

**Individuals hold great potential as volunteers, advocates, audiences, guests, sources of knowledge, collaborators, connectors, and—of course—as financial backers. It’s no secret that the more engaged someone is with your effort, the more inclined that person is to give.**

**STEP ONE:**

Create a spreadsheet (prospect profile) to keep track of your supporters. Create spaces for name, contact info, basic context about the individual including how he or she is connected to you or the program/project/event. Start with those closest to you and your project. Add friends and family of those closest to you. You will still need to find, attract, and cultivate more individuals.

**STEP TWO:**

Find supporters outside your direct sphere of influence.

- Review fellow arts organization donor lists in programs and on websites.
- Review social media and LinkedIn information.
- Source public information about individuals from business journals, newspapers, magazines, philanthropic directories, annual reports, and so on.
- Use Google to find out who sponsors what in your community.
- Databases such as WealthEngine, DonorSearch, NOZA, Zillow, and LexisNexis are also useful, but can come with a fee.

**STEP THREE:**

Assess your growing knowledge about an individual in the context of “the three Cs:”

- Capacity—What can you discern about this person’s financial capacity and ability to give?
- Commitment—What’s this person’s understanding of and interest in your project?
- Connection—How is this person associated with your project; what or who is the link?

**STEP FOUR:**

Review your newly created database and begin to plan how you will reach out to these possible project/program/event funders. Triple-check to be sure all names are spelled correctly and that appropriate titles are used in all correspondence (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., etc.).