



# Accessing Private Funding For Your Reentry Program

Private funding refers to any type of non-governmental financial support. Like government funding, private dollars can come in the form of grants that require an application to receive funds to be used for specific purposes or goals. This includes funding from foundations, corporations, and individual donors. For more information on how to secure funding for your program, please see the tip sheet [How to Develop a Funding Strategy](#).

## Why is private funding important?

### Diversifies funding streams for your program, which can:



Create more financial stability



Make your program more appealing to prospective funders

### Generally allows for greater program flexibility because private dollars:



Can be received in the form of "no strings attached" donations



Can have fewer grant requirements and/or limitations than government funding

## How to secure private funding?

**For grants**, utilize databases and/or directories that collect information on different foundations and open grants.



**For individual donations**, strategies may include regular or season-specific giving campaigns and fundraising events.



**For corporate support**, leverage board members' resources for connections with large or small businesses.



## Things to consider



Regular and consistent communication with donors is key. Consider adding existing and potential funders as a targeted audience in your communications plan.



No donation is too small! Large gifts are great but tend to be one-time donations. Smaller donations, on the other hand, have the potential to be recurring.



Timelines for private funders may be different than for government funders.



Your state may have rules and regulations around soliciting and receiving private donations. Consult with your organization's leadership around these requirements.

## Finding funders

Think outside the box. Do not limit yourself to re-entry or criminal justice funders. Does your program connect individuals with medical or behavioral health services? Address employment gaps? Think about how your program might be relevant to any and all funders.

Other areas of funder interest that your program may fall under:



- Public Health
- Workforce Development
- Reproductive Justice
- Racial Justice
- Behavioral Health
- Community Development

Research, research, research! Before engaging with any funder, understand their priorities and motivations.



- Read about projects or programs a funder has previously supported
- Look on funders' websites for priorities or agendas

## Keeping funders



Create donor/funder profiles to keep track of giving patterns, communication preferences, funding interests, and other important information that every team member can access.



Always say thank you to any person or any entity that donates to your program.



Use multiple methods to regularly engage new and existing funders, such as social media, e-newsletters, personalized letters or mailings, phone calls, or informal in-person meetings.



Keep channels of communication between fundraising staff and program staff open. Fundraising staff should have compelling stories about your program.

## Helpful Resources

[Ilma Ibrisevic, "Top Funding Sources for Nonprofits and Charities" Donorbox Nonprofit Blog](#)

[Mark Hager and ChiaKo Hung, "Is Diversification of Revenue Good for Nonprofit Financial Health?" Nonprofit Quarterly](#)

[Joanne Fritz, "How Nonprofits Generate Revenue Streams," The Balance Small Business](#)

[The Sentencing Project, "Raising Funds for Criminal Justice Advocacy" Webinar](#)

[Why Small Donations are Worth More Than You Think](#)

[Texas Commission on the Art's Fundraising and Development Toolkit](#)

[Classy: an online fundraising software with free resources for non-profits](#)