

## Fundraising: A Tool for the development of Public Library System

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**Abstract:** - *This paper introduces the concept of fundraising for libraries and discusses the various method of fundraising. It also suggests measures for effective fundraising.*

**Keywords:** Fundraising for Libraries, Financial planning for libraries

**Introduction:** Libraries are considered as non-profit organizations because they do not produce any monetary profit but investment in Public libraries has a direct impact on the development of the society. Public libraries are maintained for public use and funded by the government or the public sources. Public library satisfies the information needs of the general public by providing all kinds of knowledge and information available to all segments of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic and employment status. It has been providing information for education, leisure and entertainment for decades.

The rising cost of Library management is not being matched by budgets that remain the same or are continuously reduced. In India majority of the public libraries depend only on government grants as the main source of their income. Fundraising for the public library would be a better solution to strengthen the libraries and for their modernization and infrastructure development. There is need to explore fundraising options at large.

Fundraising is the process of gathering voluntary contributions of money or other resources, by requesting donations from individuals, businesses, charitable foundations, or governmental agencies. Although fundraising typically refers to efforts to gather money for non-profit organizations, it is

sometimes used to refer to the identification and solicitation of investors or other sources of capital for for-profit enterprises. [1]

Traditionally, fundraising consisted mostly of asking for donations on the street or at people's doors, and this is experiencing very strong growth in the form of face-to-face fundraising, but new forms of fundraising, such as online fundraising, have emerged in recent years. "Most large academic libraries employ one or more professional fundraisers known as academic library development officers to seek external funds" [2] Most of the Public libraries experience budgets shrink and such libraries are expected to deliver more for less. It is the need of the hour to start to look outside of traditional funding models to enable libraries to continue to deliver value to the communities.

#### **Objectives of the study:**

1. To study the importance of fundraising for Public Libraries
2. To study various method of fundraising for Libraries
3. To suggest proper steps for effective fundraising for Public Libraries

**Planning for fundraising:** Public Libraries are minimally supported by state funds but need significant additional funding each year to develop its infrastructure to meet the changing needs of users, keep up with the pace of scholarly publishing and for the rising cost of library materials etc. It is possible to raise money for libraries if the library authorities make a proper

plan of action and communicate Library needs and its social benefits to the potential donors. The community can help or support only if they know that the library needs financial help. Systematic fundraising plan of libraries might get more than the expectation.

#### **Steps and Methods of fundraising:**

1. **Identify the top priorities and needs of the Library:** Normally every library needs financial support for Library building construction or maintenance, Automation of Library, Digitization of collection and setting up a digital Library, Website development, Computer and ICT facilities, expertise and skilled manpower, Library collection and e – resources, for furniture and equipment's etc.
2. **Set the Library's Vision, Mission, Objectives and goals:** A Public Library should set its Vision, Missions statement and goals or objectives. It shows the path and helps the library authorities to work in the right direction.
3. **Create the wish list and Publicize:** The Public libraries should create the wish list of their priorities and its wide publicity. It might help to get positive response from all the stakeholders.
4. **Determine time bound steps :** In the Library committee meetings action plan should be determined for the time bound steps
5. **Use print and electronic media/social networking sites to reach the potential donors or create a donation website**
6. **Arrange face to face contacts to the potential donors:** Face to face meeting with

selected potential donors could move them into major donations.

7. **Financial year end appeal:**The majority of money that is given to nonprofits organizations is given at the end of the financial year. This is when people are thinking about the tax planning.
8. **Apply grant proposals to various organizations:** Public library authorities shall study the various schemes of local, state and central Govt. which offer financial assistance for the public library and take benefits under the schemes. Raja Ram Mohan Roy foundation, Directorate of Public libraries of each state, Municipal councils etc. offer such assistance.
9. **Apply to business organizations under CSR:** Corporate social responsibility has been defined differently by different writers based on what they perceive about the concept. Having learnt from the devastating effects of corporate social irresponsibility, companies are focusing on the impacts of their operations not only on profits but the society and environment at large. Therefore, corporate social responsibility refers to "the ethical principle that an organization should be responsible for how its behavior might affect society and the environment". [3]Library authorities can search potential donors from industries, companies, social trusts and business firms situated in its region and consult them to get the financial assistance for the library under CSR policies. Tata group, Infosys foundation, Sitaram Jindal foundation, Bangalore, Siddhivinayak trust, Mumbai are a few examples

which offer donations for the cause of education and library.

10. **Organize book exhibitions and events:** Invite the potential donors to various library events to show them the resources, show them the services that library provides, educate and cultivate them for higher annual gifts with the ultimate goal to move them into major gifts and introduce them with Library achievements and urgent needs. On such occasions, a donor might walk through the door with no prompting and say, 'I want to give you money.'
11. **Library development day** should be celebrated at the National and International level once in a year. Government level appeal and publicity to this concept by print and electronic media will encourage all citizens of the country for donating to public libraries on that particular day as per their wish.
12. **Finding new donors:** Present donors are the best source to find the new donors. Persons who like the library and make large donations can also suggest peoples who able to able to support library financially.
13. **Understanding and matching donor's expectations with library objectives:** Knowing the desires of the donors allowed for more success.
14. **Donor Recognition:** The libraries should show gratitude to the donor. There are many ways to acknowledge gifts from a simple thank you letter to the donor for their contribution to the library or putting name plates on library building furniture and naming a collection after

the donor. Thanking donors is a key to future success in fund raising. Sending out thank you letters make the donor feel valued and hopefully encourage them to give in the future.

**15. Identify the expectations of the community from the Library:**

The community will give to you because library meets their needs, not just because the library has needs. For what purpose is the library raising money, and why is it important? The reasons of fundraising shall be conveyed to the society. A library shall study the user needs and satisfy accordingly.

**16. Crowdfunding**

is when individuals come together as a 'crowd' to fund projects by other individuals or organizations. Usually facilitated by a website, this process usually raises smaller amounts of money, from a larger number of people. It is a funding method that gives the individual power to make change happen, and involve others in the adventure. "Crowd funding is the practice of funding a project or venture by raising many small amounts of money from a large number of people, typically via the Internet". [4] Crowd funding is a form of crowdsourcing and of alternative finance. In 2015, it was estimated that worldwide over US\$34 billion was raised this way.[5] Kickstarter, Fundly, Indiegogo, CauseVox, DonnersChoose are few professional websites devoted for the cause of fundraising.

**Conclusion:** Fund-raising efforts will surely grow in public libraries, as they are central to the core mission of social development and governmental funding is not likely to increase. An investment in

superior planning is a must for successful library fundraising programs. Library fund raising must be a cooperative effort involving library staff, Library authority including its president, trustees, volunteers, all stakeholder and well-wishers of the library. Transparency in library work and democratic decision-making system are essential requisites for increasing faith of community towards the library. "There are various sources of funds and kinds of approaches to donors which may be tried. Success is not assured, but the potential is great".[6]

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