

The illustration features three cartoon hands, each holding a stack of green banknotes. The hands are light blue with green cuffs. One hand is positioned at the top left, another at the bottom left, and the third is in the center right, partially behind the title text.

# Creative Fundraising Tips & Tricks

*Presented by Terre Thomas*

*MN Council of Nonprofits  
Fundraising Conference  
July 28, 2023*

# WELCOME!

## *Introductions and some basics:*

- 5 Things
- Copying, stealing, being inspired, and sharing
- Sparkle balls into the future
- Candy, worksheets, and show of hands to guide us
- Fast paced style and samples
- Questions and Contributions (during and afterwards)
- You can download this slide presentation.

# What We'll Cover Today

*(We only have an hour!)*

- Awareness of your limiting beliefs about fundraising
- Being Creative – You. The 4 Stage Creativity Model
- Tips & Tricks for Your Fundraising Baskets
- Tips and Tricks for Individual Giving
- Tips and Tricks for Your Org's Story (Signature Narrative)
- Managing Your Fundraising Time
- Your Five Things for next week/month
- Staying after for questions, candy, resources, networking

# What are your Limiting Beliefs about Fundraising?

*(Grab your worksheet)*

## Common ones:

- Fundraising is competitive and bigger organizations have more resources to do it.
- I resent that I have to spend my time raising money instead of doing our mission work.
- I/We don't know any rich people.
- I don't have time to look for more funding sources (or I don't know where to begin).
- Asking for money (makes me uncomfortable) (is unseemly) (isn't what nice people do).
- I don't know how to find new donors who would love and support our work.

# Limiting Beliefs about Fundraising

*What are yours?*



# Limiting Beliefs about Fundraising

An illustration of two hands holding a stack of green banknotes. The hands are stylized with yellow skin and are positioned in the upper left corner of the slide.

*What if .....*

Paradoxical thinking:

An illustration of two hands holding a stack of green banknotes. The hands are stylized with yellow skin and are positioned in the lower left corner of the slide.

Both are true; which will serve me better?

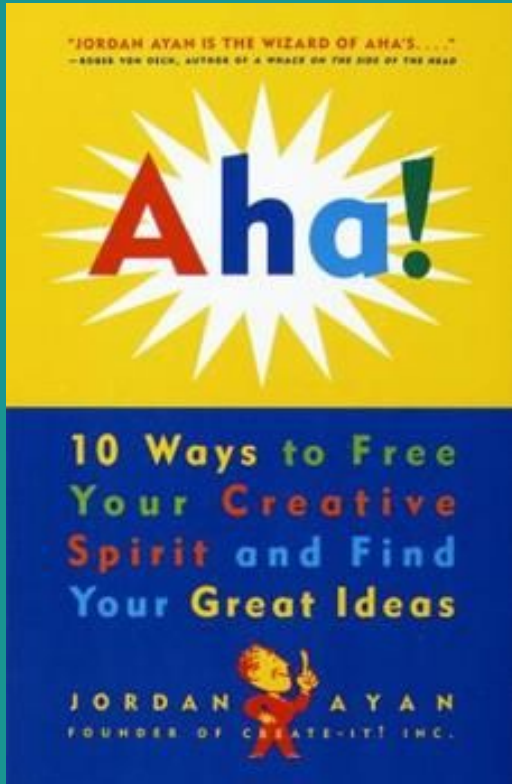
An illustration of two hands holding a stack of green banknotes. The hands are stylized with yellow skin and are positioned in the lower right corner of the slide.

# Being Creative

## YOUR Creativity

- Your two best fundraising projects
- Ideal Creative Dynamic:
  - Solo?
  - Collaboration with partner?
  - Collaboration in a group?
- Three most creative people you know (and a comment about each)
- Is there a particular time or place that creative ideas come to you more often?

