

Classical Music Fundraising from the Next Generation

by

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Introduction

It's a commonly-held belief that classical music is on the decline in America. Public funding of the arts has been diminished. Music education programs continue to be cut as schools focus on areas of study deemed more important. We regularly hear of the financial troubles of numerous symphony orchestras across the nation. Audiences are shrinking and getting older. And, young people's interest in this genre of music continues to decline. Individuals interested in classical music are often met with a deep uncertainty for the future of this genre.

Classical music organizations have experienced several challenges that threaten their continued operation. Attendance at classical music performances declined nearly 26% between 2002 and 2017 (Iyengar 8). Audiences are aging; in 2002, people ages 18 to 44 constituted 27.5% of the audience, while in 2012 they constituted 23% of the audience (Iyengar). These changes in audience profile and behavior have made it increasingly difficult for organizations to fill their concert hall's seats and has therefore created a decline in ticket sales. While orchestras have managed to keep their operational expenses stable (Voss 16), this decrease in earned income creates a revenue gap that fundraising must compensate for.

Classical music has always relied on financial support from donors to fund their programming. However, as the need for funding increases, classical music organizations are struggling to grow their donor base. As their audiences and donors continue to age, they risk losing much of their support in the coming years. In order to sustain contributions, they must diversify their base of supporters with new, young donors. But in order to attract new, young donors, these organizations must adapt their fundraising strategies in order to more effectively grow their base of support.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to analyze the strategies that nonprofit classical music organizations in America use to fundraise from young donors and to develop an understanding as to how these organizations can more successfully cultivate and engage this group.

Central to the purpose of this study are some general goals, which ultimately serve to benefit these organizations by increasing their funding from young donors. These general goals include:

- Understanding what young people (including audiences and donors) are interested in experiencing from classical music organizations.
- Understanding the causes that young people find important, and what kind of impact they want to see.
- Giving classical music organizations valuable information on how to more successfully fundraise from young donors.

Define

Prior to beginning the analysis, it is important to define the organizations that will be subjects of the topic.

The study will focus exclusively on nonprofit classical music organizations in America. A nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Service's Internal Revenue Code, relies on tax-deductible contributions from a variety of institutional and individual donations, is governed by an independent board of directors, and all earnings are used to support its mission (Exemption 1). The organization's primary mission will be performing classical music or presenting classical music concerts. Excluded are organizations with the

primary or sole mission of music education (for example conservatories, music studios, colleges or universities, etc.). However, it is important to note that many performing or presenting organizations do also include education in their mission, and this is acceptable. Examples of organizations may include orchestras, chamber music societies, and presenting venues. Many studies and resources separate opera companies from other classical music organizations, and for the purpose of this study, opera companies will not be included.

This study focuses on the distinction between younger people and older generations. Therefore, we must clearly define the age range considered young donors. Many classical music organizations have opportunities specifically offered to young donors, including separate membership programs, special events, and volunteer and engagement opportunities. Carnegie Hall's Notables membership is for donors age 40 and under. The New York Philharmonic, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, and Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center all have membership programs intended for donors up to age 45. Because so many classical music organizations have taken to making this distinction in age, this study will define young people as around the age of 40 or younger. Additionally, many of the sources referenced refer to Generation Z (born 1997-2012), Millennials (born 1981-1996), Generation X (1965-1980), Boomers (1946-1964), and the Silent or Mature Generation (born 1945 or prior) (Pew). This study, therefore, includes all of Generation Z (although many of these constituents are still children), all Millennials, and the younger half of Generation X.

Methods

In preparing this study, I relied on a literature review, qualitative interviewing, and critical reflection as my primary research methods.

I conducted a thorough literature review of many different sources relating to topics such as classical music, fundraising strategies, young generations of donors, related organizational trends, audience development, development in other arts fields, and more. Sources included research studies, financial reports, news articles, blogs, books, and more.

