
**An emerging profession:
The Higher Education
Philanthropy Workforce**

A Report to HEFCE by
More Partnership and
Richmond Associates

April 2014

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Foreword

In 2012 HEFCE published a review of philanthropy in UK higher education that showed what tremendous success there has been in growing philanthropic support to universities in the last 10 years. The report concluded that if the current rate of acceleration in philanthropic income continues, UK universities will attract gifts worth £2 billion a year from some 640,000 donors by 2022.

The report showed that investment in fundraising brings results whatever the size or type of university. If this success is to continue we must have a strong and growing group of educational fundraisers who are skilled in leading development teams and working with academics and institutional leaders.

At the moment the pool of professional fundraisers working in UK higher education is too small. In this review of the fundraising workforce many of those interviewed expressed anxieties about the vulnerabilities that come from the growing, sometimes fierce, competition between universities to attract the best from this restricted supply. As a newly appointed vice-chancellor in 2006, wanting to invest in a fundraising programme, I became acutely aware of the difficulties of recruiting a well-qualified team. There seemed to be an unnecessary vulnerability to us all in the competition that we engaged in to attract the best fundraisers. The limited pool was leading to escalation in salaries and over-rapid career progression for fundraising staff across the UK.

In order to attract more people to become educational fundraisers, there needs to be an attractive career structure and a shared understanding of the skills and knowledge-base required to be effective at different stages of that career. This is the issue that guided this second report. What should a career path in educational fundraising look like and how can we retain the best people?


The evidence and research in this review of the workforce addresses those questions. Interestingly, higher education fundraisers now acknowledge they are part of a wider group of colleagues across the charity sector and that there are lessons to be learned from outside. It is to be hoped that there will be growing acceptance across university management that a broader base of experience will strengthen teams; it is less the sector experience and more the values, skills and competencies that determine overall success. People from a wide range of backgrounds need to be welcomed if they have the right attributes.

We hope there are messages here for all who contribute to the success of university fundraising and not just the fundraisers themselves. In my early engagement in higher education fundraising, I did not really know what a good fundraiser looked like or how an effective fundraising team ought to be structured. This second report also aims to address these questions, looking at the skills, competencies and knowledge-base that we should expect in successful fundraising teams. It provides some advice about what to look for. There are messages here for directors of human resources as well as leaders of

institutions. There may also be an opportunity just at the moment for an organisation or group of organisations to come together to shape and lead the crafting of a more formal career path. Universities that have an interest in philanthropy might consider offering postgraduate qualifications and helping to develop the body of research that will inform the further evolution of the profession and our understanding of what makes effective fundraising practice.

I trust that this challenge will find a strong response and that this follow-up report will prove helpful in stimulating the growth of this rewarding and important professional group. At the moment most of the incredibly talented graduates from our universities are not even aware of the possibility and excitement of a career in university fundraising. If we are all to be successful this must change and it is my hope that higher education fundraising becomes one of the careers of choice for our very best graduates.

Finally, and most importantly, I should like to thank my colleagues on the review group, at More Partnership, Richmond Associates and in HEFCE, for all the stimulating and challenging discussions we have had over the last few months. It's been intense but it's been fun and I hope that the output will be useful to everyone in higher education.



Professor Dame Shirley Pearce

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Introduction

1. Philanthropy in UK higher education (HE) is flourishing. The evidence for the acceleration of increased philanthropic revenue across a range of institutions over the past 12 years – and of the impact of those gifts – is captured in the 2012 Pearce Report: Review of Philanthropy in UK Higher Education, commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) from More Partnership. The Pearce Report considered the conditions in which this momentum could be maintained, made 14 recommendations to help it do so and set a goal by 2022 of gifts of £2 billion a year from 640,000 donors.
2. There is a clear correlation, as the Pearce Report demonstrated, between philanthropic revenue and investment in fundraising staff. Fundraising practitioners are vital enablers. Many more of them are needed. To meet the goal of £2 billion a year, it is estimated that the workforce will need at least to double and preferably to triple between now and 2022 – and that institutions will retain them for longer if active steps are taken to develop a career path along a respected learning route.
3. As a follow-up to the Pearce Report, therefore, HEFCE selected More Partnership and Richmond Associates in July 2013 to undertake a review of the philanthropic workforce in UK HE and to make recommendations for the future development of advancement practitioners in HE.
4. This paper distils the findings of the review, articulates conclusions and recommendations and provides a toolkit and case studies for practitioners, institutions and sector organisations to take forward. It also appraises some of the mythology generated by what can seem to outsiders an arcane and mysterious world.

Context

5. In a workforce context, experienced education fundraisers occupy a seller's market. The problem is specific neither to HE nor to the UK. The world of North American university philanthropy has more zeros in its numbers – both in terms of income generated and in the body of advancement staff – yet North American colleagues also experience failed searches leaving vacant posts and opportunities missed; they devote substantial resources to “strategic talent management” programmes. [“The pool of talent may be a mile wide in the US but it’s an inch deep.”](#)
6. The survey of staff undertaken for this review has shown that one third of the experienced workforce has moved in the last five years. If, as is likely to be the case, there is a link between turnover and shortage of staff – in an expanding business where demand outstrips supply a high turnover of staff is to be expected – this gives evidence of a shortage in the sector.
7. The acuteness of the need within UK HE is accentuated by the limited size of the workforce under review. Some 1,842 staff are involved in alumni relations and development in UK HE, with approximately two thirds in fundraising and one third in

alumni relations, according to the latest published Ross-Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) survey (2013). This is a small proportion of the total fundraising workforce in charities in the UK. Whilst there is no record of how many fundraisers there are overall in the UK, the Institute of Fundraising (IoF) reported that it provided on-line support to 18,293 fundraisers and engaged a further 6,000 in face-to-face training in 2012-13. The Institute's membership was 5,469 in 2012-13, an increase of 6% on the previous year.

8. Of those who leave the UK HE sector, 40% are leaving for career development – a clear signal of the need to improve the career path.
9. The scope and sophistication of the offices they inhabit varies enormously. In 45 (of around 140) reporting offices there are two or fewer full-time equivalent (FTE) staff doing development and alumni relations work. A further 17 have more than two but less than five FTEs. At the other end of the scale, 12 universities outside Oxbridge have built up teams of 30 or more. Oxford and Cambridge (including their colleges) account for one quarter of the workforce. Some practitioners therefore need to be Jills-of-all-trades, while larger offices have room for specialisms ranging from principal gifts positions (i.e. a focus on the largest gifts of all), through sophisticated business intelligence analytics to expertise in the use of social media.
10. The work they contribute is challenging, skilful and rewarding – and increasingly powerful in enabling the mission of the universities they serve. The Pearce Report demonstrated how this group of practitioners has been growing in numbers, competence and effectiveness – and how its continued growth is a prerequisite for future achievement.
11. This growth is happening at a time of enormous change for higher education institutions (HEIs) and in step with continuous developments in technology. As an intentional culture of philanthropy is re-established among UK universities and as great wealth becomes increasingly borderless, everyone embarking on a career in educational fundraising today must be ready for a working life very different from that of the directors of development who recruit them. “I don't know what your next fundraising job is going to be. It doesn't exist yet”, as a North American specialist advises his staff. This review has set out therefore to explore the needs of the next 10 years, acknowledging that further evolution will inevitably follow.

Audiences

12. The fundraising staffing bottleneck is a complex problem inviting a series of interlocking solutions.
13. It will be clear from the recommendations that the report is intended to be of use to the HE sector in particular – to those who recruit, develop and work to retain fundraising staff and who are in a position to encourage talented people to follow a career in educational fundraising:
 - Vice-chancellors
 - Human resources (HR) departments

- Development offices
 - Careers advisors
 - There are messages for the bodies that offer training and networking to educational fundraisers, especially CASE and the IoF, as well as for enterprising institutions and networks that could do so in future, including private providers.
- 14.** There is information and demystification aimed at fundraisers working outside HE, whether in arts and culture, health or the wider charity sector.
- 15.** The recommendations, re-ordered by target audience, are attached as Appendix 1.

Scope of the review: fundraisers within HE

- 16.** The brief for this exercise focuses on recruiting, retaining and developing the workforce of fundraisers within HE. However, many interviewees have commented on the inter-dependence of front-line fundraisers, such as major gift officers and regular giving managers, with related functions including prospect researchers, data analysts and alumni relations staff. The emphasis of this review follows the brief and examines front-line fundraising staff in particular. But the analysis and the guidance are also intended to be inclusive and helpful to those in related disciplines; they share a landscape and the boundaries between them are often porous¹.

¹ Sub-sets such as prospect researchers and data-analysts are developing their own specific training provision.

Executive summary

- S1.** The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)'s "Review of Philanthropy in UK Higher Education: 2012 status report and challenges for the next decade" (The Pearce Report) recognised the pressing need, as philanthropic giving in higher education (HE) matures, both for the further development of experienced fundraising practitioners and for a clear career pathway for fundraising professionals in the university sector. Simply put, to meet the ambition set out in the Pearce report of achieving £2 billion a year by 2022, the workforce will need to double or, preferably, triple in size.
- S2.** Consequently More Partnership and Richmond Associates were commissioned by HEFCE to carry out a review of the future development and training requirements of the fundraising workforce in HE.
- S3.** As identified in the Pearce Report, there is an opportunity for all universities to make a healthy return on fundraising if they are able to attract, develop and retain the right people to make this happen. The Ross-Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) survey data shows that investment in fundraising staff correlated very strongly with philanthropic income.
- S4.** Fundraising is now core to the plans of ambitious universities. It creates unusually satisfying and rewarding jobs. Demand for staff consistently outstrips supply. There is common cause to raise the profile of the emerging profession, bring clarity to the various career routes and increasingly professionalise the learning process.
- S5.** The size of the current development workforce within UK HE is still modest, numbering some 1,842, a small part of a much bigger fundraising workforce across the not-for-profit (NFP) sectors – for example, the Institute of Fundraising (IoF) numbers approximately 5,500 members, providing on-line support to nearly 19,000 fundraisers and face-to-face training for 6,000 in 2012-13.
- S6.** Interestingly the HE group increasingly defines itself as fundraisers first and as HE specialists second – part of this wider community of fundraising practitioners whose focus ranges from education through arts and cultural organisations to the health sector and charities more widely. This is a new perspective. It has a series of helpful implications². The increased size of the workforce and increased dialogue with other sectors makes for richer experience as well as greater fluidity of movement. This review encourages greater and more coherent exchange and collaboration in future.
- S7.** There is also an opportunity for one or more universities, if they so wish, to play an important role by developing the fundraising profession as a whole, for example through provision of tailored postgraduate education and of an associated body of research.

² What nevertheless makes HE distinctive as a fundraising proposition is explored below.

- S8.** Further, investing in appropriate training, education and professional development will pay dividends both in fostering the loyalty and long-term commitment of valuable staff to their institution and in developing a skilled and professional fundraising workforce overall. This will have a commensurately positive effect on fundraising performance across the board. The survey carried out for this review found that 40% of those who leave HE fundraising do so for career development.
- S9.** HE fundraising offers absorbing and fulfilling graduate jobs where good candidates are in great demand. It provides a career path that can reach around the world, relatively high salaries, senior leadership responsibilities and a sense of achievement. While there are signs that this message is starting to reach more graduates, there is a definite opportunity to promote university fundraising more widely to students as they leave university
- S10.** There is support for the concept of a “learning route” or career pathway that makes current training offerings explicit, builds on them and anchors education within on-the-job experience and the support of peer networks. The potential exists for this to be expressed as formal qualifications. A university provider could take the opportunity to devise such a framework in partnership with sector groups. It is important to note that the introduction of a compulsory qualification, however, is regarded by the current workforce as an unhelpful barrier, given the shortage of available talent.
- S11.** There are early signs that senior fundraising leaders are progressing into more strategically important roles within universities, occasionally onto senior management teams, and that vice-chancellors increasingly recognise the value of the skills they bring. The professional standing of this effective and self-confident group of experienced university fundraisers is growing.
- S12.** There are markedly different scales of operation within UK HE development offices, from single-person units to teams of more than 50 staff. Different parts of the sector will need distinct solutions and to take individual approaches to developing their fundraising workforce: one size will not fit all.
- S13.** Clear, easy-to-comprehend language must be found to describe fundraising roles within HE. This will increase understanding and aid recruitment both from within and outside universities.
- S14.** It is in everyone’s interests that barriers to entry are avoided, and that a flexible approach is taken to recruitment, focusing on competencies, skills and behaviours and ensuring that the door is open to people from different sectors and backgrounds.
- S15.** The body of HE fundraising practitioners is notably young, predominantly female and ethnically un-diverse. Women are well represented in senior and well-paid posts. Flexible and creative approaches to recruitment (at both entry and mid-career levels) and retention will optimise the “strategic talent” this group represents.
- S16.** The use of a competency model would be widely welcomed and will help with recruitment, retention and career progression.

- S17.** Internship schemes (notably the HEFCE-supported CASE graduate traineeships) are working well as entry points and could be extended to a wider range of institutions. Top student callers, who learn their craft on university “phonathons”, are an excellent source of fundraising talent, as are others who carry out student work in development offices.
- S18.** There is a role for mentoring (especially in mid-career) and for coaching (especially at senior levels) to accelerate progress and deepen understanding.
- S19.** The context is turbulent. HE is responding to and acting upon a rapidly moving external environment, increasingly global but with expanding local communities of interest. Development teams are adapting in response, as they learn more about what works for their institution and as their relationships with their donors, of all levels and from all constituencies, grow and mature. For these teams to continue to attract transformative philanthropic support, it is not enough to be skilled and experienced; staying flexible and remaining open to continuing change are requirements for the workforce of the future.

Recommendations

Our recommendations are focused on practical outcomes that lie within the capacity of HE sector bodies and individual institutions to deliver. Importantly, universities will need to take ownership of finding ways to grow and develop the fundraising workforce, for example by allowing their staff to help other institutions and playing a role in raising the profile of fundraising in HE.

The recommendations are summarised here and are given greater context in the main body of the report alongside relevant findings and conclusions. Appendix 1 also gives a list of recommendations re-ordered for each of the audiences that have a role to play.

Overarching recommendations

- R1.** The case for support for HE – the understanding of the value of universities as a powerful channel for philanthropic interest and a good cause of wide social impact – is fundamental to the ability to grow the fundraising workforce. It needs to be reinforced at every opportunity.
- R2.** Recognising the contribution that philanthropy has historically made, makes now, and will increasingly be required to make in future to the flourishing of HE is similarly a message to be insistently and persuasively conveyed by everyone involved in this sector.
- R3.** Fundraisers will be most effective when fundraising goals align closely to their institution’s mission and when the institution’s leadership and strategy are committed to long-term objectives and investment. Universities’ fundraising, alumni relations and communications plans – based on a clear understanding of their own distinctiveness, goals and particular opportunities, and agreed at the highest levels – have an essential role to play.

