



“When a girl has confidence, everything is possible.”
- Ann Bancroft

Capstone Research, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation
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*“In 5 years, whenever anyone thinks about the state of girls in Minnesota,
I want them to think about the Ann Bancroft Foundation.”*
Ethelind Kaba, Executive Director

Introduction

The Ann Bancroft Foundation is having an identity crisis, of sorts.

Ann Bancroft, internationally known explorer and the first woman to reach both the North and South Poles, launched her foundation 25 years ago. Because she is an avid outdoor enthusiast, there is a perception among some audiences that her foundation awards grants in the outdoor, environmental, or sustainability spaces.

This is a problem — because this assumption is not true. In reality, the foundation provides grants up to \$500 to Minnesota girls that allow them to explore their dreams and help them realize their potential in an interest area of their choice.

Outside of the nonprofit community in the Twin Cities, there are additional identity concerns. Some audiences hear the name “Ann Bancroft” and think of notable actress Anne Bancroft. Others are simply not aware of the organization at all.

As a result of this case of mistaken identity, the organization is missing out on potential donors and revenue from fundraising.

Background

The foundation's value proposition is to empower children who identify as girls to discover their unlocked potential. It delivers this by awarding grants to girls in grades K-12 so that they can explore activities that help them build confidence, pride, self-esteem, and self-advocacy. Grants can be used to fund art, cultural, leadership, educational, outdoor, athletic, or dance participation fees. Each grantee must identify a mentor — a trusted adult who encourages and inspires personal growth. Mentors are often teachers, coaches, family friends, or youth group leaders. The foundation's grants have supported more than 5,300 girls since 1997.

This year, as the organization celebrates its 25th anniversary, it is in the midst of transition. In 2021, it welcomed a new executive director; and earlier this year a new director of development and an operations administrator. There are plans to add a program manager and marketing communications manager in the coming months. This summer, the organization will begin building a new strategic plan to set the course for the next five years.

When it comes to strategic planning, the foundation's Executive Director Ethelind Kaba has big aspirations. "In 5 years, whenever anyone thinks about the state of girls in Minnesota, I want them to think about the Ann Bancroft Foundation," (E. Kaba, personal communication, March 12, 2022). Her vision is to:

- Grow organizational revenue to \$3 million, a 375% increase.
- Move from a transactional model to an endowment model, which would allow revenue to be invested and grow over time and provide income to fund the organization's programming.

The organization entered 2022 in a strong financial position, having exceeded its 2021 revenue goals by 39 percent. As a result, it has a year of operating reserves. However, donor retention dropped by 18 percent in 2021. Additionally, the number of new donors fell by 11 percent. For the near term, the organization is focused on building a strong foundation to support its upcoming strategic plan.

The 2022 priorities for individual giving and programming include:

- Individual giving
 - To increase donor retention to 40%.
 - Increase donor acquisition by 5% over 2021 total.
- Programming
 - Increase grantmaking footprint in greater Minnesota by 30%.
 - Award 250 grants.
 - For its 25th anniversary, award two \$2,500 scholarships to program alumnae (also known as Trailblazers) who are in the high school or college-age range to use for secondary education or career readiness/exploration.

Insights

The foundation's transition comes at a time when individual giving is having a big impact:

- According to Giving USA, \$471 billion was given to charity or nonprofit organizations in 2020. Seventy-eight percent of funds given were from individuals and bequests, 19 percent from foundations, and four percent from corporations (Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2021).
- In Minnesota, 71 percent of funds given came from individuals in 2020 — \$5.23 billion given by individuals vs. \$2.1 billion by private foundations, community and public

foundations, and corporate foundations and giving programs (Minnesota Council on Foundations, 2021).

A focus on individual giving is a priority for the foundation. According to Kaba, it's critically important to cultivate individual donors and family foundations. "Many nonprofits believe they need to go after institutional or corporate donations because of the big dollar amounts. But the result of the extra work and nurturing you put in with individuals leads to more loyalty."

Loyal donors can mean more stability for the organization. According to Kaba, corporate donors can be volatile and tend to give to short-term causes that are making news. For example, during the recent invasion of Ukraine by Russia, many corporations prioritized gifts to organizations like the International Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Despite a rich culture of individual giving in the U.S., support for organizations that benefit women and girls represents a small share:

- Philanthropic support for women's and girls' organizations reached \$7.1 billion in 2017, but represented 1.6 percent of overall charitable giving (IUPUI Women's Philanthropy Institute, 2020).

