



SECTION IV

Sustaining Your
HPPAE

Creating a Long-Term Fund-Raising Strategy

One of your primary goals should be to integrate the HPPAE into your MSW program as a permanent fixture. While many programs start out with an infusion of initial funding from a foundation or donor, these funds may not continue at the same level, or they may require matching grants. That's why it is critical to cultivate other funding streams early on to sustain your program over time.

Fortunately, many HPPAEs have found that once the program became part of "business as usual," the costs diminished and the primary budget need shifted to student stipends. The other good news is that you don't have to be a professional fund-raiser to help sustain your HPPAE. The foundation of successful fund-raising is having strong relationships. Relationship building is a major cornerstone of effective social work as well and many of the same principles apply, including understanding your audience, cultivating trust, and open communication.

Even with limited time and fund-raising expertise, there are several reasons to be optimistic about your ability to sustain your HPPAE:

- **Resource diversity:**
There are many different ways to build sustainability.
- **A track record of success:**
Other schools are sustaining their programs and you can do it, too.

- **Funding trends:**
More grant-makers are giving to aging issues.
- **Awareness:**
Public recognition of the aging boom creates opportunities.

The first step to sustainability is to develop a fund-raising plan that will help achieve your short- and long-term goals. We recommend establishing a funding timeline, with an end goal of institutionalizing your program within four years, setting benchmarks along the way.

As part of this planning process, you will need to engage with a number of groups. These include:

- University or school development officers
- University deans
- Executive directors of community-based agencies
- Development officers at community-based agencies
- Faculty
- Alumni
- Major donors

Internal Resources

Fund-raising is critical, but it is not the only factor involved in sustaining a healthy program. New programs in particular require champions, both internally and externally, to maintain quality and continue to improve and adapt the program to evolving needs. The most successful HPPAEs have strong support and commitment of their deans, agency CEOs, and staff for fund-raising, as well as resources to develop and evaluate the program.

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Below are resources both within your university and at your HPPAE university-community partnership that you can tap for financial and in-kind support:

Development Office

Most development offices are staffed by professional fund-raisers who raise funds for the institution's operating expenses, programs, and special events. If your school or agency has been assigned a liaison in the development office, schedule a meeting with that person to discuss your ideas and determine how he or she can be helpful.

If your school or agency does not have a designated liaison, find out who in the development office has expertise in your proposed program area and ask to meet them. Offer to send a draft of your ideas or proposal before the meeting and/or the questions you would like to address. This gives development officers the opportunity to get familiar with your project and to do background research so you can hit the ground running and make the most of your meeting time together.

Dean, Director, or Agency Executive Director

Securing the support of the dean, director, or agency executive director is integral to the long-term sustainability of an HPPAE because fund-raising is one of their core charges and their leadership stature will raise the prominence of your HPPAE. Specifically, work with the dean to identify funds that can be reallocated from the school's budget to support the HPPAE. The dean's office discretionary fund may support grant-writing costs.

Faculty

Many faculties are adept at finding money to support their research projects. In the course of looking for

funding for research projects, faculty may come upon money to support service and education projects. There is also the possibility that a faculty member's research interests will overlap with the HPPAE. Discuss your ideas or proposal with your academic colleagues; they can often provide helpful leads.

Community Agencies

Colleagues in community agencies, especially those who depend upon "soft money," are also adept at finding funding. There may be opportunities to include a component of your program in a partnership member's grant if it can be linked to client services. Agency colleagues may know of foundations and individual donors who might be interested in your program. They may have submitted a similar proposal that was funded that you could use as a guide in making your case to funders.

Alumni

Just as your university relies on alumni for fund-raising, you can, too, for your HPPAE. Because the field of aging has not been as well funded as other practice areas, alumni who specialize in aging may be especially sensitive to the need to support a program like the HPPAE. We have heard from HPPAE graduates who say they feel indebted to the program, and almost obligated to "pay it forward" by supporting another student. Keep in mind that some alumni prefer to support specific initiatives, programs, or even a specific student rather than contribute to a general operating fund, so how you frame your funding request is critical. While individual contributions may seem small relative to a foundation grant, they can add up when pooled together. An

important additional benefit of this approach is that your donors can become your word-of-mouth foot soldiers, which can help bring in more supporters.

Alumni should also be encouraged to provide non-monetary support. One of the most powerful ways alumni can give back to the HPPAE is to become a field instructor.

Case in Point: The Agency for Gerontology Intercultural Field Training (A-GIFT), a Houston-based HPPAE, used gerontology alumni to:

- Mentor current gerontology students
- Staff their Employment Information and Referral Services
- Provide training to para-professional service providers in aging-care agencies
- Evaluate and disseminate products from the para-professional training program
- Teach continuing education courses in Houston's Graduate School of Social Work's Human Services Certificate Program in Gerontology

Communications Office

Every university, if not every school within the university, has an office dedicated to publicizing the institution's activities. Your school may have a dedicated staffer within the communications office who is charged with publicizing the social work school. If your school does not already have such a person, aim to develop a relationship with someone in the office who is interested in the field. Communications staff members engage in media relations, post news on the university's Web site,

run visitor tours, and produce publications—all of which can help attract students and raise your profile with potential funders.