# Being Creative



## 4 Stage Creativity Model

*by Graham Wallas*

Stage 1 – Preparation

Stage 2 – Incubation

Stage 3 – Illumination

Stage 4 – Implementation/Verification

# Stage 1:

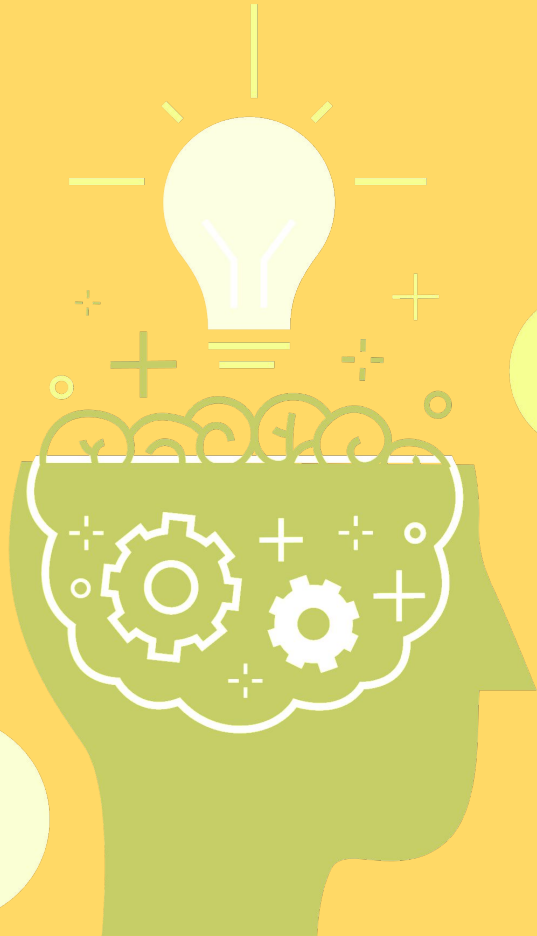
## *Preparation*

- You begin to intentionally gather information and data
- It's task oriented to the creative issue you are working on

## Stage 2:

### *Incubation*

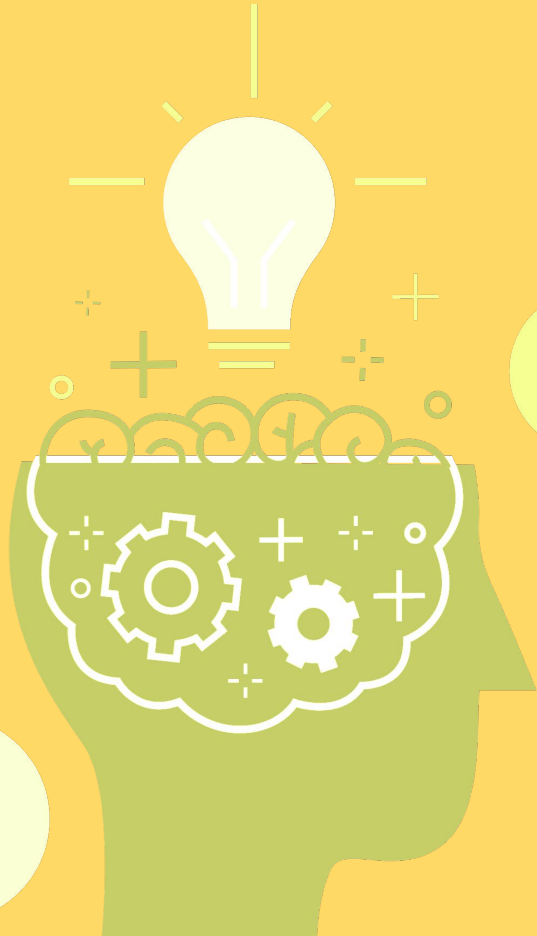
- The period when you store the info you've gathered and stop consciously thinking about it
- It's downtime for your unconscious mind to connect the ideas and information you've pulled together
- The mind explores the possibilities in five ways:



## Stage 2:

### *Incubation*

- In connecting ideas, the mind does a variety of processes:
  - Juxtaposing
  - Blending
  - Pyramiding or Funneling
  - Encircling
  - Imagining