KEY INSIGHT: Individual households drive the largest percentage of participation in giving to charity in Minnesota and nationally. This represents an opportunity for the foundation to continue its focus on individual giving, which aligns with its values.

The foundation's work is more critical than ever, given the state of girls in Minnesota and nationwide.

- A recent New York Times op-ed highlighted findings from a 2021 U.S. Surgeon General report that found in early 2021 that suicide attempts rose 51 percent for adolescent girls

compared to the same period in 2019. The figure rose four percent for boys (Richtel, 2021).

- Inequities for women and girls in Minnesota persist, despite progress, according to the Women's Foundation of Minnesota (Women's Foundation of Minnesota & Center on Women, Gender, and Public Policy, n.d.).
 - The gender wage gap, a leading indicator of gender economic equality, has not narrowed over the past five years. On average, Minnesota women make \$0.79 for every dollar that men make.
 - Girls are nearly twice as likely as boys to report significant, daily problems with feeling down, depressed, or hopeless.
 - Minnesota teenage girls are 2-3 times as likely to attempt suicide as teenage boys.

The impact of mentoring, though, can make a difference in young people's well-being.

- Grantees report an increase in confidence, self-esteem, pride, and self-advocacy as a result of receiving their grants (Ann Bancroft Foundation, 2017).
 - Ninety-five percent of girls surveyed indicated that their mentor's support through the grant process was helpful.
 - Eighty-nine percent of girls are still in touch with their mentor now after their funded activity.
- Researchers suggest that mentoring can be an effective intervention for youth who are already coping relatively well under somewhat difficult circumstances (Rhodes, J., 2008).
- Young people with mentorship relationships report favorable outcomes, according to The Mentoring Effect (MENTOR, 2014), which stated:
 - "Young people who had mentors report setting higher educational goals and are more likely to attend college than those without mentors."

- “Young adults who had mentors, particularly those at-risk, are more likely to report engaging in productive and beneficial activities than youth without a mentor.”
- “Young adults with a mentor are more likely to hold a leadership position in a club, sports team, school council, or another group (51 percent versus 22).”

KEY INSIGHT: The foundation’s value proposition is relevant to issues currently faced by girls; and the outcomes of its programming have potential for lasting impact.

According to Director of Development Besty McDermott-Altheimer, the foundation’s existing donor base is largely female, roughly age 40-65, professionally accomplished, and primarily from the Twin Cities (B. McDermott-Altheimer, personal communication, March 24, 2022). This is a strength for the organization when you consider that women are gaining influence in financial decision-making and are becoming better positioned to make significant contributions to charity.

- Women control more wealth and are more likely to take a values-based approach to investing. Younger women (millennials) are more likely to take the lead in financial decisions than older women (baby boomers and gen X), (Zakrzewski, A., et al., 2020).
- By 2030, American women are projected to be the recipients of the majority of \$30 trillion in financial assets from baby boomers (Baghai, P., et al., 2020).
- Women live an average of five years longer than men (CDC, January 2020).

KEY INSIGHT: The increase of wealth held by women represents an opportunity to capitalize on the foundation’s value proposition with a demographic that represents its existing donor base. This trend also indicates an opportunity to acquire and nurture younger donors, as well as work with older existing donors on planned bequests/estate gifts.

Competitive landscape

The foundation's mission is unique in how it allows grantees to explore activities and opportunities from different areas of interest. Similarly sized nonprofits in the Twin Cities tend to focus on activity-specific support (e.g. music, soccer, STEM education) or grants and/or programming that target all genders. Because of these factors, the organization does not have any true peers where donors are giving to one organization over the other because of its similar mission.

As noted earlier when corporate giving was discussed, stakeholder interviews indicated that competition is more apparent with causes that gain high levels of visibility due to their timeliness (e.g. humanitarian relief, civil unrest).

KEY INSIGHT: Low competition from similar organizations and flexibility for grantees represents an opportunity for the foundation to demonstrate the benefits of how grantees explore their own potential without requiring them to participate in a specific activity.

Interview highlights

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with the organization's executive director, director of development, a former board member, a current donor, and an advocate who raised funds and awareness by walking across America.

Evidence of identity issue:

- “You may want to ditch the pearls and do more ski outfits.” – A colleague/mentor of Kaba when finding out about her appointment to executive director, assuming the organization had an outdoor focus.

