



Wednesday, August 5, 2026

2026 Nonprofit Fundraising Conference

Saint Paul RiverCentre

WWW.MINNESOTANONPROFITS.ORG/FUNDRAISING-CONFERENCE

Welcome, Fundraisers!

WiFi Access:

Connect to "RC_FreeWiFi." No password needed.

Download Conference Materials:

Continue your learning after today's conference. Scan the QR code or visit the conference website, minnesotanonprofits.org/fundraising-conference, to access the Download Center with the digital conference program, and session PowerPoints and handouts.

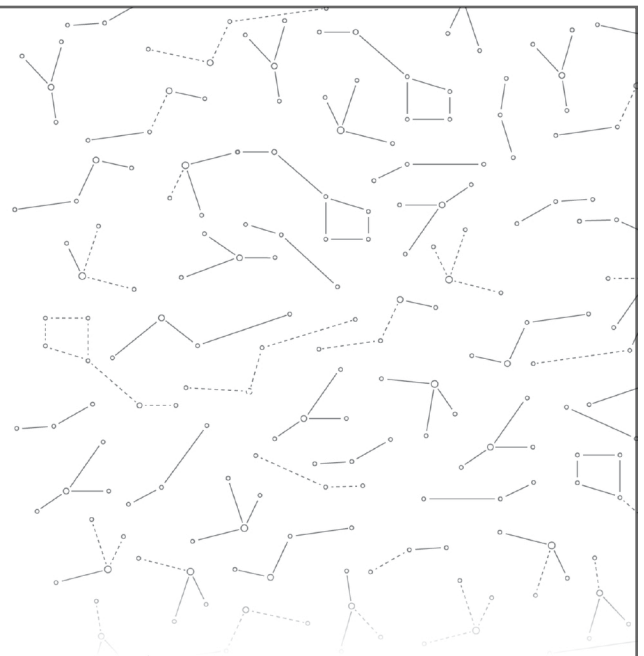


Tag MCN:

Join the conversation with your fellow conference attendees on social media. Tag Minnesota Council of Nonprofits on LinkedIn, or @minnesotanonprofits on Instagram and Facebook.

Chart your path to accelerated impact

→ Digital outfitters for
purpose-driven organizations



CRM, Marketing, and Digital Transformation

lakeone.io

Community Mural:

Take part in a community mural celebrating nonprofit fundraising. Draw or write your response to the prompt, and watch as the mural comes to life throughout the day. Find the mural outside of the Grand Ballroom doors, across from Meeting Room 3. Designed by artist Miska Abdel-Magid.

Wellness Activity

Mashkiki Studios will be leading a tea blending and medicine making activity along the Main Concourse across from Meeting Room 9. Rooted in Indigenous knowledge and lived experience, Mashkiki Studios creates space for learning, making, and connection through hands on workshops, culturally grounded curriculum, and community centered events. Stop by any time during the conference.

Nursing Room and All-Gender Restroom:

There are two nursing spaces. The primary nursing room is at the entryway of the women's restroom on the upper floor. The secondary nursing room is on street level between Headwaters Café and Kellogg Lobby. This room can be used by more than one nursing person at a time. The all-gender restroom is located across the concourse from Room 8 (near the nursing room and women's restroom).

Sensory, Prayer & Meditation Space:

A space for prayer, meditation, or quiet reflection is available in Meeting Room 9. Please be respectful of others who may access these spaces. The sensory room, a space for taking a break from high levels of activity, is also located in Meeting Room 9.

Dietary Restrictions:

Both entree options are gluten free. The vegan option is gluten free and dairy free. Breakfast and snacks will have gluten free and dairy free options. If you have indicated to us that you require a vegetarian, vegan, or other specialty meal, notify the server using the meal ticket in your nametag. If you do not have a meal ticket and need one, please see Registration Desk staff.

Please inquire at the Registration Desk about accessibility requirements that are not mentioned on this page. And please let MCN staff know if you hear or see anything that needs our attention.



FULL-SERVICE UNION PRINT & MAIL

- Offset Printing • Digital Printing • Prepress • Bindery
- Mailing • Wide Format • Screen Printing
- USA Made Promotional Products

Travis Roberts

Cell: 702-371-4139

travis.roberts@ceprinter.com

1830 Elm St. S.E. • Minneapolis, MN 55414 • ceprinter.com

Schedule

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. // Registration, Breakfast, Exhibitor Hall

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. // Round I Breakout Sessions

Beyond the Campaign: Accounting Strategies That Power Long-Term Mission Impact	Meeting Room 1
Building Ease Into Your Grant Workflow	Meeting Room 2
Building Stronger Donor Communities in Uncertain Times	Meeting Room 4
Demystifying Generational Assumptions: A Data-Driven Fundraising Strategy	Meeting Room 7
The Donor Management Software Landscape in 2026	Meeting Room 3
Do's and Don'ts of Emergency Fundraising While Experiencing Trauma	Meeting Room 5
Proving Your Impact: Case Statements That Convert	Meeting Room 8
Scrappy Systems: Small Nonprofits That Look Fundable	Meeting Room 6