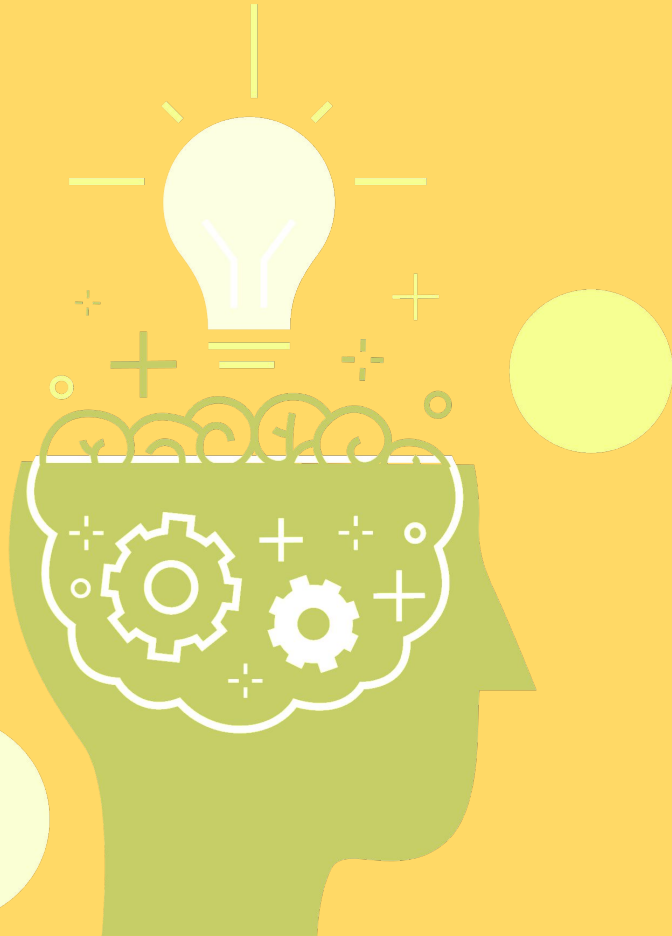
## Stage 2:

### *Incubation*

During Incubation:

Juxtaposing

- Taking one idea and pit it against another; from the contrast a new idea arises



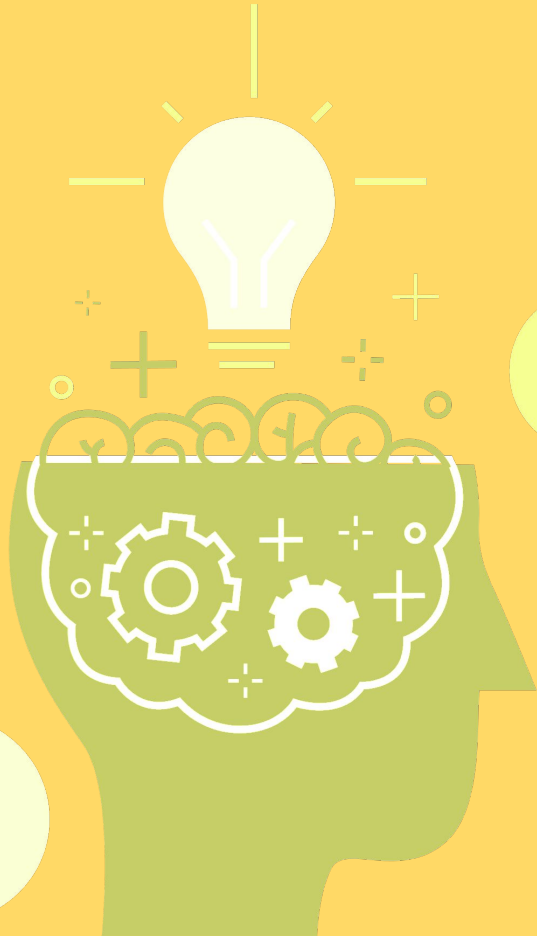
## Stage 2:

### *Incubation*

During Incubation:

#### Blending

- Borrowing characteristics or aspects from two ideas and merging them to form an altogether new one

