



## **An Investment in Your Future**

In these challenging times, remember that you and your organization are not at the mercy of the economy. The decisions you make have more influence on your organization's fundraising success than anything the economy might do.

An immense amount of wealth continues to be created around the world, and opportunities abound for those with the necessary skills and training. To succeed, you must be sharper than ever, staying on top of new trends and best practices, bringing innovative and creative thinking to your organization and operating by the highest ethical imperatives.

***Now, more than ever, you must invest in yourself!*** And it's your professional community, the Association of Fundraising Professionals, that can offer you the best resources—at the best value for your membership dollar—to help you and your organization succeed.

Many AFP members enjoy the benefit of their employers paying their membership dues. In this extraordinary period, many organizations are trimming their budgets wherever possible and membership dues are being cut. However, it is precisely during these uncertain times that your professional association offers you the most value and assistance.

If your employer is cutting membership dues from the budget, consider the investment you now need to make in yourself. If you can't pay your dues on your own, think about approaching your employer regarding a shared payment arrangement. You can each pay for a portion of your dues until the economy settles down. Sharpening your skills, connecting with other fundraisers and figuring out how to do more with less is at the top of everyone's list. And AFP is committed to helping you and your organization succeed!

What can AFP provide to help you succeed?

- *Inspiration for meeting the challenges of today.* AFP's *Fundraising in a Difficult Economy* and online Fundraising Survival Kit brings together the best advice from fundraisers around the world on how to connect with donors in the current environment.
- *Specific and individualized knowledge to advance your fundraising department.* AFP's Fundraising Resource Center responds to your unique requests with articles, resources and samples that give you what you need as well as special AFP conferences and events focus on the increasingly important specializations within the field.
- *The best training and education in the field.* AFP offers a myriad of continuing educational opportunities for all fundraisers, regardless of experience level or specialty, and most can help you attain your certification to demonstrate your commitment to and expertise in the profession.

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- *New ideas and latest trends in the profession.* Between our weekly *eWire/eWire Skill Builder*, the bi-monthly *Advancing Philanthropy* and our constantly updated website, AFP keeps you current on happenings and innovations that will affect you now and in the future.
- *Networking with colleagues and access to experts in the field.* AFP Webconferences lets you hear from the most experienced practitioners in fundraising, and online forums let you talk directly with fundraisers with a wealth of practical, how-to knowledge. Networking through your local chapter can bring new opportunities every day!
- *Benchmarks for success and future growth.* AFP research data, such as the *State of Fundraising Survey* and *Compensations and Benefits Analysis*, show how you and your organization stack up in the profession and how to proceed to find even greater success.

AFP also isn't just an investment in you and your professional career. Your whole organization benefits from the programs available through AFP membership. Success today for charities means:

- *Showing the public your commitment to ethics and accountability.* AFP's Ethics program, featuring our *Code of Ethical Principles and Standards* and *The Donor Bill of Rights*, is the most respected in the world and underscores what you and your organization does to steward not just the public's money, but its trust as well.
- *Reaching out to a growing and diverse donor base.* AFP's diverse resources not only help organizations reach out to different audiences, but also help build inclusive boards that can more effectively serve different populations.
- *Understanding how public policy affects the work of fundraising and charities.* AFP is the leader in educating government on how fundraising really works and what charities need to succeed. Our public policy program works for stronger philanthropic incentives for your organization and a streamlined oversight system that protects legitimate organizations while rooting out the bad apples.
- *Developing fundraising leadership.* Successful boards and staff that know and appreciate fundraising are key ingredients to success. AFP's executive programs develop management and leadership skills and help forge the critical bonds between staff and board that result in exceeding fundraising goals.

AFP is committed to your success and the success of your organization. There is no doubt that these are challenging times, but you still have the power to control your own fundraising career, and AFP can help.

At the same time, your membership in AFP helps to advance the overall fundraising community. Belonging to AFP sends an important message to the world that the fundraising profession is united and cares about issues such as ethics and public trust. We are committed to the highest level of service to our donors and the people we serve. We are proud of the work we do and are committed to changing the world. By joining AFP, you stand united with more than 30,000 fundraisers, each member making our voice stronger and more powerful when speaking with the government and media around the world. And as your profession grows stronger, so too does its impact on the world.

You and your organization can benefit from all of this. So continue to invest in yourself. Work with your organization so you can continue to be a vital part of the AFP community. And let AFP—your association—help you reach your professional development goals—while helping your organization continue to make a difference in the world.