

## Tips and Ideas for Obtaining In-Kind Donations

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For some organizations or businesses, providing in-kind donations to organizations doing good work in their community is the easiest way they can support you. They may not be able to provide direct financial donations, but it's far easier for them to simply share resources or expertise they already have. Use the tips below to request in-kind donations to offset some of your event expenses.

### **TIP #1: IDENTIFY YOUR EVENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

- Once you've formulated your event coordination team, brainstorm your specific, measurable event objectives. Examples might include: a minimum of 75 attendees from the Portland area; obtain a minimum of \$3,000.00 pre-expense revenue from each workshop, etc.
- Once your objectives are identified, now list out what specific resources you'll need to have in place to reach those objectives.
- Check all resources you currently have, and circle those that you will need to request. Examples of resources you need to request might include: A centrally-located facility large enough to host desired attendance and professional enough to attract business leaders; audio-visual equipment to record the event; printed promotional materials to attract attendees.

### **TIP #2: BRAINSTORM YOUR ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS.**

- Brainstorm a list of the specific administrative functions or resources your team would like to have in place to successfully coordinate your event, including a phone line, website, email addresses, mail box, office space, ability to accept workshop payments or donations online, etc.
- Check all administrative resources you currently have (either that you pay for or can obtain through volunteers) and circle those that you will need to request because of financial constraints or limitations in volunteer skills, etc.

### **TIP #3: RESEARCH OTHER AREA LIKE-MINDED ORGANIZATIONS WITH ACCESS TO THE RESOURCES YOU NEED.**

- Using the Internet, phone book and connections established by your volunteers, identify a few organizations that may have the administrative resources you need, brand power, and most importantly, similar values and mission as your group.
- Once you've identified one or two organizations that you believe are a good match, research them thoroughly. It's important to clearly understand the function of the organization you wish to solicit an in-kind donation from, as well as any organizational problems the group may be experiencing. If any red flags come up during your research (such as financial or organizational troubles), you may decide to pursue another group.

#### **TIP #4: MEET WITH THE ORGANIZATION TO BRAINSTORM OPTIONS.**

- Contact the organization and schedule a meeting with the organizational leader, public affairs director, or a manager with decision-making power. Explain to the individual the nature of the conversation you'd like to have – to discuss options for in-kind donations to support your upcoming training event.
- When you meet with the organization, it's important to come prepared. Be ready to provide a clear description of your group, the event you're hosting, expected attendance and demographic of the attendance, and the anticipated benefit this event has for participants. You also need to be prepared to share the potential exposure this business or organization can enjoy by providing an in-kind donation — in other words, how will you acknowledge their gift to all attendees?

#### **TIP #5: ESTABLISH CLEAR REQUESTS.**

- It would be very helpful if your group had a general idea of what requests you'll have for the organization. Consider writing up an in-kind donation solicitation letter that outlines your requests very clearly. For instance: "We request that you match printing of our promotional flyers, postcards, posters and signage so we can reach twice as many potential attendees." Or, "We request that you donate audio-visual equipment and crew the day of our event to record from 8am-5pm."

#### **TIP #6: SUBMIT YOUR IN-KIND DONATION REQUEST LETTER**

- Customize the ***Sample In-Kind Donation Solicitation Letter*** provided in the Fundraising Toolkit and deliver the letter to the appropriate decision-maker in the organization.
- Give the organization reasonable time to review and approve the donation request and to negotiate the acknowledgements they want in exchange.
- Follow-up the letter with an in-person visit and phone call. Once the donation is approved, use the ***In-Kind Donation Agreement Form*** provided in the Fundraising Toolkit to put your agreement in writing and to avoid any misunderstanding about your exchange.

#### **Below is a list of possible in-kind donation requests you may make:**

- Printing for event promotion materials
- Printing for event handouts
- Event space
- Event furniture such as folding tables/chairs for selling books/materials
- Audio visual equipment and/or crew
- Volunteers to support event-day coordination
- Transportation for presenter to/from the airport
- Catering for event food and beverages
- Door prize donations
- Floral arrangements for event stage