9:45 a.m. - 11 a.m. // Welcome & Keynote

Philanthropy in Motion: Trends, Trust, and the Future of Fundraising with Michelle Maryns, president of the Minnesota Council on Foundations	Grand Ballroom
--	----------------

11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. // Round II Breakout Sessions

AI for Fundraising: Practical Implementation for Any Budget.....	Meeting Room 6
Applying Disability Justice Principles to Your Fundraising	Meeting Room 5
Beyond the Event: A Practical Framework for Confident Donor Asks	Meeting Room 3
The Human Touch: Balancing AI and Ethical Fundraising	Meeting Room 4
Managing Individual Giving for Small Shops	Meeting Room 2
Minnesota's Charitable Gambling: You Should Know About This!	Meeting Room 1
Scenario Planning for Fundraising Success in Volatile Times.....	Meeting Room 8
So You Want to Start a Capital Campaign	Meeting Room 7

12:15 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. // Lunch, Midday Greeting & Table Conversations

During lunch, enjoy MCN's insights on the current state of nonprofit fundraising with MCN Research Manager Shonni Krengel and AFP-MN President Courtney Patel. After, engage in informal learning and discussion during table conversations with provided fundraising questions	Grand Ballroom
---	----------------

1:30 p.m. - 2 p.m. // Free Time, Wellness Activities, Exhibitor Hall, Dessert

2 p.m. - 3 p.m. // Round III Breakout Sessions

Beyond the Gala: Build Community and Reduce Burnout.....	Meeting Room 2
Corporations Are People Too: Relationship-Based Corporate Fundraising	Meeting Room 6
From Friction to Funding: Modernizing Marketing & Development to Drive Real Growth	Meeting Room 3
Grant Writing with AI: Save 75 Percent of your Time & See Results	Meeting Room 1
Now More Than Ever: Crisis Storytelling and Resilience Building	Meeting Room 5
Rethinking Donor Prospecting through a Community Framework.....	Meeting Room 8
Stop Fearing the Robot: Practical AI for Prospect Research	Meeting Room 4
The Three-Year Build: Designing a Manageable Fundraising Cycle for Under-Resourced Nonprofits	Meeting Room 7

3:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. // Round IV Breakout Sessions

Advancing a Responsive Strategic Grants Program for Nonprofits	Meeting Room 6
Economics and Donors: What the Data Says	Meeting Room 3
From Digital Signals to Fundraising Decisions.....	Meeting Room 2
Mutual Aid Giving and Nonprofits: Yes, and	Meeting Room 8
Prospect Development Systems That Work for Small Shops and Scale Up	Meeting Room 4
So You Want to Hire a Grantwriter	Meeting Room 5
Stewarding a Donor Organizing Capacity Building Program.....	Meeting Room 1
Using AI to Scale Your Fundraising Capacity.....	Meeting Room 7

4:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. // Curated Connections

Stay for a lightly facilitated networking activity taking place along the Main Concourse. There will be stations dedicated to various nonprofit fundraising topics. Join a station, engage in conversation, and meet with peers in this casual networking opportunity. Topics include Career & Community, Fundraising Strategy, and Innovation & Engagement..... Main Concourse

Keynote Speaker

Philanthropy in Motion: Trends, Trust, and the Future of Fundraising

With Minnesota Council on Foundations
President Michelle Maryns

Philanthropy is shifting – in how decisions are made, how relationships are built, and how technology is reshaping the landscape.