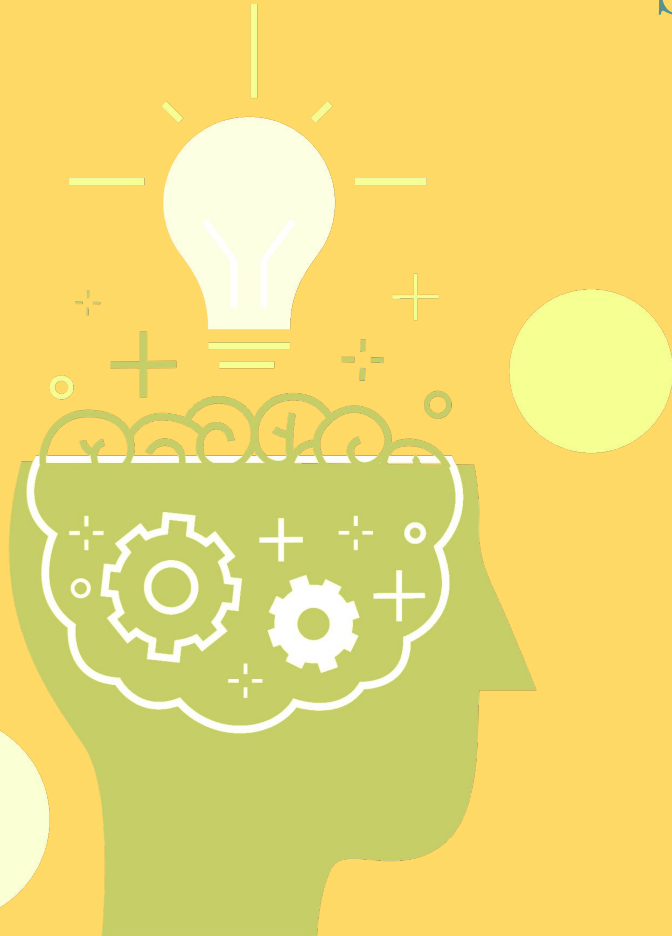


## Stage 2:

# *Incubation*

### Pyramiding or Funneling

- Joining many ideas to form a synthesis at the top or bottom, a sleek new idea that combines the best elements of all

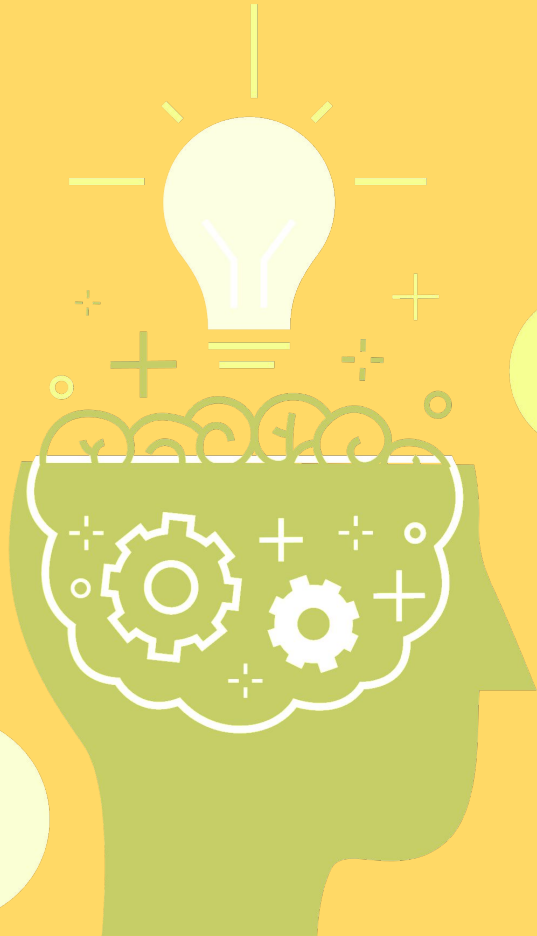


## Stage 2:

### *Incubation*

#### Encircling

- Starting with a fuzzy picture of a new idea, then narrowing the choices and options to find the one central concept that works