Recruitment and selection

- R4.** The use of clear language, avoiding jargon, about the roles and mechanisms of fundraising within HE will greatly assist in the wider promotion of fundraising careers. This includes avoiding job titles and advertisements that use terms poorly understood outside HE.
- R5.** Institutions are urged to use all available opportunities to raise the profile of fundraising as a career in HE. Potential avenues for this include:
 - Talking to students on campus, speaking at schools’ careers events, encouraging AGCAS (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services) to promote fundraising in HE as a career choice.
 - Making full use of social media and other networks of student callers, volunteers and regular giving practitioners to highlight opportunities.
 - Holding a joint event to help institutions extend graduate intern programmes, using learning from CASE’s Graduate Training scheme.

- Creating and disseminating case studies of educational fundraisers, their attributes and career paths on relevant web sites, with interviews of practitioners.

R6. Universities are encouraged to make use of the Recruitment Guidelines produced as part of this review and to adapt them to their own situation.

R7. Development directors from established operations have a valuable role to play on recruitment panels for smaller, less experienced units and are urged to do this when possible.

R8. There is an opportunity for higher education institutions (HEIs) to draw on the competency models published alongside this report in recruitment, appraisals and career planning. These can be adapted by institutions for individual roles as needed and will enable a more flexible and open approach to recruitment based on competencies, skills and knowledge rather than predominantly on experience.

R9. Key stakeholders such as CASE, the IoF and other sector bodies have the opportunity to come together to explore whether and how best to develop the competency model further, working with institutions across the sectors.

R10. Developing an “employer brand” is encouraged as an effective way for individual institutions to reinforce key messages that will encourage recruitment of strategically valuable staff.

R11. Taking a flexible approach, recognising the predominance of women in the workforce, and the need to attract people with transferable skills from other sectors, will lead to more successful recruitment. Institutions are also urged to consider ways to attract people from a range of ethnic backgrounds as student callers and volunteers, as a means to encourage a more diverse workforce over time. In particular there is the opportunity to work with student groups and societies to promote fundraising opportunities to a wider mix of people.

Education, training and development for mid-level staff

R12. There is a clear appetite for increasing professionalism within HE fundraising, which can be achieved by a mix of experiential and educational mechanisms. This presents the challenge – and opportunity – to an organisation or group of organisations working in partnership to take the lead in developing and giving coherence to a package of learning elements. For example:

- Existing good practice – from induction passports, learning logs and individual training courses – could be extended to create an acknowledged “learning route”, in due course leading to a university-backed qualification.
- A purposeful mentoring programme could be developed to aid career progression, with mentors drawn from both within and beyond HE.

R13. Cross-sector liaison and coordination is encouraged between groups including CASE, the IoF and other bodies involved with the education and training of fundraisers. Among the topics they are invited to consider are shared training, the evolution of a widely

recognised qualification working towards charter status and the general applicability of the Advanced Diploma in Fundraising.

R14. University leaders are invited to rise to this challenge of offering provision for postgraduate qualifications, including the development of a body of associated research in fundraising, particularly given the scale of the overall fundraising sector.

R15. Institutional peer groups (such as the Ross Group, and the development directors of the former 1994 Group or of specialist institutions or of members of Million+) are encouraged to facilitate shared training and networking within a community of practice.

Professional development for leaders and aspiring leaders

R16. Institutional leaders are urged to consider how to make use of the expertise and institutional knowledge of experienced directors of development for the longer-term benefit of the institution and the individual.

R17. Aspiring leaders are invited to take full advantage of the plethora of leadership development opportunities available to them including:

- Internal courses within institutions, the Top Management Programme, executive education programmes and cross-sector initiatives such as the Clore Fellowship and Common Purpose UK.
- Executive coaching.
- Joining or developing communities of leadership e.g. by mission, other peer groups, CASE or cross-sector networks.

Retention

R18. Development directors are urged to think consciously about retention and to work actively with human resources (HR) departments to develop appropriate retention action plans for their teams. The Retention Guide published with this report gives guidance on issues such as recognition and reward, personal and career development, good management practice and adopting flexible working practices.

R19. Adoption of the induction passport and learning logs by fundraising and alumni relations teams will help with retention of development team members.

R20. CASE and the Ross Group have the opportunity to play a role by collecting regular workforce data as part of the Ross-CASE benchmarking survey. This needs to be focused on information that will help monitor progress such as:

- Established number of full-time equivalent (FTE) posts in each department.
- Numbers of vacancies.
- What proportion of the FTE would define themselves as part of a black and minority ethnic group.

Further differentiation of roles carried out by staff would allow more robust benchmarking, for example by adding “management” and “operations/support” alongside “alumni relations” and “fundraising”.

Methodology

17. Over 750 people have contributed to this review – an even larger body than the 500 who participated in the Pearce Report. The evidence for this report has been drawn from the following sources:
- Six focus groups held at the 2013 CASE Europe Annual Conference, with 33 development office staff taking part. Eight of these were from the CASE Graduate Trainee Scheme, with the remaining 25 drawn from 23 HEIs) and one school.
 - Eleven written submissions. See Appendix 2.
 - Analysis of an online survey, representative of the sector, completed by 658 people during October 2013. Of the current workforce, 30% (527) took part, together with a further 50 who had previously worked in HE development and alumni relations.³
 - In-depth interviews with 64 people including senior practitioners, vice-chancellors, donors, HR and careers experts and professional organisations both in HE and outside it. These took place in the UK and in Australia. See Appendix 2.
 - Case studies drawn from interviewees and other offices to exemplify innovation and sound practice.
 - Review of Ross-CASE survey staffing data for 2013 and of CASE salary surveys.
 - A set of top-line competencies and associated knowledge for fundraisers that have been devised, tested during interviews and subsequently further developed. A summary of these is available.
 - A set of 25 personal attributes of fundraisers, drawn up by an “Ivy Plus” group of US institutions in the 1980s, was also updated and ranked by a group of senior development directors. They form part of the Recruitment Guide published alongside this report.
 - Visits to one Canadian and two US advancement offices to study their strategic talent management programmes for advancement staff. See Appendix 2.
 - Extensive desk research into current training and continuous professional development (CPD) in the sector and appropriate comparators beyond the sector. See Appendix 3.

³ Around 80% of the respondents told us the name of the institution for which they work. In order to check whether or not the survey response is representative of the sector we have correlated this data against information on office sizes contained in the Ross-CASE survey. There was a close match between the distribution of survey respondents and the “all sector” data in both university mission groups and the age grouping used in the Pearce Report. We are therefore satisfied that the survey is representative of the sector generally. Data on the correlation can be obtained from the authors.

Educational fundraising: an emerging profession

What does it mean to be a profession?

- 18.** The Pearce Report described fundraisers as “increasingly professional but not yet quite a profession”. The review has investigated whether this workforce yet represents a profession in the formal sense⁴. Practitioners of educational fundraising often call themselves professionals and refer to “the profession”. But, they acknowledge, “we’re not a profession in the way that accountancy is a profession, no”. This has to do, partly, with one of the sector’s strengths, the variety of effective practice. “There’s an approved way of treating a gastric ulcer or dealing with a big corporate property issue in law. But there isn’t a single view of what works in fundraising.” In comparison to professions such as architecture, law or medicine, where there is an established body of knowledge that has to be learned and accredited in order to practise, and where those infringing approved codes can be barred from practice, educational fundraising is not yet a profession. But it is on the way to becoming so.
- 19.** Reasons for this view, some principled and others pragmatic, include:
- The knowledge on which fundraisers draw is wide, including from such varied fields as psychology and law. But what is accepted as the canon of knowledge specifically related to fundraising in general, and educational fundraising in particular, is still fairly narrow.
 - There is a relatively small body of published work on the subject against which to devise appropriate and evidence-based practice standards.
 - Just because someone has acquired that knowledge does not make them a good fundraiser; it is no guarantee either of effectiveness or of “fitness to practise”.
 - The majority of participants in this study were concerned that formally establishing a profession at this stage, with qualifications that are required as a licence to practise, would create a barrier to entry more than an incentive to improve performance.
 - However, fundraisers aspire to be seen as professional and see the professionalisation of the sector as a positive trend.
- 20.** There are many aspects of professional conduct that certainly apply to fundraising in higher education (HE). They serve as notice that this is a serious career option with prospects for satisfaction, development and achievement, both personally and for the institutions being served. These already include, or might include in the near future:
- Well-expressed ethical standards.

⁴ Characteristics that define professionals have been developed by Robin Downie (Professor Emeritus of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow University) – referenced by the Institute of Chartered Foresters among others. See paper from the 18th Commonwealth Forestry Conference, 2010, “What is Professionalism?”

- A variety of entry points both at “new starter” level and for more experienced members of the workforce.
- Membership organisations that promote good practice and ethical behaviour.
- Opportunities for relevant study leading to a recognised qualification with ongoing continuous professional development (CPD) as a requirement.
- Respect for the body of practitioners from those outside the group.
- Opportunities for career development leading to leadership positions in management and/or in leading specialisms within an office.
- Opportunities for transfer between organisations in the same or similar sectors.
- A sense of vocation on the part of at least some to serve the transformational enterprise that is HE.
- Expectations for the conduct and accountability of individuals, and not just of organisations.

21. The intention of this report is to articulate and strengthen these elements, for example by signposting possible career paths, so as to enhance the professionalism of educational fundraisers both individually and as a body and strengthen their ability to succeed: not quite a profession but certainly not amateurish.

Where we are: the demographics of the workforce

22. At the heart of this work are the staff of development and alumni relations offices. Half of the workforce is based in just 10% (13) of the institutions⁵.

23. The workforce is predominantly young and female. Of the survey respondents, three quarters are women, 70% of whom are between 25 and 44 (see Fig. 1). The gender mix is very similar to that found in a recent survey of its members carried out by the Institute of Fundraising (IoF).⁶

⁵ Oxford and Cambridge are treated here as single institutions, although each is in reality a central office with additional college offices ranging in size from one to around eight staff.

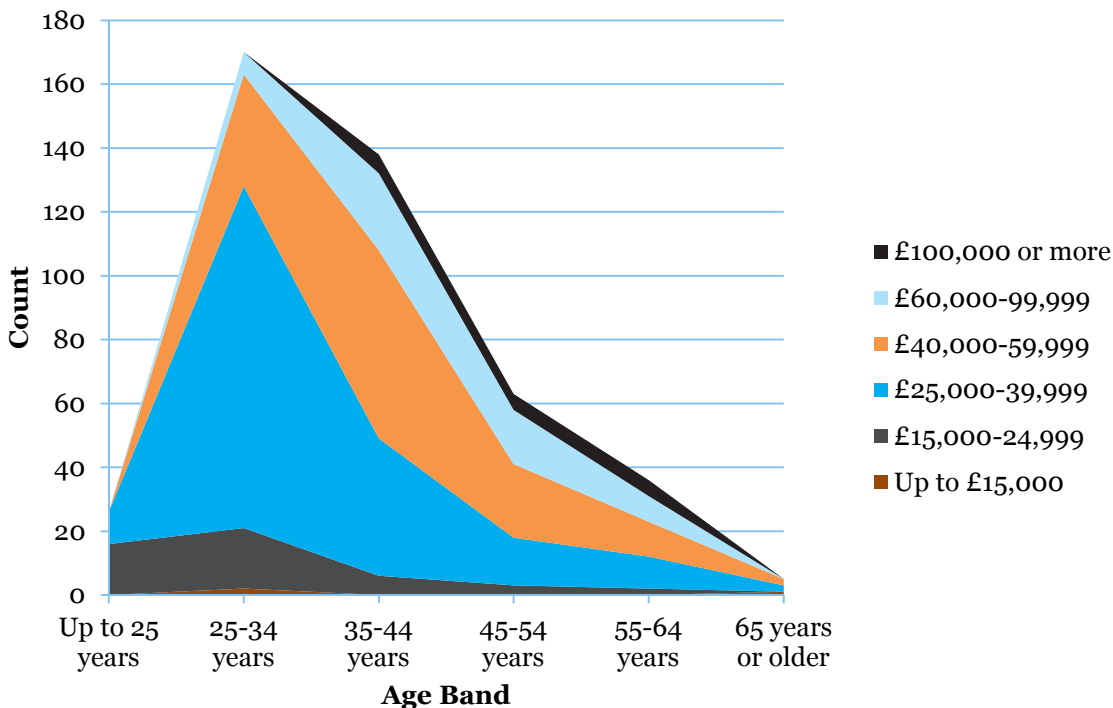
⁶ <http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/diversity-in-the-fundraising-profession>

Fig. 1 – Age and gender of survey respondents



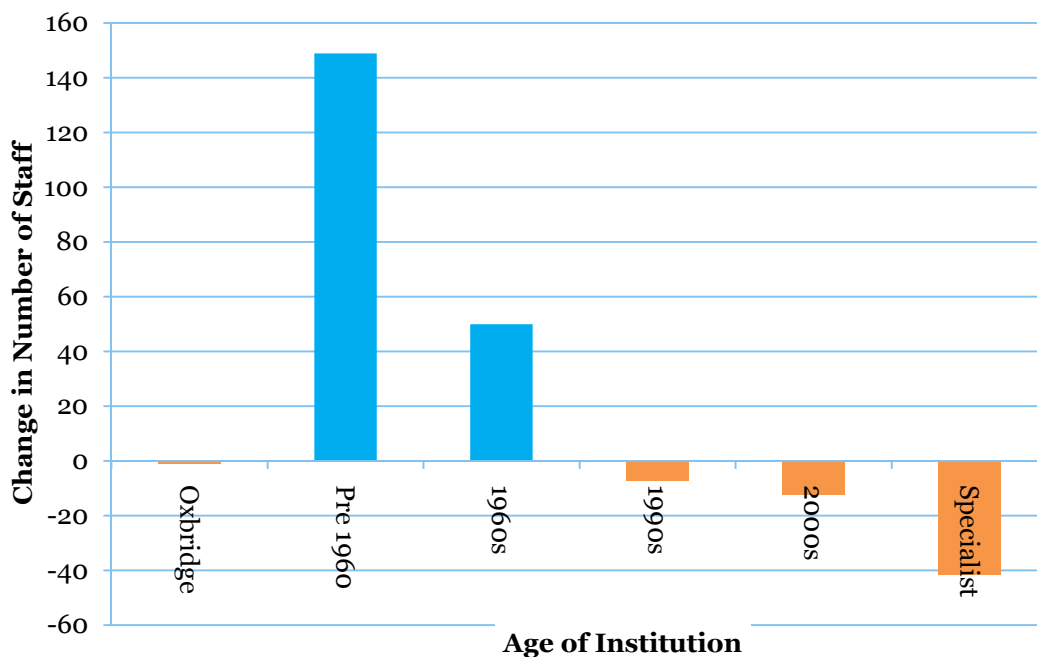
24. We have analysed salary data where it was given and compared this with both age and gender. While salary broadly increases with age, there is evidence of some who are relatively young reaching the higher pay bands – a consequence of the competitive market in which institutions operate to attract the best staff (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2 – Age band and salary range



- 25. On gender and its possible influence on salary, there appears to be little bias in all the age ranges up to 54 years old. Indeed, the proportion of all women in the 35-54 age groups who appear in the top two pay brackets is greater than that of all of the men, suggesting there is no bar to women reaching the top of the profession and being appropriately rewarded for doing so. This trend does not follow through into the 55-64 age group however, where men appear more likely to be highly paid than women, although the number of respondents here is small (27 women and nine men).
- 26. The workforce is predominantly white; 82% of the survey respondents identifying an ethnicity did so as white and from the British Isles (including Ireland), 12% as white from beyond the British Isles and the remaining 6% from other ethnic groups whether British by nationality and/or birth or not. In the same period the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) reported that 10% of all non-academic staff of known ethnicity were from a non-white ethnic minority, as were 18% of all first year undergraduate and postgraduate students. A recent report from the IoF found that 7.5% of those who disclosed an ethnicity were not white. Thus the HE fundraising sector is considerably less ethnically diverse than its context, and somewhat less diverse than its colleagues in the broader charity sector.
- 27. Over the three years to July 31 2013 there has been growth of around 7% in the numbers of fundraisers and alumni relations staff in the sector, although the growth has been by no means uniform. As investment in fundraisers correlates strongly with philanthropic revenue, there is a warning sounded here for those that have cut back.