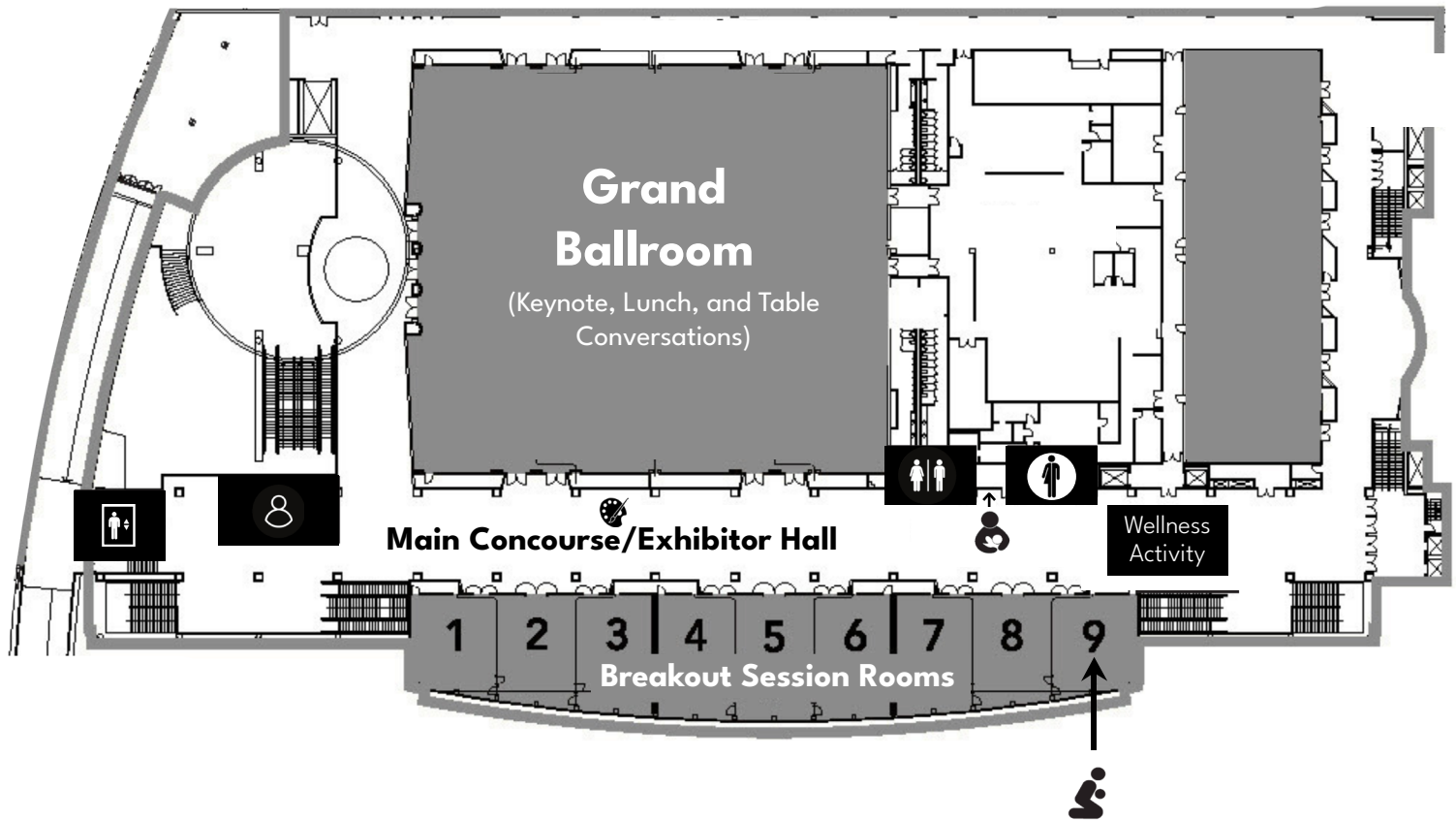
In her role as president of the Minnesota Council on Foundations, Michelle Maryns is engaging directly with funders and communities across the state. Drawing on insights from her statewide listening tour and conversations across the philanthropic sector, Michelle will share what funders are thinking about right now, how expectations are evolving, where trust, equity, and accountability are showing up in new ways, and how emerging technologies like AI may influence philanthropy in the years ahead.

For nonprofit fundraisers, this is a unique opportunity to hear directly from the philanthropic field and gain a deeper understanding of how to navigate what comes next.

Following the keynote, Michelle will be joined by **John Williams, vice president of development at Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI)**, for a candid conversation that explores these themes through the lens of nonprofit fundraising.



Conference Map



All-Gender Restroom



Registration Desk



Community Mural



Restrooms



Elevators



Sensory, Prayer & Meditation Space



Nursing Room. The secondary nursing room is on street level between Headwaters Café and Kellogg Lobby. This room can be used by more than one nursing person at a time.

Round I Breakout Sessions

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. ●

Beyond the Campaign: Accounting Strategies That Power Long-Term Mission Impact

Track: Events & Alternative Revenue

Location: Meeting Room 1

Let's demystify the financial mechanics behind capital campaigns and sustainable revenue strategies. We will cover building effective budgets, core principles of pledge accounting, managing multi-year commitments, and unique accounting considerations. You'll learn how to diversify revenue streams to protect mission continuity and reduce risk, and how to build financial models and dashboards that help leadership make informed, equitable decisions.

Presented by Joe Wallis, Abdo, LLP

Building Ease Into Your Grant Workflow

Track: Grant Writing, Prospecting & Development

Location: Meeting Room 2

Between events, donor meetings, emails, volunteer coordination, and reporting, grant deadlines can feel impossible to manage without stress or last-minute heroics. We will provide a clear framework for managing grants in a way that feels more aligned with your capacity. Learn strategies for simplifying grant tracking, creating templates, and planning ahead so grants fit into your workload instead of disrupting it.

Presented by Christine Schwitzer, founder and CEO, Holistic Grants; Max Poessnecker, development director, Exodus Lending

Building Stronger Donor Communities in Uncertain Times

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends

Location: Meeting Room 4

We will explore how giving circles are reshaping donor behavior and philanthropic norms. Drawing on research, success stories, and field-informed resources from Grapevine Giving and Philanthropy Together, participants will learn different giving circle models and practical strategies to engage or launch collective giving efforts that foster donor loyalty, shared ownership, and long-term financial resilience.