I also relied heavily on qualitative interviews throughout this project. Qualitative interviewing is a semi-structured research method that relies on open-ended questions and discussions related to the topic of research in order to gain insight and unique viewpoints from those interviewed (Edwards1-3). I interviewed several professionals from the classical music industry that have first-hand knowledge and direct experience in classical music fundraising and leadership. I prepared eight questions relating to the topic of study and asked the same questions to each person interviewed. Those interviewed include:

- Dawn Gibson-Brehon – Fundraising Consultant dedicated to supporting the development of arts organizations and Professor of Arts Management at SUNY Purchase College
- Russell Jones – Executive Director of the Stamford Symphony Orchestra and previous Director of Major Gifts at the New York Philharmonic
- Scott Reed, Executive Director of the Music Academy of the West
- Jonathan Slawson – Director of Individual Giving at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts and previous Senior Manager of the Notables program at Carnegie Hall

- Lawrence Tamburri – Executive Director of the Newark School of the Arts, previous President and CEO of the Pittsburgh, New Jersey, Savannah, and New Hampshire Symphony Orchestras, and Professor of Arts Management at SUNY Purchase College
- Dan Zanella – President of Zanella Consulting, which provides fundraising counsel to non-profits in many diverse fields, including arts and cultural institutions

Finally, I relied upon my own critical reflection for this study. Critical reflection is the process of research and analysis of one's own personal experience. "Critical reflection helps professionals to learn directly from their practice experience so that they can improve their own work in an ongoing and flexible way" (Fook Researching Critical Reflection). I've brought my own personal experience into this study. First, I'm a member of the generation that this study focuses on. I'm an avid consumer of classical music, I attend performances regularly, and it is the primary genre of music and art that I interact with on a daily basis. I'm also a professional classical cellist graduating from the Purchase College Conservatory of Music in Instrumental Performance. I have experience performing, studying, and teaching the art that this study focuses on. I'm also graduating from SUNY Purchase College in Arts Management, where I've specifically focused my studies on classical music fundraising and leadership. Prior to beginning this study, I gained first-hand experience in classical music fundraising through two internships: Carnegie Hall's Patron Program, and Lincoln Center's Corporate Fund. While I certainly do not claim that any of these experiences qualify me to be a distinguished source or speak on behalf of the field, the culmination of all of these experiences does allow me to bring a unique perspective to the topic.

Analysis of Contributed Income

In 2016, the League of American Orchestras released the most recent report analyzing the finances and operations of orchestras across America between 2006 and 2014. The report found several key findings related to contributed income (Voss 4-5):

- Across league member orchestras, 43% of total income in 2014 was classified as contributed income, 40% as earned income, and 17% as investment income.
- Contributed income remained relatively stable over time, across the field as a whole, and through the recession years (referring to recession beginning around 2008).
- Individual donors were found to be the cornerstone of orchestras' contributed income, giving almost half the field's contributed funds in 2014.

These findings are consistent with the National Endowment for the Arts' 2012 study *How the United States Funds the Arts*, which states that nonprofit performing arts groups and museums in the U.S. as a whole relied on about 45% contributed income (Woronkowitz 1).

Breakout of Average Contributed Income (2014)

