

Fundraising for the Council: a summary of results between 2005-2013

Background: In 2005 the Council issued a Request for Qualifications and contracted with a part-time fund development coordinator. Described below are the financial results of the Fund Development Coordinator and lessons-learned that can inform future fund development work.

A. A eight-year overview of the results

- Expenses – The contracts for fund development services were deliverable-based contracts that focused on implementation of Action Plan priorities. The dollar value of these contracts varied considerably and averaged \$22,000/year. Total expenses to the Council were approximately \$180,000.
- Revenues -- The Council received over \$875,000 in competitive awards as a result of proposals written by the fund development coordinator.
- Sources of support -- Government (\$633,000); Foundations (\$90,000); Non-profits (\$57,000); and For-profits (\$100,000) provided funding to the Council. Amounts ranged from a low of \$3500 (Cox Charitable Trust) to \$100,000 (Royal Bank of Canada) to \$150,000 (GeoConnections) and \$285,000 (NOAA/Climate Change Program).
- Uses of funding -- Examples of how the funds were used include sponsorship of the GOM Times, indicators, habitat restoration, SOE reporting, climate change, action planning, IT, etc.
- Over a 4:1 Return on investment -- **Approximately \$180,000 was spent to receive over \$875,000 in support of Council priorities.**

B. Lessons-learned

1. The Council can be successful in writing competitive proposals to government and non-government sources.
2. The annual *contractor review process* should continue to occur to assess whether contract deliverables and deadlines were attained, and determine ways to improve fund development approaches.
3. An internal fund development committee should continue to advise the Council and the Fund Development Coordinator. Further, fund development staff of the non-profit organizations represented on the Council should be periodically consulted with.
4. External funders have made it clear that member agencies of the Council need to pay for internal, ongoing Council costs. Further, the Council needs to provide matching funds when seeking external funder support.
5. Thoughtful and competitive ideas form the basis of successful proposals. Rigorous committee work plans are essential for efficiently developing funding proposals.
6. Funders want to "share risk" with other funders. They look for multi-partner proposals that leverage other resources.
7. The Council needs to display significant leadership in cultivating and coalescing support for regional issues.

Submitted by David Keeley, Fund Development Coordinator