

# Writing a Case for Support that Connects



# Writing a case for support that connects

Most of us in the nonprofit world like to think that donors give purely from the bottom of their hearts, regardless of the language we use, the images we share, or the credibility we offer.

*We think:*

***“As long as the donor agrees with our mission, they'll support us in our work... right?”***

But the unfortunate reality is that, while donors often give for altruistic reasons, **they still need to be sold.** Yep, just like you need to be sold on why to buy that cup of coffee from that particular shop.

So, how can you ensure you cut through the noise and win your donor's support?

The key is an **effective case for support.**

Often, a case for support is associated with major gifts or capital campaigns, making it a bit intimidating. But once you understand the formula, you can (and should!) truly use your case for support in any and all of your communications. I firmly believe every nonprofit, no matter the size, is capable of building a case for support that will help them bring in funding, tell their story, and grow their audience cohesively and with purpose. It's just a matter of asking and answering the right questions to get at the heart of what you do and why!

Using a case for support as my starting point in my roles as a nonprofit employee has helped me develop better and more effective fundraising asks, grants, social media content, presentations, and so much more. And I am confident it can help you too.

# So what is a case for support?

A case for support is actually quite simple. Effective case for supports really just do THREE things:

- engage your supporters in the problem you exist to address
- convince them YOU are the organization to solve that problem
- and show them THEY have THE thing that can help you solve it

Seriously - that's it!

To effectively land all three of these concepts in a case for support, over the years I developed a formula that I found to truly work every time, in a wide variety of settings and circumstances in the nonprofit fundraising world. **This tried and true formula works** no matter the situation or the ask:



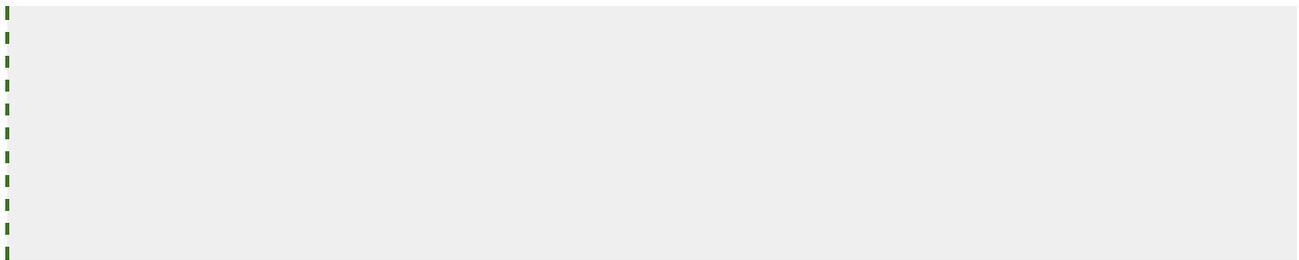
We'll break each component of this formula down next.

# Defining your purpose

To define your PURPOSE, start with answering the following questions. I've left space for you to jot down ideas and brainstorm. It can help to just write anything that comes to mind. As you work your way through the sections, you can come back and refine!

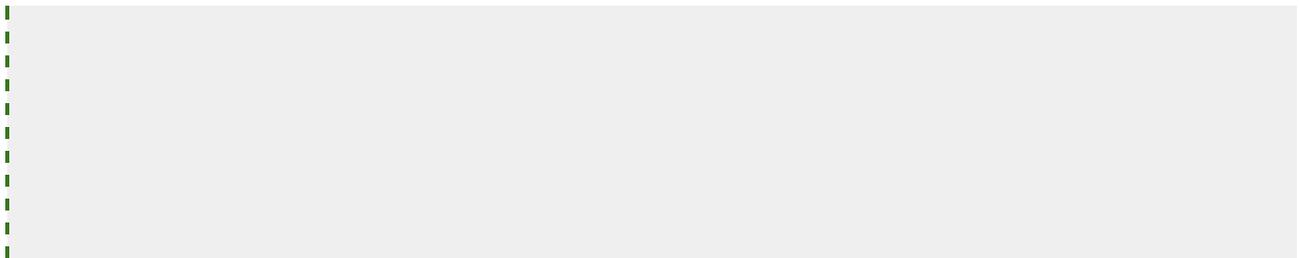
What is your "perfect world"? (Hint: your nonprofit's vision!)

