

SPEAKER SESSIONS



SESSION:

Challenging the status quo

SPEAKER:

Cam St-Omer Donaldson

Cam St-Omer Donaldson brings a unique perspective to the intersection of fundraising, change and anti-racism, equity and inclusion within the charity sector. With over a decade of experience as a fundraising leader and advocate for equity and inclusion, Cam is dedicated to reshaping traditional fundraising practices, as well as approaches to change and organisational policy to foster greater diversity, equity & inclusion.

In this engaging session, Cam will explore the critical importance of challenging the status quo. She will delve into strategies for influencing & engagement, dismantling barriers and biases, inspiring organisations to cultivate more inclusive supporter & internal relationships and equitable resource distribution.

Attendees can expect to gain actionable insights on how to embed equitable principles, as well as achieving buy in for change. She will discuss everything from reimagining supporter & internal staff engagement to benefits of fostering more diverse workforce within charity organisations. Cam will share tangible steps and case studies, offering a roadmap for navigating the complexities and seizing opportunities.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn from Cam St-Omer Donaldson's expertise and join the conversation on driving meaningful change.



SESSION:

Everything you wanted to know about Irish Donors but were afraid to ask... until now!

SPEAKER:

Edwina Newcombe

We all want to know the same thing, don't we?

What do our donors think? Their motivations for giving, how being a donor makes them feel and their thoughts about things like legacy giving.

During this session, Edwina will be sharing insight from the hundreds of conversations the research team at Ask Direct have had with Irish donors over the last few years.

Our qualitative research interviews have given us an in-depth understanding of what motivates Irish donors and how they feel about their relationships with the charities and causes they support.

Come and hear the answers to the questions that you and your fellow fundraisers most want the answers to.

Leave with a better understanding of your donors motivations, their experience as a donor and how they really feel about legacy giving.



SESSION:

Fundraising in tough times

SPEAKERS:

Svitlana Pugach, Konstantina Papadimitriou & Eelco Keij

We are in times of multicrisis, towards a global risks landscape where economic, geopolitical and societal vulnerabilities will continue to build.

The world economy is in a fragile state. Reeling from the economic impacts of the pandemic and climate change, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has pushed many countries beyond their ability to cope – and then the war in Gaza followed. Rising food and fuel prices, debt distress, and tightening financial conditions are now combining to create what the UN is calling the largest cost of living crisis of the 21st century.

In this session we will explore what other recessions have taught us as fundraisers and how we can apply these best practices in a 2024 environment and beyond. It will draw on fundraising experiences from the US (Eelco), Greece (Konstantina), and Ukraine (Svitlana) during times of political and economic turbulence, and share learnings that can be applied in any donor market. You will leave better equipped to adapt your fundraising approach and strategy during these times of crisis.



SESSION:

The power of integrating content

SPEAKER:

Jayne George

This session tells the story of the RNLI's fundraising relaunch from 2019 to now.

A story that started with the "Perfect Storm" and is not over yet...

Powerful, new messaging developed in a philanthropy and fundraising creative sprint provided the inspiration needed to unite the whole of the RNLI behind a much-desired fundraising relaunch.

On sea, RNLI provides a 24-hour rescue service to the UK and Ireland. On land, they place seasonal lifeguards on busy beaches and have a Flood Rescue Team on hand to assist those affected by flooding.

Their mission is simple: 'Saving lives at sea'. By focusing on the problem that they are trying to solve they turned this into a compelling and clear vision for the entire organisation – To Save Every One.



SESSION:

Mission Possible: transformative branding strategies for nonprofits

SPEAKER:

Conor Byrne

This session aims to equip non-profit leaders with the essential tools and insights needed to harness the power of branding and marketing in a sector driven by passion and purpose. In an era where attention is the currency, understanding how to make your cause stand out is paramount.

This presentation will delve into the core principles of brand growth, demand generation (both current and future), and the pivotal concepts of mental availability, salience, and the strategic use of Distinctive Brand Assets.

By weaving together theoretical knowledge with practical examples from non-profits that have excelled in these areas, attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of how to apply these principles to their own organisations effectively.



SESSION:

AI Empowered: navigating the fast-paced world of fundraising technology

SPEAKER:

Cherian Koshy

In the rapidly evolving landscape of fundraising technology, staying ahead can seem daunting. This session is designed to cut through the noise, offering fundraisers a clear and concise guide to leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) effectively.

This session demystifies AI, breaking down complex concepts into actionable strategies that align with your fundraising goals. Discover how to sift through the plethora of AI tools and content, identifying what can truly enhance your operations and donor engagement.

