

# Climate Catalysts Mentorship Programme 2.0



# FUNDING CLIMATE PROJECTS - FROM VISION TO ACTION BOOTCAMP DIGEST



**GAYO**

GREEN AFRICA YOUTH ORGANIZATION

**YOUTH4CLIMATE**  
**CAPACITY**



MINISTERO DELL'AMBIENTE  
E DELLA SICUREZZA ENERGETICA

# Workshop 1 : Foundations of Resource Mobilization: Building the Case for Climate Action



## Overview

Securing resources remains one of the toughest challenges for grassroots and youth-led organizations. Limited funding, high competition, and the need to prove impact often stand in the way of growth. Yet with the right strategies—clear goals, compelling stories, and trusted relationships—organizations can position themselves to access opportunities and build long-term sustainability.

## Understanding the Funding Landscape

- **Donor Priorities:** Funders often align their support with global, regional, or national priorities. Organizations must understand these and link their proposals accordingly.
- **Competition for Resources:** There are many organizations competing for limited funds. Clear positioning and demonstrating impact are critical.
- **Local vs. International Funders:** While international donors dominate the space, local philanthropy and private sector partners are emerging as valuable funding sources.

**Action Point:** Always research donor interests and ensure alignment with your project's objectives.

## Building Visibility and Credibility

- **Storytelling:** Share compelling stories of impact from your community to show the human face of your work.
- **Digital Footprint:** A basic website, active social media, or even WhatsApp groups can showcase your activities to donors.
- **Track Record:** Even small achievements matter. Document and communicate them clearly.

**Action Point:** Start small but be consistent in sharing results and progress from your initiatives.

## Positioning Your Organization for Funding

- **Clarity of Mission:** Funders want to know your core focus and how it connects to their priorities.
- **Niche Building:** Avoid trying to do everything. Focus on one or two thematic areas where you can show results.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborating with other organizations can increase reach and credibility.

**Action Point:** Identify your niche area and build consistent messaging around it.

## Writing Strong Proposals

- **Know Your Audience:** Tailor every proposal to the donor's language and guidelines.
- **Evidence-Based:** Use data, stories, and examples to show the importance of your work.
- **Clarity and Simplicity:** Avoid jargon. Proposals should be easy to read and persuasive.
- **Budgeting:** Ensure your budget is realistic and aligns with your activities.

**Action Point:** Practice developing short concept notes and refine them with feedback from peers or mentors.

## Resource Mobilization Beyond Donor Funding

- **Local Fundraising:** Engage local businesses, community members, or diaspora networks for small but steady support.
- **In-kind Contributions:** Sometimes resources come as materials, volunteer time, or expertise.
- **Income-Generating Activities:** Explore social enterprises or services aligned with your mission.

**Action Point:** Map out at least three local resource opportunities your organization can tap into.

## Building Relationships with Donors

- **Networking:** Attend events, webinars, and forums to meet potential funders.
- **Follow-Up:** Keep communication open with donors even after rejection—future opportunities may open.
- **Transparency:** Share both successes and challenges honestly.

**Action Point:** Develop a contact list of donor representatives and update them on your work quarterly.

## Accountability and Reporting

- **Clear Reporting:** Funders value timely and clear reports that highlight outcomes and learning.
- **Community Accountability:** Show how your work is accountable to the communities you serve, not just donors.
- **Sustainability:** Demonstrate how your project will continue beyond the grant.

**Action Point:** Build simple monitoring and evaluation tools (like surveys, photos, or testimonies) to track impact.

## Resources

[GAYO's Repository of Funders for Climate and Environmental Sustainability](#)

# Workshop 2 : Crafting Bankable Climate Project Proposals



## Overview

Successful fundraising is about more than ideas—it's about clarity, accountability, and visible results. Organizations that show impact, adapt to diverse donor types, and build trust through transparency and relationships position themselves for sustainable growth.

## Understanding Donors

- **Donors are not monolithic:** Each type of funder operates differently and values different things.
- **Visibility and credibility matter:** Funding decisions often reflect how established and transparent an organization appears.
- **Impact speaks louder than scale:** Even small results, if clearly demonstrated, can build confidence.
- **Clarity is essential:** Donors look for measurable outcomes and proposals that align with their stated priorities.

## Donor Archetypes

- **The Institutional Donor:** Focuses on accountability, structures, and long-term measurable outcomes. Requires clear reporting and compliance systems.
- **The Private Philanthropist:** Often driven by personal interests or passions, with more flexibility but also more subjectivity.
- **The Corporate Donor:** Motivated by visibility, brand alignment, and corporate social responsibility agendas.
- **The Grassroots Ally:** Community-driven funders or smaller organizations that value authenticity, local ownership, and storytelling.

