Western Carolina University – Division of Advancement Policy #7
Guidelines and Principles for Prospect Management
Advancement Division Leadership Approval _ 12/2/2019, 2/21/2020, 11/6/2023

Philosophy & Rationale for Prospect Management

As committed staff, volunteers, and faculty at Western Carolina University, it is our intent to create the best possible experience for our donors. As we seek to enhance community ties and increase private support, our goal is to match donor interests with university priorities, providing optimal benefits to both. We intend to provide a fulfilling philanthropic experience to our alumni and friends. Prospect management guidelines will:

- Minimize the chance for multiple solicitation and confusion of the donor
- Enhance efficiency of the development operation at Western Carolina University
- Provide a mechanism for managing donor relationships in a consistent way across the university
- Align donor interest with specific university initiatives / needs
- Inform a cultivation and solicitation strategy which has the best chance for delivering a win-win for donor and university
- Maximize the probability of securing the desired funding results in support of one or more priorities

The goal of prospect management is to ensure the most effective and efficient approach to all prospects and to specifically manage the interactions with institutional prospects where there is the greatest opportunity for overlap, multiple points of contact, and miscommunication. The development and cultivation of meaningful philanthropic relationships is the goal of all development staff at Western Carolina University. Prospect management guidelines exist to maximize philanthropic relationships for the good of Western Carolina University and the values and interests of our donors.

Development Contacts Defined & Database of Record

All University personnel, and any representative personally cultivating or soliciting donors must use the University's database of record (Raiser's Edge) to document their *development activities*, including all contacts and interactions. Generally, if there is a chance that a future interaction would be enhanced with knowledge of previous interactions then a contact report should be entered. A transparent prospect management system is essential to the success of the University's fundraising efforts. This can only be accomplished with the full participation of all staff across the University.

Information collected, maintained, or organized outside of the database of record cannot be verified, measured, or utilized in the deployment of finite resources. Additionally, the tools which inform and guide University leadership depend on the accurate entry of information in Raiser's Edge. WCU's Division of Advancement and specifically the office of Advancement Services will offer support, guidance, training, and resources to assist any office or individual in the effective and correct use of Raiser's Edge.

Confidentiality

Donor information is the common property of the University and may be subject to public disclosure laws. Therefore, discretion must be used when entering contact report and other donor-related information.

Assignments / Staff Roles

One Primary Manager (PM) will be assigned to each prospect with the assignment of additional Team Members as appropriate. These relationships are assigned to achieve the highest level of coordination and strategic cooperation among any and all interested constituencies, and are subject to change periodically as relationships change, staff turnover occurs, or a prospect's interests change.

Requesting Assignments:

Assignment of unassigned constituents for the purpose of qualification may be made by the fundraiser. On a quarterly basis, analysis of assigned prospects will be made to address any "stalled" assignments. That is, an assignment which has extended beyond the predefined period for that status. Definitions for time in stage are provided in the description of each stage.

Assignment requests for currently assigned prospects, research requests, and other database related needs should be sent to ProspectManagement@wcu.edu. Assignment requests will be reviewed based on capacity, interest, giving history, and previous engagement. When necessary, requests will be discussed at Prospect Management Meetings. Final decisions on assignments made by Vice Chancellor for Advancement.

Primary Development Staff ("Primary")

The Primary is the individual assigned the chief responsibility for managing the relationship including cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship, with a constituent. The Primary Manager should be the development officer who has the most established relationship with the prospect. This does not necessarily mean the constituency from which the prospect graduated nor the recipient of the donation.

Secondary Manager(s) / Team Members

Secondary managers must follow the same rules of engagement regarding contacts with assigned prospects. The Primary should be notified prior to any solicitation conversation. Secondary managers work in concert with Primaries to move a prospect through the donor cycle in the most efficient way possible to enhance the donor's relationship with the university in a way which takes into full account the donor's interests and values.

Team Member

Team Members represent other constituencies in which the prospective donor is interested. The Team Members will work together with the Primary Manager and other managers to develop the best strategy to engage the prospective donor and maximize the potential gift.

Team members may include any of the following:

- **Alumni Engagement Officer** – Director and Assistant Director of Alumni Engagement
- **Annual Fund Staff** – Director of Annual Giving and other members of the Annual Giving team, depending on the constituent's prior annual giving or demographic segment (i.e., GOLD Alumni, Affinity Programs, 1889, etc.)
- **Athletics Development Staff** – Associate Athletics Director for Development and Catamount Club staff
- **External Relations** – Director of External Relations or Director of Economic Development and Regional Partnerships
- **Grants Administrator** – Director of the Office of Research Administration and/or their designee.
- **Stewardship** – Director of Donor Relations and other members of the Donor Relations team.

Solicitation Clearance

A team member or secondary manager who wishes to solicit a prospect should receive solicitation clearance from the PM. Upon request and clearance, the prospect will be moved into the "solicitation" stage in Raiser's Edge. This will create a 90-day "no-solicitation" period for any individual or entity at the university.

Roles and Responsibilities for Primary Manager

The Primary Manager is the individual assigned the chief responsibility for managing the relationship including the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of a prospect. The Primary Manager should be the development officer who has the most established relationship or the potential for the best relationship with the prospect. This does not necessarily mean the constituency from which the prospect graduated nor the recipient of the donation. The goal of the relationship is to advance the philanthropic interests of the donor and of the institution in the most efficient and meaningful way possible.

Team Members will be assigned for the cultivation of the prospect and will work together with the Primary Manager to develop the strategy to engage the prospect and maximize the potential gift. It is the responsibility of the Primary Manager to involve other officers if the prospect indicates multiple interests.

If a development officer inadvertently meets, visits, or is contacted by someone else's prospect (e.g., through a volunteer) and receives new “contact report worthy” information, the development officer should be diligent after the fact and inform the Primary Manager about the visit within 48 hours.