- “People always thought it was the actress.” – Erin Dietrich, Minnesotan who walked across America and raised money and awareness for the organization (E. Dietrich, personal communication, March 17, 2022).
- One interviewee indicated that she did not know about the organization until she began working at another nonprofit and learned about it through a connection. When asked what the foundation’s best-kept secret is, she said, “The organization itself.”
- Interviewee who identified as a low-income single mom: “For my daughter, I looked for opportunities for funding for things. The Ann Bancroft Foundation would have been perfect — looking for a mentor and getting her involved in positive relationships. I was surprised that I never stumbled across it. Because I was looking.”
- On why the foundation struggles to earn larger gifts: “The perception is that the organization is small and could not handle a large gift — and maybe that’s why big donors don’t give more. Because the narrative has been more focused on the microgrants and the activity instead of the skill building and transformational thing the activity allows you to do because of the confidence and self advocacy you develop.”
- “It may be time to shift the narrative away from Ann herself and focus more on the girls and the outcomes they’re experiencing.”

Observations related to mission:

- “It’s easy for me to give and know that the money is going to a place that will directly impact an individual. I don’t know that all organizations make a difference in ‘a’ person’s life, rather than being diluted or spread out.”
- “It’s important for girls to hear a yes in a sea of nos, and to have somebody, an adult [mentor], stand by them and believe in them and show them there’s value in their dreams and the reaching for what they want.”

- “It’s a joy to support girls. The organization is in a really important moment in [its history] and the world given the pandemic's impact on girls.”
- “There is something about this organization that brings people joy. The idea of investing in girls is life giving. The tenacity and possibility, there’s something about that as a brand proposition.”

Thoughts on the current state of the organization:

- Several interviewees raised concerns about gifts from donors with direct connection to Ann Bancroft herself, rather than the organization.
- “Founder’s syndrome” and themes around an “old girls’ club” mindset came up in several interviews, indicating an appetite to modernize the organization for the future, while still honoring its roots and the value brought by its founding members. “How do we bring along the people who have been there since the beginning? How do we keep them involved in this new evolution?”
- “Wouldn’t it be great if they got a multimillion contribution every year? They would have to change their model. Not sure they can create that demand in their current structure.”
- “I think there’s an education hurdle. I’m not sure they have a really strong clarity of longevity for people who want to provide grant money. They haven’t always had a long-term vision for the organization and how to financially support it.”
- From a marketing perspective, several interviewees raised concerns about the grassroots nature of how people learn about the organization, often through community organizations and existing relationships and partnerships. Some indicated a need to be more bold in marketing efforts to drive more awareness.

Content observations

The foundation shares stories of its impact across multiple communication channels. In reviewing these channels, I observed insights from earned media stories, alumnae impact statements, mentors, and parents, storytelling content from the organization's website, and social media profiles. Editorial themes include organizational news, event announcements and recaps, news from alumnae, solicitations, and timely priorities like Give to the Max Day and International Women's Day.

Social Media

- Profiles on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram appear to be broadcasting nearly identical content with little variation between channels. This represents an opportunity for the organization to deepen its engagement with social media followers by optimizing its approach to channel-specific strategies.
- The organization is not using live video across any of its social channels or YouTube. There is an opportunity to leverage this tactic where it can have the largest impact, on events like Give to the Max Day or the organization's annual gala.
- It is unclear whether the organization uses paid social activations on any channel at this time. This represents an opportunity to use paid tactics to strategically target prospective donors and grantees, particularly through the use of geographic, demographic, and behavioral targeting.

Email

- The organization distributes a monthly email newsletter.
- Since Kaba joined the organization, the newsletter has consistently featured a message from the executive director.

- Newsletters include calls to action for readers to donate and, when applicable, apply for a grant/share the opportunity to apply for a grant.
- The newsletter is a strong foundational channel that the organization can continue to leverage to further deepen engagement with current stakeholders, as well as build awareness among new prospective donors and grantees.

Earned Media

- There has been an uptick in media coverage since Kaba joined the organization in September 2021.
- Recent coverage includes on-air appearances by both Kaba and Bancroft, as well as coverage of grantees in local and regional media.
- Kaba and the foundation also were featured in a multimedia series by the Minnesota Lynx and Timberwolves organization as part of its International Women's Day initiative.
- This increase in earned media coverage represents an opportunity for the organization to gain more visibility and credibility beyond its existing stakeholders, particularly as it looks to extend its reach into greater Minnesota.

