What are the needs of the organisation? And not only the visible or material needs, but also the invisible needs like training of staff, etc.

## **DESIGN A STRATEGIC PLAN:**

Now you need to determine the resources that you have available measured against the objectives that you set yourself. Make sure your objectives are SMART – that means it must be:

S – SPECIFIC

M – MEASURABLE

A – ACHIEVABLE

R – REALISTIC

T - TIME-BOUND

## **IMPLEMENT THE ACTION PLAN:**

Here you need to move into action. This means carrying out the action plan. This involves basic management functions such as delegating duties, double check, making appointments, attending meetings and clarifying expectations, etc.

## **UNDERSTAND THE FEEDBACK:**

Out of this process a lot of information will be generated. We call this feedback. It means you will be receiving and giving information. What is important is to act on this information. Information may come to you formally or structured (in meetings, during consultations) or it may come informally (in passing). You need to decide what information is useful and what to ignore.

### **EVALUATE THE RESULTS:**

Your actions will lead to specific results. Evaluate those results. Are you still on track with your plan or is there a need for a change in strategy? How far are you from your target? Have you been too optimistic or maybe too pessimistic in your projections?

### **THE COMMUNITY MARKET:**

This market refers to your ability to form partnerships in your broader community. Raising financial resources may not be the most important objective here. It may be more important to build partnerships in this circle of organisational influence. Here you may be able to access volunteers with specific expertise and other material resources. In this circle your primary objective should be to build the image of the organisation. In this market you also have access to professionals, schools, colleges, universities, business people, churches, local government, etc. Look at your programmes and projects and ask yourself how we can form strategic partnerships with them. And remember, an effective partnership always starts with you asking what you can do for the other party, how your organisation can add value to them. This is the fundamental basis for a partnership. And remember, building partnerships takes time. You must be patient.

### **THE EXTERNAL MARKET:**

This market refers to the foreign funders, corporate funders, etc. This is where you may be able to generate most of your funds. This is where your most skilled employees should be working and spending most of their time. The main tool in this market to access funders will normally be your funding proposal. Writing funding proposals is a conceptual task requiring a deep understanding of how the organisation works. This is why not everybody is fit to work at this level. They need to be trained first and some people may never be able to work at this level even after intensive training.

#### **Here are some reasons why people give:**

- They like what you do
- For marketing purposes
- Because you've asked
- They have resources to share
- They like you (as a person)
- For tax purposes
- There is something in it for them
- Returning a favour
- Identify with your cause
- You submitted a very good proposal
- You address real needs
- Buying influence
- They feel guilty
- For religious reasons
- It is part of a community social investment programme
- They want to identify with success
- Fear
- Because they have money
- You have helped them
- It is the flavour of the month

## **TYPES OF FUNDERS**

Many people give to organisations for different reasons. You need to find out the fundamental reasons behind the reason people are giving to you. This is important since the reasons for giving (the why) determine what you ask for. You always deal with 3 types of funders namely, the current, potential and unknown ones. The current funders are the ones funding your organisation at the moment. They have signed funding contracts with you and you are reporting on how you spend their money.

The potential funders are the ones that know about you but are not funding you yet. There is the potential or the possibility for funding since the donor knows about your organization and its work. Maybe with some more donor cultivation this possibility of funding will become a reality.

The unknown funder does not even know that you exist. This is where your marketing and communication strategy comes in. It is to create the visibility amongst different stakeholders about the work that you do. Once funders know about you then the potential will always exist for funding.

Some lessons from the above:

Remember, funder cultivation is an ongoing process and never stops. As current funders move out, new ones must move into the current funder circle. Your cultivation of unknown funders is also a continuous process. It never stops. Failure to understand and practice this will lead to organisational suicide. This is also why it is important that those entrusted with leading organisations should be free to spend as much time on this as possible. In this area of responsibility, you can never do enough.

## **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION**

So, what is the process of communicating with funders and what do you want to achieve in the end? Strategic communication refers to a process of communication that is conscious and planned. There is a strategy involved with clear outcomes to be achieved. We practice this form of communication every day without realising it.

*A simple definition of strategic communication is:* To request the right thing from the right person at the right time in the right manner to get the right result to fulfil the right need and to make relevant impact.

