# Four Keys to Building Philanthropy

It takes infrastructure to build financial resources. At a local level, there are four infrastructure keys for building successful philanthropy for Extension: Establish a philanthropy committee, have an annual campaign, acquire and keep donors, and build endowment.

**Establish a Philanthropy Committee**

Marshall Stewart says, "if you are doing it by yourself, you are not doing it right." You need help to build a successful philanthropy program. Pull in volunteers around an existing county development or fundraising committee. If you don't have an existing committee, establish one. That will give you organizational structure and continuity as you work to develop resources.

Put people on your committee with experience raising money. Add people with the capacity to be donors. Include volunteers and former council members in addition to one or two current council members to fill out the committee roster.

A philanthropy committee can help plan and implement fundraising activities. They can help identify new donors and steward existing donors. The committee can set policies for receiving gifts, thanking donors and managing accounts.

**Have an Annual Campaign**

Start by strategically placing annual fundraising activities on a calendar designed to bring in cash and acquire donors. Create messages that explain why someone would want to support local extension programs and activities. Build your campaign on a digital platform for giving, which is the most cost-effective way to raise money.

The University and Extension Advancement offers a digital platform (also known as crowdsourcing or crowdfunding) through your county's Extension Website DONATE button. You can work with Extension Advancement and Strategic Communication teams to create annual campaign messages. You can also create a [Mizzou Give Direct](#) page for special campaigns. Work with Extension Advancement to create a Give Direct page. Use social media and emails to direct people to give through your Give Direct page. Add other fundraising activities and events incorporating messages for support consistent with your annual campaign themes and messages. Make sure your fundraising activities adhere to University policies and Missouri statutes.

**Acquire and Keep Donors**

The purpose of an annual campaign is two-fold: acquiring donations and acquiring donors. Build in ways to systematically keep track of not only donations but donors. Set up a simple spreadsheet tracking names, contact information, dates of donations, amounts and designations of donations by donor. Keep track of communication for each gift such as thank you letters, gift receipts, and invitations. When donations are made through your MU Extension gift and endowment funds, University Advancement will provide these services. You can work with Extension Advancement to access lists and data on donors, and steward donors through thank you letters and recognition through the Land-Grant Society.

**Build Endowment**

What do you call a gift that lasts forever? Endowment. An endowment is an account that is invested to provide financial support unrestricted or for a specific purpose. Building endowment will help to establish long-term financial stability for your program.

Like planting seeds in a garden, sprinkle endowment messages throughout your annual campaign communication plan. Be patient and persistent. Over time, your endowment will grow. The themes and messages explaining why someone would want to support local extension in your annual campaign are the same for building endowment. Tell people endowment is one of their choices for supporting local extension through their philanthropy.

Incorporate additional messages on ways to give such as appreciated assets or gifts through a will, to help you identify major gift prospects. Set policies through your philanthropy committee for receiving planned gifts and other windfalls that direct them all or in part to endowment.

Contact Extension Advancement for more information about how to build philanthropy: Phone: 573-884-8570; email: prestonjo@missouri.edu.