Presented by Neil Aasve, founder, and Jennifer (Jenni) Bratulich, strategic partnerships consultant, True Summit Consulting

Demystifying Generational Assumptions: A Data-Driven Fundraising Strategy

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends

Location: Meeting Room 7

Analyzing institutional giving and engagement patterns can reveal surprising insights about donor behavior across generations—and transform your fundraising strategy. We'll explore how different generations define and experience community and what this means for donor engagement. Learn how to analyze your database to identify meaningful patterns versus statistical noise, and develop personalized engagement strategies for each generation.

Presented by Tim DeCelle, senior director of advancement services, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

The Donor Management Software Landscape in 2026

Track: AI & Technology

Location: Meeting Room 3

Drawing from the 9th edition of the Donor Management Software Use and Satisfaction Report, the study author will share key findings of interest to software buyers. We'll begin with the latest data on buying cycles, decision drivers, and software satisfaction. Next, we'll look at market activity: mergers, acquisitions, and investments in the software market that nonprofits should know about. We'll conclude with a crash course on selecting software with confidence.

Presented by Karen Graham, Karen Graham Consulting

Do's and Don'ts of Emergency Fundraising While Experiencing Trauma

Track: Equity & Human-Centered Fundraising

Location: Meeting Room 5

How do you raise emergency funds while managing your own trauma and stress? The Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) lost 75% of its funding in one year due to the elimination of foreign aid, followed by the community trauma of ICE enforcement in Minnesota. Hear takeaways from CVT members on effective tactics for fundraising across the donor spectrum, and how they learned that being transparent about organizational impacts and trauma can strengthen donor relationships.

Presented by Elana Schwartzman, head of growth & engagement and Laura Kuhlmann, director of development, Center for Victims of Torture

Proving Your Impact: Case Statements That Convert

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends
Location: Meeting Room 8

This session combines impact measurement with human-centered design to help you create case statements that are both emotionally resonant and analytically rigorous. We will practice identifying hidden outcomes in your programs, quantifying ripple effects that often go uncounted, and structuring asks that speak to both hearts and spreadsheets.

Presented by Ted Carling, co-founder, Ecotone Analytics GBC; Danielle Tornquist, principal, Olio

Scrappy Systems: Small Nonprofits That Look Fundable

Track: Grant Writing, Prospecting & Development
Location: Meeting Room 6

Small and mid-sized nonprofits often do powerful work but struggle to present it in ways that feel clear, strategic, and fundable. Learn how to organize programs into clear focus areas, build simple grant tracking tools, and translate community-based services into funder-aligned language that highlights outcomes and long-term impact.

Presented by Crystal Vandevender, executive director, The Parenting Resource Center, Inc.

Round II Breakout Sessions

11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. ●

AI for Fundraising: Practical Implementation for Any Budget

Track: AI & Technology
Location: Meeting Room 6

What does AI implementation actually look like when you don't have a big budget or a tech team to lean on? We will cut through the hype to explore practical, ethical AI applications currently working in small-to-medium nonprofits: donor research automation, personalized communication at scale, grant prospecting, and meeting note summarization. We'll address real barriers—budget constraints, staff capacity, data privacy concerns, and board skepticism—alongside a phased implementation framework.

Presented by Elizabeth “E” Kitzenberg, founder & principal, The Kitzenberg Group

Applying Disability Justice Principles to Your Fundraising

Track: Equity & Human-Centered Fundraising
Location: Meeting Room 5

How can we prioritize the accessibility needs, inclusion, and liberation of the disability community in our philanthropy? Learn foundational knowledge of Disability Justice as well as actions and strategies from the intersections of the Disability Justice and Community Centric Fundraising Movements. This session is advantageous to fundraisers invested in harm reduction and social change.

Presented by Madeline Geier, disability advocate & accessibility specialist/account manager, Donordigital; Eric Gustafson, community care coordinator, Shobi's Table

Beyond the Event: A Practical Framework for Confident Donor Asks

Track: Grant Writing, Prospecting & Development
Location: Meeting Room 3

Replace uncertainty with a proven framework that transforms donor asks from an uncomfortable transaction into an authentic partnership. You'll hear candid insights from leaders representing urban, rural, and suburban communities who have successfully increased individual giving, without adding the overhead of new events.

Presented by Ellen Christine Ruiters, principal, founder, Africa Jam; Rebecca Slaby, executive director, AmazeWorks; Ben Bevis, executive director, Encircled; Wesley Jones Ruiters, manager of corporate and individual giving, Way To Grow

The Human Touch: Balancing AI and Ethical Fundraising

Track: AI & Technology
Location: Meeting Room 4

AI is rapidly reshaping how nonprofits raise funds, engage donors, and tell their stories. Yet, as technology advances, trust remains the cornerstone of philanthropy. This session explores responsible and effective approaches to using AI in fundraising—helping organizations boost efficiency and creativity while safeguarding authenticity, privacy, and equity. Participants will discuss practical examples of how AI can enhance donor segmentation, campaign storytelling, and personalized stewardship without crossing ethical lines or losing the human touch that drives generosity.