**Action Point:** Map your potential donors into these archetypes and adjust your pitch, reporting style, and engagement accordingly.

# Elements of Successful Fundraising

- **Clarity of Purpose:** Donors want to see a clear vision and mission. Be specific about what problem you are solving.
- **Demonstrated Impact:** Show tangible results, even if small. Use testimonies, photos, and community stories.
- **Credibility and Accountability:** Establish systems of financial accountability, even simple ones, to build trust.
- **Communication and Visibility:** Maintain an online and offline presence. Donors often look up organizations before committing support.
- **Relationships Matter:** Building long-term relationships with donors is more effective than one-off engagements.

## Breakout Reflections

- **Documentation matters:** Invest in recording activities and results to provide evidence when applying for funds.
- **Storytelling creates visibility:** Highlight the human impact of your work to connect with donors.
- **Partnerships build strength:** Collaborations increase credibility and open access to pooled opportunities.
- **Funding is a journey:** Small opportunities often pave the way to larger grants.

## Quotes to Remember

***“Donors fund impact, not intentions.”***

***“You don’t have to scale to be credible, you have to be consistent and clear about your impact.”***

***“Relationships are currency in fundraising.”***

## Action Steps

- Map at least 5 potential donors and categorize them by archetype.
- Review accountability systems and address any gaps.
- Develop one impact story with evidence to share in funding conversations.
- Update your online presence to reflect your mission and activities.
- Initiate or deepen one donor or partner relationship within the next month.

## Resources

[Collection of Climate Funding Resources](#)



**Climate Catalysts**  
**Mentorship Programme**



# Workshop 3 : Building and Nurturing Donor Relationships



## Overview

Successful fundraising depends on relationships built on trust, transparency, and alignment. Donors want to support organizations that share their values, communicate authentically, and demonstrate impact over time. By researching aligned funders, engaging early, and maintaining consistent communication, grassroots and youth-led groups can move from one-time grants to long-term partnerships that advance shared goals.

## Understanding Donor Relationships

- Fundraising is relational, not just transactional.
- Trust, reliability, alignment, and collaboration are central to strong partnerships.
- Donors value clarity, impact, and consistent communication.

## Finding the Right Donors

- **Donors are people first:** Treat them with empathy and authenticity.
- **Do your research:** Study missions, values, projects, and geographies.
- **Tools to use:** YouthLead Fund Tracker, Climate Fund Portal, LinkedIn.
- **Maintain a living donor list:** Track interests, alignment, and past interactions.

**Action Tip:** Don't apply to every donor you find—focus on those aligned with your mission to save time and build stronger cases.

## Reading Between the Lines + Pre-Funding Engagement

- **Decode donor language:** Pay attention to terms in Calls for Proposals (CFPs). They reveal funder priorities.
- **Tailor your proposal language:** Mirror the donor's framing to show alignment.
- **Make first contact:** Use clear, professional cold outreach emails.
- **Mindset shift:** Funders want collaboration, not transactions. Ask: How do we co-create impact together?

**Action Tip:** Before applying, reach out with a thoughtful email—introduce your organization, express alignment, and ask one meaningful question.

## Reporting & Relationship Maintenance

- **Regular updates matter:** Don't wait for final reports. Share progress, challenges, and stories in real time.
- **What to include:** Before-and-after photos, community testimonials, outcomes, and lessons - not just KPIs.
- **Engagement idea:** Invite funders to webinars, project launches, or milestone events.

**Action Tip:** Treat reporting as storytelling + evidence, not a box-ticking exercise.

## From One-Time Funding to Long-Term Support

- **Follow the donor journey:**  
First Contact → Application → Funding → Updates → Renewal → Co-Creation.
- **Consistency matters:** Multi-year funding is possible when organizations are clear, responsive, impact-driven, and consistent in communication.

**Action Tip:** Think of donors as partners - demonstrate how your growth also advances their mission.

## Quotes to Remember

- “Funders are human. Build relationships, not transactions.”** — George Mwangala
- “Don’t wait for the final report to talk to your funder. A simple update can go a long way in building trust.”** — Richard Matey
- “Donor relations are built on clarity, consistency, and collaboration, not desperation.”** — George Mwangala
- “To move from one-time grants to long-term support, think like a partner, not an applicant.”** — Richard Matey
- “AI can write your proposal, but only you can speak to your story and passion. That’s what donors connect to.”** — George Mwangala

## Action steps

- Research and identify aligned donors.
- Build professional, strategic communication with funders.
- Engage in real time, not only through formal reports.
- Use evidence-driven reporting to demonstrate impact.
- Shift from grant-seeking to relationship-building.

## Resources

[The #1 Nonprofit Toolkit by Nonprofit Hub.](#)