%s of total contributed income

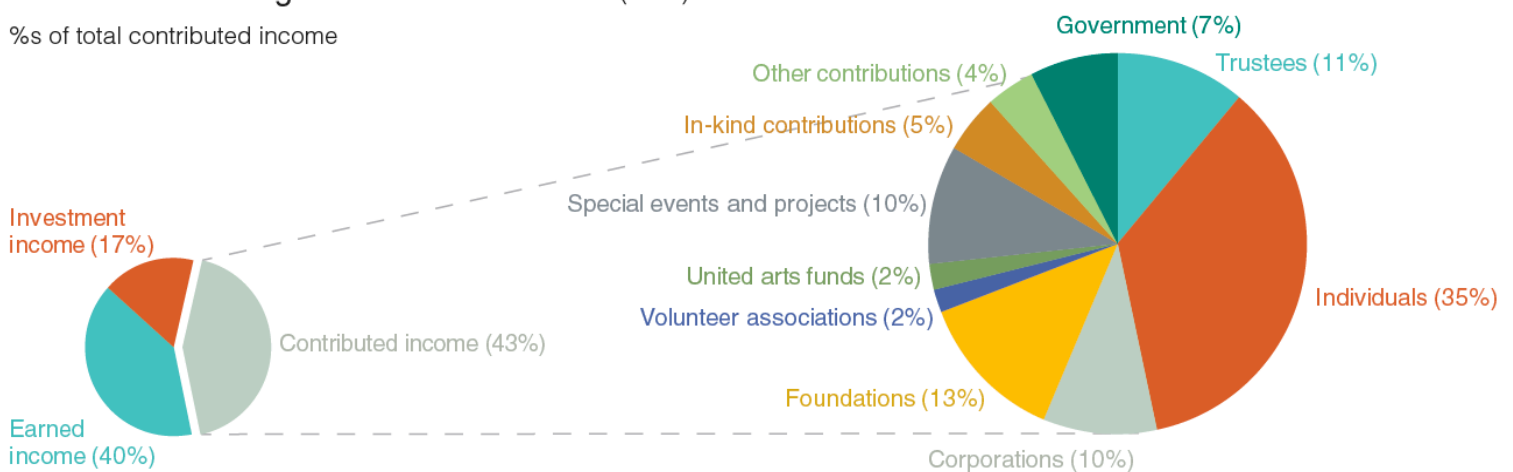


Fig. 1. Breakout of Average Contributed Income. Source: *Orchestra Facts: 2006 – 2014. A Study of Orchestra Finances and Operations*, Commissioned by the League of American Orchestras (Voss 12).

Shortly after the release of this report, news articles and other publications began sounding the alarms that orchestras now rely more on contributions than on ticket sales. The New York Times stated that orchestras “are now charities” (Cooper) and Inside Philanthropy wrote “Few cultural institutions are less healthy right now than orchestras. And the shifting nature of their revenues underscores that point” (Scutari).

In reality, orchestras’ reliance on contributed income is on par with other performing arts fields. The National Endowment for the Arts’ 2012 study *How the United States Funds the Arts* found that nonprofit performing arts groups and museums in the U.S. as a whole relied on about 45% contributed income (Woronkowitz 1). This is consistent with the previously mentioned finding that contributed income comprised 43% of total income for orchestras in 2014.

Additionally, the reliance on contributed income has not only remained a stable source of revenue for orchestras and classical music organizations for decades, but there has also actually been a consistent increase in contributed income. Below is a chart compiling data from three separate sources that analyzed the revenue sources of orchestras over 42 years from 1972 to 2014. Over this time period, ticket income has consistently represented about 41% of total revenue, private support has increased each decade, while public support has decreased.

Average Earned and Contributed Income as Percentage of Total Income, 1972-2014			
	1972	1991	2014
Earned income	63.6	59	57
Ticket income	41.8	41	40
Other (includes investments)	21.8	18	17
Contributed income	36.4	42	43
Private support	25.3	33	36
Public support	11.1	9	7

Fig. 2. Sources: *Historical Funding Patterns in Symphony Orchestras, Dance, and Opera Companies, 1972-1992* (Felton); *The Financial Condition of Symphony Orchestras, June 1992* (Sprouse); *Orchestra Facts: 2006-2014* (Voss).

Splitting contributed income into the four different categories of individual, corporate, foundation, and public support, there are some trends worth noting. Corporate support has fluctuated over the decades, where it increased from 15% of contributed income in 1972 to 21% in 1992, and then dropped to its lowest support of 10% in 2014. Foundations have increased their support from .6% of contributed income in 1972 to 10% in 1992, and to 13% in 2014. Public or government support has steadily decreased from 31% of contributed income in 1972

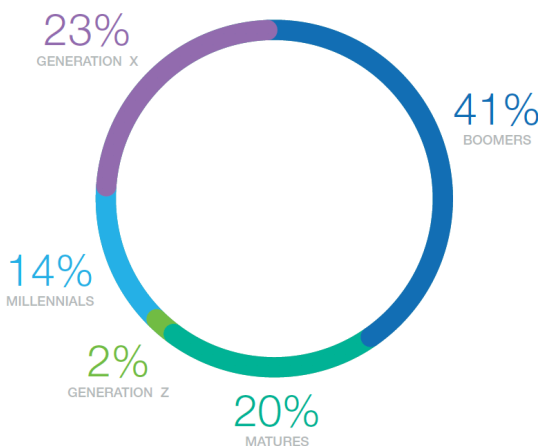
Breaking down contributed income into different categories by type of contribution (individual, institutional, government, and special events), some trends can be seen in. Government funding makes up 7%, Institutional including foundations and corporate makes up 23%, special events make up 10%, and individual makes up over 46% of total contributed income. Interestingly, this study separates trustees' contributions (individuals who sit on the governing body of the organization) and individuals. And trends show that during the time period of the study from 2006 to 2014, while growth in trustee giving outpaced inflation by 45%, growth in individual (non-trustee) giving only modestly outpaced inflation by 2% (Voss 12-13). During these eight years, while individual giving stayed fairly consistent, the support from high-profile trustees grew significantly.