Presented by Melissa Harrison, CEO & founder, Allee Creative, LLC

Managing Individual Giving for Small Shops: Building, Automating & Prioritizing a System That Works for You

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends

Location: Meeting Room 2

Individual giving programs can be complicated to manage, especially for smaller organizations. We will outline a clear, step-by-step roadmap that prioritizes only the most important aspects of individual giving that drive long-term success and honor realistic staff capacity. That means prioritizing data collection and automation, which will give you the flexibility to scale the program over time to meet the needs of your donor base. We'll review the necessary tools to invest with a small budget, and how to use those tools to automate as many processes as possible—producing reliable data, increasing donor retention, and reducing staff burnout.

Presented by Sarah Kuenzler, individual giving manager, Keystone Community Services

Minnesota's Charitable Gambling: You Should Know About This!

Track: Events & Alternative Revenue

Location: Meeting Room 1

Last year, Minnesota saw more than \$4.9 billion of charitable gambling in the state, which provided almost \$190 million to support community needs. Those numbers may be surprising, but they shouldn't be—charitable gambling needs to be on the radar of every Minnesota nonprofit. We'll talk about what is (and isn't) charitable gambling. We'll learn about some of the common do's and don'ts as you explore whether it's a fit with your organization's fundraising philosophy. And we'll answer the perennial question: "Is our quilt raffle legal?"

Presented by Evan Johnson, Minnesota Gambling Control Board

Scenario Planning for Fundraising Success in Volatile Times

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends

Location: Meeting Room 8

Move beyond static budgets and apply financial forecasting and scenario planning to anticipate change, protect cash flow, and strengthen fundraising decision-making. We will explore how key fundraising drivers, such as donor retention, average gift size, campaign timing, and event performance, connect directly to financial outcomes. We will also examine how to translate financial insights into clear, compelling narratives for boards and donors using simple visuals and outcome-focused messaging.

Presented by Ash Sparks, NFP partner, and Jasmin McKenzie, Boyum Barendscheer

So You Want to Start a Capital Campaign

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends

Location: Meeting Room 7

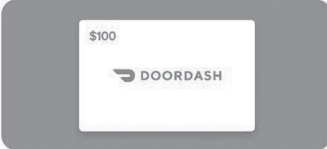
Capital campaigns are so fun and exciting, but if it is your first time leading one, knowing where to start can be a challenge. Avoid costly mistakes that could not only hurt your funding but destroy your entire campaign before it even gets off the ground. This session is perfect for those who have never been through a capital campaign before; you will leave knowing the basic do's and don'ts of starting a campaign.

Presented by Chuck Rowe, Midwest Studies Group


BOOK A DEMO

Financial confidence for every nonprofit

Take a demo. Get \$100 for DoorDash.



Round III Breakout Sessions

2 p.m. – 3 p.m. ●

Beyond the Gala: Build Community and Reduce Burnout

Track: Equity & Human-Centered Fundraising

Location: Meeting Room 2

Traditional fundraising events can be expensive, labor-intensive, and exclusionary—often relying on staff heroics while engaging a narrow slice of a nonprofit's community. Let's reimagine development events as community-centered, relationship-driven fundraising tools that build revenue, visibility, and long-term donor pipelines without burning out fundraisers. Drawing on real-world examples—including themed trivia nights, community clean-ups, creative classes, restaurant partnerships, and wellness events—this session explores how smaller, grassroots events can strengthen fundraising sustainability.

Presented by Tatiana Wagner, community engagement specialist

Corporations Are People Too: Relationship-Based Corporate Fundraising

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends

Location: Meeting Room 6

Corporations, especially large ones, may appear to be faceless, emotionless entities. But they are, in fact, made up of individual humans. In this session, we'll talk about how to identify and cultivate authentic relationships with people who work at companies, and how those relationships can be used to raise funds for your mission. This approach, which focuses on collaborating with navigators and decision-makers inside a company, may take more time, but it leads to more enduring commitments and larger gifts.

Presented by Emily Essert, Open Arms of Minnesota

From Friction to Funding: Modernizing Marketing & Development to Drive Real Growth

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends

Location: Meeting Room 3

Learn what it actually takes to:

- Reduce online giving friction;
- Align website messaging using StoryBrand principles;
- Improve SEO;
- Maximize the Google Ad Grant;
- Connect online and offline fundraising efforts into one cohesive system.

You'll hear how small shifts in clarity can unlock the ability to turn digital engagement into measurable revenue.

