

Tips for Securing A Matching Grant

Matching grants can double the dollars raised for your Give-Education campaign.

By securing a Give-Education matching grant, a funder is agreeing to match a certain amount of money raised online the day of the event, on the condition that the same amount will also be raised in online donations that day.

And donors are easily motivated to give if they know their donation will have twice the impact! In 2016, nearly \$17 billion dollars was given to charities via corporate funding, according to Double the Donation. According to TechSoup, “Mentioning matching gifts in fundraising appeals results in a 71% increase in the response rate and a 51% increase in the average donation amount (and that’s prior to receiving matching gift funds).”

Matching grants are a great way to steward your corporate donors by providing them with a marketable opportunity to be involved in your organization’s fundraising. You can steward them by thanking them publicly via email and social media ahead of the day, and reminding donors in your fundraising appeal about your matching gift from their organization.

Where can you find a matching grant for Give-Education?

You shouldn’t have to look far and wide to find a donor willing to provide a matching grant! Here’s where you can start:

- **Board members:** Your nonprofit’s Board of Directors is invested in seeing your nonprofit fundraise successfully, and often you’ll find your board members are willing to invest literally as well as figuratively. Let them know that you’re looking to secure matching grants for Give-Education. You’ll be surprised by how eager they are to help out!
- **Corporate donors:** Odds are, your nonprofit has companies you’ve worked with in the past and have a good relationship with. Whether they have an employee giving program set up, have sponsored an event in the past, or have just been publicly supportive of you, reach out! You can explain to them why having a matching grant matters so much and offer to show them some extra love by adding their logo to your page and thanking them on social media.
- **Major donors:** “Past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior,” as they say, and when it comes to something like donating to a nonprofit that’s extra true. Asking donors who’ve repeatedly shown their support for your nonprofit to provide

a matching grant gives them a new and meaningful way to support your work, and since they've already shown that they're willing to donate in a big way, they're low-hanging fruit.

If you've exhausted those options, also consider volunteer groups, in-kind donors (e.g., grocery stores that donate food to your nonprofit) or other businesses you've been looking to partner with.

Talking Points for Securing Matching Grants

When working to secure a matching grant for Give-Education, you'll need to make a good case for why it's so important. Businesses and donors may not understand how vital matching grants are on giving days, so here are a few points you'll want to keep in your pocket to help sway prospects.

- **Matching grants motivate donors.** People love a good deal. For that reason, being able to double their donation to a cause they care about can be the deciding factor for some people in whether they will donate.
- **Providing a matching grant doubles *their* donation too!** If you have a donor or business that gives to your nonprofit annually, you can convince them to provide a matching grant on Give-Education by explaining that their gift (while already incredibly important) can have an even bigger impact when used as a matching grant. They double the dollar amount by bringing in donations, and creating opportunities for future donations by enticing first-time donors to make a contribution.
- **Matching grants can help you win big.** You have the opportunity to win prizes during "power hours" throughout the day. When used strategically, matching grants can be used to drive donations during these power hours and win prize money for your cause. Having a matching grant available during a power hour gives your nonprofit a competitive edge!
- **Matching grants create interest and drive traffic.** On Give-Education, it's all about promotion and getting supporters to click the link to your donation page. Having a matching grant available gives you an angle to promote your page, creates buzz, and inspired donations.

Tips for Securing a Matching Grant

Evaluate organizations based on the three "W"s:

- What can you not accomplish on your own?
- When is the right time?
- Who is the right person/entity to augment your work?

Make sure your ask is reasonable. A donor that hasn't ever given a gift is less likely to give a \$10,000 grant than a \$1,000 gift. Start small and remember that stewarding takes time. If all goes well this year you can ask for a bigger gift next year.

Consider tying the match to a specific use for the money. Matching grants work really well on projects where you are raising money toward something that is tangible and visible. Donors tend to respond to matches if they can see that their donation is actually carrying more value.

Other Tips for Matching Grants

- **Get an early start.** Waiting until the last minute to start talking to your board, donors and business partners about a matching grant means you're less likely to get one. Your prospective grantors will feel rushed to make a decision, which is unpleasant for them. You may need time to work out the details that last-minute planning doesn't give you. So, start setting up meetings, making phone calls and sending emails as soon as your nonprofit registers for Give-Education to ensure you have plenty of time to make it happen.
- **Assign a point of contact for each prospect.** The people you'll be asking to provide a matching grant are people your nonprofit will want to build or maintain a positive relationship with. It helps to have a specific contact at your nonprofit in charge of communicating with them. That way, they don't feel as though they are getting passed around between staff members, which can be frustrating, cause miscommunications, and make them feel unimportant.
- **Prepare some materials.** Preparing a flier, brochure or even just a simple graphic with all the information your prospect needs to know about matching grants makes your nonprofit look professional and organized. Be sure to include Give-Education's date, a brief explanation of what the campaign is all about, how matching grants work and any terms your nonprofit would like to include. This also gives you great fodder for following up! For instance, after a phone call with a potential grantor, you can send an email with your info attached for them to review.

- **Be willing to offer something in return.** It's great to approach businesses with an idea of some perks your nonprofit can offer them in return for a matching grant. Things as simple as linking to their website on your Mightycause page, tagging them on social media, or putting fliers or coupons for their business in your nonprofit's lobby can make providing a matching grant much more enticing.
- **Market it.** Improperly marketing matching grants may as well not exist, so make sure you include your matching grant in all of your promotions for Give-Education. Put the information on your website and make sure your supporters know when it's available.
- **Say thank you!** If a person or business provides a matching grant on Give-Education, make sure you go the extra mile to thank them! In addition to the usual (a phone call, handwritten thank you card) you can consider extra love. Thoughtful things like shoutouts on social media, inviting them in for catered lunch at your facilities, throwing them a happy hour can help secure your grant for next year.