Rethinking fundraising

PART 1

Rogare – who we are, why we exist and how we will rethink fundraising

ROGARE
THE FUNDRAISING THINK TANK

askdirect bluefrog FUNDRAISING GoalBusters Stephen Thomas

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Further editions of *Rethinking Fundraising* – which will detail all our project work and outputs – will be published later in 2021. Until these are published, you can find out all about our projects, and download our reports, papers and other outputs from our website – www.rogare.net

Follow us on Twitter: @RogareFTT

And search for the *Critical Fundraising Forum* on Facebook.

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COMMENT

Why rethinking fundraising is so important

Heather Hill
Chair of the Rogare Council

Heather Hill, senior account executive at Chapman Cubine Allen + Hussey, is a strategic consultant, international thought leader, and former chair of CFRE International. She has been actively involved with Rogare since 2015.

'Fundraising' is a term that means many different things to many different people. The definition you might be given very often depends upon whom you ask to provide it, and the answers grow more diverse and disparate if you go on to ask how fundraising is carried out and accomplished.

This is a problem. It is a problem for charities, a problem for donors, and it is a significant problem for fundraisers themselves.

With no clear, defined pathway into the fundraising profession and much of the education and training coming through peers (if it is even sought at all), many methods and strategies are simply based on what has generated results for someone else. There's no way to know whether these were the best results that could have been achieved, or if the methods were carried out with the rights of the charities' donors and beneficiaries in mind.

Practice is often based on anecdotes about 'what's been done' that get passed down to new generations of fundraisers, and that can make it seem as though there is no knowledge base or particular skill set needed for fundraising.

In the absence of critical thought, strategies and methodologies remain in a trial and error phase. A strategy that worked at one organisation may not work in another, so another is tried, and another, until something generates a bit more revenue and that becomes the new standard. Without understanding fundraising beyond its being an assigned task or role, this cycle repeats.

In the meantime, the charity realises less support for its mission, beneficiaries are not able to be served to the fullest extent possible due to this, and donors – current and prospective – don't have a clear sense of why they should shift their philanthropic behaviour.

One needs only to look at job postings for fundraising positions to see charities, too, have the same mindset. Qualifications vary widely and, consequently, so do expectations.

This is why Rogare is needed.

Rogare asks questions. It is not satisfied that the only vetting of a fundraising method is that it worked once before somewhere. Rogare seeks to understand why certain strategies and tactics are effective, and how they are used.

In short, Rogare rethinks fundraising.

This first part of our case provides you with an overview of what Rogare is, how it came to be, and why it matters.

And does it ever matter!

Future editions (to be published later in 2021) provide an overview of Rogare's work: where it has been, where it currently is and where it is headed.

It is an honour to be part of Rogare and involved in its work. It is exciting being engaged with other critical thinkers, all passionate about fundraising and striving to elevate the thought and practice around it. There is much to be done and we are proud to be stepping into the gap between research and practice.

Rogare truly is an engine of change for the sector.

Executive summary

Rogare (Latin for 'to ask'; pronounced Ro-GAR-ray) is the independent international fundraising think tank. It is the bridge that links the academic and practitioner branches of the fundraising profession and the engine that turns academic theory and research into actionable ideas for fundraisers (s1, p6).

This first part of our case/impact report explains who we are and why we exist – what challenges and problems we have been set up to tackle. Further parts will describe the work we have done in meeting our objectives and the impact we have made on professional practice (s1, p6).

Our aim is to 'rethink fundraising' (s1, p6):

- We need to rethink what knowledge fundraisers need.
- We need to rethink from where we get our knowledge.
- We need to rethink how we evaluate that knowledge and how we use and apply it.
- We need to rethink how we value that knowledge.
- We need to rethink all the things we think we know for certain.
- We have to rethink and challenge the status quo in fundraising and not be indoctrinated by it.

Our twin objectives in rethinking our profession are to (s1, p6; s2.2, p14):

1. Develop a richer knowledge base
2. Change the culture of learning in fundraising.

In collating, refining and developing new knowledge, we aim to tackle issues in fundraising that are under-researched or under-thought. (s2.2.1, p14)

Under-researched – topics where there is a perception that there is simply not enough reliable data or evidence to inform current practice.

Under-thought – subjects where the arguments, discussions and debates lack cohesion, substance and/or internal logic.

To change the learning culture in fundraising, we aim to create and lead a network of critical thinkers in fundraising who will disseminate this new knowledge throughout professional practice by acting as key influencers in the spread of new ideas. This is the Critical Fundraising Network (s2.2.2, p15; s6, p31).

We call our approach to rethinking our profession 'Critical Fundraising' (s3, pp18-19) – a mix of critical thinking and the methodological approach of critical realism.

We rethink fundraising by (s3, p19):

1. Through the lens of Critical Fundraising, we identify an under-thought or under-researched topic, problem issue or challenge.
2. We then explore all there is we can know about that, again through the lens of Critical Fundraising.
3. And then synthesise a new transdisciplinary solution to the topic, problem, issue or challenge.

'Transdisciplinary' means synthesising a single, overarching conceptual and theoretical model from a variety of disciplines (s3, p19).

All our work (described in full detail in future parts of *Rethinking Fundraising*, and currently to be found on our website – www.rogare.net) coheres in an 'integrated theory of fundraising (s2, p15):

Professional ethics – is the foundation for everything.

Relationship fundraising – how fundraisers can and should build ethically-balanced relationships with all their stakeholders, particularly donors *and* beneficiaries.

Public understanding/stakeholder perception and engagement – how fundraisers can better understand and engage with the ideas of certain of their stakeholders who are critical of what they do.

Learning and innovation – understanding how ideas currently spread throughout the fundraising profession so we can more effectively change the learning culture.