Why Focus on Young Donors?

It's easy to understand why organizations may not prioritize the cultivation and engagement of new, younger donors. Millennials only comprised 14% of total charitable giving in 2018, while Baby Boomers represent 43% of giving (Blackbaud 9). Their average annual giving is also less than the older generations. However, we must keep in mind that younger

people simply have less money. They are still in the earlier stages of their career, do not make as much as their older generations, and haven't had time to accumulate wealth. "You have to look at where they are in their life... Millennials are dealing with their first or second jobs, so they certainly are not going to give as much as a mature (seniors over 68 years old)" (Newlon). Organizations must work to cultivate future donors now in order to eventually steward major gifts.

CONTRIBUTION TO TOTAL GIVING (PERCENT OF TOTAL DOLLARS)



	AVERAGE DONATION AMOUNT PER YEAR			CONTRIBUTION TO TOTAL GIVING		
	2010	2013	2018	2010	2013	2018
Gen Z	N/A	N/A	\$341	N/A	N/A	2%
Millennials	\$341	\$481	\$591 ▲	8%	11%	14%▲
Gen X	\$796	\$732	\$921 ▲	24%	20%	23%▲
Boomers	\$901	\$1,212	\$1,061 ▼	40%	43%	41%▼
Matures	\$1,066	\$1,367	\$1,235 ▼	28%	26%	20%▼

▼ ▲ shows statistical significance between 2013 and 2018 at a 90% confidence interval.

Fig. 3. Contribution to Total Giving. Source: *The Next Generation of American Giving*. (Rovner 9).

Consider these facts: Millennials anticipate increasing their giving more than any other generation, while Boomers and Matures have already begun to decrease their contributions (Blackbaud 9). And, "A 2014 study by the Boston College Center on Wealth and Philanthropy estimated that just over \$59 trillion will be transferred across generations between 2007 and 2061... almost \$27 will be designated for charity, either at some point during the wealth-holders' lifetimes or as bequests from their estates" (Goldseker 8). This will be the largest generational transfer of wealth in American history.

“It’s easy to justify not focusing on Millennials in the short term from a purely dollars-based standpoint. Yet, from a logical perspective, this is a completely shortsighted position. Long term organizational health requires that you refill your donor pipeline and, while Millennials might not be able to shoulder the load of being your biggest givers for the next ten years, they won’t be givers at all if you don’t get them into the pipeline early” (Simmonds).

Current Fundraising Strategies

Understanding the importance of contributed income, organizations must create strategies to effectively cultivate and engage donors. This section will explore the structure of two of the most common current fundraising strategies, what benefits are provided to donors, how each strategy can affect the organizations, and how donors relate. Additionally, while neither of the strategies are new concepts, organizations have begun to adapt them to engage younger audiences, and we will explore the efficacy of these initiatives.

The Membership Model

Nearly every classical music organization in America relies on a membership program as the basis of their fundraising from individual donors. Individuals make recurring annual gifts, and in exchange, they receive exclusive benefits. Memberships are often broken into different levels determined by the amount given, with higher levels offering progressively more benefits.

The benefits provided to members can be nearly endless – it's contingent on whatever an organization has the ability to offer. Generally, the benefits offered are services rather than products, they cannot be purchased outside of membership, and they don't directly incur a cost to an organization, although there are exceptions. Some common benefits include discounts on

tickets, early access to ticket sales, subscriptions to newsletters or magazines, invites to special events, access to member-only areas or lounges, concierge services, convenient parking solutions, access to open rehearsals or artist lectures, and more. Members are always publicly acknowledged for their support on the organizations' website and print materials.

