

Building Your Case for Support: A Step-by-Step Guide

Answer the following questions in order to develop the content for your Master Case for Support. Remember, you will rarely use this as a stand-alone document; rather you will use the relevant sections to support your conversations with donors, to prepare proposals and to devise fundraising messages and strategies for your current and potential funders. Explore [these excellent resources](#) reflecting the UC ANR Strategic Plan, our Public Values and desired Condition Changes for supporting verbiage and inspiration.

Once you have answered the questions in each section, translate them into a narrative that is brief and focused on high-level messages.

Part 1: The Community Need

Keep in mind; you are NOT talking about UC ANR or your program in this section. You are talking about the problem that you exist to address.

- What social problem exists in your community, region, state, country, or world that needs to be addressed?
- How can you quantify the size of this problem? Here is where you will need to gather some external data.
- Why would this problem get worse if no one addressed it?
- How much worse would it get?
- Why should someone not affected by this problem care about it?

Part 2: Our Solution

How is ANR uniquely positioned and capable of addressing that problem?

- What are the core competencies your nonprofit possesses that make you the right organization to solve this problem?
- What is your operating model for delivering this solution to the problem identified in the Community Need section above?
- Ultimately, what is your value proposition as an organization? How do you take community inputs (money, people, clients, etc.) and translate those into positive community change?

Part 3: Why Us

*How is ANR uniquely positioned and capable of addressing that problem?
How does your solution fit into the competitive landscape? It is not enough to say that you have a great solution. You must compare your solution to other approaches out there and must demonstrate why your approach, in comparison, is superior.*

- What are the alternative solutions to this problem that already exist (competitor organizations or solutions)?
- Why are these solutions inferior? Make a reasoned argument for why those solutions do not adequately address the problem.

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- What is it about ANR's solution to the problem that makes it superior to the other alternatives out there?
- Ultimately, what is your value proposition as an organization? How do you take community inputs (money, people, clients, etc.) and translate those into positive community change?

Part 4: Our Impact

Share any results that you have that prove your program works – demonstrate what you are doing to track your progress. Ultimately, what is your value proposition as an organization? How do you take community inputs (money, people, clients, etc.) and translate those into positive community change?

- What quantifiable results have we gathered that show improvement in our clients' lives, change to a system, or some other change that our work has helped create?
- What qualitative (quotes, stories, testimonials) results have we gathered?
- Impact statements help describe the differences, outcomes, tangible impact that gifts have. They are shorter and more concise than your master case.

Part 5: Strategic Direction

This is where you will concisely articulate the goals and objectives of your strategic plan. What is our vision?

- What 3-5 measurable things do we want to accomplish in the next 3-5 years?
- How do these goals contribute to solving the problem we outlined in the Community Need section above?

Part 6: Financial Model

To attract philanthropic investments, you have to demonstrate the financial sustainability of your organization. You have to show that you are a wise investment. Have your information ready, whether you share it right away or not. You will need to address these key areas as your request moves through the process.

- The size of your annual budget
- The sources of revenue to meet that budget
- How you think your operating revenue and expenses will change in the future Your plan for maintaining and/or growing those revenue sources

Part 7: Resources Required

This section will change based on the fundraising campaign you are launching and/or the donor audience you are communicating with.

- How much money and over what timeline do you need for this particular campaign? Why do you need this amount?
- What will this money do for the organization and ultimately the Community

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Need you are addressing? How does this amount of money fit into your overall budget over the same timeframe?

- What other funding sources are you investigating?

Part 8: Social Return on Investment (SROI)

Donors are increasingly looking for a social return on the investments they make. This does not mean that they want money back (a financial return), but rather, they want ANR to project how the investment the donor makes compares to the problem you are trying to solve.

- What will a donor's investment allow you to do?
- How can you compare that investment to the change it will allow you to make?

Have I made the case? Review your case for support

Have I made the case that our issue/cause is worth someone's sacred time or money?

- Have I made it clear that a solution is possible?
- Can I articulate why they should place their faith in us over all others?
- Can I show them what we are doing with their money?
- Have I set up the right infrastructure to make them feel a part of the effort?

Will your Case Answer Donors Questions?

- What would my gift support?
- What difference does that make?
- Why should I give more?
- Are you accountable?
- Will you thank me?
- Will I hear from you?
- What is the return on investment?

We are happy to review and comment on your document – feel free to reach out to us any time:

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