If a development officer is not assigned to a prospect and wishes to contact that entity, the development officer must discuss potential contact with the Primary Manager**.** All solicitations should be coordinated with the Primary Manager.

If two development officers request assignment simultaneously the Vice Chancellor for Advancement will make the decision on assignments. The Director of Prospect Management and Research is not responsible for settling disputes.

In all situations, the Primary Manager should make an effort to work with the Team Members so all interests are taken into account. Communication is the key. By fostering an open environment in which each development officer feels comfortable sharing his/her strategy/cultivation plans, we will alleviate mistrust and the desire to hoard prospects.

Contact Reports, Opportunities, and Proposals

All staff members should remember that all development activity (defined on page 1) with a prospect must be recorded in Raiser’s Edge. Reports must be submitted within **ten business days** of the contact. All PMs are responsible for obtaining and recording contact information from their faculty, deans, and volunteers. The PM is ultimately responsible for ensuring accurate information is entered in Raiser’s Edge. This does not preclude college / unit staff from entering contact reports.

An Opportunity may be “opened” on a prospect in RE to track the move from early to late cultivation. A proposal or “ask” may be offered to a prospect at any point but it is most likely this will occur at the solicitation stage.

Actions (Next Steps, Contact Reports, and Attempts to Contact)
Actions are the mechanism of recording an interaction, planned interaction, or attempted interaction with a prospect or donor. All actions must be assigned to a fundraiser and may be assigned to multiple fundraisers as appropriate.

a) Next Steps: Actions may be entered with future dates for planning purposes. Actions entered as next steps should not be marked as complete until the action takes place.
b) Contact reports: Within ten days of an interaction, a contact report should be entered in the form of an action. The body of the action should be descriptive of the interaction and include any relevant attachments.
c) Attempted contacts: Even unacknowledged attempts to contact a constituent should be noted promptly on the constituent record in the form of an action in the applicable format (email, phone call, letter) This information will make it possible to track the number of attempts to connect with prospective donors.

Opportunities (Specific Potential Gifts)
All prospective donors must have a contact report on record before an Opportunity may be opened. Opportunities and assignment requests will not be honored until a contact report is on file. Opportunities should be opened when a non-annual fund ask is anticipated or when the PM deems appropriate for tracking or other purposes.

Opportunity records must include the following as soon as they are entered: purpose, name, status, fundraiser, and likelihood rating. These values can always be edited if they change over time.

Additional details will be added as the conversations with the prospect mature. Ask amount, ask date, fund, and expected date can be added as these details fall into place.

Opportunity Sunsetting
All Opportunities showing no activity (as measured by contact reports) during a 12-month period will be reviewed by the Vice Chancellor for Advancement and subject to inactivation.

PM Assignment Sunsetting
Assignments of managed prospects will expire after 12 months if no face to face meeting has been recorded in Raiser's Edge by the PM, secondary manager, or team member. Appeals to retain management of prospects will be considered on an individual basis.

Portfolio Management & Prospect Stages

Tracking prospects through each stage of the development cycle is a strategic approach to fundraising. This approach significantly increases our ability to proactively track and move prospects from identification to solicitation at all levels. The below timelines are industry best practices. However, in all circumstances, timelines are defined by the circumstances of our donors. Advancement Services will track and manage aging information for strategy and informational purposes.

Prospect Pool / Pre-Identification: - Prospects that are not in any of the stages below.

1. **Identified:** This stage is the entry point at which an individual becomes a prospect in Raiser's Edge.

2. **Qualification:** A Prospect moves to this stage once a development officer is assigned as PM. It is the responsibility of the PM to make the initial substantive contacts with the prospect in order to gauge inclination and affinity to the University. A newly assigned prospect should not stay in Qualification for more than 90 days.

3. **Early Cultivation:** A prospect moves to this stage once there is at least one completed face to face visit entered into Raiser's Edge and the PM determines that a solicitation is feasible. A prospect should not stay in Early Cultivation for more than 120 days.

4. **Late Cultivation:** A prospect moves to this stage when the PM opens an opportunity, provides a strategy for solicitation, a target ask date, and a target amount. Prospect should not be in this stage for more than 120 days.

5. **Solicitation:** A prospect enters this stage when clearance for solicitation is requested. This indicates that the prospect is about to be solicited for a gift. Once the solicitation has been asked, the prospect will stay in this stage until the solicitation is closed. If the prospect declines the solicitation, the prospect will move to Cultivation stage based on feedback from development officer. A prospect should not be in solicitation for more than 60 days.

6. **Stewardship**: A prospect enters this stage once the gift is booked and the solicitation has been closed. At this point, the assigned staff member determines whether the prospect remains in perpetual stewardship (if it is the last gift the prospect will make), or if the prospect has the potential to make another gift in the future. If the prospect has the potential to make another gift the prospect should be reintroduced to the Cultivation stage.

Opportunity Stages

Strategy Formation – Time in stage before alerts start = 120 days. This status will typically be connected to the Late Cultivation stage. An opportunity moves to this status once a proposal has been entered and the fundraiser is working toward solicitation. One would expect to see future action dates and strategy plan on the constituent record at this point.

Negotiation – Time in stage before alerts start = 30 Days. This status will typically be connected to the Solicitation stage. Move to this status once a proposal has been delivered to the prospect but a decision is outstanding.

Signed and Booked – Opportunity moves to this stage once signed gift agreement and or pledge form are in place and recorded in RENXT

Withdrawn – Opportunity was created with dates and strategy but, for whatever reason, needed to be withdrawn BEFORE solicitation.

Declined – Opportunity was presented but the prospect declined.

Resources: University of South Carolina, Clemson University, University of Chicago, Northeastern University