The fundraising profession – setting the overarching conditions for all of this – for how fundraisers can acquire and value the knowledge they need to understand and engage with their stakeholders and build ethically-balanced relationships with them – is whether fundraising is viewed as a profession by external stakeholders and fundraisers themselves. Our overall aim is to contribute towards the professionalisation of fundraising.

To build and collate the knowledge base, members of the Critical Fundraising Network contribute in three different ways (s5.2, pp26-27):

Knowledge Collectives – collate the best existing knowledge and signpost fundraisers to it.

Research Projects – use Critical Fundraising to synthesise new solutions to existing challenges.

Research Centres – for topics in which we do the most work, such as professional ethics, bringing everything together in permanent, semi-formal networks to ensure a continued stream of new ideas and questions.

Everything is brought together in our Theory of Change for Fundraising (s4, pp20-21):

- By enabling fundraisers to **Ask the right questions** about
- **Theory** and
- **Evidence**
- through **Critical thinking**,
- in a mode of enquiry we call **Critical Fundraising**,
- we can establish a **Network of critical thinkers in fundraising**
- that will engender a **Culture of questioning, critique and criticism**, in which, through informed debate we will **Identify knowledge gaps** by exploring
- **Under-researched issues (evidence)**, and
- **Under-thought issues (theory)**
- leading to **Better theory** and **Better evidence**
- that will close **Knowledge gaps**,
- and, by **Influencing the influencers**
- **Embed new knowledge and thinking in professional practice**
- resulting in a **Change in the learning culture** in how fundraisers use **Theory and Evidence** to tackle **Professional challenges**.

1 What is Rogare, and what do we do?

Rogare (Latin for 'to ask'; pronounced Ro-GAR-ray) is the independent international fundraising think tank. It is the bridge that links the academic and practitioner branches of the fundraising profession and the engine that turns academic theory and research into actionable ideas for fundraisers.

This first part of our case/impact report explains who we are and why we exist – what challenges and problems we have been set up to tackle. Further parts will describe the work we have done in meeting our objectives and the impact we have made on professional practice.

Our aim is to 'rethink fundraising', which seems an appropriate aim for a think tank.

- We need to rethink what knowledge fundraisers need.
- We need to rethink from where we get our knowledge.
- We need to rethink how we evaluate that knowledge and how we use and apply it.
- We need to rethink how we value that knowledge.
- We need to rethink all the things we think we know for certain.
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Our twin objectives in rethinking our profession are to:

1. Develop a richer knowledge base
2. Change the culture of learning in fundraising.

We explain why fundraising needs to be rethought in s2, which also sets out how we will go about this.

All our work is underpinned by a methodological approach we call Critical Fundraising. This is described in s3 along with our transdisciplinary approach that draws from disciplines such as social psychology, moral philosophy and anthropology.

No-one else does what we do

Rogare is unique in the fundraising profession. We are the only body that is styled as a think tank. It is certainly true that there are other bodies and organisations, in practice and the academic world, that carry out research into fundraising practice. And some of these also develop new theory out of this research to better inform practice in the future. But no-one apart from Rogare is consistently researching and exploring fundraising's conceptual foundations, exploring the philosophical and ethical issues that sit at the very core of our profession, and synthesising new solutions to the challenges we face.

We don't just aim to make fundraising practice better, we aim to build, enlarge and strengthen the foundations that hold up that practice. Rogare is not just about making fundraising better at a practical level; it's about making it stronger conceptually. Without Rogare's contribution in this area over the past five years, particularly in the field of ethics, the fundraising profession's stock of conceptual knowledge would be much poorer.

Rogare's corporate structure

Rogare – The Fundraising Think Tank CIC is incorporated in the United Kingdom as community interest company, company registration number 11807930. A community interest company is a special form of incorporation for social enterprises that places certain restrictions on how a company can disburse the profits it makes.

Rogare is run by an executive of salaried staff (currently Rogare has just one salaried staff member, the director, though there are plans to increase our establishment of salaried staff).

The Rogare director/executive is supported in the day-to-day running of Rogare by the Rogare Council, whose role is to provide organisational leadership to Rogare and thought leadership to the Critical Fundraising Network (for more on the role of the Rogare Council, see s5.1).

Rogare does not have a board of directors. Instead we have a standing group of the Council – the Governance and Oversight Group – whose role is to provide financial oversight, including advice on matters such as the director's remuneration. The Governance and Oversight Group comprises a representative of each of Rogare's major corporate partners, our Associate Members (see s7).

COMMENT

Rogare is unique in the world of fundraising

Andrew Watt
Member of the Rogare Council

Andrew Watt is senior principal at Accordant, former president and CEO of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, former deputy CEO of the Institute of Fundraising, and a member of the Rogare Council.

It's not just about best practice; it's not just about values; nor about research; nor about education, per se: Rogare's purpose is to challenge us to develop new ways of approaching all these things, new ways of understanding them. When we engage with Rogare's work, the intention isn't that we should agree or disagree, rather that we should think and engage with the issue under discussion.

So, when Rogare publishes a paper on ethics it can help us understand current approaches and interpretations and context as we consider what the future of the field could potentially be. Rogare seldom takes an absolute position but, in setting out the issues, its intention is to force us to engage intellectually, sometimes emotionally, and challenge our preconceived positions.

Why is this so important? Few of us choose to go outside our comfort zones. Challenging times (2020 certainly qualified for that description) see us focus on the things we identify as immediate and critical. If it's not immediate and critical, it gets pushed to the side. The result is that much that is critical to the future of the profession – and more importantly to the organisations that we serve – gets short shrift. Rogare's work is to engage us with the critical to achieve a deeper understanding of the here and now as well as the potential for the future.