Some organizations have created membership programs specifically for younger donors. These programs are usually structured in a similar manner as the traditional membership programs; however, the differences are meant to be more appealing to younger people. They are often publicized with an age range of up to around age 40 and joining as a young member usually requires less of a contribution than the traditional membership. There is a strong emphasis on professional networking, social engagement, and education.

The membership model provides a number of benefits for organizations. It provides a reliable source of continued annual support and allows for an estimated forecast in future gifts. Due to the highly structured nature of memberships, it creates efficient processes for gift renewal and benefit fulfillment. The retention of donors allows marketing and business costs to be kept to a minimum. Benefits can be easily monitored and offered in a pre-defined and structured way. Organizations have access to exclusive data and can track the engagement behaviors of their core supporters and consumers. This model works best for organizations that have the means to employ a team exclusively dedicated to maintaining memberships since this model requires a high degree of coordination and constant maintenance.

Memberships give donors a heightened experience with the organization. They are able to support their preferred causes, but in return, they receive convenience, exclusive access, further engagement opportunities, and recognition. And, it connects them with other members that share similar interests.

Special Events

Another fundraising strategy often used by organizations are special events. There are nearly endless formats for special events; they're simply any event with the main purpose of fundraising. "Common types of nonprofit special events include dinners, auctions, fairs and festivals, lectures, benefit concerts, home and garden tours, tournaments, contests, sporting events, and walkathons" (Bray). Some of the most common types of special events in classical music include season galas, chairman dinners, benefit concerts, etc.

Special events are extremely popular with donors and organizations alike. They can be some of the most enjoyable evenings for attendees, and they provide some of the best publicity of the season. They allow the organization to interact and mingle with their donors. Donors can invite colleagues to the events, which introduces potential prospects to the organization. They allow for the simultaneous fundraising and celebration of the organization.

However, special events have several drawbacks. First and foremost, they are extremely costly and time-consuming to produce. They require their own planning, marketing, publicity, production. There is also risk involved in special events. "Unfortunately, you can have a great party but not manage to raise any money" (Bray). There is no guarantee of making a net profit, especially if there is variance in expected expenses and/or anticipated revenue. The return on investment can vary widely. Additionally, special events can often feel more like transactions rather than contributions because attendees usually pay for access.

Why Young Donors Give

Understanding priorities for an individual's giving is fundamental for the effective cultivation and engagement of donors. An effective organization strives to connect donors to their priorities. And, as younger generations move to become the foundations of support, organizations must understand this new group to adapt their fundraising strategies.

The *Next Gen Donors* research project, a 2012 collaboration between the nonprofit consulting practice 21/64 and the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy, found that the most important reasons young donors engage in philanthropy include supporting a mission that fits with personal values, giving back to society, and seeing that contributions make a real difference (Goldseker Next Gen 14).

The purpose of the *Next Gen Donors* study was to conduct “first-of-its-kind research to examine the next generation of major donors through careful, detailed study of philanthropic orientation, priorities, strategies, activities, and decision-making.” Data was gathered through a national online survey (310 total responses) and in-depth interviews (30 responses). The participants were between 21 and 40 years old and were considered high-capacity donors. (Goldseker Next Gen 7). This study focused on philanthropy across many different fields and did not focus on any specific causes. However, it did include “Arts and Culture” as a category of giving in its survey. The Following chart is from that study, and it details the importance of reasons that this generation engages in giving.



Fig 4. Importance of Reasons for Engaging in Philanthropy. Source: *Next Gen Donors* (Goldseker Next Gen 14).

Impact-Minded

For young donors, creating an impact is paramount. It would be difficult to find donors of any age that wouldn't care if their contributions made a difference. Every donor wants to see meaningful progress in the causes that they're supporting. But, the level at which young donors prioritize impact cannot be understated. "The potential for maximum measurable impact is their deciding factor" (Goldseker Generation 25). They choose which causes to invest in based on what will do the most good and impact the most amount of lives. Their definition of impact is not how much money is raised or goals being met. Rather, it's how much difference can be made in the world. "Millennials are more likely to donate because they want to make the world a better place" (Beussman). Additionally, 78% of Millennials are likely to stop donating to an organization if they don't know how the donation is making an impact (Millennial Impact Project 7).