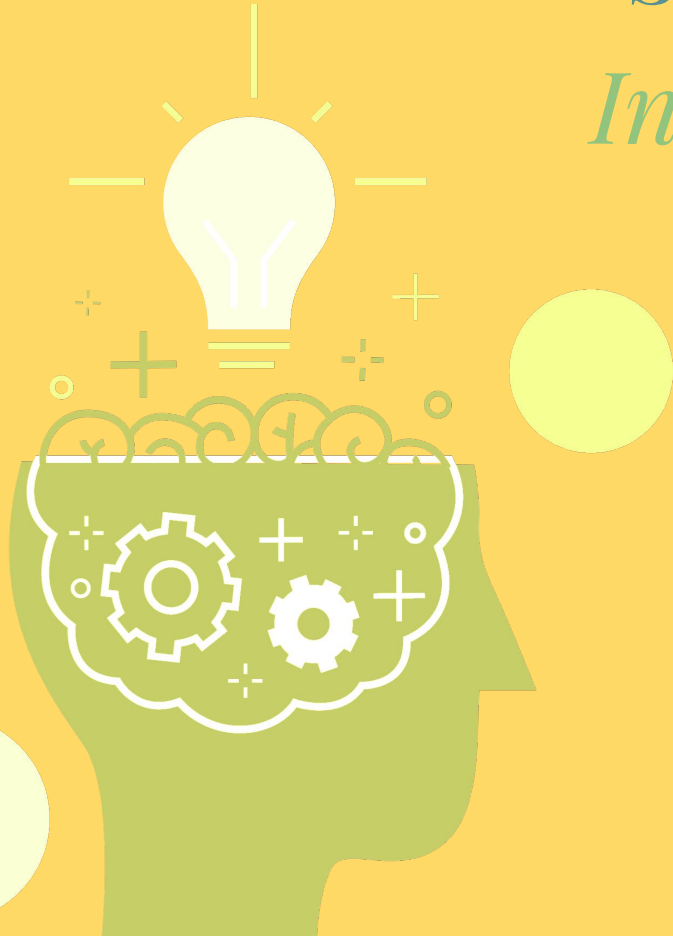


# Stage 2:

## *Incubation*

### Imagining

- Using imagination and fantasy to produce a new idea from an old one

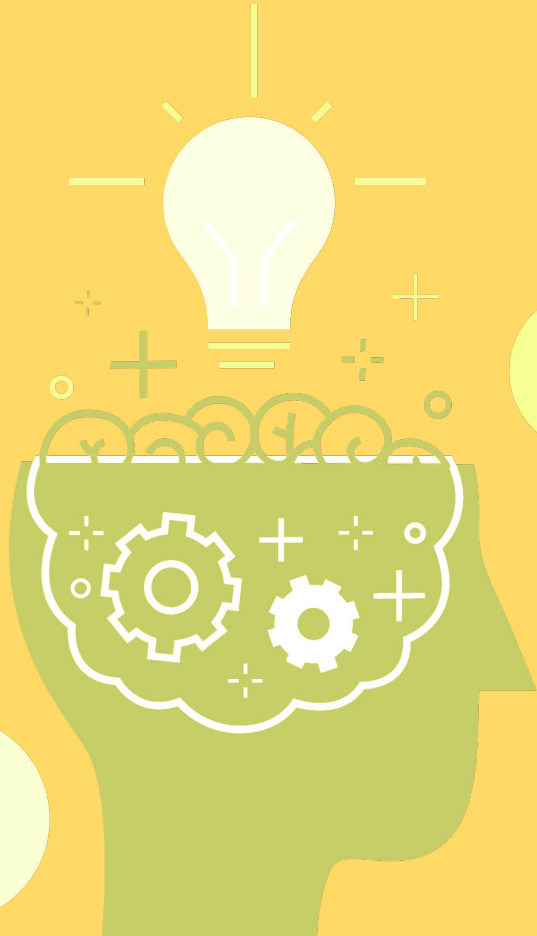


## Stage 2:

### *Incubation*

#### During Incubation

The most important characteristic of the incubation stage is that it must happen on the unconscious level; the creative work is NOT subject to your mental control.



## Stage 3:

### *Illumination*



- The Aha! moment when, seemingly out of nowhere, the new idea/solution comes to you
- Happens when the new ideas passes from your unconscious to your conscious mind. Happens most often when your brain is relaxed, in an alpha state