Consider what Rogare does:

- Adds to and enriches the body of knowledge
- Develops the theory of fundraising
- Promotes public understanding of the field
- Encourages innovative thinking
- Promotes and builds the ethical understanding and practice of fundraising.

Taken together these activities allow Rogare to integrate the theory and practice of fundraising – bringing a new dimension to our approach to and understanding of our field. To get to that point, Rogare aspires to build – with us, the fundraising professionals – the tools and resources we need: to use those to engage with broad audiences through effective messaging; and to enable the regulatory platform we stand on to be as effective and supportive of our charitable outcomes as it can be.

This is not negligible. Engaging with challenging and uncomfortable issues also engages us on behalf of the communities we serve. It forces us to think clearly about what we do and how we act. It requires us to challenge ourselves to do better and to do more. It's about identifying practical tools to achieve new and reframed goals – taking the theory and transforming it into living practice. Huge ambitions – but undeniably, Rogare's.

"Rogare helps us understand current approaches and interpretations and context when we consider what the future of the field could potentially be. Rogare seldom takes an absolute position but, in setting out the issues, its intention is to force us to engage intellectually, and sometimes emotionally, to challenge our preconceived positions."

COMMENT

How did Rogare come about?

Ian MacQuillin
Founder and director

I got a surprise when I attended my first fundraising conference, just a few weeks after becoming editor of *Professional Fundraising* magazine in 2001. I'd been a professional journalist since 1988, working in a variety of sectors, and previously edited magazines for the police service and waste management industry.

I came to fundraising from the waste management magazine. Waste industry conferences were chock-full with sessions about innovative methods and treatments, environmental ethics, and issues around government policy and self-regulation/licensing. The plenary would regularly be given by the UK's environment minister or the EU's environment commissioner, or some other luminary.

But what you didn't have at a waste management conference were sessions about how to do your job. It was assumed you already knew how to do that.

So I wasn't expecting so many sessions at fundraising conferences to be effectively training modules that were aimed at helping fundraisers perform better in their jobs. What was missing – or seemed to me to be missing – were those sessions that aimed to get under the skin of issues and explore new thinking at a deeper conceptual level.

It occurred to me quite early on in my five-year editorship of *Professional Fundraising* that what the profession was missing, and what it needed, was a think tank – an organisation of the type you find in many other professions that explores the philosophy underpinning professional practice and, where necessary, rethinks that philosophy and practice.

During my tenure as editor, the magazine tackled a lot of these big picture issues. We had a special issue on the philosophy and ethics of fundraising. We put self-regulation in the spotlight. We critically examined the foundations of relationship fundraising. We wrote about evolutionary drivers of giving and how fundraisers could tap into these.

And in one of the articles I'm most proud of in my entire career as a journalist, we consulted among leading practitioners to write a Beneficiaries' Charter to complement what was then the Institute of Fundraising's Donors' Charter, and later became the Fundraising Promise. The Beneficiaries' Charter is the origin of Rights Balancing Fundraising Ethics, one of Rogare's main contributions to fundraising knowledge (see *Rethinking Fundraising – Ethics*).

It never occurred to me to actually establish such a think tank myself. But in 2012, I started to plan doing just that. I remember sitting in a pub with Amanda Shepard – then the IoF's director of organisational membership, and who was an active volunteer for Rogare in our first couple of years – mulling over what such a think tank should do and what it should be called. Many think tanks have Latin or Greek names – such as Demos or Polis – so we thought the fundraising think tank should follow suit. And since fundraising is about asking, we thought it should be either Latin or Greek for 'to ask'. And a quick use of a translation website revealed that Latin for to ask is 'rogare' (pronounced ro-GAR-ray).

The following year I began to make serious plans to establish Rogare, but with not much idea about how I'd get it off the ground. My best hope was that it

"To my utter astonishment, Adrian Sargeant and Jen Shang offered to host Rogare at their new philanthropy centre and created a job for me to run it. Without the belief and support of Adrian and Jen, Rogare would not exist. The debt I owe them is incalculable and probably unpayable."

would be something I did at weekends in my spare time.

I met Adrian Sargeant in my third week in the fundraising sector. He wrote several articles for me for *Professional Fundraising*, and we'd always had a good and friendly working relationship. In 2013, he'd just move back to the UK from his position at Indiana University to set up a new centre at Plymouth University, in his home town. So in September that year, I went to Plymouth to chat over ideas for Rogare with him and Jen Shang. I was expecting little more than a few sage words of advice. To my utter astonishment, Adrian and Jen offered to host Rogare at their new philanthropy centre and created a job for me to run it.

Without the belief and support of Adrian and Jen, Rogare would not exist. The debt I owe them is incalculable and probably unpayable.

Rogare became part of the Hartsook Centre for Sustainable Philanthropy (HCSP) for five years, during which time we produced some incredible work, which is described in the various editions of *Rethinking Fundraising*. Unfortunately, in the summer of 2018, Plymouth University announced that it was intending to shut the HCSP, which meant that Rogare would need to stand on its own two feet.

In March 2019, Rogare became an independent organisation. In the first 18 months since then, our output was even greater than that of our years at Plymouth. Rogare has always punched well above our weight, and we intend to do so for many years to come.

Ian MacQuillin MCIoF(Dip)

Ian MacQuillin MCIoF(Dip) is the director of Rogare, which he founded in 2014. He's recognised as a leading thinker on fundraising ethics having devised a new normative theory of professional ethics – Rights Balancing Fundraising Ethics (s2 in *Rethinking Fundraising – Ethics*). Ian has also created the new field of Anti-Donation Theory with which to better understand the negative attitudes some people hold about being asked to give to charity, (see *Rethinking Fundraising - Public Engagement*).