Presented by Ryan Ruud, CEO, Lake One; Mary Beth Meyer, marketing director, Pinky Swear Foundation

Grant Writing with AI: Save 75 Percent of Your Time & See Results

Track: AI & Technology

Location: Meeting Room 1

Learn how to leverage AI ethically, safely, and strategically to identify funding opportunities, streamline grant development, and improve efficiency without sacrificing quality or authenticity. Discover how to find and write a grant in as little as one hour using effective AI prompting techniques and receive a take-home guide featuring the exact prompts used to build a customized grant-writing AI assistant. You will leave with actionable tools, increased confidence, and a clear understanding of how to use AI to become more efficient, effective, and competitive in today's funding environment.

Presented by Karen Pifher, co-owner & consultant, Creating Community Consulting

Join us for Curated Connections, a lightly-facilitated networking activity from 4:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. in the Main Concourse.

Now More Than Ever: Crisis Storytelling and Resilience Building

Track: Equity & Human-Centered Fundraising
Location: Meeting Room 5

Minnesota nonprofits have been challenged in immense and unexpected ways since 2020. But one thing remains consistent: In times of uncertainty, nonprofits show up. This session explores how nonprofit leaders can pivot their fundraising storytelling to meet the moment in a way that is ethical, meaningful, and works smarter, not harder. You will walk away with a guide on how to pivot your storytelling, insights on crisis communications best practices, and ideas for more resilient fundraising in 2026 and beyond.

Presented by Courtney Patel, president, AFP-MN; Cat Clements, senior fundraising coach, GiveMN

Rethinking Donor Prospecting through a Community Framework

Track: Grant Writing, Prospecting & Development
Location: Meeting Room 8

Many donor prospecting efforts rely on familiar supporters: board members, long-time donors, and personal networks. That approach may sustain an organization for a time, but it rarely supports long-term growth. With donor participation declining nationwide, nonprofits must rethink how they identify and engage new supporters. Discover a community-based approach to donor prospecting that helps organizations move beyond their inner circle.

Presented by Amy Pokela, AMPO, LLC

Stop Fearing the Robot: Practical AI for Prospect Research

Track: AI & Technology
Location: Meeting Room 4

Cut through the hype and focus on how AI can be used practically, ethically, and credibly as part of a modern prospect research toolkit. We will demonstrate how ChatGPT can support core prospect research activities such as prospect identification and relationship mapping without replacing professional judgment or violating data governance standards. In addition, we will address where AI tools fail. You will learn how to recognize common risks including hallucinations, over-confidence, bias, and misattribution, and how to apply validation and quality-control practices before AI-assisted outputs are shared with gift officers or leadership. Ethical considerations, confidentiality, and internal policy alignment will be discussed.

Presented by Sarah Price, managing director of research services, BWF Zuri

The Three-Year Build: Designing a Manageable Fundraising Cycle for Under-Resourced Nonprofits

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends
Location: Meeting Room 7

Without dedicated development staff, we know that fundraising can become reactive and exhausting. This hands-on session helps executive directors, board members, and leaders doing fundraising off the side of their desk design a smarter approach. Together, we'll build an annualized fundraising cycle: a structured calendar that grows both individual donor and institutional funder pipelines over two to three years. We'll cover how to map existing relationships, balance individual giving with grant and corporate strategies, and create a rhythm of cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship that compounds over time.

Presented by Ryan Petersen, principal, Petersen Consultants



BLUEKEYMEDIA

**HEART-FOCUSED, PEOPLE-CENTERED
VIDEO STORYTELLING**

- ▶ Fundraising Videos
- ▶ Testimonial Videos
- ▶ Overview Videos
- ▶ Recruitment Videos



LEARN MORE

www.bluekeymedia.com

Round IV Breakout Sessions

3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. ●

Advancing a Responsive Strategic Grants Program for Nonprofits

Track: Grant Writing, Prospecting & Development
Location: Meeting Room 6

Minnesota's funding environment remains dynamic as foundations adapt to meet needs of the community, elevate priorities of foundation leadership, and adjust to external forces. This dynamic funding environment creates opportunities to reposition your nonprofit with funders. Discover how to design a responsive, sustainable grant program that aligns prospecting, cultivation, stewardship, and fiscal management within your strategic plan. You will learn how to secure grants while maintaining fidelity to mission and goals, gain insight into the most accurate grant prospecting tools available on a variety of budgets, and learn best practices for increasing engagement.

Presented by Tom Evers, senior advisor, and Sara Thompson, senior advisor, Access Philanthropy

Economics and Donors: What the Data Says

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends
Location: Meeting Room 3

Tariffs. Inflation. Recession. Interest rates. GDP. Tax reform. We hear all of these economic terms in the news, often with much fanfare. We also know that donors are impacted by the economy, and often will adjust their behavior. Yet, the best approach to understanding the impact of economic changes on donors is not in headlines or narratives, but in data. We will discuss the data-driven link between various economic data points and donor behavior. You will learn which data points are most correlated, and which are mostly noise. We will then discuss the most recent data on donor behavior and consider strategies to meet the moment.