SWOT Analysis

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clear, simple mission and value proposition. ● New leader with strong strategic vision who is media savvy and well-connected. ● Strong name association with well-known, inspirational explorer and activist. ● Loyal, long-term volunteers and donors. ● Documented outcomes. ● Financial stability despite COVID headwinds. 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of mission clarity with external groups. ● Perception of an “old guard” among long-time volunteers and leadership. ● Lack of awareness outside the Twin Cities. ● Year-over-year decrease in donors and retention. ● Legacy gifts are largely tied directly to Ann Bancroft rather than the organization.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Women are controlling more wealth, making more financial decisions, and living longer. ● Strong culture of individual giving in Minnesota and the US. ● Mission of supporting girls is highly relevant post-COVID. ● Untapped gifts among existing donors and prospects. ● Extending into areas outside the metro for both grants and donations. 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Low participation in giving to organizations that support women and girls. ● Competition with more visible, timely causes (e.g. humanitarian relief, civil unrest).

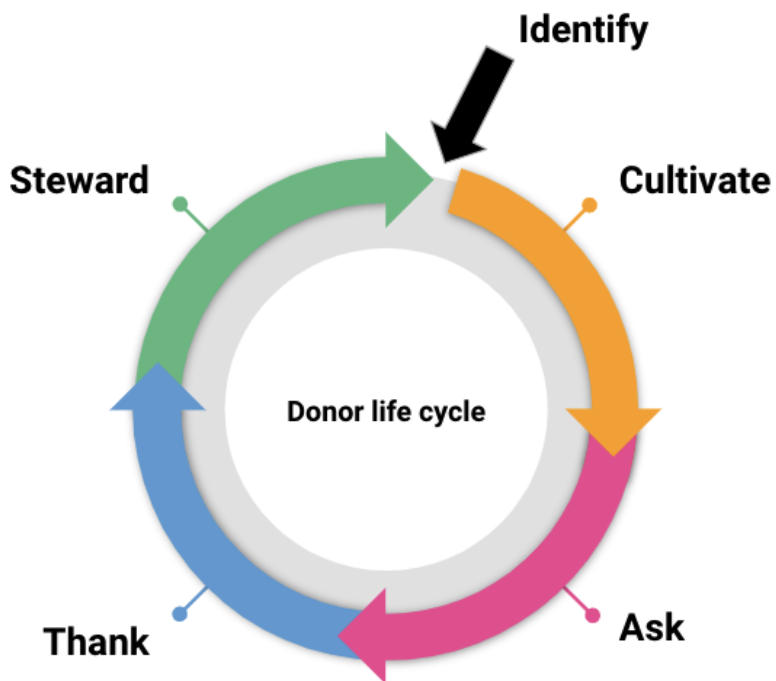
Communications objectives

To help the Ann Bancroft Foundation meet its 2022 strategic priorities, the following communications objectives are proposed.

Business objective	Communications objective
Achieve 40% donor retention (an increase of 10 percentage points)	Deepen engagement with current donors and re-engage and lapsed donors
Increase total number of donors by 5% over last year	Increase brand awareness in emerging donor audiences
30% increase in greater-Minnesota grantees	Increase brand awareness in greater Minnesota

Target audiences

For the organization to achieve its communications objectives, it will be imperative that it focus its messaging toward specific key audiences. According to its 2021 development plan, the foundation has an opportunity to engage with donors at multiple points within its donor life cycle. In particular, it identifies goals of upgrading current mid-level donors (\$250-999) and cultivating estate gifts for donors at that life stage. Additionally, with the business goals of increasing acquisition and geographic footprint, an opportunity exists in the earliest stages of the donor journey.



Modified from Ann Bancroft Foundation 2021 Development Plan.

I used MRI-Simmons to collect insights on the individuals who are most likely to help the foundation reach its business and communication goals. Based on the following combination of base factors, attitudes and behaviors, two age-based targets were identified.

Female living in Minnesota	+	Age 35-49 Household income \$100k+	+	Given to charity in the last 12 months
Female living in Minnesota	+	Age 50+ Household income \$100k+	+	Given to charity in the last 12 months

According to MRI-Simmons, women aged 35-49 who live in Minnesota with a household income of \$100k+ have a high likelihood of giving to charity. The likelihood goes up for women aged 50+ with similar household incomes. This is an indicator of a strong culture of giving in Minnesota

and also of the shifting of financial decision making toward women that was discovered in secondary research.