And that's it! When you skip or ignore any of the above, it is most unlikely that you will achieve the right result and hence fulfil the right need. The same happens to funder cultivation. There are various stages in the strategic communication process, namely:





**Awareness**



**Interest**



**Action**



**Ownership**

**Awareness:** Before any funder can give to you they first need to know that you exist and what you do. That awareness can be achieved by various means. With the ladder of effective communications I will explore various ways to create awareness amongst funders about your organisation.

**Interest:** It is one thing to create awareness but something else to cultivate an interest in your funder to move to the next stage. Many funders may know about you and your work but have no interest in what you do. You make them develop interest in your work by highlighting your focus areas, success stories and the impact you make. You sell to them innovation in addressing needs, reliability, accountability, transparency and honesty. In short, you sell integrity to them.

**Action:** This is when funders approach you for possible funding, sign funding agreements and actually starts supporting your work. How you deal with your funders during this stage, will determine if they move to the next stage. If you practice good partner relationship building in terms of reporting, openness, keeping to agreements and asking for permission to deviate from criteria initially laid down, getting the funder involved in your work, then the funder relationship will become strong. The funder will then move easily to the next stage. Should anything go wrong and they feel upset about certain malpractices it is unlikely that they will move to the next stage.

**Ownership:** This is the stage where the funder feels like they are part of your family. They want to share your success with you. They feel that a part of them has been invested in your organisation and are now ready to move to the next stage.

**Advocacy:** This is the final stage where a funder strongly identifies with your organisation or project and they become advocates for it. That means that they are prepared to sell your organisation or project to other funders or potential partners. Remember, the best people to sell what you do are those who have experienced your work. Get people involved! Get them onto your groups or committees. Let them experience what you do.

In the same way an organisation without a well thought-out sustainability strategy and well monitored action plans with collective buy-in from managers down to staff and volunteers, does not have a financial problem but a management one. Of course, there can be the occasional situation where despite a sustainability strategy you still struggle to recruit the right funders. But this is an exception. A good sustainability strategy will have made provision for a contingency plan, because you always

anticipate the worse. Following is a particular approach to understand sustainability followed by a certain approach to financial management.

Allan Kaplan defines sustainability as:

*“... Achieving the ability to keep moving, changing and achieving one’s response-ability to inevitably shifting circumstances, rather than assuming that those circumstances will ever be finally and successfully resolved, once and for all.*

This strategy should include:

- Who your existing funders are and how you can retain them?
- How many core funders you need to recruit over the relevant period and how much you will request from them?
- How many special funders you need to cover special projects?
- How much you can generate from own income?
- The resources you are able to mobilise in terms of materials, skills and expertise, volunteer labour, etc.

## **HOW TO CONTACT FUNDERS:**

### **Newspaper articles**

Your media strategy should involve regularly writing to newspapers about issues on which your organisation focus. This is also called advocacy. Build relations with journalists. Invite them to your graduations or other special events. Write a press release. Community newspapers are always looking for interesting stories. Feed them! Articles in a newspaper are like sowing seeds. You never know where and when it will germinate.

### **Brochures**

Update your brochures regularly and send them to targeted partners, both current and potential funders. Do this at least 2-3 times per annum. For partners to consider funding your organisation, they must know what you do.

### **Newsletters**

If you do not have a newsletter then you are not serious about your work. You must have an organ to communicate to the outside world. The need you are addressing is in the outside world not behind four walls. Tell potential funders what you are doing and how you are doing it. Share your success stories and your challenges. Be open and honest.

### **E-mail**

Keep this short and sweet. Funding enquiries and proposals are normally transmitted in this way. Try to get permission from your potential funder that this method of transmission is okay with them.

### **Face to face meetings**

This is the best form of communication. You are present to answer any possible question that the donor may have about your work. Try to get your potential donor to your office or project. Bring them to where the action is. Always try to close the gap of communication between you and the potential donor. This will minimise any miscommunication.

### **Television**

Not many organisations use this medium. Try it! This is one of the most effective ways to create awareness amongst unknown donors about your work.

### **Video**

Keep this short, not longer than 10 minutes. Funders are overwhelmed with requests for financial support. They do not have the time to watch a movie.

## Radio

Have a strategy in place to get on to radio often enough to create awareness about your work. With the mushrooming of community radios, there is ample opportunity to get your messages across to unknown funders.

## Word of mouth

This is when other people advocate your work and you don't even know it. Remember: People will only spread knowledge about your work if they like what you do. Give people a bad experience and they will kill you wherever they go.

