

Theatre People

Fund Development

The Fund Development department at Royal MTC, and most arts organizations, is responsible for raising funds towards operations as well as endowments, scholarships, and special projects the company wishes to undertake.

The job of this team is to build and develop relationships with individuals and businesses whose philanthropic goals align with the vision and mandate of the theatre. For example, many individuals who have attended the theatre for many years have fond memories of their experiences and donate to help the theatre continue this work so that more people can share those experiences.

Tasks and activities in a typical day

Folks who work in fundraising will typically find themselves involved in some of the below activities.

- Talking to, and more importantly listening to, patrons and donors to learn what their relationship and interest to the theatre is.
- Identifying and connecting with businesses whose sponsorship or philanthropic goals align with the activities and mandate of the theatre.
- Write fundraising appeals to existing and potential donors.
- Thank existing donors for their support.
- Track and analyse donor information and trends.
- Ensure that donors are receiving benefits and recognition appropriate to their giving history.
- Planning and managing events to thank, and also engage, donors more deeply with the work of the theatre.



Royal MTC's Drama Club thanks donors for their support by providing opportunities for them to learn more about the plays being produced. They may hear guest speakers who are working on the play, or work in other fields that are relevant to the play (a reporter speaking about their job to give insight to a play about journalism, for example), learn details about the creative process, and have discussions.

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9 skills that a Development Department needs:

- Communication skills: the ability to connect with people is very important!
- Time management skills.
- Writing clearly and impactfully.
- Being very organized.
- Event planning skills.
- Gratitude: fundraisers spend a lot of time thanking people!
- Setting goals and achieving those targets.
- Passion: it's important to care about the cause you're raising money for!
- Critical thinking, noticing trends and being able to respond to them.



Many arts organizations host a gala as their major fundraising event of the season. Royal MTC's Black and White Ball takes on the theme of one of that year's productions. In 2016, to honour Million Dollar Quartet, about 1950s musicians, the gala's décor, auction items, and performers all revolved around that era and its music. The development department coordinates all the pieces of such an event as well as day-to-day administrative work with sponsors and donors.

Building Abilities

There are probably lots of things you are already doing, and things you can start to do, that will serve you in a career in Fund Development. Some of these are:

- Organizing school or extra-curricular events.
- Talking on the phone with new people.
- Writing letters.
- Reading and watching the news. Understanding what is happening in the community you serve.
- Writing thank you notes and cards when someone gives you a gift.
- Volunteer for a cause that matters to you.