Media usage

Women in both age groups use social media regularly, with Facebook leading the way in volume. Facebook Groups in particular are popular with these audiences; and the younger group indicates they like to be connected with friends wherever they go, which could be an indicator of the sense of community influence in their lives. The younger group indicated that they especially enjoy posting content on social media. While the younger group is less likely to read a newspaper online or in print, the older group indicates that they are more likely to do so.

Personas

With these parameters in mind, as well as the insights collected through primary and secondary research, I propose the following personas, which represent the ideal individual in the two target audiences:

Dreammaker “Diana”



- 51-year-old white cis female, she/her
- Married to female partner since 2012, together since 2005
- Two middle-school age children
- Vice president of marketing at a Fortune 500 company
- MBA from University of St. Thomas
- Lives in Minneapolis
- Made first donation to the foundation after learning about it from a friend
- Gives annually through employer matching gift program to double her impact
- Active on Facebook to stay connected with friends and family, and share community-centered content around issues important to her family, including racial equity, fair wages for teachers. Subscribes to the Star Tribune and reads the New York Times online.

Diana represents the organization’s typical donor. She is a professionally accomplished Gen X woman who lives in the Twin Cities with her wife and kids. She is a friend of a friend of Ann Bancroft.

Aspirational “Abby”



- 37-year-old multi-racial cis female, she/her
- Married to male partner since 2014
- Has MBA from St. Cloud State University
- Senior manager of personal banking at a regional bank in central Minnesota
- Lives in Brainerd
- Kids age 7 and 9, active in club sports, Girl Scouts, and YMCA summer activities
- Serves on the advisory board of the Brainerd Lakes Area Women’s Fund
- Active on Instagram where she shares photos of her kids and travel adventures, uses Facebook primarily to connect with groups that align with her interests and activities, uses TikTok for viewing only.

Abby is earlier in her career than Diana, but on a similar professional path. She is influential in her friend group and community, and is connected to organizations with potential mentors and grantees.

Brand personality

The foundation's existing brand guidelines include a brand manifesto, (Ann Bancroft Foundation, 2017). Stakeholder interviews and content observations indicate that the current manifesto is representative of the brand's personality. It centers the narrative on grant recipients and the flexibility they have to choose the type of activity they want to try.

As an area of opportunity, I recommend tweaking the manifesto to include more active and aspirational language, as well as place a higher emphasis on impact and outcomes.

Existing manifesto	Updated manifesto
<p><i>There's a spark when a girl realizes she has someone she can count on to support her dreams. The Ann Bancroft Foundation believes in nurturing that spark. Through mentorship and grants, we connect girls to opportunities beyond their normal world. From horseback riding to computer/tech camps to outdoor exploring to music lessons and art classes, the opportunities are limitless and the benefit to society and the girls we serve is enormous.</i></p>	<p><i>A spark ignites when a girl realizes she has the potential to achieve her dreams. The Ann Bancroft Foundation believes in nurturing that spark.</i></p> <p><i>Through mentorship and grants, we empower girls to explore activities that expand their worlds. From STEM camps to outdoor adventures, music lessons to team sports, dance classes to cooking lessons, the opportunities are limitless — and the impact is enormous.</i></p> <p><i>Because when a girl has confidence, anything is possible.</i></p>

Strategic positioning: The Big Idea

Under the foundation's current transactional model of fundraising, donors are uniquely positioned to directly impact grant recipients with their gifts. To drive awareness of this impact and engage with stakeholders at multiple stages of the donor life cycle, I propose creating a

strategic communications campaign around the idea of investing in an individual girl. Titled “Invest in a Girl. Sponsor a Dream,” my big idea is to position the \$500 gift as an opportunity to fully fund the experience of a grantee.

Audience implications for “Invest in a Girl. Sponsor a Dream”:

- **Legacy donors:** For those giving at the mid-level, “Sponsor a Dream” encourages increasing gifts to meet increments of the maximum amount of an individual grant. For example, \$1,500 for three grants.
- **Prospective donors:** For first-time and younger donors, or people who otherwise may find \$500 to be a barrier, the campaign will be positioned to encourage groups of women to consider “bundling” a donation to total \$500 or increments of \$500. Some examples of groups might include book clubs, fitness classes, online mom groups, or parents of youth sports teams — the types of communities that tend to use Facebook Groups to connect.

