

Diversified Funding: Cultivating Donor Relationships with Integrity

Presented by Eva Agudelo
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September 30, 2025



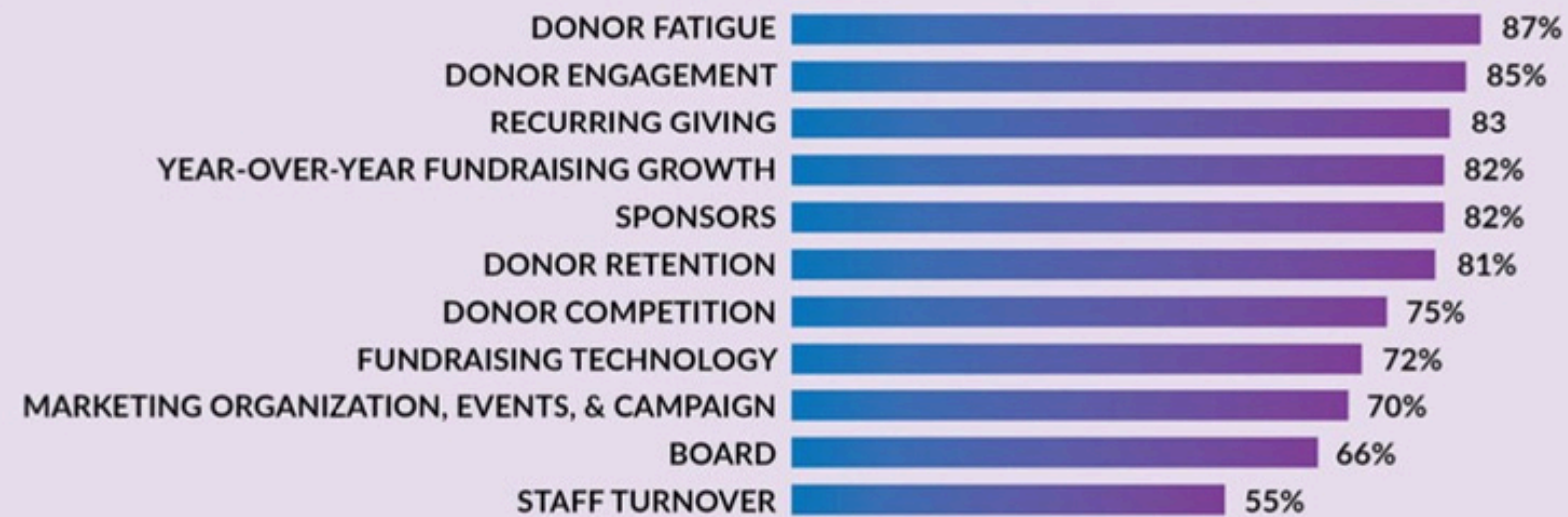


Eva Agudelo, M.S.

- 15 years in the nonprofit sector as a program admin, grant officer, and founder/ED
- Founder, Hope's Harvest
- Principal, Full Bloom Futures
- RI Foundation, Carter Fellow
- Background in policy, communications, fundraising, and strategic planning
- Applied for, raised, overseen \$10 million in individual, public, private funding

Fundraising in 2025 & Beyond

TOP FUNDRAISING CHALLENGES

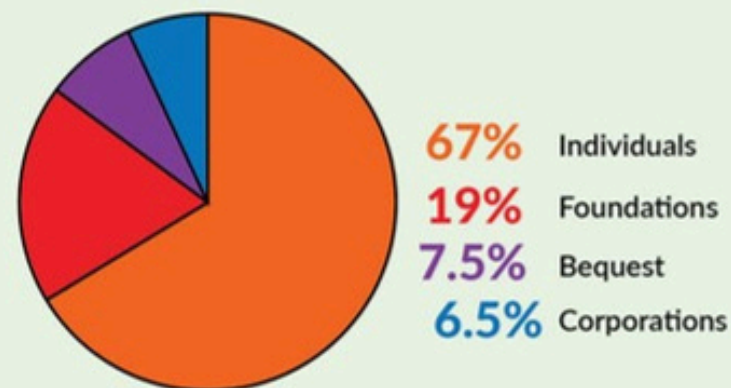


THE MAJORITY OF CHARITABLE DOLLARS WENT TO

- 24% TO RELIGION
- 14% TO HUMAN SERVICES
- 14% TO EDUCATION
- 13% TO GRANT-MAKING FOUNDATION
- 10% TO PUBLIC SOCIETY BENEFIT (SOCIAL AND CIVIC CAUSES)