*Here is where you draw people in with what you want the world to look like.*

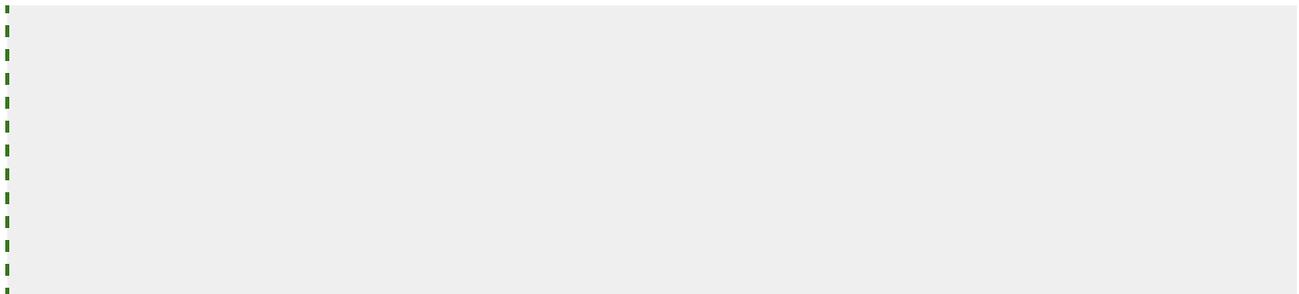


How is your nonprofit working to achieve this vision? (This is your mission!)

*This lays the steps you are taking to reach your goals.*



What is standing in your way of reaching this vision? What social problem or issue does your nonprofit exist to address? *(Stats and data are great here!)*

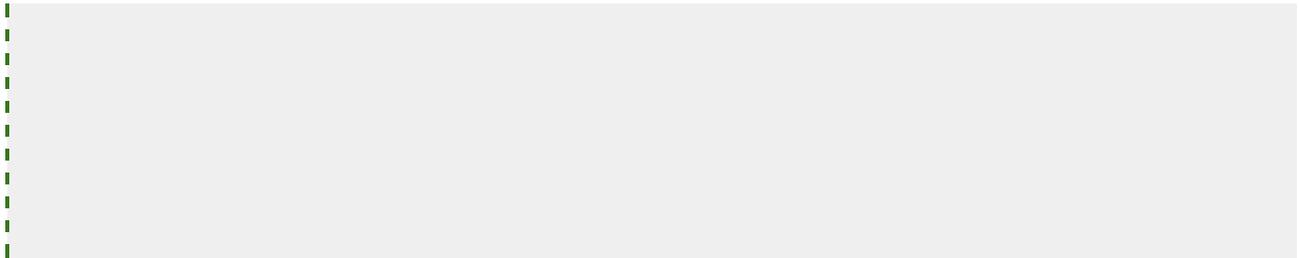


By answering these questions, you have already laid out clearly and concisely what you aim to achieve and how you aim to achieve it. *Concept #1 - check!*

# Proving your value

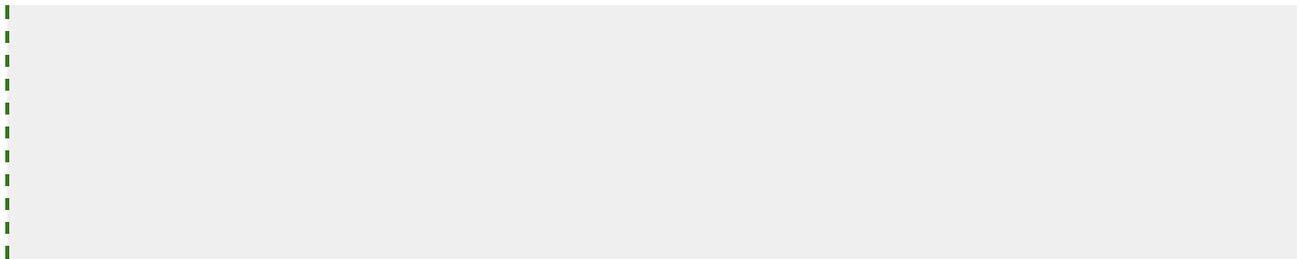
Now that you have your nonprofit's purpose clearly laid out, you're going to focus on proving your value to your potential donors. This section will define for your audience why your nonprofit specifically is the one who can and should address the purpose you laid out above.

What qualifies your organization to address this problem? Why you? Why NOW?

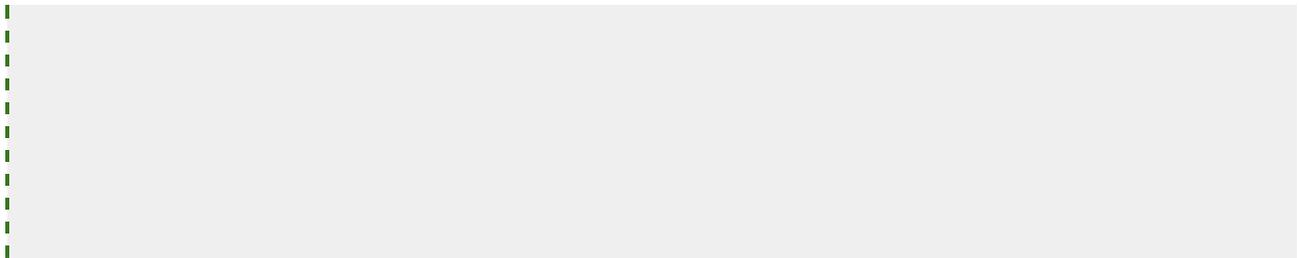


Give one anecdote that exemplifies your nonprofit's unique value. What have you done that no one else is doing or can do?

