

Fundraising FOR BEGINNERS

Donations to libraries are – by definition – gifts, but you usually have to work very hard to obtain them. ANNE TUNNECLIFFE, Director of the Queensland Library Foundation at State Library of Queensland, shares what she has learned in her first year of fundraising.

The Queensland Library Foundation, the fundraising arm of the State Library of Queensland (SLQ), works to maintain, enhance and expand the library's collections, facilities and services.

This year, we celebrate our 30th anniversary. We have contributed millions of dollars to collections and projects and have funded a \$3 million capital campaign. We also manage sponsorships for SLQ, and look to secure corporate funding for projects and exhibitions.

Eighteen months ago I knew none of this. I was in a high-pressure, executive career, negotiating corporate and community sponsorships, implementing communication plans and troubleshooting media.

Fundraising for library projects has been a steep learning curve. The successes have been inspiring and the mistakes, thankfully, few and far between, but here are some key points to keep in mind when planning to secure donations or sponsorships for your library:

Get to know your local fundraising industry

Attend breakfasts, seminars, book launches, networking events and workshops. Pick up the phone, reach out on email or social media, meet peers and corporates for coffee and ask them questions.

Local branches of organisations such as Creative Partnerships Australia, Philanthropy Australia and Fundraising Institute Australia provide a good overview of market movements and networking opportunities. You'll quickly establish a network of people who are interested and helpful, which will help you build confidence and keep focused on the task at hand.

You can't do it on your own

Fundraisers need direction from the State Librarian and the support of colleagues. Talk to staff, get a basic understanding about what they do, and work with them to construct the pitch to donors and sponsors so that what you're putting forward is what the library needs and can be delivered to expectations.

You need to understand what the library is doing. If you don't, you won't be able to persuade anyone to support it.



Dianne Byrne, SLQ Original Materials Curator, working with donors



QLF donor White Gloves experience

Communication is key

As a fundraiser you broker the relationship between the library and external parties, so you have to find common ground to get the best result.

Honesty and transparency will always serve you well. Sometimes this means having difficult conversations or telling someone something they don't want to hear, but there's no point spending time on a proposal you know from experience isn't going to attract sponsors. Having a marketing and communications background has definitely helped me to consider projects from an outside perspective and bring the two together.

Work your relationship with your donors

Fundraising is competitive and the market is tight, but thankfully we have donors who love our library as much as we do. Find people like this and make them part of your library family. Call them, meet them, ask them questions and, above all else, listen. Look at the organisation from their perspective.

Major donors like to meet the people implementing or managing projects they have funded, so make the introduction and stay across the conversations so you can manage expectations. To secure that half-a-million or million-dollar donation takes a significant capital campaign or years of cultivation.

Work with your colleagues and State Librarian to construct a proposal that has three or four projects that need funding and offer a choice of 'giving plans' over a couple of different time periods. This approach introduces

the donor to the scope of opportunities within the library and makes the donation process collaborative.

Build a reputation

Be open to fundraising for smaller projects that might attract community or media attention and help create awareness for the library. Success attracts success so, by promoting achievements, you pave the way to open discussions with other donors.

Don't get distracted

Fundraising is all about relationships. Some new, some old and some in need of attention. Take the time to plan your meetings, review proposals and anticipate

outcomes to positively impact those relationships.

That sounds simple, but you can easily get distracted by the diversity of projects and conversations going on around you. At the end of the day it comes down to how much money you have raised. 🌟

ANNE TUNNECLIFFE

Director

Queensland Library Foundation

foundations@slq.qld.gov.au

foundation.@slq.qld.gov.au

linkedin.com/company/qlf

BOUNCING BACK FROM REDUNDANCY

When **DEBORAH MARTIN** was made redundant in 2012 she found support from – and a new job through – an ALIA group.

When I was made redundant in early 2012, I found invaluable support from the other members of the ALIA OPALs (One-Person Australian Libraries) Queensland group. I was also afforded opportunities through a friend who was not a library and information professional but who had friends who were, and once she found out about the redundancy she made sure that I was introduced to her LIS friends and spent time with them at several social events.

My employer advised me in January 2012 that my position as librarian for a small special research library would become redundant in two months' time. A week later I attended a meeting of the ALIA OPALs Queensland group. A colleague at the meeting advised she was going on leave from the end of March 2012 for a few months and was looking for someone who could fill the position of senior library technician. I expressed interest and passed her a copy of my résumé. I ended up attending an interview and obtained the position, partly on account of her recommendation.

Throughout 2012, a close friend made sure I was continually invited to social occasions where she had invited other friends who were library and information professionals. She introduced me to a teacher librarian who provided me with volunteer work – and



Deborah Martin

experience on my résumé – in a school library. I also met an academic librarian who informed me about the recruiting process and advised me on preparing job applications for academic libraries. Her assistance contributed towards my getting a foot in the door of an academic library in 2013 as a temporary part-time library assistant. My brother-in-law, who had worked in human resources here and overseas, helped me to freshen up my résumé. His professional eye on the résumé and my initial applications made a difference.

I now have a full-time, non-contract position in a similar role in the same library. It wasn't all smooth sailing, but I gained valuable life and career experience during my post-redundancy adventure, which is helping to guide my current career goals. 🌟

DEBORAH MARTIN, AALIA (CP)

Client Services Officer

UQ Herston Health Sciences Library

University of Queensland

Brisbane, Qld

d.martin@library.uq.edu.au