



May 24, 2023 | KSU Benson Research and Demonstration Farm in Frankfort

Session Breakout Summary

Fundraising Strategies for Leadership Programs

Overview

Sustaining leadership programs requires innovative and diversified fundraising approaches. Beyond participant fees, programs rely on sponsorships, community support, and long-term partnerships to cover costs and expand offerings. Effective strategies hinge on clear communication of program value, tapping into broader networks, and providing tailored sponsorship opportunities. Creative, cost-efficient donor engagement is key to maintaining strong financial foundations.

Challenges in Fundraising

- **Costs Beyond Fees:** Program fees often fail to cover total costs, particularly for smaller class sizes or subsidized youth programs.
- **Donor Fatigue:** Over-relying on the same donor pool can limit fundraising potential.
- **Communicating Value:** Difficulty in showcasing program impact to potential sponsors and donors.
- **Balancing Outreach:** Determining the frequency of donation requests to avoid overwhelming or alienating supporters.
- **Low-Cost Incentives:** Ensuring cost-effective yet meaningful thank-you gestures for donors.

Strategies That Work

- **Diversified Donor Pool:** Tap into alumni networks and local businesses to expand potential sponsors.
- **Cost Transparency:** Share detailed value assessments of services to demonstrate fiscal responsibility and program impact.
- **Tiered Giving Levels:** Offer sponsorship packages with varying benefits and recognition levels.

- **Event-Based Sponsorship:** Engage donors through sponsored breakfasts, lunches, or specific events.
- **Customization for Sponsors:** Tailor packages to align with the sponsor's goals and brand.
- **Long-Term Commitments:** Encourage multi-year contributions, as some banks commit to three-year advance payments.
- **501(c)(3) Partnerships:** Collaborate with nonprofit foundations for funding and tax-exempt contributions.

Actionable Insights

- Showcase program success through participant stories and testimonials.
- Use data from evaluations to prove program value to potential funders.
- Seek partnerships with professional networks like the Institute for Organizational Management for guidance and support.