Other University Resources

- **Research office:**
This university office typically has extramural funding contacts.
- **Work-study programs:**
This student financial-aid resource can also be a source of student stipends for your HPPAE.
- **Continuing education:**
You may coordinate with this program at your university to formalize an incentive for field instructors and community agencies to work with the HPPAE.
- **Interdisciplinary programs:**
Talk with members of other geriatric fields, such as nursing and medicine, to see if there are joint funding opportunities.

External Resources

In this section, we provide information about where to look for external support for your project.

Foundations

The number of foundations that fund aging as a discrete program area is relatively small, but funding for aging issues can be found under broader programs areas such as health, public health, mental services, and families. The Foundation Center (www.fdncenter.org) is a good place to start when looking for foundation funding. It offers a comprehensive scope of information about private and corporate foundations and individual donors.

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The center also provides education, training, and seminars on proposal writing and other grant-seeking skills.

The Foundation Center's database of foundations is available for purchase on a CD-ROM. The searchable database includes a detailed profile of each foundation as well as its latest funded projects. The center also offers an extensive section on individual donors and student grants: www.fdncenter.org/learn/useaids/individondonors.html

Government Funding

Within the federal government there are departments, agencies, and offices that provide funding for programs, education, research, and services related to aging. The government has a Web site, www.grants.gov, a searchable and single point of access for 900-plus grant programs from all 26 federal grant-making agencies. The Veteran's Administration is one such source for funding.

Because older adults frequently do not receive adequate mental health services, there are opportunities for HPPAEs to secure mental-health grants to expand services or support a research agenda. Additional federal government resources can be found on the "Facts on Aging" page at www.socialworkleadership.org.

State governments administer various titles under the Federal Older Americans Act of 1965, and a variety of state-funded programs that serve the elderly. These programs are administered through Area Offices on Aging (AOA), Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), or local departments for the aging.

Case in Point:

The University at Albany has received funding from the State of New York to support its HPPAE. Check with your state Medicaid Office to determine if social workers are reimbursed for services to clients. If so, your students may be reimbursed for the services they provide.

Local Businesses

Local businesses want to be "good citizens" of their respective communities and will often make small donations to support some programs. Existing HPPAEs have successfully obtained support from medical supply companies, local restaurants, and banks. Local businesses—as opposed to multinational corporations—tend to be better targets for fund-raising because of their strong community ties. Also, their executives and employees typically have stronger alumni relationships to their local universities.

Major Donors

Identifying individual major donors requires time but it can pay off substantially. The key is to find people with a track record of giving to aging, education, or health programs. Start by making a list of the foundations and agencies that have funded initiatives of relevance to the HPPAE. Then look at their annual reports, Web sites, and marketing brochures to see if some of the seed money came from large contributions from individuals or families. Similarly, make a list of nonprofit organizations that advance aging issues, and look at their donor lists. You may have the most success by narrowing these lists of individuals to correspond to those living in your region.

It's worth noting that the average age of major gift donors is 72—precisely the demographic that is concerned about aging care.

Fund-Raising Dos and Don'ts

Once you've research and identified a shortlist of potential funders, keep in mind the following Do's and Don'ts for approaching them:

DO:

- **Do your homework to find the right match:**
Target your efforts by researching which foundations and donors have a stated mission and/or track record of supporting aging issues. Examine their program areas, their list of grantees, and their annual reports for insight.
- **Build relationships with funders.**
Relationships are the key to successful fund-raising. Start with an introductory letter or an in-person meeting in which you outline your organization's mission, goals, services, population served, accomplishments, and the relevance of your work to the foundation's stated interests. Be prepared to discuss substantive ideas or future projects.
- **Look for private donors who may be motivated to sponsor a specific program or an individual student(s).**
Donors may be alumni, contacts among staff and your school's development office, or individuals who have given to similar issue areas, who you may find by scanning the donor or supporter section of Web sites.
- **Ask about matching gifts.**
Many employers will match contributions made by employees. Be sure to ask individual donors if their employers offer such a program.
- **Identify innovations and angles in your HPPAE.**
They may match the specific interests of funders. For example, there may be crossover between a funder's strategic interest and a component of field training that focuses on elder abuse, immigrant communities, or caregiver support. Tie your work to the donor's objectives and priorities.
- **Work your connections.**
Review the foundation's board of trustees and staff lists to see if you or someone in your school or agency knows anyone. Having a point of contact may help facilitate a meeting with the foundation and help pave the way for your proposal.
- **Get to know program officers.**
Identify the program officer who covers your program area and schedule a "getting-to-know-you meeting." Program officers are experts in their areas and good people with whom to brainstorm because they're plugged into the foundation world and can help direct you to other resources.
- **Look for existing payment streams.**
These could include allocating student salaries in appropriate contracts to serve as stipends/ equivalents or dedicating the field instructor role within the supervisor role in service contracts.

