



**A Change Makers Guide to Uncertain Times  
What Change Makers & Community Builders Can Do Today  
To Get Ahead of the Curve**

**First Things First**

The Priority: Check-in with your team: How are they doing? How are you?

- Take time to reach out to your colleagues, coworkers and collaborators and engage them in ways that are meaningful to them.
- If they are new to remote work, share best-practice articles for Working from Home and help them set boundaries to avoid burnout.

Keep in Mind: You cannot be an effective leader or worker unless you are taking care of your mental health and physical well-being. Take time out of the day for walks, breathing exercises and healthy meals.

**Take Inventory**

The Priority: Know your most loyal and committed philanthropic supporters.

- What are the major sources of your philanthropic revenue? And who are your key collaborators and partners in advancing your mission?
- Does your income come from Individuals, Philanthropic Foundations, Corporate Donors, and/or Government Funding? Is it fee-for-service revenue?
- Are these still viable sources of funding? Have any of their requirements been amended due to the pandemic?
- Can expenses be cut or deferred? Reforecast your budget, setting new income and impact goals.

Keep in Mind: Be creative and expansive in how you assess your most loyal supporters. Yes, a major gift is one indicator, but there are others: frequency and consistency of giving i.e. multiple times in a year. Total lifetime giving is another often overlooked indicator of commitment to your cause or community. Finally, consider going beyond giving to those key volunteers and ambassadors that share organization's mission.



## Develop A Plan

The Priority: Identify and address priorities by answering these questions:

- What is your case for support today vs. yesterday?
- Do you have a financial plan that has contingencies and/or alternate revenue streams?
- Based on your sources of revenue and timing of funding, where must you pivot?
- What is the response to this crisis from your Board? And other key stakeholders?
- How are you communicating with internal/external ambassadors/champions?

Keep in Mind: Your activities may be postponed but your mission cannot be. History has shown that organizations that stayed the course, with modifications, in difficult times raise funds. They also emerge stronger and faster than those who made across the board budget cuts.

## Do

The Priority: Position Your Cause/Community as Your Supporters' TOP Philanthropic Priority

- Increase Communications with your 'base' of supporters, using different vehicles, including the telephone. You and your Supporters are in this together.
- Ask them what they need and listen. Then tell a story about how your cause is being affected by this current health crisis. And yes, ask for what you need, including financial support.
- Repackage your needs by communicating urgency, and ways you are affecting change. Help your supporters respond and be a part of the recovery. Giving is part of the solution.
- Instead of focusing on how to "return to normal," shift the conversation to what your organization/cause/community will look like when the pandemic has passed. While emergencies drive us to solve urgent problems, it is equally important to focus on the long-term. Throughout history, dislocations and disruptions have been used to reinvent our world.

Keep in Mind: Your 'base of supporters' wants to hear from you. Use core values to guide you. Be flexible. Focus on what you can control. Direct action to where you can affect change.

*All of us here at Melarbit Partners recognize the critical role that change makers and community builders – nonprofits, and other mission-driven businesses, entrepreneurs and investors play in solving our society's biggest challenges. We are committed to being a resource for you – now and in the future.*

*Have a specific question or want to connect to brainstorm an idea or explore a new possibility? Email the Melarbit team at [info@melarbit.com](mailto:info@melarbit.com). We are here for you.*

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Activating and accelerating impact with change makers and community builders.

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