

# FOUNDATIONS

Wyoming Library

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## How hard is it to donate to your Foundation online?

A woman walks into a store ready to buy a brand new major appliance on the spot, only to leave when she can't find a soul to take her money. Another, faced with a similar situation and frustrated, pulls out her VISA card, waves it over her head and yells, "I have plastic!"

When potential donors go to your website, do they have to chase you down if they want to give you money? Wave their credit cards in the air? Although online donations may not be the bulk of your fundraising mix, it still makes sense to make it easy to give. Ask yourself:

- Is there a web page specifically for your Foundation?
- Is the Foundation page linked from either the library home page or the "About Us" page?
- On the link, do you make it clear that this is how they can give to the library? (Rather than just saying "Foundation" without an explanation.)
- Do you have contact information including a name, phone and email?
- Is there a PayPal link so that they can donate online?
- Do you have an address and instructions on how to donate by check clearly visible?

You might also let donors know that with the state match, their \$1 equals \$2, \$3 or even \$4, and show your library's progress toward the endowment, either on your own site or by linking to the [endowment status spreadsheet](#) on the Wyoming Library Association site.

## Endowment Building – Part 2

by Gary Landeck, from the [Colorado Libraries](#) blog, March 29, 2010

If you are trying to take the very first step in building an endowment for your own library, developing your "case for giving" should be it. Your "case for giving" is the statement you can take to all your current and potential donors to ask them about their participation in building an endowment. The Association of Fundraising Professionals has an [excellent guide](#) to help you develop your case for giving.

It is likely that the first half of your endowment will come from one or two major donors – donors who are already committed to your cause and who also have extensive resources. The next 25% will probably come from gifts that are still fairly significant in size. The last 25% will consist of small gifts (\$500 or less). This is a standard pattern of development for endowments, according to the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Endowments have an essential place in libraries because they're among the best vehicles for your donors to leave a legacy. Many major donors are interested in legacy giving. Be sure to give them ample chance to do so with your institution.

*Gary Landeck is the director of the American Alpine Club Library in Golden, Colorado, the world's largest library dedicated to mountaineering and rock climbing.*

### **Sound like a human being – say your appeal before you write it**

Do you need to write a fundraising letter? From the Future Fundraising Now blog ([www.futurefundraisingnow.com](http://www.futurefundraisingnow.com)): natural sounding writing is more effective. Two simple rules to achieve it: 1) never write a word in a letter that you wouldn't use in conversation, and 2) find a friend, and tell them what you want to say in the letter. Say it a couple of times, until it comes out naturally and says what you want to say. Then write it down.

### **How do you raise endowment money in a recession?**

A limping economy creates challenges for endowment campaigns. Donors have less to give, or hesitate to give money for the future when funding cuts hurt library services now. Isabel Hoy, Goshen County library director, suggests: "Nothing new but perhaps, 'When you are handed a lemon...make lemonade.' Use present cuts as evidence of what we may see in the future. Now is the time to plan ahead. Make fundraising fun-raising. Never underestimate the value of directly asking for money for a purpose the donor genuinely values!"

So how do you do it? Do you have good ideas on how to raise endowment funds in a recession. Share them! Other libraries around the state would like to know. Send your stories to Susan Mark, Statistics Librarian, at [smark@wyo.gov](mailto:smark@wyo.gov) or call her at 307-777-5915.

### **Grant guide is new addition to WSL professional collection**

Looking to write a grant? The State Library recently added a title of interest to its collection, available at your library through interlibrary loan:

- *Winning grants : a how-to-do-it manual for librarians with multimedia tutorials and grant development tools* / Pamela H. MacKellar and Stephanie K. Gerding. New York : Neal-Schuman Publishers, c2010.

Find more library science books from the State Library by searching WYLD at <http://wyld.state.wy.us/wsl/> or contacting Susan Mark.

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