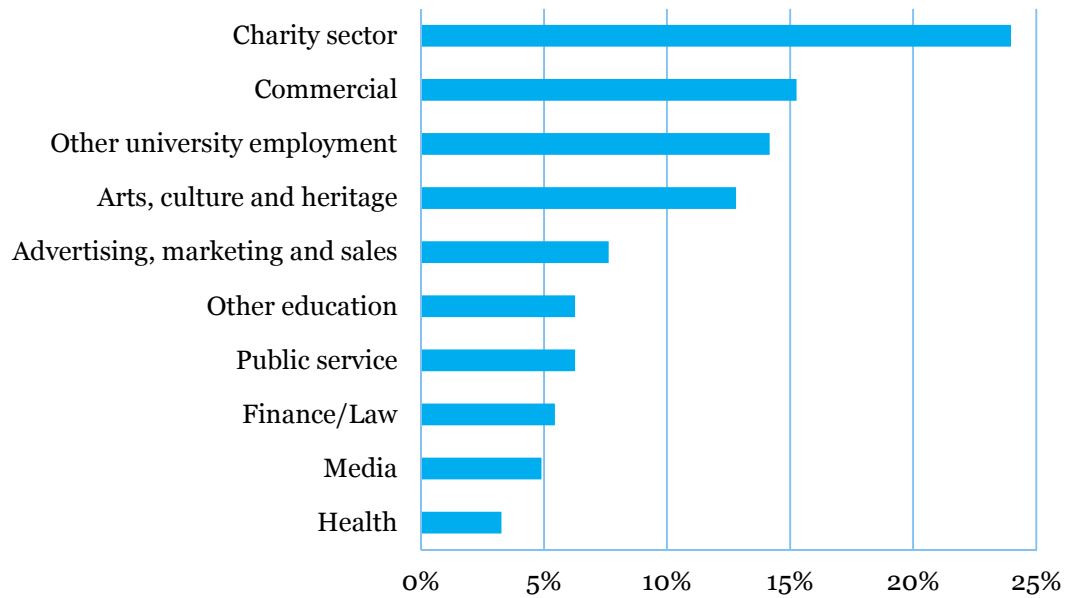
Fig. 3 – Change in absolute number of fundraising and alumni relations staff 2010-2012 by age group



Where we are: fundraising progress

- 28. The achievements described in the Pearce Report are real and impressive. At the end of financial year 2006-7, 131 institutions reported £513 million in total funds raised from 132,000 donors. Five years later, 152 institutions reported £693 million from more than 204,000 donors. That means 16% more institutions reporting an overall rise of 35% in funds raised, and 54% more donors.
- 29. The staffing base that has supported this remarkable growth in revenue and supporters has been a generation of home-grown pioneers (10% of the workforce has always been in HE development), together with talent imported from North America, people who have transferred from fundraising posts in other not-for-profit (NFP) sectors, and those who have transferred in from other disciplines within HE and beyond it.

Fig. 4 – Previous employment, those who have not always worked in HE development



Case Study

“I think that in many ways fundraising is more subtle here than in North America”

Kirsty MacDonald, Executive Director, Development and Alumni Engagement at the University of Edinburgh, came to the UK from Canada 19 years ago.

“I’m glad I moved from Toronto to London early in my career. It’s harder to build a network and understand the culture if you’re a senior development professional plucked straight from Harvard or Yale and dropped into the UK!

“To some extent, development is the same everywhere: it’s fundamentally about building long-term relationships. However, I also think that in many ways fundraising is more subtle here than in North America, where it seems to me it’s become aggressive and mechanical. I love the fact that we have to listen and be very responsive – and don’t mind that the British aren’t always comfortable talking about money. Figuring out what makes donors tick is what makes philanthropy fun.

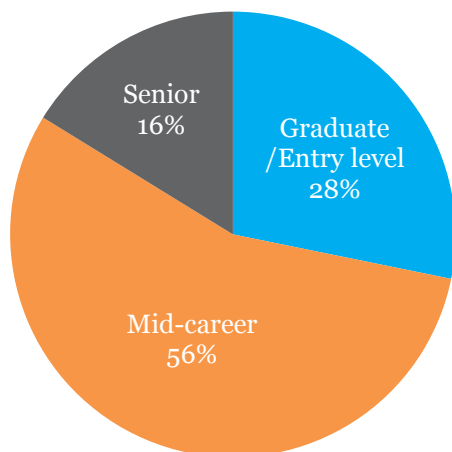
“Over the last 19 years, as I’ve moved between the arts and higher education, I’ve watched British fundraising change hugely. It’s been great to see development shift from the periphery to the core of institutions. Now, for the most part, vice-chancellors understand that, if they want to raise funds, it’s not enough to simply hire a fundraiser; they have to embrace fundraising as a big part of their role and then cascade it down through the organisation – which is what’s happening at Edinburgh.

“Having said that, I think there’s still much room for growth in the UK. The virtuous circle of giving back – ‘I’ve benefited from philanthropy, so I want to help the next generation’ – isn’t here yet. It’s not part of the alumni psyche. In some areas of fundraising we have many real success stories, for example, in medical fundraising, but we need to make them work in other disciplines. In addition, we need to get better at raising funds from other sources: government, grants and foundations, match schemes and the like.

“If I could wave a magic wand, I’d bring in some kind of transition programme for senior people transferring into fundraising from other professions, as well as trying to attract more bright graduate trainees through initiatives like the CASE traineeship. I’d also make existing fundraisers more confident and collaborative, so that development gets a voice at the top table. Of course, it’s not brain surgery, but fundraising is a profession – with its own techniques and strategies – like any other.”

30. People have transferred in at a variety of levels, including 16% of transferees at a senior level.

Fig. 5 – Entry level into HE development of those who have worked elsewhere



31. The increased size of the workforce and increased dialogue with other sectors makes for richer experience as well as greater fluidity of movement. The phenomenon of a cohort of development directors who had never worked for someone with more fundraising experience than themselves is coming to an end. **“I went from admin assistant to development director in five years. I shouldn’t have been allowed to do that.”** HE fundraising recruits today, such as the high-calibre Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) graduate trainees’ group, can look forward to a considered and supportive training and development experience with expectations of a coherent career path ahead of them over many years.
32. Within university administrations, fundraisers often find themselves a privileged group. **“Fundraising staff are more engaged in attending conferences, seminars and webinars than their counterparts in marketing or communications.”** Much good practice in training and networking has evolved to equip practitioners to succeed, although fundraising theory and research is less well developed. Practitioners can probably make better use of such material as does exist.
33. The Pearce Report indicated pressure points at all levels, from entry level, to mid-career progression, to heads of function. **“Getting the right appointment at the top is critical. We made four attempts before we found our current (excellent) director of development.”**
34. A shortage of strong candidates has been exacerbated, in many cases, by institutional inexperience. There are cases of evident over-promotion. **“I was lured away from my first job by lots more money. I wasn’t ready to run a team. The people interviewing me didn’t know that. And I didn’t know that.”** Instances of practitioners swinging from vine to vine without their feet ever touching the ground do little to build conviction and trust within the academic community and undermine the core strength of HE fundraising: the ability to build long-term relationships where time and attention may result in significant gifts.

35. Some key practitioners, especially at senior levels, have ambitions exceeding the expectations of their university employers. A number believe they have a broader contribution to make to their institutions beyond the development and alumni relations office. How their skills, perspectives and key relationships (both internal and external) are best used as their careers develop should be of concern. This is especially the case in a young profession where some are appointed to be leaders of substantial development and alumni relations offices with another 20 to 25 years of their working lives ahead of them.
36. Despite these caveats, HE fundraising is a satisfying and rewarding career delivering impressive impact in the most important of causes. On the other hand, it remains relatively small, in some places fragile, over-dependent on a few individuals and vulnerable to pressures from within and outside the institution.

Case Study

“I watched other people and how they managed, and was mentored informally by contacts elsewhere.”

Chris Murphy is Head of Development and Alumni at Birkbeck, University of London, having worked previously as a fundraiser in the arts and as a recruitment consultant.

“After graduating I went travelling in the hope that a career plan would come to me while lying on a beach. It didn’t and I ended up as a head-hunter specialising in recruiting fundraisers ... which was when I came to formulate a real career plan.

“The contacts and insights I’d gained enabled me to get the first job I applied for: as a fundraiser at the National Theatre. From there I progressed to Head of Memberships. So at 27 years of age, I found myself leading a team of six people, some older than me and with established reputations in the sector.

“It was a steep learning curve with a limited training budget! I watched other people and how they managed, and was mentored informally by contacts elsewhere. I also tried to read at least one leadership or management book a month and attended CASE events, but for the most part I relied on my instincts and people skills.

“After a couple of years I was approached for the Head of Development and Alumni post at Birkbeck. I’d always had higher education in the back of my mind, thanks to my grandfather, a miner’s son who was saved from a career in the pit by education. I know every university says its fundraising proposition is unique, but ours really is a one-off story of high quality research combined with access and evening teaching. The idea of giving people a second chance at education particularly resonated with me.

“At Birkbeck I’ve been able to grow the team from five to eight and I’ve had some leadership training. We’ve made progress. It’s tangible in the figures, but I know I’m far from the finished article as a leader. I’m still trying to make the transition from managing to strategic thinking. Whether I should be doing this job so young is debatable: there are

times when I think it would be beneficial to have a more senior fundraiser above me to learn from. But I'm lucky to have found consultants who I can turn to when necessary.

“My day-to-day management challenges are the obvious ones: finding the right staff, the right prospects and finding sufficiently ambitious projects to fundraise for. My advice to new directors would be to observe the whole institution, build meaningful relationships with academics, work damn hard and enjoy it – it's a brilliant job.”

Where do we need to be?

37. The case for support for HE and the importance of philanthropy in accelerating its impact is fundamental to this topic. To quote the Pearce Report, HE provides the activities and the infrastructure to deliver social progress across the spectrum, connecting with the widest range of passions and interests from donors of all sizes. It changes students' lives and improves their life chances – offering opportunities to open doors of every kind. It offers society's best chance of tackling the big issues of our times, from the diseases that killed our forebears to resource shortages, from the misery of war to the ominous gap between rich and poor.
38. This review has assessed various models to calculate the size and nature of the workforce needed to deliver the 2022 goal of £2 billion a year set by the Pearce Report. The analysis indicates a requirement for at least double (and preferably triple) the current staffing contingent. Thus far, expansion in staffing levels has correlated with an increase in funds raised. The conditions for success are that the new posts are populated by well-trained people operating in higher education institutions (HEIs) that are led by senior management teams engaging with the institutional recommendations in the Pearce Report. And of course quantity needs to be increased with no dilution of quality.

Recommendations

- R1. The case for support for HE – the understanding of the value of universities as a powerful channel for philanthropic interest and a good cause of wide social impact – is fundamental to the ability to grow the fundraising workforce.⁷ It needs to be reinforced at every opportunity.
- R2. Recognising the contribution that philanthropy has historically made, makes now, and will increasingly be required to make in future to the flourishing of HE is similarly a message to be insistently and persuasively conveyed by everyone involved in this sector⁸.
- R3. Fundraisers will be most effective when the leadership and strategy of their institution are committed to long-term objectives and investment. Universities' fundraising, alumni relations and communications plans – based on a clear understanding of their own distinctiveness, goals and particular opportunities, and agreed at the highest levels⁹ – have an essential role to play.

⁷ See Pearce Report Recommendation 5.

⁸ See Pearce Report Recommendation 6.

⁹ See Pearce Report Recommendation 1.

Fundraising within HE and beyond

An outward-looking perspective: part of the wider fundraising community

39. In the early years of the acceleration of HE fundraising, practitioners tended to look to each other for training, networking and good practice – much of this helpfully facilitated by CASE with its explicit focus on the education sector and its significant body of expertise in North America. New arrivals to HE development frequently comment on the generosity, candour and helpfulness with which experience is shared even among competing institutions. “HE is a welcoming and supportive culture. Colleagues in other institutions are willing to share expertise because our fundraising targets are rarely the same so we are not in direct competition.” This practical camaraderie is a significant element in the speed with which progress has been made. Participants in this study have strongly emphasised, however, their sense of belonging less to a self-contained group within HE – although it is critical that the particular characteristics of HE philanthropy are well understood – as of being part of a horizontal discipline carried out in different NFP sectors. These range from arts and cultural organisations through health agencies to high street charities, each with their own local opportunities and culture. “We used to be precious about this – ‘Oh, but we’re different’ – but we’ve had to change.”
40. This shift away from an HE silo towards a more outward-looking perspective is significant and a sign of increasing maturity. It has opened up opportunities for recruitment at all levels, for professional development and networking, for invigorating exchange of practice and for growth in leadership experience. This wider landscape is peopled in much larger numbers with skills and expertise that are transferable across the sectors. The IoF – the only individual membership body for fundraisers in the UK – has 5,500 members.
41. There is much in common. But there are important differences too, some mutual misunderstandings and traps for the unwary as they cross sector boundaries. Historically, a caricature of the spectrum has the charity sector being good at direct marketing, events and challenge-based fundraising, the arts particularly good at sponsorship, membership and stewardship, and HE succeeding with raising the largest gifts – with some truth in the generalisation. But recently staff and skills have flowed more frequently between different parts of the NFP sector. This review encourages greater and more coherent exchange in future.¹⁰

HE fundraising: distinctiveness and difficulties

42. For clarity for those considering a move into HE fundraising and for reassurance for those already within it, it may be worth describing the features of this special landscape. The opportunity for fundraising within universities is extraordinary. The latest Coutts £1 million+ Philanthropy Report recorded that HE was the most common destination for million pound donations in 2012. “One in four donations (24%) was given to this cause,

¹⁰ One regular observer of fundraising practice in Europe and North America points out that the HE concentration on Major Gifts fundraising has come at a cost. “On the whole the HE sector is very poor, compared with others, at middle and lower level and legacy fundraising.”