He writes a regular column for *Third Sector* magazine and regularly contributes to the specialist charity media around the world. He is also regularly asked to talk about fundraising by the print/online and broadcast media, and has appeared on programmes such as Radio 4's ***Today*** and PM programmes and BBC and Sky TV news. Ian is also an in-demand speaker on the global fundraising conference circuit.

He is a member of the certification committee of the European Fundraising Association, which assesses the qualification/educational programmes of EFA members; and a member of the editorial boards of the *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing* and the AFP's magazine *Advancing Philanthropy*.

Ian has worked in the fundraising sector since 2001. As editor of *Professional Fundraising* magazine from 2001 to 2006, he was widely acknowledged as being a key influential advocate for and critical friend of fundraising, regularly being voted into the top 10 most influential people in fundraising.

From 2006-2009, as was an account director at charity specialist PR agency TurnerPR before joining the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) as head of communications, where his strategic comms expertise significantly reduced negative media coverage of street fundraisers.

What fundraising's thought leaders say about Rogare

Rogare is wildly different to anything else in fundraising – there's no-one else like Rogare or doing what Rogare does. Connecting with such brilliant minds has tapped into and unlocked the critical thinking side of my brain, unleashing perspectives that have taken me by surprise in the most inspiring way. Nowhere else do I have these kind of conversations that provoke, rouse and incite dialogue in the unique way that Rogare approaches fundraising. It's truly refreshing to be part of this group.

Esther Kwaku, The Nerve Network

The huge challenges facing the world today require an equally huge response. Securing transformational change means motivating, mobilising and enabling many more people to contribute, which means we need to be much better and more effective at fundraising. That's where Rogare comes in. To change fundraising, we need to understand fundraising, analyse fundraising and critique fundraising. We need to assemble the theories, test the hypotheses and build the evidence base so that we lay the foundations for a more effective fundraising future. Rogare is leading the way in this, and we're proud to be part of the project.

Damian O'Broin, Ask Direct (Rogare Associate Member)

"Wow...that's exactly right. Why isn't anyone discussing that?" If you're like me, tactical fundraising solutions were the focus of much of why I attended conferences or consumed content online. After a while, you look at the state of the sector and wonder: who's asking the questions and discussing why we do what we do. Enter Rogare. For six years, Rogare has been thinking, talking, and sharing research on the big questions in philanthropy. In fact, it's the only place that I know of that asking the tough questions. You won't find trite answers at Rogare but you'll think harder and smarter about what we do and why we do it.

Cherian Koshy, Des Moines Performing Arts

Rogare is not for fundraisers who just want to maintain the status quo. Rogare pushes boundaries – it questions the status quo – it challenges fundraisers to critique how they work and function, to improve not just themselves but also the function of fundraising itself. Perhaps most critically, Rogare has been instrumental in reminding the sector that ultimately it exists for its beneficiaries and everything therefore needs to revolve around this primary stakeholder group. For me personally, this is Rogare's biggest legacy, reminding the sector not to lose sight of the beauty of the tree for the woods – to keep on challenging us on how we can do better than our status quo, to prevent us becoming entrenched in ways that worked in a different age, and find creative and innovative ways for the betterment of our beneficiaries.

Dr Haseeb Shabbir, senior lecturer in marketing, University of Hull and Academy Team member, Chartered Institute of Fundraising

COMMENT

Why we support Rogare – it's the evidence, stupid

Mark Phillips
Member of the Rogare Council and Rogare Associate Member

Mark Phillips is founder and general secretary of Bluefrog London and a member of the Rogare Council.

When Ian MacQuillin came to see me at my house in the summer of 2014 to ask if Bluefrog would become an Associate Member of Rogare, there was one particular word he used that sealed the deal – evidence.

Ian said that a key role for Rogare would be to emphasise the necessity for best practice to be underpinned by evidence.

I see a failure to do this all the time.

I see charities rebranding on the whim of someone following the latest fad in commercial marketing, in the process losing much of the connection they had with their donors, and once that connection is broken, the money stops coming in.

I see charities producing creative that appeals personally to someone at the charity, with little regard to what the evidence says about how that creative will land with donors.

All the time I see in fundraising major and minor decisions being taken because someone has an opinion about something, even though their opinion is not supported by any evidence, which they would have known had they looked for the evidence.

The major challenge we face in fundraising is encouraging and persuading fundraisers to use the evidence that is available to them.

Yes, we also need to think differently about how we do what we do. Yes, we need new theories of ethics and new ethical frameworks. Yes, we need to be able to conceive of the relationships we build with our stakeholders in different ways. All the things that Rogare has done and is doing. Yet essential to a mature profession as they may be, sitting on top of them is the practical evidence that informs fundraising practice and enables fundraisers to do what they do, day-in, day-out.

We at Bluefrog have put much of this practical research and evidence into the profession. Many other researchers are doing the same.

But what is the point if the majority of fundraising practitioners never read it, let alone act on it?

Each of us, including Rogare, including Bluefrog, can only do so much in contributing to and building fundraising's stock of evidence and knowledge. Each new paper, report or case study is an incremental addition that brings incremental improvements.

To bring about the kind of transformational change that will take the donor experience to the next level, and lift up the help we can provide to our beneficiaries, we need to change how fundraisers value the evidence that's in front of them

Through the Critical Fundraising Network (s5.2), the Knowledge Collectives (see s5.2.1) and the Theory of Change for Fundraising (s4), that's what Rogare is doing, and that's why Bluefrog is an Associate Member.

> *To bring about the kind of transformational change that will take the donor experience to the next level, and lift up the help we can provide to our beneficiaries, we need to change how fundraisers value the evidence that's in front of them."*

2 Why we need to 'rethink' fundraising

It's all very well having a think tank. But why does Rogare actually exist? What are the actual challenges we're rising to or the problems we need to overcome, and why is 'rethinking' fundraising the way to go about it?

