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# Rapid Response Fundraising Strategy

April 10, 2025

Drop in the chat!

**Please share your name, location and organization.**





# Alford Group



## Accelerating impact

Full-service consultancy.


Tailored solutions.

- Fundraising
- Strategic & Organizational Planning
- Governance & Leadership Development
- Interim Staffing
- Data Management, Analytics & Assessment
- Equitable & Inclusive Culture

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## **Land Acknowledgment Chicago, IL**

Chicago is located on the traditional unceded homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi Nations. Many other tribes such as the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac and Fox also called this area home. The region has long been a center for Indigenous people to gather, trade and maintain kinship ties.



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## Webinar Logistics

- Recording and resources available
- Survey
- Listen-only mode
- The chat is open!
- To ask a question, please use the Q&A function

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# Hello! It's great to be with you today.



**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER**

Alexis Cooke



**VICE PRESIDENT**

Greg Whitney



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**Poll Question #1** - Which of these issues is the highest priority as you build your Rapid Response Fundraising Strategy?

- a) Replacing Federal Funding in your budget
- b) Sudden shortage of staff
- c) Communicating urgent needs with donors
- d) Engaging key volunteers to increase momentum
- e) Engaging board members meaningfully in fundraising efforts
- f) Starting a Rapid Response Strategy

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- e) Engaging board members meaningfully in fundraising efforts**
- f) Starting a Rapid Response Strategy**

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## Let's level set and speak plainly

Fundraising alone will  
not be enough.





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**Poll Question #2** - How are you feeling after 4 months into this changing environment?

- A. Grounded and ready for anything 🧐
- B. Uncertain, but optimistic 😊
- C. Very anxious, but persisting 😬
- D. The sky is falling 😱

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Small tactics can help build momentum.




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## **Build momentum and accelerate growth mindset**

 **Assess the current state of your organization**

 **Activate a culture of philanthropy**

 **Build and pivot fundraising strategies to meet the moment**

 **Position authentic and clear messaging**

# Assess the current state of your organization

- **Affirm budget implications for this fiscal year.**  
What is the impact of shortfalls across multiple years?
- **Use scenario planning to review development's annual plan.**  
Refresh projections to identify potential wins and barriers.
- **Compile data analysis of trends in donor behavior.**  
What has been effective and ineffective in recent years?
- **Evaluate the development staff resources closely.**  
Where can you reduce tasks that have little ROI on frontline fundraising?



## Build and pivot fundraising strategies to meet the moment:

- **Focus on current donor and funder relationships.**  
Identify your individual giving pool or pipeline and communicate with them now.
- **Identify opportunities and moments to leverage.**  
What can we leverage across all current activities and events?
- **Position your asks as short-term support for longer-term sustainability.**  
Take advantage of any opportunity to do this!
- **Activate relationship mapping and seek support from ambassadors.**  
Increase your spheres of influence and bring new people to the table.



## Activate a culture of philanthropy:

- **Center this work, even in a crisis, on relationships.**  
Encourage broader engagement in mission and vision fulfillment.
- **Engage your board in scenario planning.**  
Include them as part of the solution to meeting the moment.
- **Mobilize your ambassador networks.**  
Activate the board and other volunteer leadership groups and staff.
- **Empower ambassadors to be true partners in fundraising work.**  
Provide specific opportunities for them to lean in and participate.



## Position authentic and clear messaging:

- **Use a strength-based framework to bring people in.**  
Invite your community of supporters and partners to be part of the solution.
- **Focus on value-based philanthropy - giving that's aligned to desired impact.**  
Reflect the core beliefs and goals that align you with your donors.
- **Cascade your messaging for per audience appropriately and consistently.**  
Build trust through an authentic and transparent approach to reporting.
- **Communicate confidently and authentically.**  
Speak your truth and don't shy away from challenges you are facing.







# **Tactics to Support Rapid Response Fundraising Strategy**

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## When should I implement these tactics?

These action steps and tactics are for you if you are in one or more of the following scenarios:

- Our organization does little individual fundraising or individual fundraising outside of events.
- We have depended on federal funding for the bulk of our programs/services and have not done a lot of relationship development work.
- I'm short-staffed and I don't know how I can take on any more work.
- Our organization leaves fundraising leadership out of budget discussions but depends on fundraising to make up budget shortfalls.
- I don't know how to tell our donors and the community that we are short on revenue and we need to fundraise dollars now.

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## Tactics to Support Your Organization

- Scenario Planning
- 30-60-90 planning
- Start-stop-continue exercises
- RACI / Time management matrix
- Persona and/or audience profiles
- Strength-based messaging
- Pipeline development
- Ambassador engagement menu



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## Alford Group Tools

[ABC Scenario Planning Template](#)

[Board Engagement Toolkit](#)

[Resources for Navigating Executive Orders](#)

Explore our website for more resources and tools.





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**Book a free 30-minute consultation with one of us!**



**Alexis Cooke**

Chief Operation Officer  
she/her

[Schedule a call.](#)



**Greg Whitney**

Vice President  
he/him

[Schedule a call.](#)

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## What's missing? What more should we talk about?

- ▶ **Assess the current state of your organization**  
Identify organizational scenarios and corresponding development projections informed by history and analysis.
- ▶ **Activate a culture of philanthropy**  
Engage your board as part of the solution and leverage your ambassador's resources and networks.
- ▶ **Build and pivot fundraising strategies to meet the moment**  
Focus on current relationships, convene critical conversations and maximize ongoing fundraising efforts.
- ▶ **Position authentic and clear messaging**  
Center messaging on strength-based position, cascade by audience emphasize value-based philanthropy.



**Questions?**



# Thank You!



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