accounting for 42% of all million pound donations made in 2012. Indeed, six of the ten biggest donations were given to universities, all worth £30m or more ... Major donors view universities as credible institutions that are able to absorb and spend large sums on a wide range of important activities, from scholarships for financially disadvantaged students to cutting-edge research.”¹¹

43. Fundraisers want to make a difference and the largest gifts enable them to facilitate an enormous impact. But it is essential to tune in to the nature of the complex and long-term “good cause” that HE represents (as distinct from the urgent simplicity of a single-issue charity), the structure and politics of large institutions with multi-million pound turnovers focused on the core activities of teaching and research (where fundraising can seem peripheral) and to the culture and nature of the people at the heart of these institutions. “Universities are vast. You can be intimidated by that. Or you can find a way to join the dots.” “It’s never boring because there’s so much going on.” “You have to be comfortable working in a chaotic environment that changes”. “Top notch institutions have 500 priorities”. “If you expect a rock solid list of prioritised projects in universities then you’re waiting for Godot.”
44. A critical skill for university fundraisers is the ability to build strong partnerships not just with donors but with key faculty colleagues – the leaders of research groups and academic champions of projects identified for philanthropic support. The Pearce Report’s recommendations (10) emphasised the importance of embedding fundraising within institutions and providing support for academic and other staff who play an active role in philanthropic activities. CASE and Universities UK are researching existing practice of effective engagement with the academic community in relation to fundraising. “You’re surrounded by ferociously smart people. You’ve got to be able to handle that.”
45. Universities are attractive employers, many HE fundraisers observe, offering above average salaries for the market¹² (“a senior development director is paid twice as much as the CEO of a small charity”), especially in the most senior roles, and good conditions (holidays, pension provision, flexibility). Those responding to the survey tended to be satisfied with their pay and benefits, (70% actively agreeing they were, with percentages rising to 78% and 77% respectively among those working in management and strategy and major gifts fundraising).
46. The mainstream charity community has in recent years debated who is really “in charge”, the charity or the donor – with the suggestion even that “the agenda has to be grabbed back from the philanthropists”.¹³ With this background it is not surprising to hear fundraising rhetoric about “delivering the donor to the institution”. By contrast, one of the reasons the HE sector has been so successful in major gifts is that it has, to an extent, reversed the proposition, focusing instead on representing the institution to the donor and emphasising institutional accountability. This is a matter of meeting donors on their

¹¹ The Coutts Report also gives credit to the UK Government’s matched funding programme of 2008-2011 for encouraging donors towards HE.

¹² 80% of the survey respondents indicated their salary band, providing evidence to support this claim.

¹³ For example, Joe Saxton, Driver of Ideas at nfpSynergy speaking at the IoF Legacy conference 10 October 2011.

terms, and on their territory. It presents exciting and responsible opportunities to the fundraiser. This is not specific to HE, merely something that HE has done well. “It’s not simply how much money they bring in. It’s to do with how clearly satisfied all parties are”. “Even fairly junior people in fundraising end up representing the institution on quite sensitive matters.”

47. The range of places where HE practitioners have gained their fundraising training is wide, including the IoF, various arts training programmes, and the Cass Business School, in addition to CASE. The forums where they have acquired management and leadership training – no less important for senior staff – are yet more varied, from the Leadership Foundation’s Top Management Programme, through to the growing number of in-house courses, Executive Education and MBAs.

Integration of practice from other parts of the NFP sector

48. A number of informal cross-sector groupings with common ground are emerging, through planning or happenstance, such as the interchange of staff in London now occurring between the Tate, King’s College London and Cancer Research UK.¹⁴
49. At present the practice of fundraising is self-regulated within the framework of UK and national law. Fundraising charities are encouraged to join the Fundraising Standards Board (FRSB), although only four universities have seen the value in so doing. (HE is already highly accountable, through the regulatory oversight of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and a range of professional bodies.) Membership of the FRSB is still optional but it may not remain so. The FRSB tests complaints against the IoF Code of Practice and its own “Fundraising Promise”.
50. The idea of chartered status for fundraisers within the next five years has been mooted for the IoF by one of its trustees who leads the newly established Sustainable Centre for Philanthropy at Plymouth University. This would be an important additional step towards professionalisation and an opportunity to be explored with the IoF by the appropriate bodies within HE, particularly CASE.

¹⁴ The increasing number of Academic Health Science Centres nationally is likely to accelerate the integration of more conventional “charity” fundraising practice into HE practice. The fundraising operations at King’s College London now encompass all the fundraising for the King’s Health Partners’ NHS Trusts, so the Executive Director, Fundraising and Supporter Development, has responsibility for everything from £20m gifts to someone running a marathon to help fund a new scanner.

The HE fundraising workforce

Developing the workforce

- 51.** This review has focused its analysis on three interconnected areas. Detailed findings and recommendations are summarised under each of these:
- Recruitment and selection
 - Training and career development – at entry level, professional and management levels
 - Retention
- 52.** It is informed by findings from the survey about what keeps people in the sector and what makes them more likely to leave.
- A very high proportion of people working in the sector (85%) drew a sense of personal accomplishment from their jobs, with those working in front line fundraising the most satisfied and those working in development services the least.
 - “Career development” (40%) and “poor management/organisational culture” (18%) were the two reasons most often cited for leaving the sector by the small number of people (50) who completed the survey who were no longer in HE. While 95% feel they have the right skills for the job and 80% are actively encouraged to participate in training, a significant proportion (18%) do not feel there is relevant and useful training available to them.
- 53.** Good people like to continue to grow. Some high-achieving development leaders are frustrated by what they perceive as an “Upstairs, Downstairs” institutional culture where they feel second-class citizens, fit only to occupy a limited space. It serves not only talented fundraisers but also their institutions well if there are avenues for them to engage seriously in questions of long-term planning and prioritisation for the university. As development programmes become more sophisticated they become less opportunistic and more planned; for the chief development officer to be part of institutional strategic deliberation greatly enhances the effectiveness of their operation. There have been recent interesting examples of senior practitioners breaking through into roles with a wider brief and/or of leaving the country – especially to positions in Australia – to do so. [“A number of universities have broadened the portfolio of the development director to include corporate engagement or business relations ... Integrating fundraising within a broad portfolio of commercial and income generation capabilities would provide new career and professional development opportunities to senior fundraisers.”](#)

Case Study

“Would I ever return to the UK? It’s not something we’re likely to think about for some time as a family, but if that time comes I’d like to think my current role would open up my options for the future and take me in a new direction.”

Kate Robertson is Chief Engagement Officer at the University of Adelaide, Australia, having joined in 2013 from the University of Nottingham.

“In many ways I could have stayed at Nottingham forever. I was having a ball and it was an emotional wrench to leave mid-campaign, but – as a family – we’d been harbouring the dream of moving to Australia or New Zealand for over ten years. This is a broader role than I had and there aren’t too many of those in the UK for any directors of development looking for progression. When the opportunity came, I couldn’t pass it up. And then there’s the Australian weather and lifestyle, of course.

“My title is Chief Engagement Officer. It’s often a good conversation starter when I pass out my business card and many are quick to quip at its acronym! I have responsibility for the university’s strategic approach to engaging and building effective relationships with government, industry, the community, alumni and donors. I report to the vice-chancellor and I am part of his senior executive team. My background has focused mostly on alumni and donors. I was attracted to this position by the career step it provided: new stakeholder groups take me out of my comfort zone, and thinking about how we work as ‘one institution’ for something like external engagement in HE is challenging.

“At a number of other Australian universities, a variety of job titles reflect the broader, strategic role that many advancement leaders now have, positioned at the heart of their institution. I suspect ‘engagement’ will come up more often in relation to job titles for senior administrative, not just academic, posts and that’s a good thing. It’s easy to think of Australia as some years behind the UK, but in many ways they’re well ahead. In others they’re catching up fast - adopting and adapting well to lessons learned from the US, the UK, and indeed elsewhere. It’s exciting to be in such a dynamic new environment.

“Would I ever return to the UK? It’s not something we’re likely to think about for some time as a family, but if that time comes I’d like to think my current role would open up my options for the future, and take me into new directions. A role in the UK would have to be something that, whilst valuing the traditional skills and attributes of a fundraiser - strategic thinker, effective relationship builder, diplomatic negotiator and income generator to mention a few – would put them to good use in new and different ways.

“Any trend towards finding career pathways that recognises the significant breadth and depth that very many of the UK’s top HEI fundraisers can bring to the top table should be strongly encouraged – the rewards will be high for the individuals and institutions alike. If not, the danger is that great talent is likely to be lost to the sector or, as in my case, some will go further afield for that next step.”

Recruitment and selection

54. Educational fundraising is “a truly phenomenal career with lots of opportunity to make an impact and progress” yet few graduates have heard of it and almost none of its current high-achievers deliberately sought it out. Just as a powerful “case for support” is necessary for successful fundraising, it is also compelling in attracting those who wish to work for a cause that “makes a difference”, or, as one interviewee noted, a “real charity” in contrast to her view of HE as being somehow less worthy than other causes. Recruitment material is almost non-existent in careers offices or on national or sector web sites; when posts are advertised they rarely speak of the charitable and civic intent of the institution. There is a problem with the visibility of these absorbing, intellectually-demanding, increasingly meaningful and, often, well-paid roles.

Case Study

“I vaguely thought about working in the charity sector when I graduated but then the manager of the student calling team sent round some info about the CASE scheme.”

Carina Waldock is Annual Giving Officer at the University of Liverpool and a former CASE graduate trainee.

“If I hadn’t been a student caller at university, I’d never be in this career. It was fun, built my confidence and opened my eyes to educational fundraising. I vaguely thought about working in the charity sector when I graduated but then the manager of the student calling team sent round some info about the CASE scheme. I had no idea that educational fundraising salaries were so high – or that there were such fantastic opportunities for career progression.

“The CASE traineeship was even better in reality than on paper. Over the year, I moved around every part of development at the University of Nottingham and did a secondment to a university that was just starting to fundraise. Of my trainee peer group of nine, seven of us are still in higher education fundraising and one of the two who left is doing a postgraduate course. I always liked regular giving best, as it seemed the busiest and most diverse area, so when the job came up at Liverpool two years ago I jumped at the chance.

“My family and friends were aware I’d done the student calling, but didn’t think of higher education fundraising as a career. I even got some stick: ‘The government should be paying.’ But they were always supportive. I still meet a lot of people who don’t grasp what I do and don’t know that universities are fundraising – even within higher education!

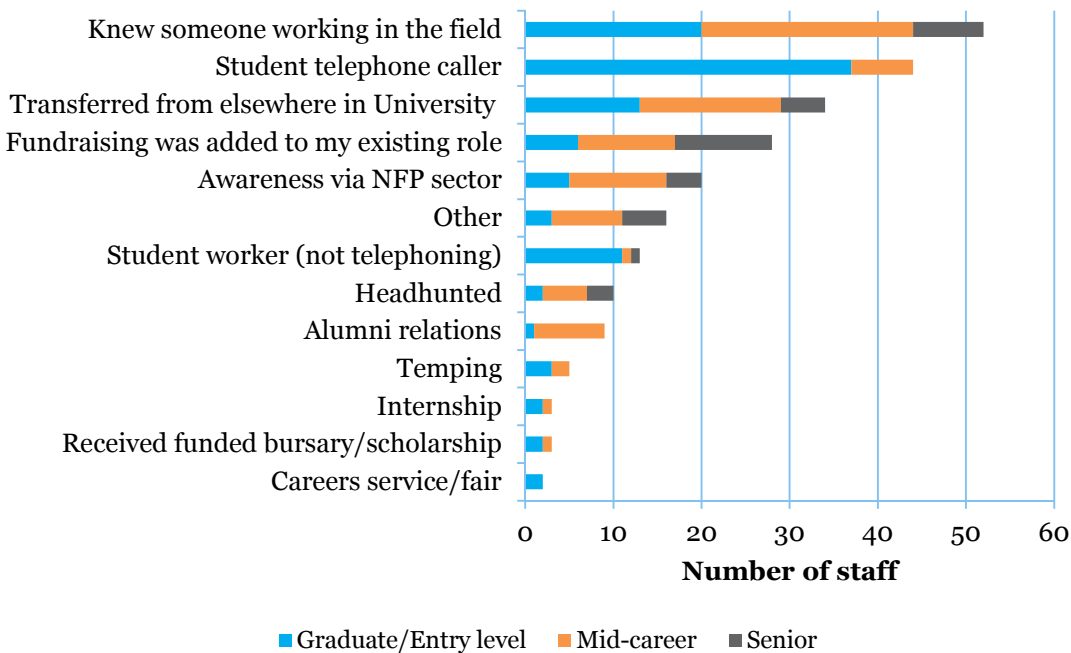
“I feel overwhelmingly positive about the experience so far. It’s definitely a very professional environment to be in, but I do worry slightly that there’s been less investment (and therefore fewer jobs) in development in northern universities than in the south. Also, I may have become a bit niche. I write a lot of copy, but if I wanted to take that skill into student recruitment, say, I’d probably have to step down a level.

“Anyway, my ambition long-term is to stay in higher education fundraising and progress

into management – maybe run a one-woman shop in a small institution, so that I can broaden my skills even more. I’m not sure about major gifts. I’m the kind of person who drops soup down my shirt, so I’m more comfortable with students not millionaires! In fact, a big part of my job now is managing the student callers and that is something I really enjoy.”

55. Language is an issue. The terms used to describe the roles encompassed in this review are not always well understood within HE, let alone beyond it. The standard descriptor is “development office”. Yet “we have ‘academic development’ here and ‘estates development’. I rarely say ‘development’ about my job because most people don’t know what it means.” Job titles involving the word “philanthropy” are becoming more common (implying a relationship seen from the donor’s perspective). Another increasingly used term is “engagement” as in “supporter engagement” and “insight” to indicate the increasing importance of data analytics in driving fundraising. The term “advancement”, implying not only fundraising but alumni relations and communications acting in concert – sometimes with marketing and reputation management as well – has been selectively imported from North America but is still not widely used or understood in the UK. Few outside the sector understand what an “annual fund officer” does, a common descriptor in HE, despite there being hundreds of people in mainstream charities performing this role of raising many smaller regular gifts; and the language of “leadership giving”, “principal gifts” and “campaign management” is scarcely more intelligible outside HE development offices. In HE “face-to-face” fundraising means working intimately with wealthy donors, yet in the charity sector it is the polite name for “chugging” (street fundraising). The sector needs to be more thoughtful about the language and descriptors it uses for its vacancies. Capturing in plain English what fundraisers in HE do and why it matters will make the opportunity intelligible and more attractive to potential recruits.
56. There were a large number of ways in which current staff found out about fundraising in HE. Beyond simply responding to an advertisement, the single most common awareness prompt among survey respondents was knowing someone already doing the job. However, among entry-level staff, being a student caller was by a long way the most common starting point. When added together with other work in the development and alumni relations office it becomes the most common introduction to the field.

