

FUNDRAISING RESOURCES

ACUMEN ACADEMY FUNDRAISING COURSE AND I.G. FIELD GUIDE COMPLEMENTARITY



Acumen Academy and I.G. Advisors have created practical and high-quality fundraising resources to help nonprofits develop their fundraising skills: a 6-week "Nonprofit Fundraising Essentials" online course (in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) and a Relationship-Based Fundraising Field Guide (in English). MAVA Foundation highly recommends you to take the time to discover and use these tools to support your organisation's financial sustainability.

So as to help you use both resources complementarily, we developed this document highlighting some of the key topics and tools offered by each.

OVERVIEW

Both the [Relationship-Based Field Guide](#) (I.G. Field Guide) and the "[Nonprofit Fundraising Essentials](#)" course (Acumen Academy course) provide essential tools and knowledge on fundraising.

- The Field Guide offers a self-assessment to start, which is great if you don't know what you need to work on and/or are time poor and don't wish to take a full course. It can be used as a manual to consult to improve different areas of your fundraising game 'on demand'. The welcome section might be particularly useful for new nonprofits, as it provides an overview on financials, governance and staffing for NGOs.
- The Field Guide is less interactive than the Acumen course in the sense that it doesn't provide videos or case studies. However, it provides great templates to fill in, hence might be useful if you like visual tools to start your reflection. It is useful if you are looking to work on particular sections as each can easily be accessed whenever needed. Yet if you are less proactive, the Acumen course might be more adapted.
- If you are particularly interested in detailed practical strategies to engage with various donor audiences, the Field Guide is your best friend. The Acumen Academy course, providing a broader and more general overview of donor audiences, can serve as a quick resource to access when you need it.

SECTION I: DEFINING YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY	SECTION II: IMPLEMENTING YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY
PART A: PREPARING FOR THE PROCESS	PART A: PREPARING FOR IMPLEMENTATION
DEFINING YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY 2	INTERNAL RESOURCES: THE BOARD 2
LANDSCAPE RESEARCH & BENCHMARKING 14	INTERNAL RESOURCES: THE TEAM 9
FINANCIAL TARGETS 9	
PART B: DESIGNING THE DONOR JOURNEY	PART B: IMPLEMENTING THE DONOR JOURNEY
DONOR AUDIENCES 0.5	PROSPECTING 2
UNDERSTANDING YOUR DONORS 5	MESSAGING 1
DONOR OFFERING: ASSET INVENTORY 1	PARTNERSHIPS 0.5
DONOR OFFERING: 'PRODUCTS' 4	THOUGHT LEADERSHIP 0.5
MAKING AN 'ASK' 2	EVENTS 0.5

01 Learning Tools

02 Section 1: An Entrepreneurial Approach to Funding Your Nonprofit

03 Section 2: Funding Models and Diversification

04 Section 3: Budgets and Fundraising Goals

05 Section 4: Building a Community of Donors and Partners

06 Section 5: Storytelling and Communications

Top image: Syllabus from the I.G. Field Guide

Bottom image: Syllabus from the Acumen course

ON YOUR ORGANISATION

The **Organisation readiness assessment test offered by the Field Guide** is very quick and to the point. If your score is low, resources are provided on the different areas. The theory on Mission and impact is very similar to the Acumen course, but does not provide case studies nor videos. In the resources provided by the Field Guide for the welcome section, the Theory of Change template is slightly different from the Acumen one. This is a great way to show how different models can work for different organisations, and can (and should) be tailored and adapted to serve the organisation's specific needs when it comes to explaining your mission and impact. **Information provided on financials and governance and staffing might be interesting and are not provided in such details in the Acumen course**, e.g. on organisation's registration options, building a budget, building a board, etc.

ON DONOR AUDIENCES

The Acumen course gives a great overview of the different funding sources available (with advantages and disadvantages of each), which is extremely useful for organisations that are not aware of the different options yet and how to capitalise on each.

On its side, the Field Guide focuses on six types of funders: trusts & foundations, corporates, high-net-worth individuals, governments and multilaterals. Practical strategies are provided on how to engage with each. Detailed strategies like these are good complementary resources for Module 2 'Funding Models and Diversification' in the Acumen course. **The Field Guide breaks down every aspect of the donor journey into smaller workshops - which is excellent for an in-depth analysis.** The Acumen Academy course's Modules 2 & 4 'Funding Models and Diversification' and 'Building a Community of Donors and Partners' have workshops and readings, which work towards similar objectives but in a less-detailed and brief manner.

These two contrasting aspects provide a good complementarity between the Field Guide and the course - the former being more holistic, and the latter being a quick handy tool.

ON THE DONOR JOURNEY

The Donor journey priorities test from the Field Guide is useful if you don't know which sections of the guide you want or need to focus on and if you would like to assess your progress at the end. As the stages mentioned in the field guide for the donor journey are very similar to the stages of donor development mentioned in Module 4 'Building a Community of Donors and Partners' of the Acumen course, this test in the Field Guide is well complementing the Acumen course. As you use the Field Guide to identify which stage you need to work on the most, **you can use the practical tactics provided in the Acumen course for each of the stages.**

ON CASE FOR SUPPORT

Section II Part B 'Implementing the Donor Journey' of the Field Guide covers similar topics to stages 1 and 2 of Module 4 'Building a Community of Donors and Partners' of the Acumen course, such as **network mapping, donor event organisation, communicating with prospective donors**, etc. In parallel to the description of a Case for Support that the Field Guide provides, Module 4 'Building a Community of Donors and Partners' of the Acumen Academy course provides a workshop guide on how to actually write one. Thus, **you might actually use the course workshop and assignments as a purposeful practice to concretely write a Case for Support.**

OTHER

- The Field Guide has a comprehensive section on human resources around fundraising, and hence might be very useful if you are looking to improve your human resource practices with regard to fundraising.
- Module 5 'Storytelling and Communications' of the Acumen course is not really covered in the Field Guide and hence might be a great Module if you are looking to improve your online communication for instance.



<https://www.acumenacademy.org/>
<https://www.acumenacademy.org/course/nonprofit-fundraising-essentials>
Available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese



<https://www.impactandgrowth.com/>
<https://www.fundraisingfieldguide.org/>
Available in English (Spanish coming soon!)



<https://mava-foundation.org/>

We hope you will enjoy both of these resources and we wish you all the best on your fundraising journey!