Presented by Matt Haggerty, managing director, Not-for-Profit Managed Services, Baker Tilly

From Digital Signals to Fundraising Decisions

Track: AI & Technology
Location: Meeting Room 2

Nonprofit fundraising teams collect more digital data than ever, but all that data rarely leads to clearer decisions. Reports get pulled, dashboards get built, and instincts still do most of the driving. This session focuses on how nonprofits can move from activity tracking to decision-ready signals. We'll explore how to identify which digital signals actually matter, how to reduce noise, and how to align reporting with the questions fundraisers need answered: What's working? Where are donors getting stuck? What should we change next?

Presented by Jeff Coffey, Wangle LLC

Mutual Aid Giving and Nonprofits: Yes, and...

Track: Equity & Human-Centered Fundraising
Location: Meeting Room 8

Mutual aid has been on the rise since the founding of GoFundMe, the uprisings in 2020, and the federal occupation of Minnesota in 2025-2026. Nonprofits can have a productive role in supporting mutual aid AND growing community support for their own missions. Trilingua Cinema will discuss how they have approached raising money for mutual aid as a part of their mission work and Next in Nonprofits will review how to keep this authentic—inviting support while not usurping relationships. The session will review peer-supported tools in addition to centralized giving.

Presented by Steve Boland, co-founder/managing partner, Next in Nonprofits

Prospect Development Systems That Work for Small Shops and Scale Up

Track: Grant Writing, Prospecting & Development

Location: Meeting Room 4

Fundraisers know that strong prospect research, portfolio strategy, and data habits are essential for long-term success. This session is designed primarily for small shops and solo fundraisers, with clear examples of how each system can scale up for larger teams. We'll break prospect development into practical, manageable components—donor research, portfolio strategy, and data hygiene—to show how to build simple, repeatable systems that support effective fundraising without requiring specialized staff or expensive tools.

Presented by Don Irwin, senior manager of development data and research, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

So You Want to Hire a Grant Writer

Track: Grant Writing, Prospecting & Development

Location: Meeting Room 5

You know your organization could bring in more grant dollars, but where do you start? And how do you know when it's time to hire a full-time grantwriter? In 2019, Rise brought on its first dedicated grantwriter. Seven years later, the program has achieved significant growth and learned valuable lessons. This session offers a candid case study of the organizational shifts, successes, and challenges that followed. We'll discuss how to pitch a strong case to your board and leadership, how to prepare staff and programs for grant funding, and how to anticipate and manage challenges that come with increased grant funding.

Presented by Nicole Conti, associate director of grants and Noel McCormick, VP of advancement, Rise, Incorporated

Stewarding a Donor Organizing Capacity Building Program

Track: Strategy, Growth & Trends

Location: Meeting Room 1

In 2025, the Legal Rights Center launched a grassroots fundraising program, bringing together volunteers to build skills and community while raising significant general operating dollars. The campaign was successful on all fronts and has quickly solidified as a powerful individual giving strategy. Hear about LRC's process and gain an in-depth perspective on donor organizing and practical strategies to support relational fundraising within your base. Discuss how lessons learned could apply to your organization and how you could build buy-in from your board and volunteers.

Presented by James Miller, development and communications director, Legal Rights Center; Ray Martinez, founder and principal, RM Methods

Using AI to Scale Your Fundraising Capacity

Track: AI & Technology

Location: Meeting Room 7

One of the most common challenges for organizations no matter their size is scaling their fundraising capacity to meet their mission's need. The evolution of AI offers a new set of potential tools that can scale even the smallest fundraising shop to build strategies that used to be the purview of only larger organizations with significant staffing infrastructure. You will learn how AI can be used to leverage fundraising opportunities, regardless of your organization's size or fundraising staff capacity.

Jake Blumberg, principal/founder JB Strategies; Jenna Ray, executive director/CEO, GiveMN



Before they
open their
hearts, they
have to open
the envelope.

**Minnesota's nonprofit provider
serving local & national organizations**

• STRATEGY • CREATIVE • PRINTING
• MAILING • DATA SEGMENTATION

Find us at
Booth 6

palmer
Non-Profit Communications

A Division of POS Professional Office Services, Inc.

Conference Sponsors & Exhibitors

Visit Conference Exhibitors to discover tools and expertise to support your work. The Exhibitor Hall is located in the Main Concourse, outside of the Breakout Session Rooms.

Lake One

www.lakeone.io

Digital transformation is complex. From getting stakeholders to align, to navigating a sea of opinions and slew of tools, it's overwhelming. Lake One makes big change possible in simple, yet strategic strokes, using a structured and collaborative approach to problem-solving. We get to know your business, envision its future, and make the journey to that future possible by supporting everyday decisions and actions that generate lasting impact.