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- **Pay attention to funding cycles.**
Foundations have specific time periods during which they fund projects. Hence, it is important to ascertain when the trustees meet or when the foundation makes awards. Although a foundation may like your ideas or project, it may be unable to fund it right away. So, keep in touch; inform the foundation of other grants received to support projects in your school or agency.
- **Follow up.**
Once you have met with the foundation, remember to send a thank-you letter—good manners go a long way.
- **Follow the rules.**
When writing and submitting a letter of intent or proposal, follow the foundation's guidelines and instructions for the letter. Foundations receive hundreds of proposals and have developed formats, submission dates, and funding cycles that work for their staff and boards. Ignore their guidelines and you run the risk of having your proposal get rejected before it is read.
- **Double dip.**
Find out if the foundation has funded or is currently funding a project or research in your school or agency because some foundations do not fund more than one project simultaneously within an institution. It may not reflect well on you or your institution if you do not know this information and the foundation brings it up.
- **Let a rejection go unanswered.**
Follow up and ask for feedback so you can make improvements. Use the opportunity to ascertain whether you should apply again in the future.
- **Underestimate the value of small donors.**
Their contributions can add up—they may also lead you to major gifts.

Writing a Winning Proposal

Writing successful proposals is both an art and a science. Keep these principles and structural guidelines in mind:

Key Principles

Check the guidelines:

Check the funder's Web site to see if it has specific proposal writing guidelines and follow them.

Know your "unique selling proposition":

One of the most critical things funders look for in a proposal is your ability to fulfill an important need that no one else is addressing. This requires that you have a sophisticated analysis of the lay of the land, and a compelling argument for why and how your project will get results.

DON'T:

- **Submit unsolicited proposals.**
They end up in the trash.
- **Ask for funding during the initial contact.**
Your first contact with a foundation should be to introduce yourself and begin the process of building a relationship.

Build on success:

According to Sarah Collins, editor of the Foundation Center's Guide to Winning Proposals: "The proposal most likely to bring us success...is the version of the most recently funded proposal you wrote for the very same project sent to a similar foundation."

Key Components

Executive Summary:

This is a brief summary (abstract) of the proposal that includes: a statement about the request, the need or problem you are addressing, the program you are proposing, and a brief summary of your organization. Executive summaries are typically one to two pages or 250-500 words.

Statement of Need or Problem:

This section explains why your project is necessary and relevant to the identified need. Your scope of the problem should demonstrate depth of knowledge and a sophisticated analysis, supported by relevant data and statistics. If there are existing models or approaches that have addressed this problem, acknowledge them and describe their limitations as well as what makes your project different.

Objectives:

Be sure to include a concise, specific description of the overall goals of your project, proposed outcomes and accomplishments, and how they will be measured.

Program Description and Procedures:

This is the core of the proposal and frequently the longest component. It features a detailed description of the proposed program components that respond to the

identified need, including specifics on who will benefit and how. Include a plan of action that details what is to be done, by whom, for whom, how, and when. Describe the merits of your proposed solution and why you are particularly qualified to carry out the program for which you are seeking funds. Include a work timeline. Remember to include a statement about how your project will advance the foundation's program goals.

Sustainability:

The issue of sustainability and past funding from other funders for a similar project should be addressed in this section. You want to:

- Make clear to funders that they are not supporting the program in perpetuity; this is time-limited support.
- Acknowledge additional and existing sources of funding. Funders will often request that you identify other sources of funding that you are pursuing and funds you currently receive. Existing support from a foundation is like a Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval.
- Identify categories of support:
 - Administrative support
 - Scholarships/stipends
 - Field instructors
- Reiterate that the long-term goal is to institutionalize the program so it is absorbed by your school or agency.

Evaluation Plan:

The evaluation plan provides details about the program's impact and objectives and how you will measure them. Include evaluation methods, types of information to be collected, instruments to be used, and how information

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will be reported. Evaluation criteria should be included for each objective. Lay out clear outcomes; for example, the project will:

- Increase number of students in aging
- Increase number of aging courses
- Strengthen the connection between the field and classroom
- Strengthen the aging service network
- Increase students' knowledge of aging

Personnel:

Provide detailed information about how the project will be staffed, including the employees' experiences, credentials, their scope of work, and the amount of time they will spend on the project. Include a curriculum vitae for each staff person in an appendix. Identify consultants and provide a description of their experiences and justification for their use.

Dissemination:

Dissemination—how information gleaned from the project will be shared with others—is not required in all proposals, but will likely be an important component of a project like the HPPAE, which folds into a larger national network of similar projects.

Budget:

A realistic presentation of program costs, including projected expenses and revenue (other sources of funding, in-kind contribution). If you are applying for a multi-year grant, include a detailed budget for each of the three years. Please note that some funders require a budget narrative that provides more details about proposed expenditures and an explanation of unusual expenditures.

For additional information and courses on proposal writing, visit the Foundation Center's Web site at www.fdncenter.org.

→ Go to the Sustainability Section of www.hartfordpartnership.org:

- Letter of Inquiry Sample
- Letter of Intent Sample
- Fund-Raising Proposal to Foundation Sample
- Fund-Raising Letter to Individual Donor Sample
- Case Statement Sample
- Four-Year Sustainability Plan Sample
- Evaluation Survey for HPPAE Schools
- Student Tracking Survey