Problem: The practice of fundraising is not built upon a sufficiently rich and robust knowledge base, and fundraisers do not sufficiently value, seek out, and use the knowledge that is available to them. To compound matters, the lack of a theoretical foundation underpinning the knowledge base often leads fundraisers to make poor and inconsistent decisions in areas such as ethics and regulation, which ultimately can impact the amount of money they can raise to help the lives of their beneficiaries.

Solution: We need to RETHINK both the type of knowledge that underpins fundraising, and bring about a culture change in how fundraisers learn, acquire and value that knowledge.

We have therefore set ourselves two overarching objectives

1. Develop a richer knowledge base
2. Change the culture of learning in fundraising.

We'll go into more detail about the problem (in s2.1) and the solution (s2.2) in the next couple of pages. Before we do though, here is a restatement of the problem, and our proposed solution, in more colloquial language:

Fundraisers don't have access to enough really good professional knowledge to make sure they can be the best they can be at ensuring charities have enough money to improve the lives of the people who rely on them. So we are going to collate the knowledge that already exists and create new knowledge, and make sure it gets to them.

But many fundraisers don't see the value of learning this type of stuff.

So we are going to have to inspire in fundraisers of all stripes (young and old, newcomers and old hands, junior and senior) an intellectual curiosity to learn more about the profession they committed to.

We are going to do this by piecing together all our brilliant ideas – on ethics, relationship fundraising, professionalism, public perception and much more – to show how they can help answer many of the challenges fundraisers currently face.

And we'll bring about this change by continuing to build, inspire and empower our movement of people from all around the world who are hungry for evidence-based change in fundraising.

2.1 The problem

Fundraising is a young profession, globally. Codes of practice are relatively new. They exist in all English-speaking countries (dating to 1964 in the USA and 1982 in the UK). But they are rarer and/or rudimentary in many other countries or are taken lock, stock and barrel from an anglophone code. Defined codes of practice/standards and a system of professional ethics are just two markers of whether an occupation can lay claim to being a profession. A defined body of knowledge that professionals must acquire through defined entry routes to the profession is another, and this is something fundraising conspicuously lacks in all countries (MacQuillin 2020).

The theoretical hinterland that informs professional fundraising practice is sparse and often disconnected when compared to a field such as accounting, medicine or even closely-related fields such as marketing. For example, one anthology on marketing ethics contains 90 collected papers (Smith and Murphy 2012). By contrast, the two main academic journals that publish fundraising research have published just three papers dedicated to fundraising ethics since the turn of the century (Clohesy 2003; Rosen 2005; MacQuillin and Sergeant 2019). Many researchers and scholars thus doubt that fundraising can lay claim to true professional status and consider it only an 'emerging profession' (Bloland and Bornstein 1991; Breeze 2017; Carbone 1989; Donahue 1995; MacQuillin 2017b).

The lack of professional education as an entry requirement means that fundraisers often go to conferences to learn the basics of their craft in lieu of having studied this before or as they enter the profession (MacQuillin 2020). At these conferences, they learn by a 'copy the case study' model (Shepard and MacQuillin 2017).

Conferences are thus primary learning centres for fundraising, but less often are they places where fundraisers engage in critical reflection and debate about more nuanced issues such as ethics (it's received knowledge that most conference workshops on ethics will be poorly attended, while a session on, say, 'storytelling' is standing room only).

The 'case study' in the learning model will often be presented with an absence of robust evidence or theory to support it, while fundraisers in attendance may lack the professional knowledge to challenge the results as they are presented, or the wherewithal to challenge the reputation of the person presenting the case study. This has led to an 'eminence vs. evidence' debate (Craver 2017a, 2017b, 2017c). To compound matters, there is also a line of thought that any attempt to ground professional practice in better education or theory is unnecessary (MacQuillin 2020, pp67-71) or is 'overthinking' things to the extent that it inhibits action in professional practice (MacQuillin 2017a). Fundraising does not inspire an "intellectual curiosity" among practitioners about their chosen profession because they are too busy trying to acquire the fundamental knowledge they need just to get by in their jobs (Harris 2019 – and see comment on p15)

When an issue or problem arises, or a crisis strikes, practitioners cannot necessarily draw on a bedrock of knowledge, evidence and theory for guidance about how to respond. The result is often that policy in fundraising is made up on the fly in response to challenges as and when they arise.

But as there is no established or accepted body of knowledge, the thinking that led to the resolution of the current crisis cannot be entered into it for future reference. And so whenever similar crises emerge in the future, fundraisers and those representing them again have to make up the (same or different) policy response all over again.

All around the world, there are ethical and policy challenges that confront fundraising. And fundraising does not possess a sufficiently rich and robust foundation of professional knowledge to allow it to rise to these challenges.

The problem for fundraising as a 'profession' is not that fundraisers are stifled into inaction by 'overthinking', but that the profession doesn't do enough thinking to develop the theory and knowledge it needs to tackle and resolve challenges in innovative yet fundamental ways, by learning from the knowledge that already exists.

2 2.2 The solution

Rogare's solution to the challenges described in the previous section is fourfold:

1. Fundraising needs a richer body of knowledge to underpin professional practice.
2. Fundraisers need to acquire this body of knowledge.
3. Fundraisers also need to see the value of this knowledge and want to acquire it.
4. Having done this, we need to change the culture in fundraising whereby fundraisers begin to use better theory and evidence to make decisions not just in their day-to-day jobs but also in developing policy for the fundraising profession.

The first part of this solution is therefore to collate, refine and develop the knowledge base and make it available to fundraisers. The second part of this solution – points 2-4 – is, having raised awareness of the value of this knowledge, to engage fundraisers in changing the professional culture in how this knowledge is valued and used.