Fig. 6 – Initial Awareness of HE development as a career other than seeing an advertised post



- 57. Only two people cited the careers service as the reason they joined, one fewer than the number who did so because they had received a philanthropically funded scholarship.
- 58. It is notable that telephone fundraising programmes provide an introduction to the idea of fundraising for universities and an initial training opportunity. Other work in the development and alumni relations office also plays an important role. Purposefully encouraging student callers and other former workers to consider remaining in the sector is an obvious avenue to explore, especially those who have demonstrated their ability to digest and draw on large amounts of data and to use soft negotiation skills effectively.
- 59. Experience of recruiting from other parts of the NFP world and indeed from the private sector is increasingly viewed as positive. As HE fundraisers have become more confident and expert, the additional experience and perspective of practitioners from backgrounds ranging from direct marketing to finance is refreshing and valued. A number of participants argued that by starting their careers in such bodies as the Prince’s Trust and small arts organisations they had been “thrown in the deep end” more than they would have been in the more hierarchical and perhaps more protective world of HE. Entrepreneurial skills and exposure to a wide variety of people were among the valuable attributes of that induction. For those transferring from outside the sector, rather than being recruited as new graduates, the most pressing need is to help new arrivals adjust to the particular politics, values and *modus operandi* of the sector – “fundraising skills are generic across the sectors, context is specific” as one interviewee put it. Supporting this, in the online survey, 60% of those who transferred into HE development at mid/senior levels found adapting to the HE sector harder than adapting their development/fundraising skills: only 26% argued the reverse (that adapting their development/fundraising skills was harder than adapting to the sector).

Case Study

“It’s helpful to be a bit worldly wise and have some life experience... If you can speak confidently with potential donors, then you will build the vital relationships.”

David Ellis is Deputy Director of Development at UEA, having previously worked in local government for 25 years.

“I was in my mid-40s when I realised that I was looking forward to retirement. I’d fallen into local government after university, was in the right places at the right times, and rose to senior management quickly. The longer this went on, the more economic sense it made to stay. But it wasn’t enough to sit with golden handcuffs waiting for a final salary pension, and wasn’t worth a life lived less than fully. I wanted to build a longer-lasting legacy, and to work in a more creative field with more freedom to be me.

“I realised that fundraising might be a good fit, although I kept several causes in the frame – not just education. I spoke to development recruiters, who were brutally honest that I’d have to enter at a much lower level and take a big financial hit. But in my mind, I saw this as largely temporary. If you’re going to be an effective fundraiser, you do have to back yourself, don’t you?

“At that point I contacted UEA (where I had taken my MBA) for a long chat about the skill set. Months later when the job of Senior Development Manager came up, I applied, even though I didn’t have the fundraising experience required on paper.

“But, in June 2012, I had my foot in the door – and 18 months later I’ve helped to raise £1.7 million for vital medical research. Fundraising isn’t a dark art, despite what you may hear. If you can build relationships and have a passion for your cause, it’s relatively straightforward. Of course, I use many skills from my former career: writing, budgeting, organising, thinking strategically and selling ideas... but the soft skills, the emotional intelligence and ability to listen, are the most vital. So I tend to think of fundraising more as a calling than a profession. It’s not about using how *clever* you are – it’s about using who you are.

“It’s also extremely helpful to be a bit worldly wise and have some life experience to draw on. If you can speak confidently with potential donors who may be senior partners in major law firms or incredible hedge fund managers, and be at ease with CEOs and trustees of charities, then you will build the vital relationships, which lead in turn to gifts.

“As of this month, I’m Deputy Director, so I’ll be bringing more of the managerial skills back to the day job. The culture in HE is great: youth and energy combined with experience and erudition. My family will tell you that our Sunday evenings have changed completely. Funnily enough, now I find myself thinking of ways *not* to retire.”

60. Geography has a bearing on recruitment. So does brand. Brand is even more significant in less favoured locations – hence the interest in “employer brands” emphasising particular attributes of a university as an attractive place to work. Within the small community of UK HE fundraisers the reputation of particular departments and leadership is common knowledge and will facilitate or inhibit recruitment. There are concentrations of more experienced fundraisers within the M25, in Oxford, in Cambridge and in Edinburgh/Glasgow. Recruiting to positions in the north-east or the south-west of England, for instance, or in Wales or Northern Ireland, demands even more creativity and flexibility than elsewhere, with a heavier dependence on candidates’ transferable skills and on “growing our own”. Many fundraisers naturally consider the reputation, mission and style of a potential university employer and the fit with their personal interests and abilities. Given that, especially for the most senior roles, this remains a seller’s market, experienced practitioners will investigate carefully before accepting a position, assessing whether the conditions exist for them to do a good job, conditions including institutional readiness, leadership and a commitment to invest in fundraising.

Case Study

“We’ve just appointed seven new people, which marks the end of a second phase of expansion ... but we don’t want to stop there.”

Stephen O’Connor is Director of Development at the University of Leicester. He was previously UK Director of Fundraising at Barnardo’s. He has been able to grow the Development and Alumni Relations team from six to 19 people in the last five years on the back of rising philanthropic income and support.

“I wouldn’t have considered the director’s role if the university hadn’t already been committed to a significant investment in growing the capacity and capability of the development team. Although a small operation, it was professionally reinvigorating to take a very hands-on role at a start-up that was gearing itself for growth and also happened to be my *alma mater*.

“My first task in 2009 was to recruit an able deputy director whose skills would complement my own. I had to go to market twice before I found the right person – an experienced manager with a wealth of major gifts experience and who was also attracted by Leicester’s soaring ambition. I already had in mind a team structure with essentially three pillars on which we’d be able to build a bigger team in the future: major gifts, alumni relations and development services.

“As the university began to see the philanthropic returns materialise from its initial investment over the following five years, it gained confidence in committing further investment. We’ve just appointed seven new people, which marks the end of a second phase of expansion – still based on the original pillars – but we don’t want to stop there.

“I think it’s easier for us now to find people at the beginning of their careers than it was five years ago. Graduates increasingly see higher education fundraising as an attractive professional career option. Once they’ve got the experience, it can be a seller’s market. I

know some people are absolutely set on a career in London and won't consider the 'provinces' for their first or second role, not least because they fear not being able to afford to return to the capital later on. But the quality of the work-life balance here, the university's high-profile research and fundraising successes – combined with the attractions of a thriving diverse city just an hour by train from London – are all benefits that play strongly in our favour.

“People have enjoyed growing with the team and retention has been positive. They enjoy working together and value consistent investment in high-quality learning and development. It's not always the big money that wise people are looking for.

“We've done well at winning big gifts and have been recognised with major industry awards – and we highlight these features to prospective recruits. Our success in large part is down to having the right people and playing to their strengths and potential. For example, we've raised £10 million for heart research with the support of the local community. Our approach has been informed by the proven community development skills and experience in the team and on the Development Board which supports our work. Will we do a full-on campaign? I think appeals still suit us. But if we continue to grow at the same rate, I think we'll be ready for a campaign before too long.”

61. A selection process that takes account of the need to engage the candidate with the institution as well as to assess the suitability of the candidate may mean the difference between securing a good person and losing them. That process requires more forethought and flexibility than for more routine and familiar appointments.
62. A number of universities have devised internships of various kinds to draw in young talent to fundraising. In particular, the CASE graduate trainee scheme is widely praised for its high calibre entrants and for having raised the profile of the role. It has also given the participating institutions valuable experience of recruiting and developing graduate talent, experience that is applicable to the recruitment and development of other team members. In terms of recruitment numbers, however, it is a refreshing drop in a thirsty ocean¹⁵. One of the key challenges is how to scale up the programme to include a more diverse range of institutions. Realistically, external funding for this exercise is no longer available: HEIs need to find a way to make this work for themselves. The CASE scheme is seen as something of a Rolls-Royce model. More such opportunities are needed, whether facilitated by CASE or locally.¹⁶

¹⁵ There is a strong pattern of retention of trainees in the HE sector. Of the 27 trainees who have completed the programme, 12 of them were retained by their host university and 12 took up fundraising roles in other universities. The great majority of the trainees have therefore remained within the sector. Only three trainees did not stay in the sector and all of these moved to charity fundraising. The host universities see the graduates as employable and there is a strong desire to retain them where possible. The most common reasons for not doing so are the lack of an opening in the team and budget constraints. Where the trainees were taken on, the universities have been delighted with their performance. The most common attributes referred to by the universities were their initiative, enthusiasm and energy, knowledge, personal credibility, confidence to speak up and their understanding of the university.

¹⁶ The Cancer Research UK Graduate Trainee Scheme provides another model researched in this review.

63. Many alumni remark that they are better informed about the university after they graduate than in their student days. Building in, as part of student engagement, an understanding of the “case for support” for universities, their role as philanthropic powerhouses and the realities of their funding, would be a sound investment for future alumni engagement as well as for recruitment into advancement positions. When development offices do a good job of celebrating the impact of fundraising successes on campus that also contributes to strengthening a culture of philanthropy.

Case Study

Raising awareness of development careers: St John’s College, Oxford

At just six years old, the development office of St John’s College Oxford is relatively young – but is already making a name for itself as an innovator in promoting development careers. It began by creating a **paid vacation internship** open to students and graduates of any university who might be considering a career in fundraising. One of the first interns, a St John’s alumna, is now working for a small arts organisation in a role that includes fundraising responsibilities.

In addition, the development office runs a series of **master classes** during term-time for St John’s students to raise awareness of its work and various career options – not just development. The idea is to find an alumnus/alumna or benefactor with an interesting career to come in and to talk to a group of students, who are then offered the opportunity to get involved in a hands-on, development-related project.

For example, last year’s master class focused on marketing and communications – led by an alumnus with a successful career as a marketing and branding consultant. Students then used the theory they’d learned from the master class to work with the development office on one of two projects. The first involved creating a postcard for an alumni appeal, which subsequently hit its target and unlocked matched funding pledged by a group of benefactors. The second involved redesigning the college’s annual Benefactors’ Report to better convey the college’s case for support and demonstrate the impact of donations. The work included pitching ideas to a board of benefactors and collecting and writing human-interest stories about students to bring the publication to life.

The latest master class will focus on renewable energy and feed into a new capital fundraising appeal. More importantly perhaps, it will spread the word about the work of the development office among a new intake of students... and potential donors. As **Caitlin Tebbit, Development Officer**, points out, it’s a win-win strategy. Even if master class participants have no interest in development careers, they will have direct experience of fundraising and fundraisers – and will therefore be far more likely to support the college after they graduate.

64. Top student callers are an obvious source of recruits. Development offices should consciously seek to draw this group closer to their work – especially if there is a calling agency involved, which can add an element of distance from the cause.

65. Other student volunteers working with the development office as well as those within the institution such as student union sabbatical officers or student ambassadors are another possible source for recruitment.
66. Human resources (HR) departments can greatly aid the recruitment and retention of high performing staff with a range of interventions including understanding the desired attributes, skills and competencies of fundraising staff; creativity and flexibility in employment conditions; and close scrutiny of grade evaluation systems. (Positions with significant impact on the institution but limited managerial responsibility – such as principal gift officers – are frequently evaluated as being of lower worth than those with a larger team but less responsibility for impact on institutional mission.) Where key positions are obstinately hard to fill, an “open door” policy where a university will find a job for an impressive candidate whether or not there is a formal vacancy has much to recommend it. Openness to finding skills wherever they are is important. Consciously regarding fundraising as a horizontal workforce spread across the charity sector, rather than a vertical workforce within HE, will underpin that openness and invigorate and enhance professional skills.
67. Recruitment advertisements and particulars need to emphasise the values and impact of a university when advertising jobs. Most fundraisers work for charities whose aims they connect with, yet universities often make their focus very opaque. “Be part of something big and special”, the University of Boston’s home page for advancement recruitment – www.bu.edu/dar-talent – gives an interesting example of how advertising can promote the cause and attract talented people.

Case Study

How do you attract sought-after candidates not just to a position but to a department, a university, a city, a region?

Pursuing the extraordinary: Employer branding at the University of Sheffield

When Tracy Wray (Deputy Director, HR) joined the University of Sheffield in 2011, she had a fairly typical reaction. “I had no idea what an amazing place this was until I got through the door,” she recalls. Unlike most recruits, however, she was in a position to do something about it. In fact, raising the profile of the university as an employer was one of her initial projects.

Working with the director of corporate affairs and consultants TMP Worldwide, the first task was to agree a positioning statement, a paragraph defining what made the University of Sheffield unique *as an employer* – aligned with the institution’s wider branding, vision and strategy. In some ways this is analogous to launching a fundraising campaign, in that it focus attention on the bigger picture, on what the institution as a whole really is and does and makes possible.

The audience in this case, of course, is not donors but prospective academic and professional staff – both targets with which the University could benefit from being “a little less modest”, as Wray puts it. They organised workshops, focus groups and one-to-one interviews with existing staff (again, just like a fundraising campaign), and also spoke

to external potential applicants to determine their impression of the university. The research was finally boiled down to a statement (or “Employer Value Proposition”) of around 100 words.

“Proud of our roots, our impact and our achievement, Sheffield has a hunger and passion for the future. A future underpinned by long-term investment in exceptional research and teaching, in international ambition, in talented students and in committed professionals. These are people who have the space, autonomy and encouragement to excel. More than this, we go out of our way to make sure they feel part of our community, part of our city, part of our future. We think it’s a future that ambitious, passionate and collaborative people will want to embrace and share.”

The next step was to articulate and condense this value proposition in a strapline, headlines and imagery. “We decided to focus on a call to action, ‘Pursue the extraordinary,’” says Wray. “We also came up with the creative concept of ordinary objects that become *extraordinary* when the right questions are asked.”

This may sound abstract but it all makes sense once you see Sheffield’s striking, colourful recruitment advertisements in the Times Higher Education (*THE*) magazine or elsewhere. Early design samples include the images below. Remember, the goal is as much to attract attention and raise the university’s profile as to fill the advertised post. With that end in mind the “employer brand” is now being rolled out through websites, social media and internal toolkits, as well as recruitment ads.

“Development is one of the most competitive recruitment markets in higher education,” says Wray. At a time when the university has been investing strategically in its fundraising capacity, having appointed not only a senior director of campaigns, three major gifts officers and an international alumni development manager, and currently seeking a head of campaigns, the helping effect of the eye-catching “employer branding” is timely and welcome, and has been instrumental in changing candidates’ perceptions.

An example of Sheffield’s advertising can be found at Appendix 4.

68. There are related professional groups (e.g. marketing, sales, business development, executive search, private banking) that, drawing on the competency framework, would form a target market for the recruitment of fundraisers. Universities have to hand some powerful technology. They should make use of alumni databases to help reach people from sectors where transferable skills can be found. There is a greater role for social media, such as Linked-In, in raising the profile of fundraising careers.
69. For entry as well as mid-level recruitment, the advice is to appoint for capacity and potential rather than expertise – and then to provide the training and coaching support to build up appropriate skills. This can be a formal part of the recruitment offer.
70. We found that for some institutional leaders and HR professionals there was a significant perception of risk in recruiting development staff, particularly senior ones. These are still relatively new roles in universities, and HR departments may not have helped the university to recruit many, if any, senior development staff. “We don’t know what we’re looking for, and so it’s hard to know whether we’ve found it.” “Director of development is

up there with the IT director and chief investment officer as among the hardest to recruit to.”

