



DEVELOPMENT

In the past two years, AORE has succeeded in building its internal and external philanthropic culture. We hired a development consultant to help increase sustainable philanthropic revenues—through fund development activities and processes at the board and staff levels.

To preserve AORE's fiscal sustainability, we know that we need to strengthen our resources. As AORE enters its 25th year, our expanded programming will require more financial support than just membership dues and conference revenue. Here's a look at what we've done.

The Bigger Picture

Keeping AORE financially healthy takes work—and resources, including time and money. Improved fundraising practices will allow the association to survive and thrive, strengthening its ability to serve members and the broader outdoor industry.

WHY IT MATTERS

1. Fundraising will help AORE plan.

Fundraising forces nonprofits to take a step back and think about how they are going to accomplish their projects, with what resources, and in what time frames. Organizations almost always need to have some sort of planning in place to ask for support and succeed in attaining it—whether they need it when filling out an onerous grant application or when a donor prospect asks for the five-year plan.

2. Fundraising makes AORE see where it is vulnerable.

In the process of planning and asking how it will accomplish a project, a nonprofit often realizes that it has gaps in resources toward meeting its goals. Identifying weaknesses and vulnerabilities in organizational structure is critical in strengthening an organization.

3. Fundraising will help AORE work as a team and align goals.

Fundraising acts as a glue for different project areas, unifying the team and its different project goals into one mission. A nonprofit will be stronger if its different components are brought together under a solid mission base.

4. Fundraising will make AORE prioritize projects.

Prioritizing where to allocate precious resources is a constant struggle for nonprofit managers. The fundraising process gives nonprofits an objective way to choose the projects that are most relevant to their mission.

5. Fundraising will make AORE branch out and broadcast.

To be eligible for grants, and sponsorships especially, nonprofits need to prove they are reaching as many people as possible.

6. Fundraising will help AORE evaluate.

Benefits to evaluating include saving resources, fixing program elements and work plans that aren't working, and knowing your impact, which in turn helps you fundraise.

7. Fundraising will improve AORE's sustainability.

If a nonprofit does not fundraise, it is vulnerable to its source of funding ending.

Fundraising is so much more than raising funds. If done right, fundraising will help develop AORE into a high-functioning, networked, sustainable, influential force for community good.

DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

After building a philanthropic culture, and putting systems in place to better enable fundraising, AORE's executive and volunteer leaders are better equipped to maintain a more sustainable fundraising program. To keep the association moving in the right direction, the development consultant has recommended that AORE do the following.

Ensure that staff can provide necessary support for development activities.

AORE's executive director should continue to devote 33 to 50 percent of her time to fund development. She should be involved in recruiting key volunteer leadership and cultivating top institutional relationships, be the organization's lead solicitor, and assist with fund development goal-setting.

Use the annual conference for fundraising.

This gathering of AORE's community is the heart of the association and the *only* available place to connect with AORE's members in large numbers in person.

Have board members personally introduce people.

Continue to have board members provide personal introductions to individuals with interest in the organization, and host activities that steward existing donors, cultivate potential donors, and increase the donor pool. The *Know10/Call 10/Thank 10* program introducing people to AORE is *the best* way board members can help the organization; thanking donors is *the easiest* way for volunteers to participate in fund development work.

Continue to cultivate and steward individuals who are capable of making major gifts.

Major giving is the future of successful philanthropy at AORE.

Explore and experiment with social media campaigns.

Example: BOD members have used Facebook fundraising campaigns for birthdays to request donations. These efforts have allowed AORE to expand its fundraising beyond members into the wider public, through AORE contacts.

Continue to develop the grants program.

Seek grant opportunities ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

Prioritize programs.

Develop messaging, target audiences, and fundraise for priority programs. Articulating priority funding needs remains difficult, due to the lack of easily fundable programs at AORE.

Use a detailed, written annual fund development plan to guide fundraising efforts.

These plans are a standard practice and ensure continuity, timely execution, and accountability.