## THE REGRET LETTER:

I am sure that you must have received a regret letter before. Well, I will now show you that a regret letter does not exist. It is only a figment of your imagination. For me, a regret letter is nothing but a delayed yes or a yes to somebody else.

Funders normally communicate that:

- You applied too late or you missed the deadline
- Their budget is depleted and you must try again next time
- Your work does not fall in their focus area
- They do not fund small projects but only networks
- Sometimes they thank you and wish you well in your future endeavours

Remember, when you receive any letter from any funder, then that is already a yes. Why?

Because funders receive hundreds if not thousands of requests for funding. They have to employ people just to read your proposal. When they reply to your request then it means they know who you are. You have overcome the first stage in strategic communication, i.e. they are aware of your work. Their letters are littered with useful information such as correct addresses, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail numbers, names of board members and it is signed by someone. So next time when you communicate with them, you will know exactly whom to address your request to!

This is how you work with the responses they provide:

<b>Funder response</b>	<b>Your response</b>
Proposal submitted is too late	Make sure you submit way in advance the next time
Already exceeded their budget	Make sure you submit way in advance the next time
Not in their focus area, e.g. women development, not youth development	Send the information to a 'women' development organisation. It may be 'no' to you but 'yes' for development
Only fund networks and not small projects	Join a relevant network as soon as possible
We already have our projects that we fund	

So, go and find all your regret letters. You may be sitting on a gold mine!

## HOW TO WRITE THE WINNING FUNDING PROPOSAL

The following are some of the core elements of a funding proposal.

## **THE ELEMENTS OF A WINNING PROPOSAL**

- THE COVER LETTER
- TITLE PAGE
- INTRODUCTION
- PROBLEM STATEMENT
- UNIQUENESS OF THE ORGANISATION
- OBJECTIVES
- EXPECTED BENEFITS
- OPERATIONAL PLAN
- PERSONNEL
- EVALUATION
- THE BUDGET
- ATTACHMENTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

## **THE WRITING OF A FUNDING PROPOSAL**

There is no correct method for the writing of a funding proposal. The type of method, sequence or composition of a funding proposal depends on many factors such as that which is required by the funder or the type of project for which funding is required. Some funders also have their own application forms designed to make it easier for organisations to apply for funding.

Please note that flexibility is important with the type of approach that is followed and with the writing of the funding proposal. The following elements must be paid attention to when writing a full proposal:

### **THE COVER LETTER**

This briefly describes the content of the proposal. It should not contain too much detail and must not sound intimidating. Try to avoid being prescriptive and please do not beg. The most senior staff member will sign your cover letter. The chairperson of an interest group of in our case 'Friends of the Library' can also co-sign.

### **TITLE PAGE / COVER PAGE**

This contains the following information:

- Name and address of the organisation that applies
- Telephone- and fax- and e-mail numbers
- Title of the project
- Time-period of the project
- Name of the potential funder
- Date of submission
- Fundraising- and NPO registration number of your organization
- Name of your contact person

### **THE INTRODUCTION:**

Describes the general aims and objectives of the organisation and the date when it was established.

Describes briefly similar projects that already exist.

Describes the organisation's target group.

Provides some statistics that support and motivate your proposal.

## **THE PROBLEM STATEMENT**

- Identify the target group
- Identify the needs that your organisation wish to address for e.g. access to employment for unemployed youth or fighting poverty by providing access to productive land.
- Explain the scope of the problem or the need you wish to address.
- If you have research information available, inform the donors how big the problem really is.
- How many people are unemployed or how many people live in poverty.
- Describe how social values will be influenced.
- Explain how the unemployment problem causes young people to resort to criminal activities to make a living or how a lack of access to productive land hinders people from developing sustainable livelihoods. Explain what impact the problem has on the community and provide an indication of community resources or the lack of it to address the problem or the need.
- 

### **Five basic questions when the problem statement is analysed and formulated:**

- What is the problem / need?
- Where is the problem?
- When does the problem occur?
- What is the scope of the problem?
- Who is affected by the problem?