I believe this strategy will be effective because it takes into account each of the key insights highlighted from primary and secondary research by:

- Focusing on individual giving,
- Illuminating the organization’s value proposition of empowering girls at an important time in society,
- Capitalizing on the increased giving power of women, who are making more household financial decisions and inheriting more wealth, and
- Leveraging the foundation’s uniqueness in how, unlike other causes that may be more prominent in the news, it allows the donor to have a more direct impact.

Communications strategy

The foundation's brand guidelines offer overarching key messages that speak to its mission and value proposition. These messages align nicely with the active and aspirational language in the recommended update to the brand manifesto. They include:

- Providing a safe place for girls to dream.
- Connecting girls with activities that expand their worlds.
- Sparking a girl's potential and brightening her future.
- Nurturing the belief to do and be more.

Key messages

To support the "Sponsor a Dream" positioning strategy, communications will need to provide additional context and relevance to help move audiences through the donor life cycle. I recommend the following key messages:

- Supporting girls has never been more important.
- By exploring activities outside their worldview, girls can gain confidence and self esteem, and build skills in self-advocacy.
- But for many girls, cost can be a barrier. For others, the lack of support of a trusted adult can lead to loss of interest or motivation.
- You have the power to enable a girl to discover her spark and explore her full potential.
- Your \$500 gift will have a direct impact on a girl by fully funding her grant and mentoring experience.
- Your gift makes an immediate and long-term impact on a girl's life—and in our community. Because when a girl has confidence, anything is possible.
- Invest in a girl. Sponsor a dream.

These key messages executed across an optimized mix of media will best position the organization to have the greatest impact on its communication objectives.

Media

The foundation's existing owned channels and recent earned media success are a strong foundation that will support a strategic communications plan to help achieve its objectives. It also has a strong library of core content that can be leveraged across paid, earned, shared and owned channels (PESO) to illuminate the organization's story in a meaningful way to people in its target audiences.

Applying the PESO model, I recommend the following integrated media mix:

Paid	Earned
Social media ads executed through Facebook Ads Manager	Op-ed placements in out-state daily newspapers
Shared	Owned
Pilot brand ambassador program	Optimize existing website content to be more audience centric and discoverable via search

Implementation

Using the media outlined in the PESO model, I recommend an integrated approach to implementation that includes tactics to support and complement each other. Considerations for staffing and budget are included under each media tactic.

Paid tactics: Meet them where they are

Paid tactics will focus on social media because of its flexibility and targeting capabilities. Social media also is a more cost effective option compared to other paid tactics like radio, television, and out-of-home ads. MRI-Simmons research indicated that Facebook is the most popular social media platform among both of our target audiences. In addition to placements within Facebook, the Facebook Ads Manager platform also will enable ads within Messenger and Instagram.

The following paid tactics are recommended to help the foundation achieve its communications objectives:

- To reach prospective donors with characteristics similar to **Dreammaker Diana**:
 - Create a campaign in Facebook Ads Manager with a lookalike audience based on the organization's existing donor list. The campaign objective will be to drive brand awareness. This approach will deliver ads to individuals with characteristics that match existing donors but who are not currently on the existing donor list.
 - This tactic is designed to identify potential new donors, so messaging should be optimized toward the earliest stage of the donor lifecycle. Ad copy should include key messages that establish why now is a critical time to support girls.
- To reach prospective donors with characteristics similar to **Aspirational Abby**:
 - Create a campaign in Facebook Ads Manager with an audience based on geographic and behavioral targeting parameters. The geographic parameters should align with communities that will be targeted in earned media (outlined below). Behavioral targeting should include individuals with interests in philanthropy, empowerment, and child development. The demographic

parameters should prioritize women age 35-49.

- Messaging will be identical to the lookalike campaign since this group will be at the same point in the donor lifecycle.
- To re-engage **lapsed donors**:
 - Create a campaign with a target audience using the organization's existing donor list that excludes anyone who donated in the last two years. The campaign objective will be to drive website traffic.
 - Messaging for this audience should align with the stewardship stage of the donor lifecycle in a way that re-introduces the organization and its impact. Ads will drive to existing impact statements on the foundation's website, where grantees share stories about their experiences. To help drive this audience toward making a donation, landing pages should be optimized to include a clear call to action (additional details are outlined under the owned-media section).