And, this next generation of donors doesn't just want to hear about the impact, they want to see it. "57% of millennials report a desire to directly see the impact of their donation" (Newlon). They're less interested in the mission statement of an organization, receiving an update from the administration, or reading a news article that talks about the impact. They want to be in the room where the change is happening. They want to experience the impact face-to-face.

"These rising generations – especially the Millennials – have grown up in a world full of screens, which may explain why they yearn to see the impact their giving has had "face-to-face" rather than virtually. One donor who works in computer science made this argument directly:

‘I’m a tech guy. I love the virtual. But actually, a picture, a 3D video, whatever, will not convey the same feeling if you just get out and travel there... You’re going to get a tour, and the tour is going to involve other people. So you see that human emotion. You can see either the passion in their eyes or the gratefulness in their eyes or a bit of both. That’s the driving force’” (Goldseker Generation 36).

Giving Time and Talent

Young donors want to be engaged with the causes they support. They want to build close relationships with the organizations they give to, see the impact of their giving, and develop a better understanding of what the organization needs. They want hands-on opportunities to get involved with the organization. They feel that have more to offer than just a financial contribution; they also have time and talent to share.

Many people in their 20’s and 30’s grew up in a time where they were encouraged – and sometimes required – to volunteer. Schools, social clubs, honor societies, and religious institutions required them to perform community service. They were taught that volunteering looks excellent on college applications and job resumés. Volunteering time and giving back to the community was how one could become a better, more well-rounded person. The importance of giving back through time and hands-on volunteering has been so thoroughly engrained into this generation that it has shaped their priorities for giving.

However, volunteer opportunities are not created equal. Millennials are the most educated generation alive. Nearly 40% of them have bachelor's degrees or higher, 67% have attended college, and over 92% have completed high school (Pew Millennials). They understand

the specific skills and experience that they have to offer and want to apply these skills to their volunteering. They don't want to dedicate their time doing busy work or jobs not related to their skill set. They want organizations to take advantage of the knowledge and expertise that they're offering.

“On-the-ball nonprofits are definitely looking to give their future major donors ways to engage beyond just opening their wallets. But this works best when nonprofits offer outlets for engagement appropriate to the donor’s skill set, making it personally meaningful. Says one, ‘I really don’t want to go out and volunteer a day to go feed people at a homeless shelter. It is just not where my skills are best used; it is not what I do best. What I’m very good at is selling, marketing, and communication. Those are the areas that organizations need a lot of help with’” (Goldseker Generation 128).

Offering volunteer opportunities to young donors allows them to be directly engaged in creating an impact with the organization. It gives these individuals opportunities to build their resume, network with like-minded people, not to mention a real sense of accomplishment for their service. It also allows individuals who don’t yet have the income to make a financial contribution the opportunity to get engaged, so that when they do have the means, they will donate. “Individuals ages 25-29 are more likely to volunteer than any other age category. When people volunteer with your organization, they build a stronger, longer lasting relationship with your organization that can result in future donations” (Beussman).

Implementing New Ideas

The most important reason that young donors engage with classical music organizations is to create an impact in their community. They want to be closely involved in the organizations that they support. They want to contribute more than just money – they also want organizations to take advantage of the skills they have to offer. It is clear that young donors have different priorities for giving than the previous generations and using this information, organizations can develop new strategies to connect with this group, cultivate stronger relationships with new donors, and fundraise more effectively.

Create mission-focused messaging. Recall the primary reason that young donors give: they're impact-driven. They hope to create the largest possible impact with their contribution. Organizations must double down on their missions, and every activity that they participate in – fundraising included – must be firmly centered around the impact that the organization intends to make. They must create a compelling case for how one's support will advance the organization's impact. Young donors aren't interested in continuing support that upholds the status-quo of an organization. They want to see progress, and it's up to the organization to be constantly reminding their donors and audience alike of the difference that is being made.

Offer hands-on opportunities. Young donors want to be closely involved with the causes that they support. They want hands-on opportunities to volunteer and get involved with the organization so that they can get up-close and personal with the impact being made. They want to give their time in the most meaningful way by utilizing their skills and expertise. They don't want to be offered unrelated volunteer opportunities. "The next generation is savvy enough to spot the types of token engagement often offered to younger donors – like asking their friends to give, or sitting on a powerless 'youth advisory committee.' They'd rather have the chance to

be an advisor to the staff on, say, legal or technological questions – whatever matches their best skillsets” (Goldseker Generation 128). Offering opportunities such as event planning assistance, young advisory committees, or asking to give names of prospective donors will be ineffective in engaging young donors and doesn’t treat the donor like a valuable partner. Rather, organizations must be receptive to what skills donors are offering, what areas they’re most interested in being engaged in, and finding a way to fit them into the organization.