Case Study

Home-grown fundraisers: University of Birmingham

Faced with the frustrating challenge of attracting experienced major gifts fundraisers, the University of Birmingham has responded by adopting a strategy of growing its own. The principle, according to **Nick Blinco, Director of Engagement**, is to “recruit for talent and train for skill”.

For entry level graduate positions, the university has its own institution-wide graduate training programme in which the department plays a role. The department also has a substantial team of student callers, several of whom have secured permanent roles in the department after graduation. Graduates are typically recruited into officer level roles across research, regular giving, alumni relations and major giving, with intensive support to build their experience, skills, networks and gravitas.

For all positions, the department recruits against a set of behaviours and university-wide capabilities, with a selection process that involves role-play, values and aptitude tests in addition to traditional interviews. The department particularly looks for people who are intellectually curious, resilient and empathetic, with the flexibility and self-awareness to work with academics, donors and the university’s senior leadership.

Birmingham also has a thorough induction and skills development programme. All new starters meet key stakeholders of all levels and are assigned a mentor from outside the department, as well as an “uncomfortable companion” from within. New starters shadow more experienced members of staff to cultivate and close larger gifts. Regular peer-led training sessions cover technical aspects of fundraising, and weekly surgeries are held with senior fundraisers or researchers.

There is a highly structured approach to managing performance. All team members have a one-to-one meeting with their manager once a month and coaching is provided where required. Team and individual targets are co-created between managers and their direct reports: the aim is to make them realistic but stretching. The department uses the university-wide personal development system and encourages all members of staff to take advantage of the Birmingham Professional, a professional development programme for corporate services staff.

Recommendations

- R4. The use of clear language, avoiding jargon, about the roles and mechanisms of fundraising within HE will greatly assist in the wider promotion of fundraising careers. This includes avoiding job titles and advertisements that use terms poorly understood outside HE.
- R5. Institutions are urged to use all available opportunities to raise the profile of fundraising as a career in HE. Potential avenues for this include:

- Talking to students on campus, speaking at schools careers events, encouraging the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) to promote fundraising in HE as a career choice.
- Making full use of social media and other networks of student callers, volunteers and regular giving practitioners to highlight opportunities.
- Holding a joint event to help institutions extend graduate intern programmes, using learning from CASE’s graduate training scheme.
- Rolling out case studies of educational fundraisers, their attributes and career paths on relevant web sites, with interviews of practitioners.

R6. Universities are encouraged to make use of the Recruitment Guide produced as part of this review and to adapt them to their own situation.

R7. Development directors from established operations have a valuable role to play on recruitment panels for smaller, less experienced units and are urged to do this when possible.

R8. There is an opportunity for HEIs to draw on the competency models published alongside this report in recruitment, appraisals and career planning. These can be adapted by institutions for individual roles as needed and will enable a more flexible and open approach to recruitment based on competencies, skills and knowledge rather than predominantly on experience.

R9. Key stakeholders such as CASE, the IoF and other sector bodies have the opportunity to come together to explore whether and how best to develop the competency model further, working with institutions across the sectors.

R10. Developing an “employer brand” is encouraged as an effective way for individual institutions to reinforce key messages that will encourage recruitment of strategically valuable staff.

R11. Taking a flexible approach, recognising the predominance of women in the workforce, and the need to attract people with transferable skills from other sectors, will lead to more successful recruitment. Institutions are also urged to consider ways to attract people from a range of ethnic backgrounds as student callers and volunteers, as a means to encourage a more diverse workforce over time. In particular there is the opportunity to work with student groups and societies to promote fundraising opportunities to a wider mix of people.

Education, training and development for entry and mid-level staff

71. A grounding in good professional practice starts with the induction programme run by development and alumni offices. About 30% of survey respondents were new to HE or to fundraising on first appointment. The induction programme itself becomes a tool in retaining this talent. Entry to HE fundraising usually requires the assimilation of a considerable amount of information. Some HEIs now capture the expected schedule of learning through an “induction passport”.

72. At the mid and junior levels especially there is wide appreciation of CASE's programme of training, most especially CASE's Spring Institute in Educational Fundraising (SIEF), which is often used as a reward or incentive for promising staff. SIEF does an outstanding job in enthusing participants and opening their eyes to the real potential of a career in fundraising. Some concern is expressed however about control of the content and that participants receive a certificate just "for showing up", rather than for an assessment of their learning. More intentional post-SIEF evaluation, reflection, or online assessment of the learning would be reassuring. CASE's model of delivery is heavily dependent on volunteers. This has advantages – being a speaker provides learning for the volunteer as well as their audience – but evident limitations too, for example in quality control and in overload. It is largely the employer institutions that are underwriting the provision in a period when staff time is under acute pressure. The balance of need within the sector between skills-based training and conference-based networking is also a matter for consideration.
73. The largest offices are now providing wide-ranging programmes of in-house training, following in the footsteps of North American counterparts. "Oxford Inspire" and "King's Knowledge" are leading examples of such programmes. This practice is likely to spread as offices expand.
74. Fundraisers choose to supplement CASE programmes with aspects of training run by the Institutes of Fundraising and Marketing, the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners and Researchers in Fundraising among others, as well as a number of commercial offerings. There is wide take-up of these training opportunities. By contrast, opportunities for intentional, reflective and assessed education are less common, and less widely available. Most fundraisers possess a Bachelor's degree in some academic subject. There are only a small number of Masters programmes that include elements of fundraising practice, though a number of universities and business schools are exploring the possibility¹⁷. The new IoF Advanced Diploma in Fundraising, which has been developed in association with the Association of Fundraising Professionals and the European Fundraising Association, is aimed at Masters-level participants. It was launched in the autumn of 2013.
75. Network groups informally linking, for instance, major gift officers or heads of regular giving at peer institutions are actively encouraged by the more established development offices. Opportunities to share candid experience within communities of practice broaden the experience of individuals participating and add to their professional resilience.
76. Helping people to move from an operational to a more strategic level can be challenging. "How do you get the person on £50,000 a year to take the next steps to what the person on £100,000 a year can do?" This is the point where more formal mentoring can make an important intervention – typically for staff in their late 20s. In the online survey around 46% of respondents had participated in mentoring or coaching. Of these, over half rated it as being one of their top three methods of training and development. While many mentoring partnerships have been arranged in ad hoc ways, there are models for more formal and coherent structure for mentoring, e.g. the IoF's special interest groups and the

¹⁷ Chichester is launching an undergraduate degree in fundraising, while Plymouth is introducing a fundraising elective to some its undergraduate programmes.

Australia Council programme for mentoring arts-based fundraisers. More of this would be valuable, especially for practitioners beyond the first stage of appointment. As one survey respondent commented “[Developing a mentoring and coaching culture is much more powerful than a formal education in fundraising.](#)” Training in how to be a mentor is part of this process.

Case Study

“The first lesson that I’d pass on is consider being mentored, whatever level you’re at. Second, take the time to choose the right person.”

Rachel Morgan is Senior Development Manager at Cardiff University.

“I suppose I’d describe myself as a mid-career development professional who is ambitious for the long term. At least, that was in my mind when I was looking for ideas about how to prepare myself to take the next step. I was really thinking about a good training course or undertaking a professional qualification, but someone at CASE suggested getting a mentor instead – a person I aspired to be like.

“When I thought back over the events I’d attended one person stood out: Nick Blinco, Director of Engagement (encompassing development, alumni and business engagement) at Birmingham. His own career trajectory is inspirational, but it’s first and foremost the values he espouses that I admire. Nick’s a consummate professional who’s taken his department on a journey that only a special leader could – with strategic and emotional intelligence, sheer hard work and an emphasis on the importance of teamwork throughout. He has a voice and influence on the policy scene too.

“So I emailed him, inviting him to coffee or lunch. His PA got back to me and suggested a phone conversation instead. He basically said ‘yes’ almost immediately but wanted to know exactly what I was looking to get out of mentoring. That was over a year ago now.

“In practice it works out at an email or phone call every two months or so. I’m very conscious of how busy Nick is, so I tend to contact him only when there’s something to discuss. At the beginning, he gave me a couple of more general forward-planning exercises. I realise now that I was being a little naïve about my ambitions. With the benefit of his hindsight I’ve learned to be more patient and considered. He manages to say it like it is, at the same time as being very encouraging. Nick also has an uncanny ability to read the situations I describe and to pull out the implicit but critical points which lead me to practical, positive solutions. He knows too when just to give reassurance that I’m on the right track.

“The first lesson that I’d pass on is: consider being mentored, whatever level you’re at. Second, take the time to choose the right person. Third, use your fundraising skills: be flexible, remember that an hour of this person’s time could be put to very valuable use at their own institution and – of course – say ‘thank you’.”

77. Generational differences need thought in this markedly young body of staff. Increasing evidence indicates that the “Generation Y” contingent expects more involvement in

designing their own roles/jobs/targets/expectations than their forebears¹⁸. This is a challenge for them and for their managers. “Gen Y don’t leave institutions. They leave managers.” In the survey, 96% of those under 25 agreed that opportunities to progress and develop careers were important to them when choosing to apply for a job.

78. A range of current good practice, including an HE “induction passport”, “learning logs”, encouragement to join network groups, and feeding these steps into personal development plans, should be facilitated and linked together. The “learning log” that is an intrinsic part of the CASE graduate trainee programme, where participants capture and track the elements through which they progress and discuss them with their manager, is a valuable and transferable feature. Personal development plans need to encourage real reflective learning and not simply be a box-ticking, performance management or target-setting exercise. Questions like “Why was that hard?” and “What achievements are you especially proud of – and why?” are as important as “Did you meet your targets this year?”
79. Most of the practitioners currently leading development offices in UK universities have effectively learnt their craft on the job – by a patchwork of courses, coaching and trial-and-error. Their career route has been clearer with hindsight than in prospect. There is widespread appreciation that the emerging profession now owes it to new entrants to offer a more considered and coherent pathway – and that such clarity will itself increase the pool of interested candidates.
80. The review has looked at the range of current provision, both academic and vocational, delivered on and off the job. The new Arts Council “Philanthropy Fellowships” are of interest, where the learning fundraisers acquire at their host institution will be recognised by a certificate from the University of Leeds, with the possibility of a Leeds MA in due course. Another intriguing model is the AGCAS matrix standard, to which all university careers services sign up, and through which AGCAS works in partnership with the University of Warwick, leading to a Warwick MA. Practice in careers offices is therefore continually enriched by learning from the MA dissertations offered by participants. This latter model has the advantage of making reflective learning as important as simply receiving training, and simultaneously builds the body of knowledge in the sector. Constraints to be borne in mind include the relatively small size of the current HE fundraiser population (which may not make it attractive for a provider such as the Open University to meet this need). Training budgets in many HEIs are limited.
81. There was little enthusiasm among sector leaders for a mandatory qualification for HE fundraisers (and little confidence that it would demonstrate competence anyway). But 45% of survey respondents said they would value a specific qualification in HE fundraising, with younger people being more positive. However, there is a growing appetite for a training and qualifications route that builds on existing good practice, allows for different specialisms (regular giving, major gifts or business intelligence for instance) and for modular development, and relates to on-the-job realities.

¹⁸ ‘Talking About My Generation: Exploring the Benefits Engagement Challenge’ – Dr Paul Redmond, Liverpool University/Barclays

Fig. 7 – Career stages and sample learning route

	Career Stage	Range of possible interventions
Year 1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship • CASE Spring Institute in Educational Fundraising • CASE Introduction to Fundraising in HE • IoF Introductory Certificate • Induction passport • Learning log • Peer networking
Year 2 to 5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IoF Certificate / Diploma • CASE Spring Institute in Educational Fundraising • Learning log • Mentoring • Specialism specific training programmes • Peer networking in & ex-sector
Year 5 to 10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management training • Mentoring • IoF Diploma / Advanced Diploma in Fundraising / MA • Specialism specific training programmes • Peer networking in & ex-sector
Year 10+		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management / leadership training • Executive coaching • Advanced Diploma in Fundraising / MA • Continuing education on fundraising developments • Peer networking in & ex-sector
Beyond DARO *		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management / leadership training • Executive coaching • Peer networking in & ex-sector
Key		<p>* Development and alumni relations office</p>

Recommendations

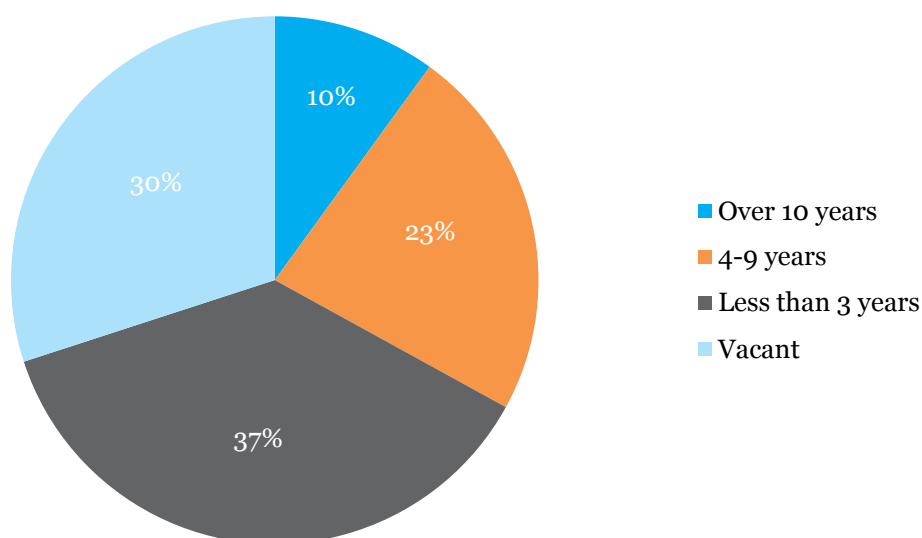
- R12.** There is a clear appetite for increasing professionalism within HE fundraising, which can be achieved by a mix of experiential and educational mechanisms. This presents the challenge – and opportunity – to an organisation or group of organisations working in partnership to take the lead in developing and giving coherence to a package of learning elements. For example:
- Existing good practice – from induction passports, learning logs and individual training courses – could be extended to create an acknowledged “learning route”, in due course leading to a university-backed qualification.
 - A purposeful mentoring programme could be developed to aid career progression, with mentors drawn from both within and beyond HE.
- R13.** Cross-sector liaison and coordination is encouraged between groups including CASE, the IoF and other bodies involved with the education and training of fundraisers. Among the topics they are invited to consider are shared training, the evolution of a widely recognised qualification working towards charter status and the general applicability of the Advanced Diploma in Fundraising.
- R14.** University leaders are invited to rise to this challenge of offering provision for postgraduate qualifications in fundraising, including the development of a body of associated research in fundraising, particularly given the scale of the overall fundraising sector.
- R15.** Institutional peer groups (such as the Ross Group, the development directors of the former 1994 Group or of specialist institutions or of members of Million +) are encouraged to facilitate shared training and networking within a community of practice.

