



Resource Guide: Breakthrough Fundraising for Building Power

With Makani Themba, Higher Ground Change Strategies
By the Center for Media Justice



LISTENING SESSIONS

Start your fundraising work with listening sessions. In either one-on-ones or small groups, ask existing and potential donors: What do they care about? What would interest them in supporting your work at a deeper level? Below are some resources to guide you, but they cannot replace your own intelligence about your community and your base. Think about your people and what they care about and center your fundraising on that.

[PamelaGrow](#)—a practical blog that focuses on the all-important art of listening and donor retention. If you have never made thank you calls or scheduled time to listen to donors, you must read this.

[Three Simple Questions That Establish Donor Trust by the Association of Fundraising Professionals](#)—walks you through best practices in preparing to engage and listen to a possible “major donor.”

[Beth's Blog](#)—a non-profit tech blog that is light on cultural competency, but strong on understanding tech trends such as “social listening.” For some simple ways to implement social listening in your own communications and fundraising, check out her go-to guides.



**“Take the time to ask before you ask.
Experiment with what works best for
your constituencies.”**

—Makani

GRASSROOTS FUNDRAISING

[Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training \(GIFT\)](#)—the most culturally competent grassroots fundraising resource out there, with real life, down to earth approaches that—with discipline—will get you results. GIFT has an extensive set of resources including some in Spanish.

[The Change Agency](#)—fundraising guidance from some of the most successful campaigns in one central place. Check out the [list](#) we created or create your own.

[Mobile Cause](#)—a good place for beginners that emphasizes optimizing your website for mobile phones, which is how most people access your site. Check out their webinar and free resource library including targeted social justice resources.

[Grassroots Fundraising for Social Justice Organizations: Raising Money from Individuals in Tough Economic Times](#)—a publication from the (now defunct) Vanguard Public Foundation. It's a classic guide from 2001 that rounds up knowledge and case studies on social justice fundraising. Ignore the contact info, but the models and advice are timeless.

[Nonprofit Hub](#)—provides suggestions on what data your donor database should track. Remember: your fundraising is only as good as your systems to track and thank your donors.



These resources can help you develop a decent infrastructure, it's only persistence and intentional engagement that helps you turn the interested into investors.

—Makani

ENTERPRISE FUNDRAISING

Enterprise or fee for service refers to the goods and services that you can offer for sale such as training sessions, consultations, t-shirts, and clothing resale. These days, nonprofit enterprise fundraising goes way beyond old school bake sales and raffle tickets – although these still hold real appeal. Some nonprofits are becoming landlords with sub-leasing and capital campaign strategies that include in-kind property and renovation donations, leasing to other nonprofits and mission aligned formations, opening thrift stores, and selling member-created goods.

[Booster](#) and [CafePress](#)—online services for selling goods. Asking members to get their crew to buy your awesome gear is a pretty easy ask. Booster caters to mission-driven organizations and helps organizations reach their “supporter diaspora” beyond their local community.

[The Service Corps of Retired Executives \(SCORE\)](#)—has great resources to support enterprise startups, including business planning. A good business plan will help you assess the potential market, risks, and opportunities. It will also help you demonstrate an idea’s potential to investors.

[Locavesting](#)—a solid resource for exploring Investment Crowdfunding or Direct Public Offerings, which is a growing trend. This approach allows a group to offer public shares in relatively small enterprises like a farm or small-scale clothing manufacturing in order to raise capital to get it off the ground. A good case study on how this works is [here](#).



Enterprise efforts require a great deal of attention and time to invest without expecting a return right away, but can give you stable income. You also have to make sure the accounting lines are clear and you are complying with all relevant laws and reporting.

—Makani