## **THE UNIQUENESS OF THE ORGANISATION**

Your proposal should convince the funders that your organisation is the most suitable to address the problem. What qualifies you for funding and not another organisation? Why should the funder consider your proposal at all? Provide reasons for a certain approach or method that you will follow. Motivate why your organisation will deliver the best results. Use your track record of past projects to help convince the funder that you can be trusted.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- Describe the objectives / results that you want to achieve and at what cost
- The stages / phases in addressing the problem
- Remember, your objectives must be SMART:
  - Specific and practical
  - Measurable
  - Achievable
  - Relevant and realistic
  - Time-bound

## **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

Indicate the benefits for your target group for e.g. access to sustainable income, increased self-esteem, decrease in the poverty levels, reduction in crime, more community cohesion, access to information, etc. A potential funder may be interested to find out how the project will lead to:

- More knowledge about better or more effective methods
- New program / project material
- Models for other projects

How will it fit in with national- or provincial government focus areas? For example, in South Africa we have the Integrated Development Plans at regional and local community levels. Remember that funders work with many organisations addressing similar needs or problems in different parts of the

country and even the world in the case of international funders. They need to know how they can share your experiences and success stories with other organisations. In this way impact can be enhanced, something funders are very serious about.

## **OPERATIONAL PLAN**

### **This is the core of the proposal**

It is a realistic management plan for the total duration of the project. It describes the structural relationship to the rest of the organisation Indicates the commencement date and the date of completion of every task and activity, preferably in a monthly sequence. In practical terms the plan will specify:

- What will be done?
- By whom?
- How it will be done?
- When it will be done?
- Resources needed to execute tasks
- Indicators of success
- Who is accountable for task completion?

## **PERSONNEL**

The success or failure of a project depends on the staff who is responsible for the project work. Funders feel more comfortable with people who are:

- Qualified
- Have the ability to initiate projects and complete it successfully
- Have the necessary experience
- Have integrity

### **It is advisable to provide job descriptions of the personnel for example:**

- Job Title
- Educational qualifications
- Specific responsibilities
- Authority for the project
- Previous experience in similar projects

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Evaluation must be carried out to determine whether objectives are being achieved. Remember, to evaluate means to establish the value of something. This evaluation must be done in line with your stated objectives as outlined in your proposal. Before you can evaluate you need to monitor constantly what you are doing to check for any deviations in your project plan. Monitoring is primarily about gathering relevant information and processing it. An evaluation can be internal or external. Many funders prefer external evaluations because it is more objective. Internal evaluations tend to be more subjective and the organisation can tend to report what the donor wants to hear.

When you plan to evaluate, explain to the funder that your evaluation will include:

- An evaluation criteria
- Certain techniques to be used
- Design

- Time-period (when it will be done)
- Who will do it?
- Why it will be done?
- Your commitment to submit an evaluation report

## **THE BUDGET**

The budget is a comprehensive and realistic monetary description of your organisation's projected income and expenses over a specific period of time. Your budget will cover the following categories of expenditure:

- Operational expenses for the project or programme
- Capital expenses for the project or programme
- Core cost expenses for the organisation to run the project e.g. rent, communication, transport, etc.

## **ATTACHMENTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION**

Add an organisational structure (organogram) to show where your project fits into the total organisation and the lines of accountability

If you apply for the first time include your constitution and NPO certificate if you have one. Also include the following:

- Newspaper cuttings of your organisation's work
- Letters of support
- Letters of support from members of the community
- Photos of similar project activity

## **INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL FUNDERS**

- Prepare a list of potential funders with the following information:
  - Precise address, both postal and street address
  - Telephone-, fax- and e-mail number
  - Contact person with initials, correct surname and job title
  - Total previous applications to the same funder
  - Number and total amount received from the funder
  - Make telephonic contact with the relevant funding officials
  - Decide how the funding proposal will be composed

## **Conclusion**

Libraries can become vehicles of knowledge, which drive change and energise their focus on partnerships in order to improve the quality of life for their communities. While there is no "one way" to structure effective business-community partnerships, asking the right initial questions and engaging in continuous learning will strengthen the partnership. Forming and implementing a partnership with business partners that works takes effort, but is similar to forming any partnership.

"The dawn of the information age has fostered a major shift from organisational structure to quality of life. The underlying assumption here is that the best interests of the organisation are protected not by its structures and procedures, but rather by the quality of life experienced by its members"

Community outreach is closely linked with marketing, but it goes beyond making patrons and their families aware of the library, to establishing community partnerships and delivering services as well. Forming partnerships will proved to be valuable not only for one partner but for both. (Puth, 2002:11). Each side of the partnership must invest time and resources to build the partnership in a way that reflects the needs, capacities, and resources of the other. Libraries that structure their programmes and

services within the context of research-based youth development models can provide opportunities for young adults to achieve a successful transition from adolescence to adulthood.

## References

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