We'll explore practical AI applications that are reshaping the fundraising sector, providing insights into how these tools can be integrated into your strategy for maximum impact.

This empowering session is your key to confidently navigating the fast-paced world of fundraising technology, ensuring you're equipped to harness the potential of AI and drive your organisation forward.



SESSION:

The fundraising taxonomy of love

SPEAKER:

Jen Shang

Our job as fundraisers is not only to love the communities we serve and connect our donors' hearts to these communities, but also to LOVE OUR DONORS. To love our donors, we must give them what they need from their support, and to do this, we need to know who our donors are. What are the important identities that they are expressing through their giving? How can we nurture those identities through the experience of love and enhance their psychological well-being?

In 2023, the Institute for Sustainable Philanthropy conducted a major new research project focused on the experience of love in fundraising and the language we use to describe it. As a result of this work, we developed a taxonomy of issues to consider.

Fundraisers can use this framework to audit their own communications and redesign their communications to develop more meaningful forms of love at a much higher level of psychological well-being. This enhancement of psychological well-being can be experienced by donors at all spectrums of capacity to give.



SESSION:

The productisation of fundraising

SPEAKER:

Tiwa Odukoya

Charities worldwide and across many causes are experiencing challenges with regards to hitting ambitious targets. It would be incorrect to assume that this is because our society has become less giving. Conversely: the need and opportunity to give to causes has rapidly increased from the war in Ukraine, to the climate emergency and supporting racial injustice.

Instead, charities are lagging behind in their ability to shift the focus on how we ask. Charities have adopted commercial approaches through their adoption of advertising, which in a capitalist world is a necessary action.

The next phase requires a need to productise the ask:

From: Give because it's the right thing to do

To: Give because it is an expression of who you are as a person

Please note, this is an interactive workshop



SESSION:

Burnout, emotional exhaustion, and the future of the fundraising sector

SPEAKERS:

Michelle Reynolds & Colin Skehan

There is no simple solution to a problem as endemic as emotional exhaustion and burnout is to the charity sector. Deep personal ties to the mission, workplace cultures minimising the need for rest by normalising overwork, deeply meaningful work that is always urgent, an implicit expectation that working in the charity sector means you should always give well over and above, and societal and systemic ideology that charities should do more with less, all contribute to fundraising professionals, and other charity workers too, working far beyond what is healthy. If we are ever to see change, we have to start having the difficult conversations.

Fundraisers need to be empowered and enabled to hold boundaries around workload; to find their individual comfort level around exposure to others' traumatic experiences; to resist the self-imposed yet seemingly reinforced-by-others belief that they must be "always on" and put everyone else's needs ahead of their own. And charities need to be empowered to support their staff without fear of public scrutiny of investment in their people.

In this workshop, Michelle shares reflections on her research journey, as part of her Masters in Integrative Psychotherapy, exploring empathic distress and burnout amongst fundraising professionals in Ireland.

Colin had his own brush with burnout and mental illness in early 2023. As he worked hard to find his way back, Colin became passionate about mental health and fundraising. He was delighted to learn about the important research conducted by his co-speaker, and proud to contribute. Colin was fortunate to have great support from family, friends and his employer Trócaire.

And we invite you to join the conversation. Let's start the journey to advocate for change and foster environments where empathy thrives without compromising the emotional health of those who offer it.



SESSION:

High value legacy giving

SPEAKER:

Claire Routley

Data tells us that large gifts are extremely important to total legacy income: in the UK, for example, gifts from estates worth over £500,000 make up 60% of legacy income, and whilst only 2% of gifts are worth more than £250,000, they make up more than 30% of income. With wealth becoming more concentrated over time, this trend is only likely to grow.

In this session, we will explore high-value gifts in Wills, considering who gives larger gifts, and what their specific motivations might be. We'll then talk about what this is likely to mean in practice for legacy fundraising, thinking about the implications both for how we communicate with these generous donors, and how we work most effectively with our colleagues.



SESSION:

Creative rule breaking for direct response nerds

SPEAKER:

John Lepp

Tired of sending the same kind of donor communications year after year after year?

Get your donor's attention and interest with something unconventional that's proven to work.

This session will help give you a fresh perspective on your direct mail – so you can feel confident breaking rules and raising more money while you do it.

Your donors love it when you step beyond the normal non-profit speak. And they'll reward you by sending more (and larger!) gifts.

This session will take you through: Obsession, Intelligence and Creative.

Asking questions like; How did we get here? Who REALLY are our donors? Do we really know enough about decision science to break the rules? And, how can we be playful and thoughtful in our work – to create better performing appeals?

John will take you through real life examples, from older successful direct response material, to examples of inspirational RULE BREAKING appeals.