## Stage 3:

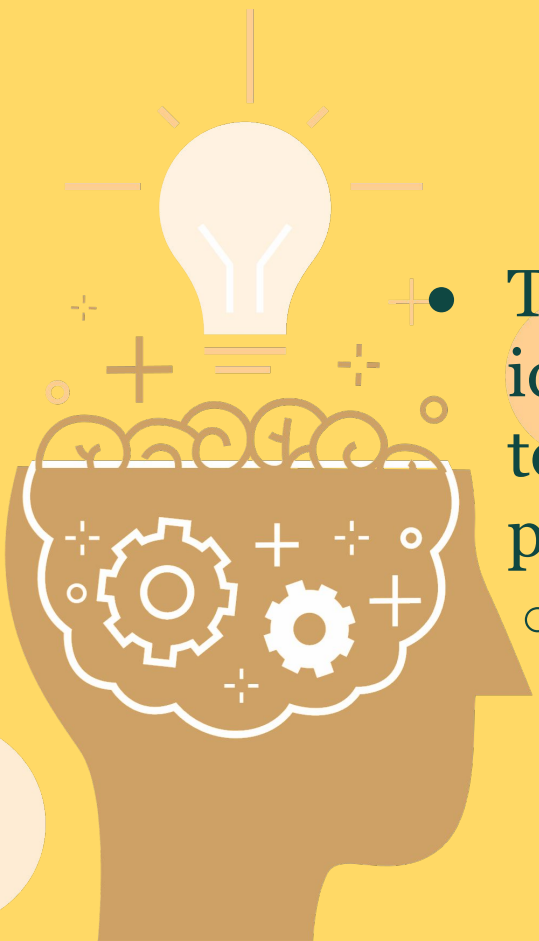
### *Illumination*



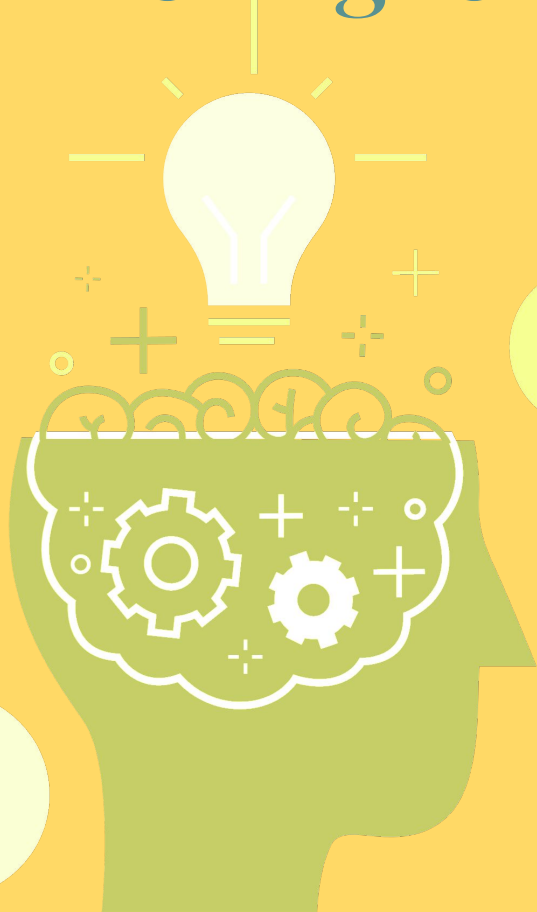
- Relaxed brain/Alpha state examples:
  - In the shower, daydreaming, washing the dishes, twilight sleep and upon waking, repetitive exercise, meditating, other mindless repetitive tasks.
  - Happens when you are relaxed and unstressed.

## Stage 4:

### *Implementation*

- 
- The point at which you give form to your new idea to make sure it works: to write the appeal, to create the event, to create the new program pitch
    - Comes in two forms:
      - Seeds of the solution - Michelangelo & daVinci
      - Perfect form- Mozart & Bach

# Moving forward



## *Reminder:*

- Give yourself time for all the stages - especially preparation and incubation!
- Know the type of implementation that happens more for you.

# Fundraising Baskets

- Individual Giving
- Events
- Grants
  - Traditional Institutional
  - Faith Congregations
  - Civic Groups
  - Professional Associations
  - Other Sources



Fundraising Baskets	% Budget	Strong	Needs Work	Need to Try	Skip	Notes
Individual giving	% of FR Budget:					
Events	% of FR Budget:					
GRANTS (all)	% of FR Budget:					
Other	% of FR Budget:					
Grants-Traditional	% of Grants:					
Grants-Businesses	% of Grants:					
Grants-Congregations	% of Grants:					
Grants-Associations	% of Grants:					
Grants-Civic Groups	% of Grants:					

# Creative Examples for Each Basket



# Individual Giving

*Use your physical space:*

- Small Sums:
  - Stairstep Quotes Project



# Individual Giving

- *Subtle reminders*
  - Heart of Gold mug and annual refill



# Individual Giving

- *Seize timely opportunities*
  - Smoky stationary for post-fire appeal
  - Haiti Hurricane



More for Individual Giving in next section!

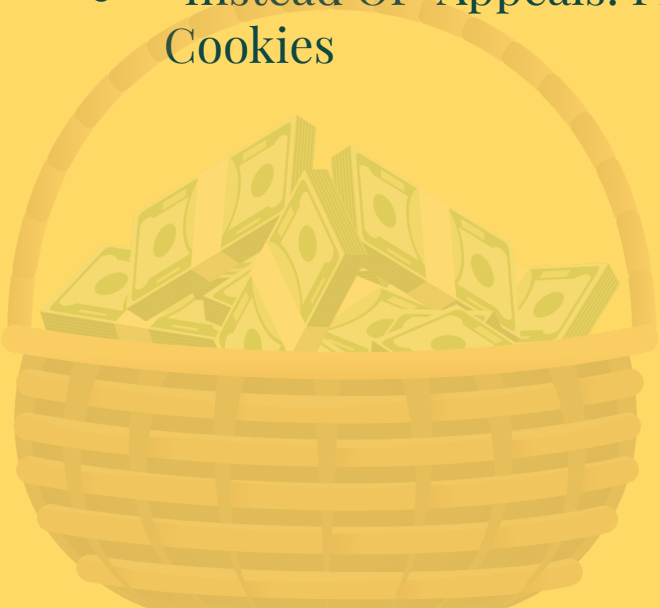
# Events

## *Creative Examples*



# Events

- At the event: Ambassador Cards
- Big Bras & Little Panties House Parties
- “Instead Of” Appeals: Placemats, Cookies