THE AVERAGE DONOR'S ONE-TIME GIFT WAS \$121 (UP FROM \$115) & AVERAGE MONTHLY GIFTS WERE \$25 (UP FROM \$24)

WHERE DID GENEROSITY COME FROM?



- Top Trends:
 - Loss of federal funds >>>>
 - Competition for smaller pots >>>>
 - Smaller gifts >>>>
 - Seismic shifts (priorities, capacity, comms, programs)
- Political divides: Mission clarity and alignment are key
- Economic uncertainty: Diversify, don't depend on one stream

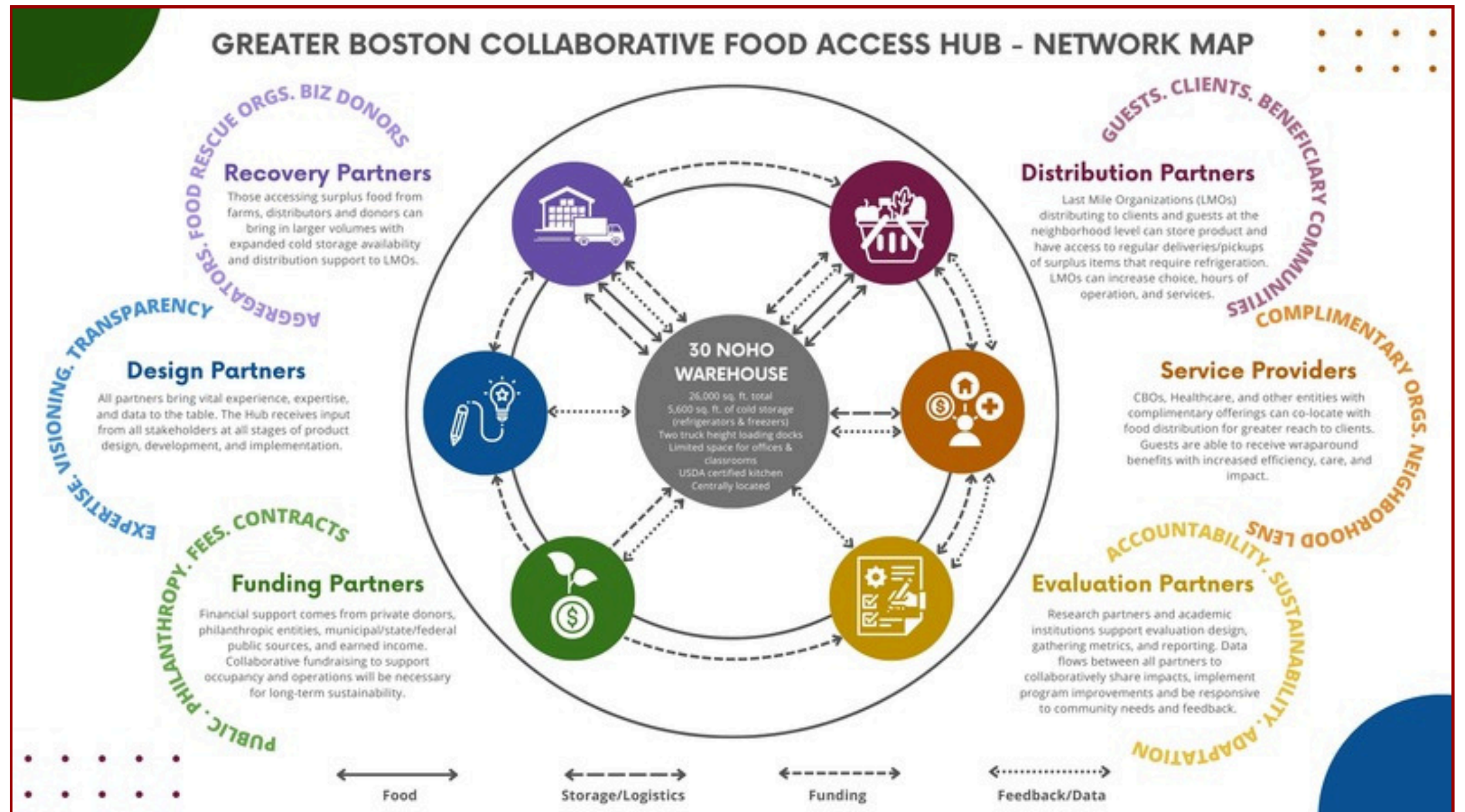
Everything You Do is Fundraising

- Doing a GOOD JOB at something PEOPLE NEED
- Building relationships
- Telling your story
- Documenting impact
- Money = energy = resources



Understand Your Resource Flows

- Who benefits?
- Who contributes?
- What's the ACTUAL value you provide?
- Where should you be providing support?
- Who should want to support you?



FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

DIVERSIFY DIVERSIFY DIVERSIFY

- PUBLIC FUNDING: STILL A VIABLE PATH
- GEOGRAPHICALLY FOCUSED FOUNDATIONS
- CORPORATE GIVING (BIG AND SMALL)
- INDIVIDUAL GIVING
- EARNED INCOME
- COLLABORATIVE FUNDRAISING





How Fundraising Really Works

- 80% relationship, 20% asking
- ALMOST ALL major gifts come from consistent stewardship
- Belonging, meaning, impact

“If you want advice, ask for money.
If you want money, ask for advice”



Bring the Love

- Seek resonance
- Share from the heart
- Express genuine care and gratitude
- Connect authentically, before/during/after
- Cultivate joy & inspiration
- BE what MATTERS about what you DO



Get Practical



PUBLIC FUNDING

THINK OUTSIDE YOUR PROGRAM FOCUS

- What state or municipal priorities are aligned with your work? (econ dev, workforce, health care, etc.)
- What agencies and departments have natural allies?

GET TO KNOW YOUR LAWMAKERS (AND THEIR STAFF!)