To do this, we need to rethink fundraising. We need to rethink what knowledge we need. We need to rethink from where we get our knowledge. We need to rethink at what stages in fundraisers' careers they need to start acquiring this knowledge. We need to rethink how we value that knowledge and how we use and apply it. We need to rethink all the things we think we know for certain. We have to rethink and challenge the status quo in fundraising and not be indoctrinated by it (Jenkins 2016).

Rogare has been established to do precisely this. We aim to create a movement of critical thinkers in fundraising who will lead the way in 'co-creating' and valuing new knowledge (we call this approach Critical Fundraising – see s4) as the bridge that links the academic and practitioner wings of the fundraising profession.

Rogare will make a difference in both areas where change is needed:

- Developing a richer knowledge base (point 1 above)
- Changing the culture of learning (points 2-4).

2.2.1 A richer knowledge base

First, in collating, refining and developing new knowledge, we aim to tackle issues in fundraising that are under-researched or under-thought.

Under-researched – topics where there is a perception that there is simply not enough reliable data or evidence to inform current practice. Our aim is to find out what research does exist and suggest how this could be used by practitioners. Rogare is not primarily a research generating body and we don't intend to conduct large amounts of primary research, either quantitative or qualitative, though we will do some. The contribution to knowledge we will make will be to collate and refine the knowledge about particular subjects that already exists, to make it easier for fundraisers to access and use that knowledge. We have a defined methodology for doing this which we call the Knowledge Collective approach. There is more information about Knowledge Collectives in s5.2. In this sense, Rogare is an engine that turns academic research into actionable ideas for fundraisers.

Under-thought – subjects where the arguments, discussions and debates lack cohesion, substance and/or internal logic. These are likely to be characterised by the same rhetorical arguments being repeatedly used (from within the sector as well as outside it) without progress actually being made. Our aim is to develop new theory in order to ask better questions to get the evidence we need. Part of the issue for fundraising as an emerging profession is that fundraisers don't always know what evidence they ought to seek out because they don't have the theories to allow them to generate the right hypotheses (or in other words, to ask the right questions that will lead them to the right evidence). Rogare aims to supply that missing theory and help to generate the hypotheses and ask the right questions that arise from it.

Taking a transdisciplinary approach (Scott 2019; see s3.1) we are working on many projects that will contribute to fundraising's knowledge base and we intend to bring all this together in an integrated way.

An integrated theory of fundraising

Most of what we have worked on since we were formed in 2014 and are planning to work on in the future (see specific editions of *Rethinking Fundraising* or our website) fits together as part of an holistic rethinking of fundraising - an 'integrated theory of fundraising', if you will.

Professional ethics

Underpinning everything is a sound normative ethical theory outlining how fundraisers identify and balance their respective duties to different stakeholders – beneficiaries, donors, legislators and regulators (how fundraising is regulated is a key concern for fundraising's professional ethics), the media and the general public, including those who don't give to charity.

Relationship fundraising

Fundraisers need to build and maintain ethical relationships with all their stakeholders. While the concept of relationship fundraising was conceived with the donor as the central stakeholder, we are exploring the different types of relationships fundraisers need/ought to build and nurture with all their stakeholders – particularly beneficiaries, but also regulators/ legislators and the non-donating public – and the appropriateness of some of those relationships. This is further nuanced by the ethics of the power dynamics in such relationships, and the need to ensure that all relationships are ethically balanced, as well as the structural barriers to implementing these relationships that exist at many nonprofit organisations.

Public understanding/stakeholder perception and engagement

The various stakeholders with whom fundraisers need to build and maintain relationships have different motivations and reasons to engage with them, and some have quite strong objections to how fundraising works. So we need to better understand why people hold particular attitudes about professional fundraising, and how we can better engage fundraising's stakeholders through new narratives (informed to a large degree by the new theory of normative fundraising ethics outlined above). A major line of thinking for us is to explain the attitudes that people hold about fundraising (*what* they think) in terms of the possibly (probably?) ideological reasons *why* they have those attitudes. How we have applied this in the Canadian Fundraising Narrative is described on p22 of this paper and in *Rethinking Fundraising – Public Engagement*.

Learning and innovation

How – and even if – fundraisers choose to build such ethically-balanced relationships with their stakeholders will, to a large extent, depend on the professional knowledge that fundraisers have and how they choose to use it. This is why we need a culture change in how fundraisers acquire and value their professional knowledge, and to facilitate this, we want to describe the existing learning culture in fundraising by identifying the ways that new ideas are first developed, then spread through the sector, and finally are embedded in professional practice.

The fundraising profession

Setting the overarching conditions for all of this – for how fundraisers can acquire and value the knowledge they need to understand and engage with their stakeholders and build ethically-balanced relationships with them – is whether fundraising is viewed as a profession by external stakeholders and fundraisers themselves. The professional esteem – or lack of it – in which fundraising is held has the potential to help or seriously hinder the collective endeavour of fundraising.

2.2.2 Changing the learning culture

As we have said, Rogare is the bridge that links the academic and practitioner branches of the fundraising profession, and we have also said that Rogare is the engine that turns academic research and theories into actionable ideas for fundraisers.

But there is little point in throwing reports and outputs at practitioners if those practitioners either don't see the need for them or they don't know how use them.

Rogare's aim is therefore to create and lead a network, or movement, of critical thinkers in fundraising who will bring about this culture shift (see s5). This network will help to identify where the profession's knowledge gaps are so that Rogare can attempt to fill them. And once that is done, the network will disseminate this new knowledge throughout professional practice by acting as a key influencer in the spread of new ideas (s6).

But the members of this network will not just be passive recipients of the work that Rogare produces. Rather they will work with Rogare on projects, exploring issues themselves, gathering evidence, and generating new ideas and hypotheses. Members of this network have already contributed to several projects.