*(Storytelling is so important! A personal story or client journey is perfect here. Bonus points if this client story can directly relate to the data you used to highlight the problem in the last section!)*



How is your organization equipped to address the challenges you are facing? What is your plan to resolve the challenges you've identified?



*Et voila!* By answering these questions, you have now proven your value without ever saying "You should help us because...." *Concept #2 - done!*

# Highlighting their value

Now - *arguably the most important part* - highlighting THEIR value.

This section is so vital because it shows you are connecting with this person/this company/this community group (this *whatever*) because **you have done your research and you know their values, goals, and purposes align with yours.**

You aren't just asking *anyone anywhere*, you are speaking directly to this individual because you know the relationship would be mutually beneficial and productive.

Why are you reaching out to this specific person or organization? What can they offer that no one else can?

What part of your mission and vision is this donor most connected to/inspired by? What connected them to your organization in the first place?

Why is this so important - to them AND to you?

*It may be that one of these questions connects more directly to specific fundraising asks than others. You do not have to answer every single one each time - they are just meant to get your wheels turning on how you can craft this section to best draw out that connection each time!*

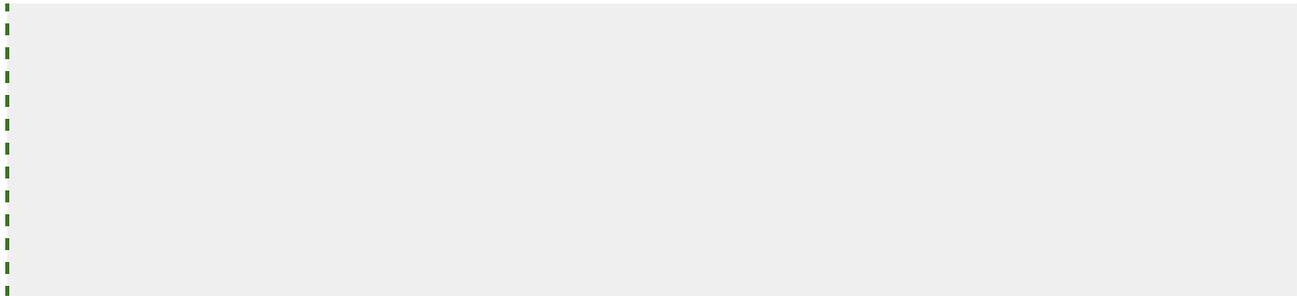
# Call them to action

Now, the part people often jump straight to. (Or avoid including altogether!)  
That's right, it is time to make your ASK.

This can be something as simple as "share our information on social media" to as significant as a request for a 5-figure gift. But whatever it is, all that came before should lead directly into what you are requesting.

So - if you're asking for a social media share, you should have highlighted the value of sharing in the earlier section. If you're asking for \$10,000, the impact that money could make should be woven in throughout your message. How many lives will you be equipped to change for the better with those donations?

So... what do you NEED to help address the challenges you've laid out above? How will this donation (of time, money, products, or otherwise) change your nonprofit and the community you serve for the better?



***If you have done this portion right, the ask will flow naturally from all that came before it.***

If you don't feel like it is flowing naturally, go back and work through some questions again. Now that you have seen the full formula and the questions within each, it can help you to better pinpoint what you need to include in each point.

# The real magic of a great case for support

And there you have it! Just like that, and you have a foolproof formula for fundraising for your nonprofit. But, the real magic of the case for support lies in **how it helps you focus your efforts.**

As I've said throughout this guide, your case for support is a **formula**. Once it is developed, it can be repurposed over and over again -- for grant writing, for social media, for newsletters, for donor appeals, and more. It is the basis of **who your organization is** and, when done well, it:

- helps write all sorts of OTHER content for you - from emails to social media posts to grants.
- helps you make decisions as an organization (*Does this get us closer to solving our problem? Are we following through on our ask?*)
- Provides you a clear, consistent and effective messaging strategy in **everything** you say and do.
- Gives you the confidence to know that you are asking proudly, with integrity, and with the ability to follow through!

*Once you know your case for support inside and out, you can use it literally anywhere you are putting your nonprofit's message out to the world.*

I hope this has helped you clarify how to position yourself as a worthy cause to support. Can't wait to see how you put it to use!

Have questions or need more help in  
writing your case?  
Let's chat!

[Bonnie@BanyanNonprofitStrategy.com](mailto:Bonnie@BanyanNonprofitStrategy.com)

(Or find me on instagram at [@BanyanNonprofitStrategy!](https://www.instagram.com/BanyanNonprofitStrategy/))