Facebook Ads Manager indicates that a \$3,000 investment across all three campaigns will deliver approximately 213,000-250,000 ad impressions from October 1-December 31, 2022 (Facebook, n.d.). For creative asset development, web-based design software Canva offers its premium version for free to qualified non-profits. The foundation meets Canva's requirement as a registered 501(c)3 and a "social impact organization with a mission consistent with a public or community benefit," (Canva, n.d.). This execution can be managed by the organization's marketing communications manager.

Earned tactics: Raise awareness

Earned media is an opportunity for the organization to drive awareness and deepen engagement with individuals who fit into the Dreammaker Diana persona. MRI-Simmons indicated that this group is likely to read a newspaper.

The foundation has an existing relationship with a pro bono PR firm that helped facilitate recent media placements, including a 50-minute segment on MPR featuring both Kaba and Bancroft, a profile of Kaba in the Star Tribune, and a Women's History Month documentary for the Minnesota Timberwolves and Lynx.

To help the organization reach its awareness goals, I recommend:

- Leveraging the pro-bono relationship to place op-eds written by Kaba in out-state Minnesota daily newspapers, prioritizing the Duluth News-Tribune, Fargo/Moorhead Forum, Grand Forks/East Grand Forks Herald, Brainerd Dispatch, West Central Tribune, St. Cloud Times, Rochester Post-Bulletin, and Mankato Free Press. Op-ed messaging should focus on raising awareness of the challenges faced by girls in Minnesota and the disparities in giving to causes that support gender equality.
- Amplifying placements on owned channels (i.e. website, newsletter, social media) and including in the organization's ambassador program, a shared-media tactic that is outlined below.

With pro bono support for these efforts, no additional budget or staffing are needed. Initial drafts of the op-ed will be written by Kaba.

Shared tactics: Increase authenticity and credibility

To further broaden the reach of the campaign's key messages and to add authenticity and credibility, I recommend piloting an ambassador program that leverages the networks of the organization's board members. Through this program board members will be provided with materials to share with their own connections and receive tips on how to use tools like social media and email to amplify communications from the foundation.

Brand ambassadors will be provided with a toolkit that includes:

- Key messages and timing of the campaign, as well as best practices for creating and sharing content across different channels.
- A sample content calendar with key dates and tactics (i.e. Give to the Max Day, #GivingTuesday, end of year giving themes, and estate planning/familing giving conversations), and links to relevant content on the foundation's website and other sources.
- A bi-weekly email that includes a digest of examples, metrics on how the campaign is performing to date, and reminders to participants of recent and upcoming content calendar items to share.

Ambassador social post examples:

Kate Metzger
Just now · 📍

This #GivingTuesday, I am supporting the [Ann Bancroft Foundation](#). I love that my gift will directly empower a girl to explore her dreams.

\$0 raised for Ann Bancroft Foundation
Be the first to donate!

Ann Bancroft Foundation is asking for donations.
November 30, 2021 · 🌐

We celebrate this #GivingTuesday with profound gratitude to our supporters whose partnership and generosity help Minnesota girls dream big and feel supported to reach their potential.
Learn more about dreams you've sparked and our impact at www.annbancroftfoundation.org/impact/alumnae

To contribute to our mission and to receive a matching gift from Facebook, use the "Donate" button below.

Like Comment Share

Write a comment...

Kate Metzger is asking for donations.
Just now · 📍

Help me reach my \$500 goal to support the [Ann Bancroft Foundation](#). This gift will fully fund the grant and mentorship of a girl to help spark her curiosity and explore her potential - because when a girl has confidence, anything is possible!

\$0 raised for Ann Bancroft Foundation
Be the first to donate!

Like Comment

Write a comment...

Kate Metzger
Just now · 📍

So proud of [Ann Bancroft Foundation](#) Executive Director Ethelind Kaba for being featured by the [Minnesota Lynx](#)! She's doing great work to empower girls in Minnesota to realize their full potential and achieve their dreams.

favorite stories that we highlighted just recently well

Minnesota Lynx
March 8 · 📍

On #InternationalWomensDay, we spotlight Ethelind B. Kaba

- Executive Director of the Ann Bancroft Foundation
- Founder of The Stargirl Initiative
- Multidisciplinary storyteller
- Passionate about advancing equity, human dignity, and potential

Ethelind discusses lifting up women worldwide and more.
The Come Up Presented By [Deluxe](#)
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Learnings from the ambassador program will be applied to a future phase where influential community members from throughout the state can help amplify the organization's key messages. Potential future partners could include individuals affiliated with community foundations, existing and future nonprofit partners, program alumnae and former mentors, and other youth-focused community-based organizations.