SESSION:

Outward Mindset: From silos to dream teaming

SPEAKERS:

Max Newton & Lindsay Tilston Jones

How much money, time, energy and people are lost as a result of teams working poorly with each other? Can you afford that to continue? You can't afford not to hear about Outward Mindset.

We'll take you behind the scenes on how Outward Mindset revolutionised our leadership and enabled us to achieve amazing results working with other teams. A new way of thinking about ourselves and relationships with others totally changed how we led our teams, broke down silos, totally turned around ways of working with other teams, improved our wellbeing, and more. All the things we think are important in leaderships – including coaching and feedback – only really make sense when wrapped in Outward Mindset.

We will give an insight into Outward Mindset and bring real life examples of this way of thinking in practise and you'll be amazed at the results. Both from our time together at Shelter and since we've been apart 😞

We'll talk through some models and tools, telling stories to illustrate. And we'll even have some audience interaction, including getting a chance to work through a key Outward Mindset tool with your neighbour.

Outward Mindset is a new way of solving age old issues that are a constant complaint at organisations in the sector.



SESSION:

LinkedIn for fundraising strategy: overlooked and underused

SPEAKER:

Eelco Keij

With over half a billion users worldwide, LinkedIn has become of vital importance in the fundraising strategy market, yet it remains underutilised and not well understood.

How can you optimise its use for your charity or nonprofit organisation? What options are available, and what are the dos and don'ts that have emerged over the years?

Even the free version of LinkedIn holds tremendous strategic potential, especially in the fundraising sector.

Not being on LinkedIn is being Linked Out!



SESSION:

“You can’t just take the money and run”: what can we learn from media and campaign fundraising in the GoFundMe era?

SPEAKERS:

Caoileann Appleby, Jess Hayes, Susan Daly & Siobhán O’Donoghue

In an era where distrust of traditional institutions (government, NGOs, religious organisations, media) seems ubiquitous, new platforms and organisations are promising to bring supporters closer to the work.

GoFundMe has been used to raise \$80 million and counting for people in Gaza, while NGOs’ messaging has been often conflicting and confused.

So in an era of increasing peer-to-peer fundraising and campaigning, how can your organisation stay trustworthy, transparent, and relevant? Join Jess Hayes (Supporter Propositions Director Guardian News & Media), Susan Daly (Managing Editor, Journal Media) and Siobhán O’Donoghue (Executive Director, Uplift) who will discuss how these different organisations tackle these issues, balance tangibility and trust with their supporters, and raise more to make more impact.



SESSION:

Unpicking the sector's biggest strategic challenges

SPEAKER:

Jane Trenaman

What are the biggest strategic challenges facing fundraising leaders and together can we begin to unpick the solutions?

Cii's Irish Fundraising Director's Network has hosted a series of meaty sessions since its relaunch last year. Across a myriad of topics, conversations consistently lead back to 4 key themes:

- Fundamental Trust – overcoming internal silos
- Income Fuels Mission – holistic organisational strategy
- People Matter – the future of work
- Culture Eats Strategy – leading by example

This is a collaborative workshop tailored for fundraising leaders. Together you will frame and brainstorm your core challenges, explore root causes and begin to unpick solutions with your peers, with tangible actions to take back to your organisation.



SESSION:

A Donor is for Life: The Dogs Trust Ireland story

SPEAKER:

JoAnne O'Donovan

Dogs Trust Ireland has seen voluntary income soar by 180% in less than a decade, a testament to its innovative approaches in digital platforms, individual giving, and donor and legacy marketing. At the heart of this success however lies their deep and enduring relationships with donors, and their passionate commitment to loving the people who love dogs.

This session is an opportunity to learn from their experiences and how these approaches can be applied to your own context in nurturing donor relationships and driving growth.

JoAnne will share a heartfelt and honest account of how these relationships have shaped the charity's trajectory and she will discuss the strategic decisions that have led to significant achievements. Attendees will gain insights into the challenges faced, the lessons learned, and the strategies that have driven success, as they embark on the exciting next chapter in Dogs Trust Ireland's story.



SESSION:

Way beyond digital fundraising: how a mobilisation model can harness people power and help you win

SPEAKER:

Paul de Gregorio

People have power and it's our responsibility to help them use it to change the world.

Organisations from all over the world are using digital techniques to build or harness the power and energy of existing movements in order to bring about the change they, and more importantly the public, want to see.

Greenpeace does it, big political campaigns do it and increasingly the most progressive charities are doing it as well.

They think way beyond fundraising as the vehicle for change, they know that they need to inspire the public to give a share of their time, money and voice if they are going to deliver their mission.