- Show up to events/hearings, shake hands, get cards
- Site visits, program updates
- Appropriations
- Know the legislative calendar

ADVOCATE WITH YOUR SECTOR/ALLIES FOR LINE ITEMS

- Food Policy Councils
- Trade associations
- United Way/nonprofits

“SPECIAL” FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Discretionary opportunities

Get Practical



LOCAL FOUNDATIONS

COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

- Often repositories of lesser known family funds
- Get to know program officers (invite, share, ask for advice)
- Show up to events

FAMILY FOUNDATIONS

- Get to know program officers (invite, share, ask for advice)
- Board, donor, staff, volunteer connections

REGIONAL FOCUS

- Opportunities for partnerships
- Larger pots

HEALTHCARE COMPANIES

- Insurers
- Hospitals (Determination of need)

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NATIONAL COMPANY, LOCAL PRESENCE

- Who is based in your area?
- Banks, technology companies, healthcare, food companies

LOCALLY OWNED, MISSION ALIGNED

- Restaurants, schools, farm supply, processors, car dealerships
- Make sure it's a fit and then go all in

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO OFFER THEM?

- VISIBILITY: volunteer exposure, newsletters, events
- Who are your stakeholders and will they support local business?

SPONSORSHIPS VS. GRANTS

- SPONSORSHIPS: events, less \$\$
- Charitable foundations – more \$\$

CORPORATE GIVING

Get Practical



EARNED INCOME

WHAT IS YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION?

- What do you have that others need?
- Experience, expertise, labor, resources (buildings, vehicles, etc.)
- Asset mapping

WHO IS YOUR “CUSTOMER”

- Other organizations
- Municipalities, companies, volunteers, etc...

WHAT RESOURCES DO THEY HAVE?