The end result of Rogare's endeavours will be to bring on a new generation of critical fundraisers who will lead a culture change in how fundraising professionals understand and can apply theory and evidence in rising to and meeting the challenges they face.

Knowing what knowledge they need to apply is an essential ingredient.

But just as important is that we help fundraisers to become literate in the use of this knowledge – for example, that they are ethically literate (Scott 2019). That is why it is so important that we change the learning culture alongside building the knowledge base.

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COMMENT

Are we curious enough about fundraising?

Nigel Harris
Member of the Rogare Council

Nigel Harris is managing director of Nigel Harris Associates and a member of the Rogare Council.

We *do* fundraising. We manage campaigns. We measure costs. We plan. We ask. We thank. We seek information. We share information. We learn on the job. We learn from others.

There are lots of things we do in fundraising. But what do we actually know? What informs what we do in fundraising? What shapes our broader understanding of what is happening to and around us, and because of us? What do we question? What do we challenge? How are we curious? And what drives us beyond the things we do, and know?

Getting a job in fundraising will not necessarily require you to know anything about what you need to do. Fair enough, everyone starts somewhere, and given that there is no vocational or tertiary education pathway into fundraising, it seems reasonable to start from a zero base. But what are we required to learn along the way, as we continue our work in fundraising? Nothing really. Nothing actually compels us to know anything; just to do things.

The difference is between knowing what to do as opposed to knowing why you are doing it – about the deeper, underlying exploration of factors such as markets, behaviours and relationships, all central to understanding fundraising and philanthropy.

I have seen too many examples of work undertaken with every good intent and little underlying enquiry. I have been in too many conversations where the prevailing assumptions are accepted without contest. I have given too many presentations where established research and relatively common concepts are perceived as new information.

It seems to me that we are content to learn enough to get things done. But in settling for this level of enquiry, are we lacking a level of intellectual curiosity in fundraising?

If we are, perhaps one reason comes back to this idea of 'doing' fundraising. In our busy-ness of doing, are we devoting enough time to thinking and to exploring ideas? Are the structures for learning and thought leadership in fundraising too organic – too ad hoc or unformed to give reasonable guidance? Is it too hard to find your way to knowledge and relevant content? Are we still inclined to accept the conventional wisdom of the eminent without seeking the evidence to either agree with or contest that which is presented to us? Is the focus on outputs continuing to divert us from the meaningful conversation around outcomes and impacts? Do we value knowledge and deeper enquiry? Do we have the time and encouragement to pursue it?

Where do the answers lie? Who takes the lead on this? Where does the responsibility for change sit? Many individuals will pursue learning, whether that is sector professional education, vocational and tertiary education, attending conferences, seminars and webinars, or just reading the literature – research, journals, articles and blogs. But you don't *have* to do any of this. Beyond employer requirements, if they exist, it's up to the individual.

So here is the big question. Are we curious enough in fundraising? Intellectually curious rather than knowing enough to get the job done. Perhaps the question answers itself? If we start by answering the simple question about our intellectual curiosity in fundraising, we may have just taken the most important first step.

3 Our methodological approach – Critical Fundraising

Critical Fundraising is a concerted attempt to critically and constructively evaluate the challenges and issues faced by the fundraising profession and provide evidence- and theory-based solutions to them.

The term is directly borrowed from Critical Marketing, a school of thought espoused by marketers and marketing academics that challenges the orthodox views that are often seen as central to the core discipline of marketing. Critical Fundraising seeks to do the same for fundraising. Critical Marketing is based on the concept of critical management studies, which is informed by Critical Theory – the school of thought that assesses and critiques society and culture by applying knowledge from the social sciences and humanities.

However, while we do delve into Critical Theory for some of our work – particularly in our work on postmodern fundraising and the ethics/philosophy of community-centric fundraising (see s7 of *Rethinking Fundraising – Ethics*) – Rogare's use of the word 'critical' does not formally denote or refer to Critical Theory. Instead – while acknowledging that we aim to question and challenge in a similar, but not identical, vein to Critical Marketing – we employ a dual meaning to its use.

The first is simply in relation to critical thinking and reasoning. As part of our stated objective to engender a culture change in how fundraisers use theory and evidence, we want to encourage more critical thinking and reflection on how that knowledge is acquired and used. As a start to this, two of American members of the Rogare Council – Cherian Koshy and Ashley Belanger – have written a critical thinking guide for fundraisers.

The second use of the word more directly refers to our methodological approach, which is Critical Realism (CR). Critical Realism considers that there *is* an independent social reality (things are not simply constructs we have invented, as various forms of postmodernism would have it – gross simplification klaxon!). CR therefore considers that certain things really exist in the real world. The role of CR is to identify the mechanisms, often hidden or unactivated, that explain/cause these real world phenomena.

These mechanisms operate hierarchically at different levels, with lower-level mechanisms explaining the mechanisms and observed events at higher levels. CR aims to develop 'causal-explanatory accounts' of events; the purpose of CR is to explain, but not predict, as is the case with positivist science. So Critical Realism is the halfway house between positivism and various 'postmodernist' or interpretivist methodologies, such as post-structuralism.

Critical Realism informs our Theory of Change and much of Rogare's work, particularly our exploration of gender issues in fundraising. In this project we looked for the factors that have causal powers to shape the patriarchy in fundraising. By doing this we can identify where and how we can best intervene to redress the balance by activating or suppressing certain of these causal powers (see website).