Paul will explain the theory behind digital mobilisation and try to convince you that your organisation should explore the model to remain relevant in this ever changing world.

He'll give examples of how organisations have activated this thinking to drive successful public engagement, campaigning and fundraising activities.

This session will leave you with the inspiration, knowledge and examples to enable you to explore digital mobilisation at your organisation.



SESSION:

Wisdoms from the past, for great fundraising now

SPEAKER:

Marina Jones

Fundraisers are generally rubbish about learning from the past – we tried it once twenty years ago and it didn't work so we chase after the next shiny thing - yet there is so much wisdom from the past that can teach us so much about how great fundraising works and approaches that we think are fresh today were used decades or centuries ago.

This session explores the best lessons from the past and how they draw on behavioural science principles that work to persuade and influence more gifts. The wisdom from the past can help us do great fundraising now. It will explore how fundraisers have always been excellent persuaders and even before they had fancy names like heuristics and nudges, humans knew how to influence other humans.

It will explore why these techniques work and how they can be applied to improve fundraising today. As well as issues that have always challenged fundraisers (core costs, emotional labour of the work, cultures of philanthropy and images we use to show the impact) and explore historical and current answers to those challenges.



SESSION:

What happens in fundraising when you focus on what donors actually need?

SPEAKER:

Mark Phillips

We live in a world that is rapidly changing. Where a seemingly never-ending series of crises is reframing how people consider their philanthropy.

The result is that donors are reassessing who they support and why. The turmoil in their lives offers both a reason and permission to rethink how they do good. As a result, donors are increasingly likely to switch the charities they support and, in some case, stop giving altogether.

This session considers what the sector should do to respond to this new paradigm with a focus on what actually works.

We'll review how the fundamental building blocks of great fundraising campaigns work in today's fundraising environment, presenting the case for taking a long-term view aimed at delivering the sense of stability and progress that donors desperately want and need. This will be illustrated with case studies that demonstrate what has been achieved by charities applying this approach over years rather than a few months.

We'll also consider the fundamental donor need states, examine how charities can maintain relevance and look at what pulls donors towards charities and what pushes them away. This means we'll reconsider how we can repurpose recruitment, thanking and reporting back to better answer donor needs rather than simply innovating because it sounds exciting and fun.

The key takeaway will be understanding how to refocus a fundraising strategy to function in an environment characterised by international turbulence and change.



SESSION:

Audience-first mobilisation and lead generation in the changing digital landscape

SPEAKERS:

Joshua Leigh & Sarah Crowhurst

Mobilisation and lead generation for building fundraising programmes that are audience-first, sustainable and will withstand the huge, critical shifts in the digital advertising landscape (things like the Digital Services Act restricting targeted advertising; Chrome killing the cookie in 2024; Meta weaker performance in the wake of iOS14).

In this changing digital advertising landscape, we're seeing the declining performance of direct-to-donation asks, and a huge opportunity for 2-step and lead generation to build cash files by email and to build regular giving by telemarketing.

With our clients, we have developed and tested several exciting new lead magnets, like values-led hand-raisers as well as audience-led digital val-ex items that excite, delight and connect audiences with the cause they care about in new ways. The goal is to create something that serves an audience need and creates a shared vision for the world – a collaborative, values-driven proposition, rather than a traditional need/solution story.

As the digital advertising platforms shift, and consumer expectations evolve to a place where they want a little something extra as they do good, our clients have worked to create products that address new habits, new technologies and overall create a sustainable programme for digital fundraising, in 2024 and beyond. We'll show participants how they can get started, with an exercise template that helps them develop their own lead magnets, and a hands-on demonstration of how to get the basics right on Meta and email to bring it to life.



SESSION:

Fundraising ethics – Doing the right thing? But what is the right thing?

SPEAKERS:

Ian MacQuillin, Cherian Koshy & Meredith Niles

You've discovered loads of great ideas at Summer School that you could implement in your fundraising. The question is: ought you implement them?

As a fundraiser, when you go to a conference, you take away great practical advice: 'Here's something that will work; you should do it too.' But do you always consider whether just because you can do it, you ought to do it?

How often do you pause to consider whether they might have unintended ethical consequences from implementing this great idea?

At the Fundraising Summer School, we have tried to embed ethics through the two-days, rather than have a 'token' ethics session, which suggests that ethics is separate and optional to fundraising practice.

At this interactive session, we want you to bring to the panel the ethical dilemmas, issues and challenges you have encountered at Summer School (or those that you have been ruminating on for a long time already) so we can engage in a critical discussion around what they are, why they might be problematic, and how we might resolve them.