

## **50 Ways for a Nonprofit to Build Trust with Donors**

Building trust with donors is a cornerstone of successful and sustainable nonprofit fundraising. Here's a list of 50 ways for a nonprofit to cultivate that trust. Each of these trust building steps are powerful ways to steward your donors (major or otherwise). And if you want to take a deeper dive into donor stewardship come to the Nonprofit Storytelling Conference – <https://nonprofitstorytellingconference.com>

1. **Transparent Reporting:** Regularly share financial reports and updates.
2. **Impact Stories:** Share stories of the real-life impact of donations.
3. **Engage Personally:** Personalize all communications with donors.
4. **Open Door Policy:** Allow donors to visit and see your operations firsthand.
5. **Acknowledge Mistakes:** If errors are made, admit, apologize, and rectify.
6. **Timely Communication:** Always respond to donor queries promptly.
7. **Donor Surveys:** Ask for feedback and act on it.
8. **Use Donations as Promised:** Always utilize funds as advertised.
9. **Testimonials:** Share experiences from those directly impacted by the nonprofit.
10. **Regular Updates:** Consistently update donors on project progress.
11. **Third-party Evaluations:** Share audits or evaluations from external agencies.
12. **Personal Thank You's:** Send handwritten thank you notes.
13. **Donor Recognition:** Recognize donors in publications (with their consent).
14. **Feedback Loop:** Show donors how their feedback was implemented.
15. **Peer Reviews:** Share positive feedback from other reputable nonprofits or experts.
16. **Workshops & Webinars:** Offer informational sessions about your nonprofit's work.
17. **Consistent Branding:** Ensure all materials reflect your nonprofit's image and values.
18. **Celebrity or Expert Endorsements:** Gain endorsements from respected figures.
19. **Open Forums:** Host Q&A sessions with donors.
20. **Volunteer Opportunities:** Let donors see and engage in the work firsthand.

21. **Detailed Budgets:** Share where every dollar goes.
22. **Collaborate with Respected Orgs:** Partner with reputable organizations or businesses.
23. **Active Advisory Board:** Show that decisions are made with diverse, expert input.
24. **Confidentiality:** Protect and never misuse donor personal information.
25. **Host Events:** Allow donors to interact with your team and beneficiaries.
26. **Honest Metrics:** Share both successes and areas needing improvement.
27. **Engage on Social Media:** Share real-time updates and engage with donors online.
28. **Educational Content:** Provide content that educates about your cause and methods.
29. **Focus Groups:** Occasionally gather donors to gain insights and suggestions.
30. **Answer Tough Questions:** Don't shy away from addressing concerns head-on.
31. **Training and Development:** Show donors that staff is continually learning and improving.
32. **Show Long-term Commitment:** Highlight past achievements and consistency.
33. **Effective Governance:** Ensure a capable board oversees the nonprofit.
34. **Acknowledge Donor Anniversaries:** Celebrate long-standing supporters.
35. **Organizational Culture:** Promote a culture of integrity and transparency.
36. **Newsletters:** Share regular, honest updates through newsletters.
37. **Highlight Checks & Balances:** Show measures in place to prevent misuse of funds.
38. **Meet in Person:** When possible, have face-to-face interactions.
39. **Show Growth and Learning:** Share how the organization evolves based on experiences.
40. **Accreditations:** Secure and display ratings or certifications from oversight agencies.
41. **Use Constructive Criticism:** Show that you value and act upon constructive feedback.
42. **Share Challenges:** Be open about challenges faced and how they're addressed.
43. **Beneficiary Involvement:** Involve those you serve in communications.
44. **Respect Donor Intent:** If donors specify fund use, always adhere to their wishes.
45. **Diversify Income:** Demonstrate financial sustainability by not relying on just one income source.
46. **Video Updates:** Use video to provide authentic updates and stories.

47. **Community Involvement:** Engage and be visible in the local community.
48. **Regular Check-ins:** Casual updates or calls, just to maintain the connection.
49. **Provide References:** Offer testimonials from other donors.
50. **Financial Stability:** Demonstrate good financial health and reserves.