## CONNECT TO SMALL SUMS

Website: [SmallSums.org](http://SmallSums.org)  
Address: ~~544~~ University Ave W. (rear bldg entrance)  
Mail: PO Box 40561 St. Paul, MN 55104  
Call: 651-242-9441  
Email: [ContactUs@SmallSums.org](mailto:ContactUs@SmallSums.org)  
Facebook: Small Sums page  
(Like us please for weekly client spotlights)

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Make a donation to cover a monthly bus pass (or many) at [SmallSums.org/donate](http://SmallSums.org/donate).
- Tell others about our practical powerful work.
- Connect us to your congregation or civic group for speaking opportunities.
- Volunteer.
- Come for a Show-and-Tell Tour/Talk at Small Sums.

**SmallSums**  
At Home Group™

...helping homeless workers with  
what they need\* to get back to work  
and back to a more stable life.

*\*usually work clothes, tools, bus passes*

Learn about Small Sums at  
**SmallSums.org**

*Be sure to watch our video, it tells our story w*

# Grants

## *Creative Examples*



# Grants

- *General*

- Look at kindred spirit orgs' funders lists
- Small Family Foundation Workshop (or materials) with Access Philanthropy
- Get a volunteer grant researcher
- Use AI for new language ideas for grants



## *Access Philanthropy* Small Family Foundation Workshop Materials: \$65

### *Materials include:*

- The Powerpoint presentation with Steve's look at 50 funders. Link to a recording of the 3 hr. event.
- A complementary pdf book of 100 funder profiles
- 2-week Free Trial of the Small Family Foundation funder list with 400+ profiles\*

*Offer ends August 15*

# Grants

## *Faith Congregations & Civic Groups*

Ask to be connected, recommended, nominated

- Ask your donors
- Ask your board members
- Ask your family & friends



Church of Saint Cecilia

2357 Bayless Place, St. Paul, MN 55114 [www.stceciliaspn.org](http://www.stceciliaspn.org)  
Phone: 651.644.4502 Fax: 651.647.1445

June 26, 2023

Small Sums  
1222 University Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55104

Dear Andrea,

As you know, each year our parish looks at and supports organizations who promote and support the value of human dignity, and each year Small Sums continues to excel at this.

Please accept this gift of \$1,000 from our parish with much gratitude for the good work you are doing.

I love the Maya Angelou quote, "I think a hero is anyone really intent on making this a better place for all people." Everyone involved with Small Sums, individually and collectively, are heroes to more people than you know!

Peace,

Marge Virnig  
Pastoral Associate

# Grants

## *Professional Associations*

- Look for professions that have a kindred spirit with your org.
- Ask your donors, board, family & friends what they belong to. Ask to be connected, recommended, nominated.



# Grants

## *Business*

- Seek kindred spirit businesses especially ones with giving culture
- Ask your donors, board, family & friends for businesses that have funds and giving committees
- Ask to be connected, recommended, nominated
- Ask for stuff
  - Redwing Boots
- Ask their employees to volunteer
  - SFM

*SFM supports over 150 charities in 2022* **SFM**  
The Work Comp Experts®

In 2022, SFM supported more than 150 organizations through direct donations, sponsorships, and employee matching.

The company is several years into an initiative to increase charitable giving, with a mission to reach an annual donation budget of 2% of pre-tax profit. SFM is on track to reach that goal by 2025.