Professional development for leaders and aspiring leaders

- 82.** High-performing directors of development are valuable people. They are increasingly essential in realising institutional aspiration. “If they’re good, hang onto them for dear life.” Strategic talent management is advisable both to allow them to flourish and to produce a pipeline of their successors¹⁹. At any one time there are usually a cluster of universities with vacancies at the top level, with costly gaps between appointments. At the time of writing, out of a sample of 30 universities reviewed for this report (see Fig. 8) there are at least nine vacancies at development director level with a further 11 having been recruited in the past three years. At the same time, it is noteworthy that those universities within the sample that have had some of the greatest fundraising success have had development directors in post for over four years.

¹⁹ Executive search firms and donor interviewees have expressed concern as to whether enough high calibre directors of development to be are waiting in the wings to replace their bosses in due course.

Fig. 8 – HE development leadership – time in post



- 83.** Leaders of development offices of any size face the same challenges as anyone who starts by developing a specialism, but with increasing experience and seniority finds that the management of others is at least as important as their own practice. Some practitioners with particular skills in working with donors and with academic colleagues will wish to remain just that – and should be encouraged to flourish in that mode and not required to acquire management responsibilities as the sole route to promotion.²⁰ They should however be encouraged to share their expertise and experience locally and nationally. But many will wish to develop their management skills, and others will have this responsibility thrust upon them. *“I moved from managing a team of eight to a team of 80 overnight.”*
- 84.** The 2012 Pearce Report noted that the leadership task of a development director is as much about “managing up” and about building alliances and relationships with academic and administrative peers as it is being the practice leader in the development office itself. Executive education, personal coaching and other forms of developing the leadership and management skills of development office leaders will make a major contribution both to fundraising success and to the positive development of the workforce.²¹ This leadership development task does not need to be tailored specifically for fundraisers since the challenges are generic. There is a growing range of well-regarded management and leadership training available within universities, of which senior development staff should certainly take advantage. Learning in the company of colleagues from other departments has the valuable by-product of integrating development better within the institution. And

²⁰ Some North American HEIs have two tracks for progression, one leading to management responsibilities and the other to principal gifts positions where the expectation is for limited management tasks but high revenue goals.

²¹ It is striking that this group found it hardest to maintain a sense of work/life balance with one third saying they could not do this. A move from senior roles into consultancy seems frequently to be underpinned by a search for a better balance.

there are benefits in drawing on cross-sectoral provision, engaging with the experience of other disciplines in the private, public and NFP sectors.

Case Study

“They say fundraising is a marathon, not a sprint. So it makes sense to ensure continuity by encouraging promotion from within, where the opportunity exists.”

Norma Sinte, Director of Development and Alumni Relations at Queen’s University Belfast.

“It was never on my radar to return to the university I graduated from but, while working in the arts sector in marketing and fundraising, I spotted the job opportunity at Queen’s and joined as head of major gifts in 2000. The fact that it was a new post in a new department attracted me. I also felt that my background in the private sector in sales management both in Northern Ireland and overseas and also in the arts sector in fundraising would stand me in good stead. Being at Queen’s in the start-up phase meant that I had the opportunity to understand how this business works. With only a few of us on the team, we were involved in all aspects of development and alumni relations no matter what the job title!

“I had assumed that my next career move would be outside the organisation. I had never stayed anywhere longer than six years. But when my boss left in early 2007 I was thrust into the acting director role. Although I deliberated about applying for the post of director, I reasoned that I at least had to give it a shot.

“Being an internal appointment is not easy. People assume that you know much more than you do when in fact exposure at a senior level has often been limited. I had to grow into the role – at a time when we had a lot of vacant posts and for a year were simply fighting to keep things running. I would thoroughly recommend that anyone in the same situation find an external mentor. I was very lucky to have Mary Blair, Director of Development at LSE at the time. She gave me sound advice and helped me focus on doing the right things (not just ‘doing things right’). It is also important for institutions to guide those who are appointed internally and ensure they have access to the same training and development as external candidates – and indeed the investment to make changes to meet new aims and objectives.

“They say fundraising is a marathon, not a sprint. So it makes sense to ensure continuity by encouraging promotion from within. Today, I make sure that my staff have access to opportunities for training and development both inside and outside the university. For example, I supported one of my senior team through an MBA and put our prospect researcher in an ‘acting-up’ role as fundraiser for a year. The former is now director of development in Monash, Australia, and the latter is one of our fundraising team. I take pleasure from both.

“Although it’s good to bring in new blood, in a sector where change is constant, continuity can be useful. And it isn’t about continuing to do the same things – it is about building on solid existing foundations to change and improve in the future. In the last few years I’ve

doubled the size of the department, planned and launched a second fundraising campaign, and, by building a talented team, have ensured that our work is seen as absolutely vital to the university.

“Roles on a number of committees and working groups mean that I have become involved in projects beyond fundraising and alumni relations. I thrive on change and I think that’s what keeps me here. My next challenge is to work with a new vice-chancellor – who also happens to be another leader appointed from within.”

- 85.** It should be noted that the leader of a small high performing development and alumni relations office (for example at a specialist institution) may well have fundraising targets that form as large a proportion of institutional turnover as the leader of a 40-person team. And the gifts they are looking for may well be of the same order. Yet clearly the management challenges are different, with the small office leader having to be the practice leader of the major gifts team, simultaneously encouraging a diverse range of skills and competencies in a modest team, while the leader of the larger office will have specialist leaders in each area.
- 86.** Personal executive and development coaching was seen as a powerful tool to improvement, especially for senior staff²² who value input from beyond their immediate experience to help them approach challenges in new and creative ways, building confidence at the same time. This is a personal matter but it is warmly to be encouraged.
- 87.** The IoF has developed a set of leadership competencies and incorporated them into a pilot leadership programme. This is based mainly on action learning and on mentoring.²³
- 88.** There is much discussion among senior staff about the necessity or otherwise of a direct reporting line to the vice-chancellor and/or a position on the senior management team. Current practice varies and there is no demonstrable correlation with performance.²⁴ But fundraising becomes more strategic as it becomes more effective and embedded. As it does so, more people at senior level within development offices will take on wider roles at higher levels – a trend that is already happening. But “[how do you pull them into the strategic conversation without pulling them so far in they haven’t got time to do the job?](#)” In the meantime, wise directors of developments form strong relationships sideways with their peer heads of finance, estates, HR and careers, as well as focusing on managing upwards with soft negotiation skills. “[The key is delivery. Success depends on the numbers but also on whether the senior team feel engaged, loved, enjoying their role in the fundraising.](#)”
- 89.** Leadership of institutional fundraising is inevitably a shared commitment. Talented, experienced, tenacious professionals are necessary but not sufficient elements in the chemistry. The leadership of vice-chancellors and their active engagement with the

²² Some of those who had experienced coaching or wished for it had had to overcome ill-informed internal attitudes that to do so was somehow to admit incapacity!

²³ <http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/director-of-fundraising-competency-framework/>

²⁴ See also Myth-busting section.

philanthropic process are indispensable. “The VC’s interest is perhaps the key determinant of success.”

90. Directors of development are not on a career track to become registrars or vice-chancellors – and few would wish to be so. But their increasing expertise, effectiveness and institutional knowledge earn them respect and attention from their vice-chancellors. What should happen to people who reach the top at age 40? They have 25 or 30 years’ working life ahead of them; there are not currently many examples of high level development staff in their 50s and 60s. A note of realism is urged here. Some will leave the sector and become, for instance, CEOs of charities. There is a well-beaten path into consultancy. But there may also be roles within – or working across – management structures that will enable the small number of highly talented and strategic people who have run large campaigns to stay and develop their skills and interests. Possibilities suggested in the consultation process (several of which might be at pro-vice-chancellor level) include:

- A broader role including leadership of external relations, marketing, student recruitment, international affairs, press and PR etc.
- A broader role with responsibility for revenue-generation, defined widely.
- A role as a kind of internal consultant in the university – someone who is used to seeing the institution from outside and can add wisdom to decision-making on everything from institutional strategy to senior academic recruitment.
- A progression into the leadership of the delivery of student experience. The customer-centric world of fundraising and alumni relations is arguably good preparation for this role; happy and fulfilled students make the best alumni.

Recommendations

R16. Institutional leaders are urged to consider how to make use of the expertise and institutional knowledge of experienced directors of development for the longer-term benefit of the institution and the individual.

R17. Aspiring leaders are invited to take full advantage of the plethora of leadership development opportunities available to them including:

- Internal courses within institutions, the Top Management Programme and cross-sector initiatives such as the Clore Fellowship and Common Purpose UK.
- Executive coaching.

Joining or developing communities of leadership e.g. through mission, other peer groups, CASE or cross-sector networks.

Case Study

“In the long-term, the role of development director will become increasingly strategic – probably part of the so-called ‘C-suite, the top team’”

Wendy Purcell, Vice-Chancellor of Plymouth University

“Here at Plymouth, we are in the relatively early stages of our development journey having only recently appointed our first dedicated development director.

“In recruiting, we focused most of all on identifying development professionals who were able to demonstrate a genuine connection with our values as a university. Excited by our vision to be the enterprise university and passionate about our mission to transform lives through education and research were key selection criteria. We devoted considerable time to talking with the candidates about our purpose and their interpretation of it. How would they make our strategy live through their own philosophy? And did they measure their success through cash delivered or impact made?

“In addition, crucially, the person we appointed had to be a credible senior leader who could operate at all levels – from students to major donors. To that extent there’s nothing magical or unique about the development function. These are generic senior leadership skills.

“Nevertheless, there’s no doubt that we were looking for someone with a track record in fundraising. It’s just that we shuffled the pack on values and leadership qualities. And we had no hesitation in rejecting very experienced people who didn’t have the right fit.

“It’s harder for me to talk about retention, but I was aware in the recruitment process that the best development directors are believers in and ambassadors for their institutions. The long-term relationships they build are by definition non-transferable.

“We see development as a natural extension of what we do at Plymouth University. If we are effective at transforming lives, then alumni will want to give back to us. As a result, in the long-term, the role of development director will become increasingly strategic – probably part of the so-called ‘C-suite’. After all, building close relationships with the senior management team is a key part of the role, so it’s a short hop to becoming part of it.”

Retention

91. With key skills in short supply and a buoyant job market, it is tempting for fundraisers to consider opportunities elsewhere. For high fliers, the phone rings often with job possibilities.
92. Research from the US demonstrates that a major gift officer becomes effective after two and a half years in post in an institution (cited by Bentz Whaley Flessner).
93. In the online survey, over half (55%) of respondents agree that they intend to stay in HE development for the next three years and only around one in 10 (12%) disagree. Those

working in regular giving and major gift fundraisers seem to be more settled than those in alumni relations and development services. Just over one-third (36%) of those considering leaving the sector cited career development as their primary reason for looking to move on.

- 94.** There was little evidence during this review of active retention strategies in place, with the exception of embryonic work in larger offices. Such strategies are increasingly used in the context of other shortage specialisms outside HE, focusing on elements including the needs and motivations of staff. Thoughtful institutions will take an active approach to retaining key talent. HR departments could usefully play a role where they are not already doing so, particularly where the teams are modest in size. More details on retention strategies are included in the Recruitment and Retention Guides included in the appendices.

Recommendations

- R18.** Development directors are urged to think consciously about retention and to work actively with HR departments to develop appropriate retention action plans for their teams. The Retention Guide published with this report gives helpful guidance on issues such as career planning, identifying and retaining talents and skills, recognition and incentives, adopting flexible working practices.
- R19.** Adoption of the induction passport and learning logs by fundraising and alumni relations teams will help with retention of development team members.
- R20.** CASE and the Ross Group have the opportunity to play a role by collecting regular workforce data as part of the Ross-CASE benchmarking survey. This needs to be focused on information that will help monitor progress such as: the established number of full-time equivalent (FTE) fundraising and FTE alumni relations posts in each department along with numbers of vacancies; what proportion of post-holders would define themselves as part of a black and ethnic minority group. Further differentiation of roles carried out by staff would allow more robust benchmarking, for example by adding “management” and “operations/support” alongside “alumni relations” and “fundraising”.

Additional findings

- 95.** While recommendations for the use of competencies and on diversity have already been included in relation to recruitment and retention (R8 and R11), additional noteworthy information and discussion is reported below.

Competencies, skills, attributes and values

- 96.** The development of a model for the competencies required for successful fundraising was – perhaps surprisingly – welcomed with notable warmth by most participants in the study. Many universities use such a framework for other roles; a number of the bigger development offices are in the process of devising their own. They were seen as likely to be useful particularly in helping institutions to recruit more effectively and to avoid misfires – especially when panels include senior staff unfamiliar with fundraising; to open eyes to where suitable pools of new recruits may exist (Who else looks like this and what training have they already received?); and in strengthening appraisal, performance management and the planning of CPD. Compatible skills, attitudes and values – the

values both of the individual professional and of the institution they join – are also recognised as important and complementary.

Case Study

Managing by core values - King's College London

When the development functions of King's College London and its partner hospitals merged in 2010, it was clear that several different organisational cultures were coming together, which presented a unique opportunity to redefine the merged department's working culture. The members of the new team therefore embarked on a project to identify the core values that defined them – not only as they were at the time but also as they wanted to be in the future.

With around 120 people in the new department, an entirely bottom-up approach was impractical. The senior management team met to identify areas of priority. They came up with three core values – expressed as adjectives: *brave*, *rigorous* and *supportive*.

Next, a taskforce was created, consisting of staff at all levels of seniority and led overall by Deputy Director of University Fundraising, Dale Cooper. The role of the group was to flesh out each of the three core values.

Individuals in the department who clearly exemplified specific core values were co-opted to join a series of workshops and meetings to explore the culture values more fully. At the end of this process a final values document was drawn up. Each of the values was assigned two or three “sub-values”, expressed in the form of questions and several behaviours that exemplified the core values.

For example:

Value: “**The Brave - Pushing of Boundaries**”

First sub-value: “**Innovative** – Am I thinking creatively and being ambitious?”

Behaviour: Example of “exemplary sign”: **Open to ideas**. Responds to new ideas by discussing how they might work instead of telling others they won't work.

A full list of King's core values can be found as Appendix 5.

Today, what started as a project to create a common culture has become an essential management tool. Managers have concrete standards by which to evaluate performance and – crucially – to make those difficult conversations easier, while the recruitment process includes a core values interview as well as a skills interview. The questions and behaviours are also embedded in: personal development plans and the departmental strategy; activities, such as whole-team meetings and away days; communications – internal and external; and coaching.

According to Dale Cooper, the exercise has helped to create a collegiate department of like-minded people with few of the silos that might be expected in such a large group.

Other institutions have since borrowed the core values document and adapted it for their

own needs. Although the wording has changed slightly, the essence has remained the same, which suggests that King's College London has identified some fundamental characteristics of the development profession in UK HE.