- Beyond \$\$s

COLLABORATIVE FUNDRAISING

- Contracts
- Services
- Technical Assistance
- Shared Infrastructure
- Shared Resources (things AND people)

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INDIVIDUAL GIVING

LARGE DONORS

- Could already be part of your network
- Know your donors, do your research
- Build relationships, stay connected, ask for their connections
- Hang out – coffee dates, walks, program specific activities
- Ask for advice, AND THEN ask for \$\$

GRASSROOTS GIVING & NEW DONORS

- New audiences – press, socials, word of mouth, (small) events
- Be ready to engage and make an ask
- Peer fundraising – word of mouth
- Return to value proposition consistently

EVENTS

- Small, targeted ONLY
- House parties
- Program specific (farm walks, volunteer days, etc.)

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INDIVIDUAL GIVING

BOARD ROLES

- ALL boards are giving boards
- Making connections, making asks
- Invest in development training
- Keep them informed and activated
- Effectively communicate the seriousness of the situation

STEWARDSHIP & RETENTION (AKA TECH & SYSTEMS)

- ROI/Cost-Benefit – You can't afford to skimp on systems
- AirTable, Little Green Light, spreadsheets
- Track changes over time for each donor, plus details
- You MUST follow up and quickly – each gift is a test
- Think in annual terms – at minimum your donors should have quarterly opps to engage
- Offering 60%, asking 40%

Get Practical



INDIVIDUAL GIVING

LEARNING TO ASK

People give because they are asked...

“I’m reaching out to thank you for all you’ve done for our organization (be specific). I would love to connect with you, either by phone, or for a (coffee, walk, program specific activity) to share about our plans for this coming year/season, and hear your perspective as a supporter on how we can best meet the needs of (constitents, community) during these challenging times.”

“Thank you for sharing your thoughts - they’re so on point and we’ve been planning to meet the challenges you mentioned in A, B, and C ways. Would you be able to support (organization) with an increased gift of (\$xxx - based on research) this season/year?”

People are generally flattered to be asked...

...and it gets easier the more you do it!

STORYTELLING & IMPACT

Track Your Data! – Never Optional!

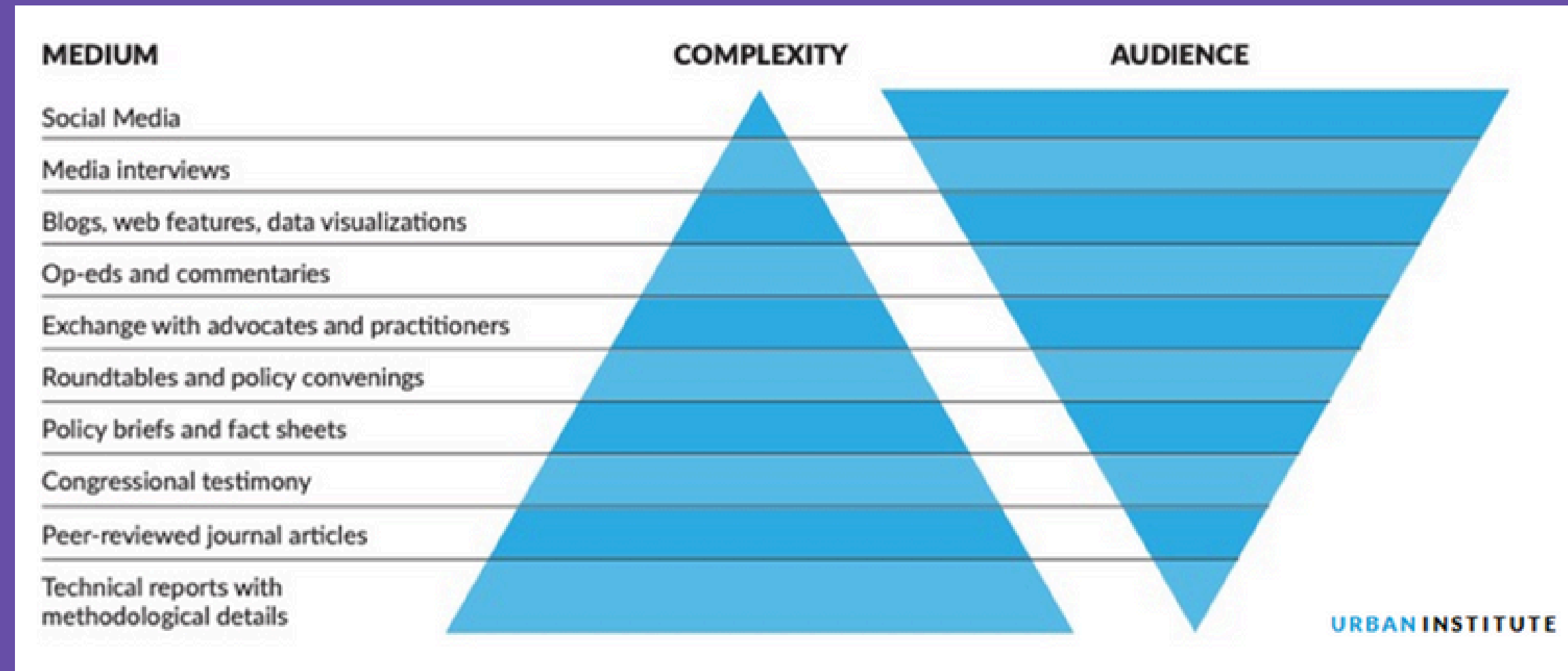
- **QUANTITATIVE**
 - # served
 - \$\$\$s distributed, value
 - organizational (funding, staff, partners, etc.)
 - demographics
 - OVER TIME
-
- **QUALITATIVE:**
 - Photos (staff training)
 - Quotes (surveys, 1-1s)
 - Value proposition and segmentation