Don’t focus on donor benefits. Recall the chart on the importance of reasons for engaging in philanthropy; receiving some sort of tangible benefit ranked as the least important reason for young donors. When people contribute to a cause, they’re truly looking to give, not get. “Millennials aren’t going to respond to perks and tangible items, but want to understand how their donation is going to benefit your mission and their community” (Beussman). “Regardless of their wealth and privilege, their philanthropy is motivated more by what they believe in and care about than by a desire for praise or other less notable impulses” (Goldseker Generation 176). This does not mean organizations should stop providing benefits or recognition to their donors altogether. In fact, the Blackbaud Institute study found that younger donors do place some value on recognition for their donations (Rovner 15). When classical music organizations try to cultivate new donors for their annual membership program, the focus must be on the impact that their contributions will make. The message should be how their gift will directly support the mission of the organization, how the funds will be used, and how the donor can become more involved. The member benefits are not a reason to ask a donor to give. Rather, benefits and recognition are given simply as a byproduct of sincere appreciation.

Meet them where they’re looking. Consider how connected young people are to their mobile phones. 18 to 24-year-olds check their phone 74 times per day, 25 to 34-year-olds check

50 times per day, and 35 to 44-year-olds check 35 times per day (Eadicicco). “Smartphones are rising stars with Gen Z, Millennials and Gen-Xers – a majority of these younger donors say they engage with causes and charities that way. Moreover, the percentage of donors willing to give via mobile device is up across all generations since 2013” (Rovner 21). And, the means by which organizations connect on mobile phones is important too. Phones are no longer just used for calls, text, email, and web surfing. Young people use their phones for apps, social media, music streaming, and more. Organizations must be at the forefront of technological advancement and experiment with many different kinds of mobile engagement.

Have a clear, informative, mobile-friendly website. The first place that donors look before giving to an organization is their website. Across every generation, an organization’s website is the most important source to find out about an organization. The website should include the mission of the organization and show the impact that is being made. It should have opportunities on how to get involved, and it should have a quick and easy way to donate.

Additionally, these websites must be mobile-friendly. As discussed in the last point, younger generations are dramatically more connected to their smartphones. Web browsing has become more popular on mobile devices than on computers. In 2017, mobile site visits accounted for 63% of all internet traffic, while desktop visits accounted for just 37% (Enge). And over three-quarters of young donors are willing to give via a mobile device. (Rovner 22).

Integrate marketing with fundraising. Engagement begins at the marketing level. Traditionally, marketing and public relations have focused on earned income (ticket sales). Since marketing controls the organization's online presence, websites and social media accounts are usually focused on promoting upcoming performances to gain revenue. This leaves fundraisers without the means to connect with their donors and focus on showing the impact. "What

organizations should be doing with social media is talking about the cause issue, because that's what the Millennials are excited about. They should be using social media to show how their dollars are being used through imagery" (Newlon).

Conclusion

As classical music organizations face an aging and declining audience base, they must work to secure their futures. Paramount in their efforts must be engaging new, young donors to continue the support of the arts. However, this new generation of donors has different priorities for giving and look to engage with the arts in different ways than previous generations.

Organizations must be willing to adapt their engagement strategies to meet the needs of this young generation through new engagement strategies, including a redeveloping of fundraising models, the utilization of new technologies, the offering of more hands-on opportunities, and consistent impact and mission-based messaging.

Some people believe that classical music organizations are outdated; that younger generations are not interested in attending or supporting classical music, and that in order to continue to be relevant, organizations must change their focus. None of these statements are true. Quite the contrary, classical music organizations must double down on their mission, create clear and focused messaging, work to maximize their impact, and always be looking to connect with new audiences. They must always show their supporters the difference they are making and allow donors a deeper level of engagement. Support will always follow vision, and never the other way around.

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