Diversity: gender and ethnicity

- 97.** Does it matter that the fundraising and alumni relations workforce is predominantly female and overwhelmingly white? Participants in the review are thoughtful about this question. Seventy-four per cent of survey respondents were female. The percentage of women enrolling for the CASE Spring Institute has approached 80% in recent years. (It should also be noted that the number of women appointed to the most senior positions in HE fundraising roles is also strong, with women currently leading fundraising, for instance, at high-achieving offices including Oxford, Cambridge, King's, UCL, Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities.) Ideally, almost everyone would prefer a mixed and balanced workforce. While universities may be pleased to see credible male candidates apply for positions, the reality is that the sector would be well-served by being creative in devising employment arrangements that support a majority female workforce. There are good examples of flexible working after return from maternity leave that have served both employer and employee. While some fundraising positions are relentlessly demanding, it does not follow that to be a successful fundraiser staff have to work full time.
- 98.** Of note is the patchy record of providing maternity or interim cover at a more junior level. Several institutions that have taken part in More Partnership's Regular Giving Benchmarking project have decided against making a maternity cover appointment and then experienced a drop in their regular giving income that exceeded by tens of thousands of pounds the cost of having provided adequate temporary cover. Aside from the loss of income, this diminution in performance is demotivating for staff who care about raising money.
- 99.** Respondents to the survey were 94% white. As evidenced in paragraph 26 this is less ethnically diverse than staff in HE as a whole and also than the fundraising workforce in high street charities. As universities become ever more international, with flow-on consequences for their student, parent and alumni bodies, there must surely be advantages in encouraging a fundraising workforce that more closely echoes the diversity of the supporter base with which it will engage. Visible leadership, tailored training, mentoring and the support of communities of practice will all provide incremental progress. "You cannot be what you cannot see."
- 100.** The process of incremental organisational change enabled by the Athena SWAN charter to advance the representation of women in science, technology, engineering, medicine and mathematics is interesting in this context. www.athenaSWAN.org.uk

Case Study

“At a fundraising seminar yesterday mine was the only non-white face”

Samir Savant, Director of Development at the Royal College of Music

“Diversity is an issue in higher education fundraising, especially in terms of ethnic minorities. Working in the arts and higher education, I find there’s never any direct discrimination. But at a fundraising seminar yesterday mine was the only non-white face, and sadly this is often the case at such events. And occasionally an older donor will ask: ‘Were you born in this country?’

“I think there are two issues. First, there’s self-confidence. If most of your major donors are wealthy white business people, it’s easy to feel intimidated when you come from a different ethnic or socio-economic background. I’m lucky in that my Cambridge degree and career success to date have given me the confidence needed, but other fundraisers might benefit from initiatives like mentoring or simply more visibility – it would be good to see more role models.

“Second, it’s possible that the black and minority ethnic population doesn’t think of fundraising as a profession with a big ‘P’, on a parallel with law or accountancy. Some of my parents’ friends have asked me: ‘But what’s your day job?’ I hope this will change with the professionalisation of fundraising that’s already under way.

“In the meantime, though, there are things that higher education could be doing. Career services could promote fundraising more effectively as a fulfilling graduate job. Development departments could make sure that they are recruiting student phone fundraisers or new graduates from under-represented groups and that the talented ones are supported as they make it through the middle ranks all the way to the top.

“Similarly, I think there could be more opportunities for women returning to work after having children, such as high-level posts for major gifts specialists who may not want to run a department – at least for a while.”

Myth-busting

- 101.** The Pearce Report examined a series of tenets of received wisdom that are felt by some in the development community to have assumed the status of unhelpful “myths”, needing testing at least and sometimes “busting”. The same is true in relation to development of the workforce. These myths often contain a kernel of truth, but are sometimes based on limited anecdotal evidence without consideration of the particular circumstances in which they have occurred or indeed of what is really happening in the sector. They are explored here in more detail and tested against the weight of the research done for this review as well as professional experience across sectors.
- 102.** It should be emphasised that the intention here is not to replace one myth that something always works with an equal myth suggesting that it never does; different approaches will work in different environments.
- 103.** **“It’s a job you just fall into if you can’t think of anything else”**
Most fundraisers aged 40 and over did not set out to become HE fundraisers, and many did not set out to become fundraisers at all. In some cases fundraising was a way to come as close as possible to a particular “calling” or “cause”, sometimes in the arts or mainstream charitable sector, occasionally HE. However, younger graduates are starting to view fundraising as a logical career choice, and fundraising for HE as an attractive way to achieve personal goals and beliefs. One quarter of the survey participants, mostly those under 35, who entered the field (other than those who said they had responded to an advertisement) had found out about it through being a student caller or worker. This is an important finding for development directors as they contemplate expanding their teams.
- 104.** **“You have to have a track record in major gift fundraising to become a director of development”**
It remains the case that most directors of development have raised major gifts: this is the experience base most sought by recruitment panels. But there have been some interesting exceptions recently that make this a myth that may need busting. Not all highly successful major gift officers have the managerial and political skills necessary to make good development directors. As development offices (and associated institutional expectations) grow, so this management role becomes more and more important. And likewise some effective development directors are emerging from other paths, or from leading fundraising for high street charities where at present major gifts account for a lower proportion of income. The key issue here is whether they can prove that they are effective and are able to manage an office that raises money.
- 105.** **“You have to have a seat at the institution’s top table to be successful”**
This has been an article of faith in the past for many development directors. A less absolute view emerged from the interview group. Vice-chancellors recognise that valuable fundraising time may be lost by requiring development directors to sit through wide-ranging business meetings, and development directors told us that it was more important to have a close working relationship with the vice-chancellor, and regular one-to-one access to members of the senior management team, than a guaranteed place on that team.

While an assigned seat at the top table for the director of development is not a demonstrable requirement for success, where it happens it is interpreted as a welcome demonstration to the HE community and to donors that development is at the heart of the institution. Above all, though, development directors warned that problems arise when fundraising is discussed at a very senior level without appropriate expert input. It is essential for mechanisms to be in place to enable the development director to have direct input into senior management group considerations of the part played by fundraising and alumni relations in major policy decisions.

106. “There’s overwhelming scepticism out there about accredited learning”

Some practitioners take the view that fundraising is a branch of sales, which is best learned “on the job” and not subject to a great deal of theorising. But the review found many interviewees believing that accredited learning, and a common core of skills and knowledge, would be important and useful markers of the emerging profession. Indeed, of those under 25 years old, nearly half thought a formal fundraising qualification would be useful. In broad terms the desire for a generic qualification diminished with age. When offered the opportunity of an HE-specific qualification nearly half of all age groups felt it would be useful. Not everyone will want to pursue this route, but as one interviewee put it: “If it is becoming a profession then there are professional skills to learn, and that means high quality training, and ultimately degree level study and research.”

107. “If we can just recruit a fundraising guru, preferably from the US, then we can leave them to get on with it”

There are several reasons why this myth needs to be challenged. However successful the development director has been before, he or she will still need commitment and involvement from the institution’s leadership and a strong cause to promote. Without this it will be hard to succeed however great the guru. In addition, in the early years of HE fundraising in the UK, the experience base in the UK was probably twenty years behind that of successful public universities in North America. While there is still much to learn, fundraising for UK universities is maturing fast. Some successful fundraising universities have exhibited a high degree of institutional continuity, promoting development directors from within, and have invested in building a strong base of gifts rather than only pursuing major donors. These universities are now seeing the fruits of that patience. In an earlier piece of work carried out among Oxford Colleges by More Partnership, the Oxford Colleges Benchmarking Project, staff continuity was one of a handful of factors that correlated with fundraising success.

108. “Money – salaries, bonuses, golden handshakes – motivate most”

Not according to most of the interview group. Of course, there may be a reticence about appearing mercenary in face-to-face interviews, and some interviewees who were not fundraisers commented on the need to reward experienced and successful development directors well. But the interview group as a whole said that more important than money was a sense of contributing in a way that made a lasting difference, respect within the institution, and the chance to help bring about a change of culture. Those who completed the online survey after leaving HE more often cited unrealistic targets and a lack of strategy and understanding as reasons for leaving rather than dissatisfaction with remuneration.

What does the future look like? The next 10 years

- 109.** The sector is on track to reach the Pearce Report target of gifts of £2 billion a year by 2022 from 640,000 donors. What are the implications of that trajectory for staffing and the need to double or ideally triple the size of the workforce? Forecasts of greater success and expansion of the workforce should be made with the caveat that progress has been bumpy in many institutions. For some universities, fundraising returns remain low and income marginal. In others, the departure of a vice-chancellor, and/or a development director, can turn the clock back and see a draining of institutional memory. “High performing teams can melt down.”
- 110.** Nonetheless, some of the following are likely trends within the fundraising workforce in the next 10 years. Most of these are desirable, others less so; some have outcomes that are difficult to predict; none is inevitable. What is important is that deliberate steps are taken now to accelerate the impressive momentum of philanthropic support for HE.

Strategic level

- 111.** Fundraising for universities will continue to become more main-stream, with several consequences. First, it is likely that universities will ask for gifts more often, mirroring practice in the charity sector where only a matter of weeks will elapse between a first gift being made and the request for another. Second, the response from alumni that “it’s the government’s business” will continue to decline. In its place may be an expectation of a longer and more sophisticated period of relationship cultivation. This may start to reduce the rapid level of turnover that exists in the sector at present, as donors expect more engagement before giving. Third, there will be an expectation that staff should be a part of a university’s giving community, and experience of staff fundraising campaigns will develop significantly – fundraisers skilled in this area will be needed.
- 112.** Beyond fundraising practitioners, further inclusion of fundraising targets and objectives in the roles of vice-chancellors, pro-vice chancellors and deans can be anticipated. The division of responsibilities between an outwardly-focused vice-chancellor/president and an academic provost will become a more familiar model, along the lines of North American institutions. The implication for the fundraising workforce may be that a cadre of more experienced fundraising leaders will emerge in the presidential roles.
- 113.** As teams and campaign targets grow, it is likely that universities will continue the trend, already under way, of setting targets for non-governmental, non-fee revenue, of which philanthropic income will be an important (but not the only) source. Over time this may mean fundraisers begin to manage and drive these other forms of income generation, for instance with titles such as “pro-vice-chancellor for revenue development”, and conversely sometimes managers from other areas of income generation having responsibility for elements of fundraising. Care will need to be taken to ensure that philanthropic income continues to grow over time.
- 114.** As increasing investment takes place in development teams, many institutions will shift to a federal or unit-based model of fundraising, with fundraising staff based in schools and

departments, with close links to academic champions within those units. Issues of coordination and the management of prospective donors will then be accentuated – as is already evident within Oxford and Cambridge and at some universities with active business and medical schools fundraising programmes.

- 115.** At a senior level, a greater number of staff who began their careers as fundraisers will join university senior management teams, partly as institutional fundraising becomes more strategic, partly as an incentive to retain exceptional talent.
- 116.** Competition between universities for donors is likely to intensify as budgets and ambitions grow, and this may lead to a heightened sense of caution about what institutions are prepared to share. This may encourage a greater number of in-house designed training programmes so that recruits are taught “how we do things” in preference to or in addition to broader training provision.
- 117.** Philanthropy is developing rapidly across continental Europe, in particular in Scandinavia, the Benelux countries and increasingly in France. An earlier pattern of North American practitioners coming to the UK has given way to a more general exchange. The exodus of UK development directors to Australia has drawn wide comment. This highly portable expertise will lead to interchange also with Singapore, Hong Kong and South Africa, among other places.

Job roles

- 118.** An acceleration of the expansion of the HE fundraising workforce is likely to lead to a greater degree of specialisation. This in turn will lead to several other trends:
- 119.** A premium will be paid for specialist experience, such as knowledge of Asia, and networks among Asian donors. International fundraising will become the norm for ambitious universities.
 - As the handful of donors at the top of a pyramid of gifts are fundamental in determining success or failure of campaigns, highly-focused appointments such as “director of principal gifts” will multiply. Notwithstanding the myths we highlight elsewhere, inexperienced institutions will try and hire “heroes” from outside to take up these roles without implementing necessary internal change.
 - Teams will develop dedicated to stewardship, mass giving and events fundraising, with specialist skills often imported from other successful sectors such as the arts and mainstream charities.
 - In aspirational fundraising campaigns, a campaign communications function with specialist knowledge of fundraising brand and identity will be created, as exists in several universities already. These teams will need to co-ordinate their work carefully with existing university communications and public relations teams.
 - In parallel, fundraising will rely to an increasing extent on analytics, as databases grow and approaches become more sophisticated. Ability and experience in report writing and statistical analysis will be prized.

- 120.** There will be even greater tension in larger teams between time allocated to managing teams of fundraisers and time given by these managers to “being fundraisers”: seeing potential donors and managing those relationships.
- 121.** Internship numbers will grow – through the expansion of the CASE graduate trainee scheme, among other developments – and through the creation of internships by particular universities as one method of recruiting new talent.

Skills and CPD

- 122.** An emphasis will emerge on skills beyond those focused solely on the donor – in the future, building partnerships with other organisations (such as healthcare providers) will be increasingly important for strategic projects, as will negotiating skills inside universities to determine the conditions under which to accept a gift. Subtlety, roundedness and influencing skills will be valued in this context.
- 123.** Likewise mentoring and coaching will grow. Finding experience to fulfil both these needs from outside the sector to provide an infusion of energy, fresh ideas, and management tactics will become much more commonplace. Mid-career and senior fundraisers will demand increasing amounts of management training as team numbers swell over the course of the next 10 years.
- 124.** There will be a growth in fundraising staff seeking and completing qualifications provided by various universities. Almost certainly, there will also be a growth in the number of such offers, particularly at postgraduate level and based in business schools.

Conclusion

- 125.** Fundraising in universities continues on a steadily upward trajectory. University fundraisers and the teams that support them are playing a more and more significant role both in their own institutions and in the fundraising workforce across the charitable sectors, a workforce that increasingly and persuasively defines itself as a respected profession.
- 126.** There is much to be gained from taking a more structured approach to promoting university fundraising as a career that reaches to the heart of what universities exist to achieve. The prize is unlocking the potential for increased philanthropy in the UK and to meet the ambitions set out in the Pearce Report of achieving £2 billion a year by 2022.
- 127.** The time has come for leaders within HE to work in partnership with fundraising leaders from other charitable sectors to develop an acknowledged career path for this group of practitioners who are increasingly skilled in their practice and high impact in their effect. In that case, the workforce will grow in both quantity and quality, strengthening its ability to increase philanthropic support for HE – among the most powerful forces for good on the planet.

List of Appendices

128. Appendices have been published in a separate file which is available at www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/

[Appendix 1: Recommendations by audience](#)

[Appendix 2: Acknowledgements](#)

[Appendix 3: Bibliography](#)

[Appendix 4: University of Sheffield job adverts](#)

[Appendix 5: King's College London core values](#)

[Appendix 6: Glossary](#)

Workforce Toolkit

A toolkit has been published with this report to help those involved in recruiting and developing the fundraising workforce in HE. It is available at:

www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year and contains the following:

- Recruitment Guide
- Retention Guide
- Induction Passport
- Competencies and Skills Frameworks

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