Ethics & Data Collection

- **MINIMIZE THE BURDEN**
- **DO NO HARM**
- **ONLY FOR TANGIBLE BENEFIT (SHORT/LONG-TERM)**
- **PAYMENT FOR TIME/CONTRIBUTIONS**
- **OFFER ANONYMITY**
- **EXPLICIT CONSENT**

Respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

STORYTELLING & IMPACT



<https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/use-pyramid-philosophy-better-communicate-your-research>

Framing Fundamentals

Framing is the choices we make in what we say and how we say it. We're framing when we decide what to emphasize, how to explain, which metaphors to use, which values to center, and even what to leave unsa...

FrameWorks Institute

www.frameworksinstitute.org/framing-fundamentals/

Crafting Your Message

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- Target existing alignment: we're not putting square pegs in round holes
- Use funders' key words
- ASK your audience what they care about, and then give them that

KEEP IT SHORT, IMPACTFUL, AND

VISUALLY APPEALING

- Photos! Quotes!
- Invest in graphic design support when possible



IMPACT REPORT 2018-2021

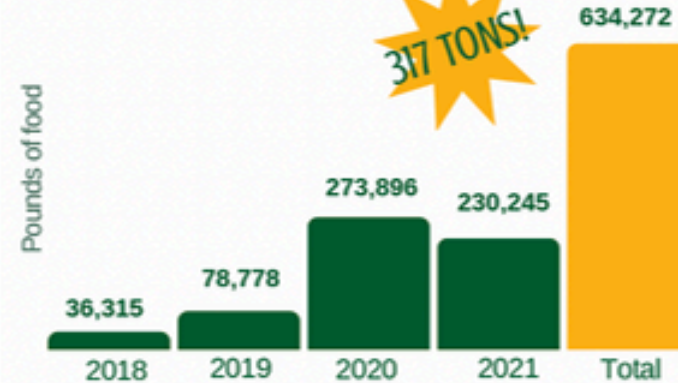
Hope's Harvest improves the livelihoods of local farmers, increases food security for our most vulnerable residents, and gets everyone engaged in strengthening the food system by eliminating on-farm food waste.

As Rhode Island's first statewide farm-based food rescue program dedicated to securing the supply chain of fresh local produce to hunger relief agencies, Hope's Harvest coordinates a strong network of volunteers, farmers, and food pantries to recover local produce and distribute it to neighbors in need.

