



Briefing Note – Prospect Research Plan Outline

Introduction

In larger fundraising campaigns it makes sense to prepare a formal Prospect Research Plan. That way the Fundraising Director has a clear understanding of the research programme, staffing and budgetary implications. As a useful way of starting such a plan, these headings may help.

Prospect Research Plan Headings

1) Introduction

2) Background to the fundraising campaign

- a) How much do we need to raise and by when?
- b) Table of Gifts – How many donors at different levels of gifts
- c) Who do we expect to give to us (who are our natural constituencies?)

3) The Concept of a Prospect Pipeline

- a) Defining different types of prospects e.g. cold, warm and hot prospects
- b) How many prospects of each type do we need to achieve the target?
- c) We do not need to research prospects at the outset; how many prospects do we need in each year of the campaign?

4) The Research Methods

- a) Desk research
- b) Individual interviews
- c) Prospecting Groups

5) Managing the Prospect Research Process

- a) Database (typically audit, specification, back up, data cleaning, data analysis, implications for the campaign).
- b) Qualifying Prospects
 - i) How will prospects enter the system?
 - ii) How will we estimate their wealth?
 - iii) How will we assess their capacity to give?



c) **Prospect Management Systems**

- i) Prioritising research prospects
- ii) Individual prospect research briefs (a snapshot, standard profile or full in depth profile)
- iii) Reviewing the Prospect Pipeline
- iv) Assigning prospects to staff and volunteer leaders
- v) Co-ordinating approaches to prospects
- vi) Prospect Progress Reports

6) Resources

- a) Research resources required (books, directories, newspapers, periodicals, CD ROMs, online resources.
- b) Staff (full time, part time, volunteers, & interns)
- c) Budget (actual for year 1 and indicative budget for future years)

7) Prospect Research Timetable

8) Conclusion

9) Appendices