BILL

www.bill.com

BILL is the only platform that empowers finance leaders like you to run your business—your way. Automate AP & AR, make informed decisions backed by real-time data, and control spend with a powerful company card and expense management solution. Nearly half a million businesses pay or get paid through BILL.

Blue Key Media

www.bluekeymedia.com

Blue Key Media is an award-winning video production company based in Minneapolis + St. Paul that's passionate about sharing purpose driven stories. We lead with heart to connect with viewers emotionally to get you more sales or donations, hire more effectively, and make you stand out from the competition.

Boyum Barendscheer

www.myboyum.com/industries-we-serve/nonprofit

Boyum Barendscheer provides audit, tax, accounting, and advisory services tailored to the unique needs of nonprofit organizations. Our experienced professionals help nonprofits strengthen financial operations, navigate complex challenges, and achieve their missions with confidence. Through trusted relationships and industry expertise, we serve as a partner for organizations making a difference.

Bridgewater Bank

www.bridgewaterbankmn.com

Known for responsive support and simple solutions, Bridgewater Bank is a premier, full-service Minnesota bank serving businesses, entrepreneurs, and successful individuals. Its team of local experts delivers a comprehensive suite of deposit, lending, and treasury management solutions, paired with a relationship-based approach to banking.

CE Print + Promo

www.ceprinter.com

CE Print + Promo is a full-service union printing company with a rich history of serving nonprofit organizations in Minnesota. We feature union staff in all production departments including offset printing, digital printing, prepress, bindery, mailing, wide format and screen printing. We also provide USA Made promotional products.

Double Good

www.doublegood.com

Double Good's industry-leading virtual fundraising platform lets organizations, school groups, and other youth-focused causes raise the funds they need quickly and effortlessly without handling paperwork, payments, or products. Organizations can sell popcorn virtually by sharing a link with friends and families—and keep 50 percent of every dollar in sales to fuel their dreams.

Grant Professionals Association - Upper Midwest Chapter

www.grantprofessionals.org/page/uppermidwest

The Upper Midwest Chapter of the Grant Professional Association (GPA) is a professional membership organization dedicated to grant professionals. The UMW Chapter includes new and seasoned professionals residing in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Our members work in a variety of government, education, and nonprofit organizations, as well as independent consultants.

Hoan Marketing

www.hoanmarketing.com

Hoan Marketing empowers mission-driven nonprofits and businesses to reach more supporters online. With website, marketing, branding, and consulting services, Hoan is your partner in making mission statements come alive.

Minnesota Council of Nonprofits

www.minnesotanonprofits.org

As one of the largest state associations of nonprofits in the country, the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) joins nonprofits across interest area to advance important nonprofit issues. MCN is a trusted ally and advocate for you, offering relevant workshops and conferences, timely nonprofit data and research, impactful state and federal advocacy, and a strong member network and benefits.

Minnesota Council on Foundations

www.mcf.org

MCF has partnered with Impala to bring free access to Impala Ecosystems to Minnesota through October 2027. Talk with us to learn about how you can use this data platform to strengthen your work through finding information on grants, funders, nonprofits, and cause areas important to you.

Minnesota Gambling Control Board

www.mn.gov/gcb

The Minnesota Gambling Control Board provides the resources and regulation to make the state's lawful gambling industry — the largest in the nation — successful. We ensure the integrity of operations, create educational materials, and ensure that net profits are used to address a wide range of charitable needs across the state.

Next in Nonprofits

www.NextInNonprofits.com

Whether you're a solo fundraiser wearing every hat or part of a larger department, Next in Nonprofits gives you extra capacity and expertise. We write grants, build fundraising strategy, and handle the work that piles up when time runs short. From hands-on execution to high-level guidance, we meet you there.

Palmer Non-Profit Communications

www.palmerprinting.com/non-profit

Palmer Non-Profit Communications has an experienced team that offers the wisdom and proven methods for connecting with your donors. Your strategist, project manager, graphic designers, copy editors and data experts are all under one roof in one production facility. Our fully integrated workflow ensures your projects advance smoothly throughout all phases.

Thank You, Conference Sponsors!

Partner Sponsor:



Connector Sponsors:



Upcoming MCN Fundraising Events



Scan Me

August 11

Beginning Grantseeking | 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. | Virtual

August 11

Event Planners Incubator | 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. | Virtual | Free | Re-offered Nov 10

August 13

Beginning Grantwriting | 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. | Virtual

September 2

Intermediate Grant Writing: Strategic Approaches to Competitive Proposals
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. | Virtual

September 9

Grantwriters Incubator | 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. | Virtual | Free | Re-offered Nov 4

Sept 15, 29, Oct 13

Building and Cultivating Major Donors for Small- to Mid-Size Nonprofits Series
9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. | Virtual

September 22

Introduction to Individual Donor Development | 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. | Virtual

October 29-30

2026 MCN Annual Conference | In-Person, Saint Paul RiverCentre