SINCE 2018 HOPE'S HARVEST HAS...

- Recovered nearly **630,000** pounds of fresh produce
- From **48** local farms
- Donated food to **48** hunger relief agencies
- With the commitment of over **350** volunteers contributing more than **4,900** hours
- And supported our agency partners in serving over **35,000** individuals per month

FOOD RECOVERED



“ I was humbled by the number of agencies (food pantries, kitchens, and networks) supported by Hope's Harvest. I am awed by the generosity of farmers who plant rows just for the organization. ”
— Nancy Reiter, HHRI Volunteer

“ That fresh locally grown food wasn't getting to us before. We knew there was surplus food at nearby farms, but we needed the organization to get it to the agencies that directly serve people. ”
— Andrew Schiff, RI Community Food Bank

\$1.05 MILL

In-kind value of food recovered

\$1.27

Cost per pound of food recovered

2,537,088

Servings of food recovered

TOP 25 FARM PARTNERS & POUNDS RECOVERED

Ferolbink Farms	168,184
Four Town Farm	159,130
Boston Area Gleaners	45,050
Shewatuck Farm	29,664
URI Extension Farm	29,581
Arcadian Fields	16,519
Appleland Orchard	13,913
Sodco	12,908
Barden Family Orchard	11,016
Brandon Family Farm	10,279
Teo's Products	9,230
Big Train Farm	9,097
Freedom Food Farm	8,728
Confreda Farm	7,910
Indian Rocks Farm	7,575
Steere Orchard	6,328
Charlotte's Farm	6,227
Movement Ground Farm	6,110
Cooks Valley Farm	6,000
McCoy Community Farm	5,908
Decastro's Farm	5,376
Hocus Pocus Farm	4,707
Garman Farm	4,597
Earthcare Farm	4,070
Pippin Orchard	3,732

TOP HUNGER RELIEF AGENCIES SERVED & POUNDS RECEIVED

RI Community Food Bank	222,592
The Elisha Project	210,090
Olneyville Food Center	68,177
Jonnycake Peacedale	14,524
Martin Luther King Center	9,926
Community Action Partnership of PVD	9,385
URI Graduate Student Village	8,776
St. Martins	5,706
Jonnycake Westerly	5,622
East Bay Food Pantry	5,516
Sunrise Forever	4,396
St. Johns	4,133
Amos House	3,618
Hasbro Children's Hospital	3,180
We Share Hope	2,650
Bristol Good Neighbors	2,108
Federal Hill House - Holy Ghost	1,095
Better Lives	1,023
Crossroads RI	1,005
Calvary Baptist Church	1,000
AMOR	844
St. Andrews/St. Peters	720
134 Collaborative	445
RICAN	315
Scituate Senior Center	220

“ As a farmer, I feel compelled to help those who don't have enough to eat. Hope's Harvest makes it easy for me to do that. They do the hard work of picking, packing and delivery and all I have to do is grow the kale. ”

— Diana Kushner, Arcadian Fields

HOPE'S HARVEST HAS BEEN GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY



Resources beyond \$\$\$

Volunteers

- What can they realistically do?
- Invest in training
- Provide value & quantify theirs
- Cultivate and steward



Resources beyond \$\$\$

Technology

- Upfront cost - HUGE timesaver
- Automate - Zapier, Asana, Calendars
- AI Tools - you get out what you put in
- Data management and ops



1. Acting as a skilled fundraiser in the field of (xyz)...
2. and utilizing the parameters from (website, pdf, copied notes, annual report, etc.)...
3. prepare a document with the following characteristics (word count, tone, style, etc.)...
4. that will meet the following goals...
5. Write like a human, don't repeat yourself

REVIEW - REVISE - SPOT CHECK

Relationships are EVERYTHING



- Seek resonance
- Share from the heart
- Express genuine care and gratitude
- Connect authentically, before/during/after
- Cultivate joy & inspiration
- BE what MATTERS about what you DO



Questions/Discussion



FULL BLOOM FUTURES
— COLLABORATION • RESOURCES • SOLUTIONS —

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