This execution leverages organic content from across the organization's existing owned channels. No additional budget is needed. It will be implemented via a collaboration between the foundation's marketing communications manager, who will compile the toolkit and provide supporting materials, and operations administrator, who will manage communications with the participating board members.

Owned tactics: Become discoverable

The increased awareness from the paid, earned, and shared tactics will potentially cause a spike in website traffic from people interested in learning more about the foundation. This also will drive additional search engine activity. These factors represent an opportunity for the organization to optimize its website to provide an optimal user experience.

To facilitate the optimization of its website, the foundation can apply for pro bono work through an organization like HandsOn Twin Cities, which pairs skills-based volunteers with nonprofits working to improve society (HandsOn Twin Cities, n.d.). A pro bono content strategist can provide an assessment of the existing website and recommend improvements to help the organization meet its goals.

Tactics for pro-bono volunteers to consider:

- Make the homepage of annbancroftfoundation.org more audience centric by articulating the organization's purpose more clearly and providing direct pathways for prospective donors, mentors, and grantees to engage.
- Optimize website content to drive engagement at all points of the donor lifecycle:
 - Use search trends to identify opportunities and implement high volume keywords.
 - Update storytelling content on impact and outcomes to feature more mentors and grantees; and include frequent calls to action to either donate or apply for a grant.
 - Continue to share links to website content across owned channels (social media and newsletter) and ask ambassadors to amplify to increase site traffic.

Exploration of the pro-bono partnership with HandsOn Twin Cities can be managed by the foundation's existing development director with no additional budget implications. Website updates will be managed by the marketing communications manager and current web-hosting vendor.

Campaign timeline

Pre-campaign planning: Q3 2022

From July 1-September 30, the foundation will establish its baseline digital metrics, create the brand ambassador toolkit, draft op-ed materials, and coordinate with pro-bono partners on media outreach and website optimizations.

Campaign live: Q4 2022

The campaign will launch on October 1 and conclude on December 31. This timing is recommended based on several factors that align with the organization's priorities and the community's mindset around giving.

- Q4 aligns with several key priorities in the organization's existing development plan, including its end-of-year appeal, Give to the Max Day, #GivingTuesday, and telefundraising drive.
- The consumer mindset is turning its focus toward end-of-year giving, and gatherings with friends and family are opportunities for conversations about giving and estate planning.

Evaluation

The implementation tactics outlined above can be measured through a combination of digital metrics and insights from the foundation's donor database. On the digital side, a comparison between existing performance metrics and the metrics achieved during the campaign will demonstrate the effectiveness of the campaign. However, according to Kaba, the organization currently has limited focus on tracking and reporting such metrics. This represents a need to establish a baseline to understand the impact of the campaign.

With a planned launch date of October 1, I recommend the foundation use July-September to establish baseline metrics across digital channels. This will allow the organization to compare numbers from one three-month period to the next. During this period, the organization will monitor:

- Website analytics: unique visitors, page views, and sources
- Social media insights: engagement metrics (reactions, comments, and shares on posts), video views, link clicks, and page followers
- Newsletter metrics: subscriptions, unsubscribe requests, link clicks

In addition to the evaluation of digital metrics, the organization can examine the information tracked in its donor database to gain insights into the campaign's impact on giving, donor acquisition and retention. Starting with a baseline of these metrics during the same period over the previous two years, we can observe the differences across several metrics, including:

- Number of donors acquired
- Number of repeat donors
- Amount raised and whether gift levels increased or decreased
- Locations of donors

Here is how the recommended metrics match up with the organization's business and communications objectives:

Business objective	Communications objective	Impact measurement
Achieve 40% donor retention (an increase of 10 percentage points)	Deepen engagement with current donors and re-engage and lapsed donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of repeat gifts ● Level of increase/decrease in gift amounts ● Event attendance ● Newsletter open rates and clicks through to content
Increase total number of donors by 5% over last year	Increase brand awareness in emerging donor audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Website traffic ● Newsletter sign-ups and open rates ● Event attendance ● Social media engagement
30% increase in greater-Minnesota grantees	Increase brand awareness in greater Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Website traffic from geo-specific targets ● Number of partnership organizations from outside existing footprint ● Number of donation and grant applications from outside existing footprint ● Newsletter sign-ups and open rates ● Social media engagement

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