

SOAR Funding Strategies

SOAR programs can be funded through a variety of sources, including foundations, private donors, and businesses operating in your communities. The resources on this webpage supplement the existing funding and sustainability tools located on the [SOARWorks website](#).

Partnerships and Pitches

SOAR programs are generally run by either non-profit entities or government entities, including cities, counties, and state governments. For government-run SOAR programs, it is important to seek counsel as to what funding opportunities can be pursued.

[View the SOARWorks Infographic “Steps to Accessing Funding”](#)

In order to diversify funding sources for SOAR, it is essential for government-run SOAR programs to develop and maintain relationships with non-profit partners who are often better positioned to accept donations and participate in fundraising activities.

[View the National Council of Nonprofit’s “Find Your State Association”](#)

Developing a Pitch

Regardless of the funding source, having a persuasive pitch for why funders should support your SOAR initiative is essential to funding success. Before beginning your crowdfunding or fundraising efforts, you should develop a strong message about your funding goals and your SOAR program’s impact.

[View the Network for Good’s How to Write Amazing Fundraising Appeals](#)

Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding refers to raising money through donations from a large number of people, usually in small donations through the Internet. While still a relatively new tool in the fundraising toolbox, crowdfunding is projected to become a [\\$90-96 billion dollar](#) industry by 2025 and use is steadily gaining steam.

Crowdfunding happens via website (such as “Kickstarter” or “Indiegogo”) that allow people to post descriptions (including pictures and videos) of their projects to attract donations. Because you are using the Internet and sharing through email, websites, and your social media platforms, crowdfunding can reach more people. A fun and effective twist on this concept is live crowdfunding – where you or others pitch your SOAR program to those who have gathered at a certain time on a specific web platform. These events can be run by your organization alone or you can partner with organizations who specialize in creating crowdfunding events.

Important Things to Consider

Choose Your Platform Wisely

Some platforms are tailored for creative projects, while others cater specifically to nonprofits interested in using crowdfunding to fundraise.

Different platforms charge different fees: some charge more if a project doesn’t reach its goal, while others don’t charge a fee at all, but also don’t allow the sponsoring project to collect the money unless you reach your funding target. With that said – all platforms charge a baseline processing fee.

[Grantspace's "Five Criteria for Choosing a Crowdfunding Platform"](#)

Special Regulations

As with any fundraising activity, nonprofits need to know the laws that [regulate fundraising](#). Most states have laws that require nonprofits to register **before** soliciting residents of that state. This means that an online crowdfunding event for a California charitable event, hosted through a platform based in New York, sending messages to potential donors in Illinois, has to know all of the regulations that may apply to activities in all three states.

Charitable solicitation laws in *most* states do not specifically address fundraising on the Internet, so you have the obligation to treat crowdfunding like traditional fundraising and should consult legal professionals prior to starting such activity.

[View Grantspace's "What is Crowdfunding"](#)

Fundraising Events

Fundraising events are a much underutilized tool in securing funding for human service projects. This is for good reason – when not done correctly they can end up being a major waste of time and money. Here are a few tips to help you move forward with planning for and executing a fundraising event to support your SOAR activities. Remember – you may choose to hire an outside consultant to plan your event. If this is the case, ask others who have used this person to make sure they have good references. You are always encouraged to contact your [SOAR TA Center Liaison](#) for support with sustaining and growing your SOAR program.

[Convio's "Fundraising Success Guide for Small & Growing Nonprofits"](#)

Make Goals That Make Sense

You should start with a monetary goal that meets [concrete "things"](#) (docx) you are looking to have funded. Maybe you want to purchase computers to collect medical records, or hire a new staff person to do SOAR applications – know the cost of what you need. The goal should be measurable and specific, and you need to be sure to have a budget for the event that you stick to.

It is important that you choose an event that matches your specific needs. The event(s) you choose should always match your audience, brand, mission, goals, budget, time/expertise, and the staff and volunteers you have supporting your efforts.

Securing Corporate Sponsors

Have different packages and sponsorship levels so you have support from both large and small sources. When doing outreach, bring easy-to-understand materials like infographics that easily describe the value you bring to the community. Once a relationship has been fostered, be sure to honor that relationship so that these one-time donors become regular contributors to your organization.

Make Memories

Make sure that you create an amazing experience that the attendees enjoy. Also, try to use live presentations from people that have actually benefited from SOAR so that the true reason to "give" is stuck in the minds of the attendees.



Marketing the Event

Use every format you have at your disposal: website, social media, e-mail, and print. This is also a time where you want to use a 'save-the-date' and send the event to local media outlets, so you can get them to carry a story about your upcoming event.

You're ready to get started!