# Individual Giving

*More tips & tricks*



# Direct Mail:

- Hand address as many as you can
- Envelopes – make them stand out in the mail pile
- Font and font size – don't make them look like a magazine article (test different styles)
- Personal notes – may be the only thing they read; strengthens bond
- The P.S. – may be the other “only thing” they read and remember
- Length and volume – remember your goal



# Email:

- Subject lines
  - Google the Dos and Don'ts
- Don't make it visually too slick
- Don't use links to anything else – just to the donate page
- Make sure your links work
- Oops resends
- One-two pitches with date-certains. “This coming Thursday is National Caregivers Day.” “Today is National Caregivers Day!”
- Test, test, test – Version A Version B (Fear and Optimism)



# Texts:

- Use sparingly – it bugs people
- Use it for super timely thing
- Test for numbers and the annoyance factor (Clicks, Donations, STOPS)



# Platform Solicitations:

- *Give To the Max Day, 11/16/23 Giving Tuesday, 11/28/23:*
  - Evaluate your org in the Search function and in your year-end fundraising timing
  - Elevate your search and success chances with matching money, other promotions, embed it in other communications
  - New donor acquisition – meh
  - Ask donors and board to send five people to your page
  - Competition emails and the subject line



# Social Media:

- *Facebook and Instagram:*
  - Sweet spot of frequency and interesting intentional content (Not stale or outdated)
  - Donate option always; direct solicitation judiciously
- *Twitter and Threads: Who knows!*



# Individual Asks:

- Profiling to pick your prospects
- Fear
- Ask and shut up



# Other Communications & Opportunities:

- Have a Donate link in all staff email signatures (with an informal tone)
- Have QRC codes
- Have account to take credit card donations with your phone
- Put an envelope and online link info with all mailings (except thank yous)



# Publicity/Press:

- Initiate press with a related timely event
  - especially a crisis – fire, burglary
- Create and build relationships with reporters and editors
- Be an expert source



# Your website:

- Keep it fresh and up to date
- Review it regularly and evaluate donation traffic
- Remember it's a credibility reflection



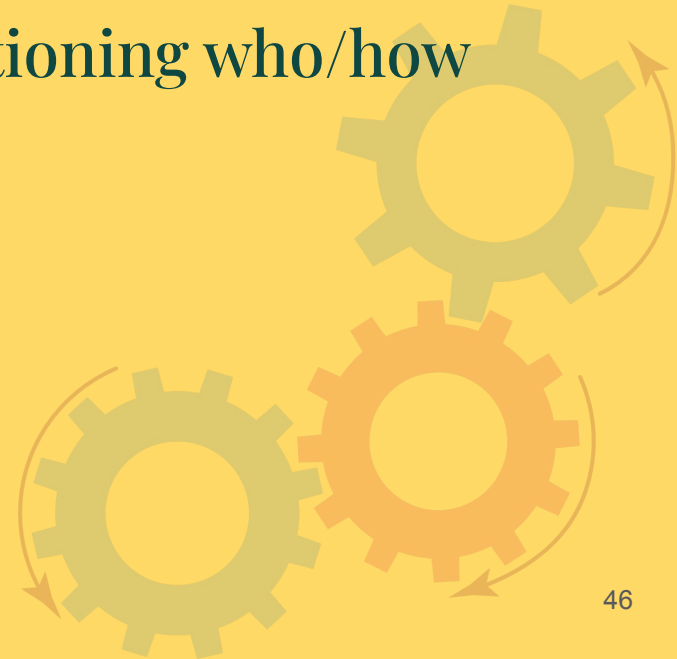
# Board Members

- Their giving
- Their connections (professional, congregations, associations, relatives, friends)
- Thank you calls Campaign



# Thank You:

- Look at online articles of ALL the ways to thank donors
- Heart of Gold mugs and annual refills
- Express appreciation by always mentioning who/how their money has helped
- Thank you calls



# Telling your Org's Story

## *Signature Narrative*



*The problem may be as old as the hills, but  
your solution has an elegance all its own.*

Craft a 30 second elevator-pitch description of your organization for both you, your staff, and your donors to use

# *How do Donors Express Support?*

Ask them to do it with:

- Ambassador cards
- Commenting and sharing on Facebook and Instagram
- Asking them to make five connections

# Closing

## Managing Your Fundraising Creative Work and Time

- Make space and time for your best creativity
- Schedule yourself for Preparation and Incubation stages for projects
- Shawl of Concentration
- Rewarding yourself



# Closing

- Your 5 Things (Grab your worksheet)

## After Party:

- Resource Table – *Books, Lists, Terre's Favorite Sample Collection*
- Questions
- Connecting with Others



# Contact info

- *Terre Thomas*

- [yfgodmother@gmail.com](mailto:yfgodmother@gmail.com)
- Available for special projects

- *Sierra Hegstom*

- [hegstoms@gmail.com](mailto:hegstoms@gmail.com)
- Sierra Madre Photography [www.sierramadrephotography.com](http://www.sierramadrephotography.com)