

Planned Giving Through Wills and Bequests

Planned giving is the term used to refer to the arrangements made for a group to receive contributions from the estate of a donor after a donor has died.

Community groups and associations need to consider the following questions prior to implementing a planned giving program:

- Are you certain that your group or organisation is going to be around, and is not going to disappear before any would-be benefactors die?
- Do you have a loyal base of long-term supporters and/or donors who trust your group and believe that there is a long-term need for you to exist?
- Does your organisation have a solid reputation of continuous achievement, transparency in financial dealings, and the ethical and responsible management of resources and raising money?



Some of the more basic ways you can start with are:

1. **Be ready** Make sure your group is ready - take your time and have your board think about what resources you might need, any professionals you might need to get in touch with for guidance, etc.
2. **Tell people about this opportunity** This is an opportunity to invest in the future, through assisting your group to meet its objectives, but people need to know about the opportunity in order to take it up. You can do this by:
 - Adding information on your web page.
 - Inserting an article or small piece in your regular newsletter.
 - Dedicating a page of your annual report to the subject.
 - Offering information in a mail-out.



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3. Tell them the difference the money could make It is vital that you not only tell people that you value and welcome bequests, but also how those bequests can make a difference. There are a number of ways you can do this, including:

- An article in your newsletter telling recipients about a bequest that was left to your organisation, and how they could do the same.
- Quantifying exactly what you are able to do with the money left from various bequests - e.g. what a \$1000 bequest could help you do.
- Mentioning regularly - in your newsletters, on your website, in direct-mail outs, within your annual report - that your group accepts bequests and legacies.
- Inserting check-off boxes in all direct mail appeals so donors can request information about bequests and the benefits of having a will.
- Considering a focus group of current donors and board members to look at the feasibility of promoting planned giving; and developing a marketing plan that uncovers existing bequests and possible bequest prospects.
- Looking further afield and "putting your wares in the window" - let people know that you are in the market for bequests, and let them know what their donation gets them, by highlighting examples.
 - Name something prominent after your current largest donor, just to show what's on offer.
 - If you get a bequest, or a promise of a bequest, advertise it very widely (if the donor agrees).
 - Have an annual bequest recognition event.
- Being faithful to the donor's wishes when using the money - not only because you promised to, but to reassure other prospective donors that they can safely leave their dreams with you.

For more information on planned giving or bequests refer to Fundraising Association of Australia visit www.fia.org.au