But our Critical Realist approach is perhaps most easily demonstrated in the report we produced that looked at the barriers to relationship fundraising. This report identifies barriers at different levels, with those at lower levels explaining/causing those above, for example:

- A barrier to relationship fundraising is a failure to invest in fundraising with long-term goals (e.g. insistence on short-term targets), which is explained/caused by…
- …lack of understanding of professional fundraising, which is explained/caused by…
- …lack of organisational culture of philanthropy, which is explained/caused by…
- …fundraising not being seen as a profession, which is explained/caused by…
- …many things, including the lack of a specified and required body of knowledge (and we have a separate line of enquiry that uses CR to uncover the mechanisms causing fundraising's lack of professionhood and how they can be changed to lead to greater professionalisation).

When we embark on projects and when we publish our reports and papers, we don't tend to spell out and make explicit the Critical Realist approach and ethos that underpins them. Nonetheless, for those interested in our methodological approach, this what we're doing.

How we rethink fundraising

1. **Through the lens of Critical Fundraising, we identify an under-thought or under-researched topic, problem issue or challenge.**
2. **We then explore all there is we can know about that, again through the lens of Critical Fundraising.**
3. **And then synthesise a new transdisciplinary solution to the topic, problem, issue or challenge.**

3.1 A transdisciplinary approach

We take a transdisciplinary approach to rethinking fundraising. The solutions to the challenges we face are not necessarily only to be found in the academic domains of fundraising, nonprofit studies, nonprofit marketing and philanthropy. Relevant ideas, theory and evidence are also to be found in closely-related academic disciplines such as commercial marketing, consumer behaviour, behavioural science and public relations. But they can also be unearthed in subjects such as social psychology, moral philosophy, anthropology, evolutionary biology, political theory, postmodern philosophy and many others.

For example, in 2016, we reverse-engineered the theory from social psychology that underpins relationship fundraising practice – see *Rethinking Fundraising – Relationship Fundraising*, or our website.

Our work on ethics obviously draws on established ideas in moral philosophy, and continues to rope in new concepts and ideas as we expand and develop this extremely neglected corner of fundraising's professional knowledge base.

We are also currently looking at how ideas from different disciplines can help us come up with new ideas and practices in fundraising. These include:

- Evolutionary biology – to help us conceive of new guidance on how much people ought (so a moral concept) to give to charity
- Anthropology – to help us to tell better stories about our work and engage our donors in new ways
- Public relations – to help us to reconceptualise our relationships with all our stakeholders
- Consumer behaviour and political theory – to help us to better understand why people often have such vehement objections to fundraising.

But what does transdisciplinary mean, compared to multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary?

- Multidisciplinary means incorporating ideas from outside your silo/discipline.
- Interdisciplinary means working with people across silos/disciplines.
- But transdisciplinary means synthesising a single, overarching conceptual and theoretical model from a variety of disciplines.

Here's how this works in a couple of hypothetical cases for behavioural science and ethics:

Case 1 – behavioural science

Multi-disciplinary – fundraiser reads a paper written by a behavioural scientist about how behavioural science can be used to influence consumers, and applies that to their own fundraising in an attempt to do better fundraising.
Inter-disciplinary – fundraiser works with a behavioural scientist to make their fundraising better.
Transdisciplinary – fundraiser and behavioural scientist work together to devise new approaches to fundraising, founded on behavioural science, that are universally applicable.

Case 2 – ethics

Multi-disciplinary – fundraiser reads a paper written by an ethicist and applies this to their own fundraising to do fundraising more ethically.
Inter-disciplinary – fundraiser works with an ethicist to identify ways to do their fundraising more ethically (such as in drafting a gift acceptance policy).
Transdisciplinary – fundraiser and ethicist work together to develop a new theory of fundraising ethics.

Further reading

Critical Realism

Centre for Critical Realism – https://centreforcriticalrealism.com/about-critical-realism/basic-critical-realism/

Very handy YouTube video – https://bit.ly/criticalrealism1

Or this one – https://bit.ly/criticalrealism2

Critical Theory

Entry on Critical Theory in the *Stanford Encylopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2019 edition). https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/critical-theory/

Critical Marketing

There isn't much available online about Critical Marketing. This might be where to start, especially chapter 2 – https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/handle/10092/12106

4 Theory of change for fundraising

We have explained that we want to rethink fundraising. We've explained that we want to do this by building a better knowledge base to fill the gaps in under-researched and under-thought subjects, and to encourage a learning culture so that fundraisers better value and use the knowledge they have. We've also said that we recruit people into the Critical Fundraising Network (s5) to help us achieve these objectives.

But how do we actually target the change we want to bring about in fundraising? How do we ensure that how we rethink fundraising translates into changes in professional practice? This is where our Theory of Change for Fundraising comes in:

- By enabling fundraisers to **Ask the right questions** about
- **Theory** and
- **Evidence**
- through **Critical thinking**,
- in a mode of enquiry we call **Critical Fundraising**,
- we can establish a **Network of critical thinkers in fundraising**
- that will engender a **Culture of questioning, critique and criticism**, in which, through informed debate we will **Identify knowledge gaps** by exploring
- **Under-researched issues (evidence)**, and
- **Under-thought issues (theory)**
- leading to **Better theory** and **Better evidence**
- that will close **Knowledge gaps**,
- and, by **Influencing the influencers**
- **Embed new knowledge and thinking in professional practice**
- resulting in a **Change in the learning culture** in how fundraisers use **Theory and Evidence** to tackle **Professional challenges**.

Rogare aims to enable and empower fundraisers to **ask the right questions** rather than providing the answers to those questions.

Ultimately we want to change the way that fundraisers use **theory** and **evidence** in their day-to-day jobs and when formulating policy for the fundraising profession. We want to transition the profession to a stage where every fundraiser seeks and is able to use theory and evidence in assessing how best to develop not just their own fundraising strategies and plans, but also in the way they tackle their profession's major challenges.

We will do this by encouraging both a mindset and a mode of enquiry we call **Critical Fundraising**.

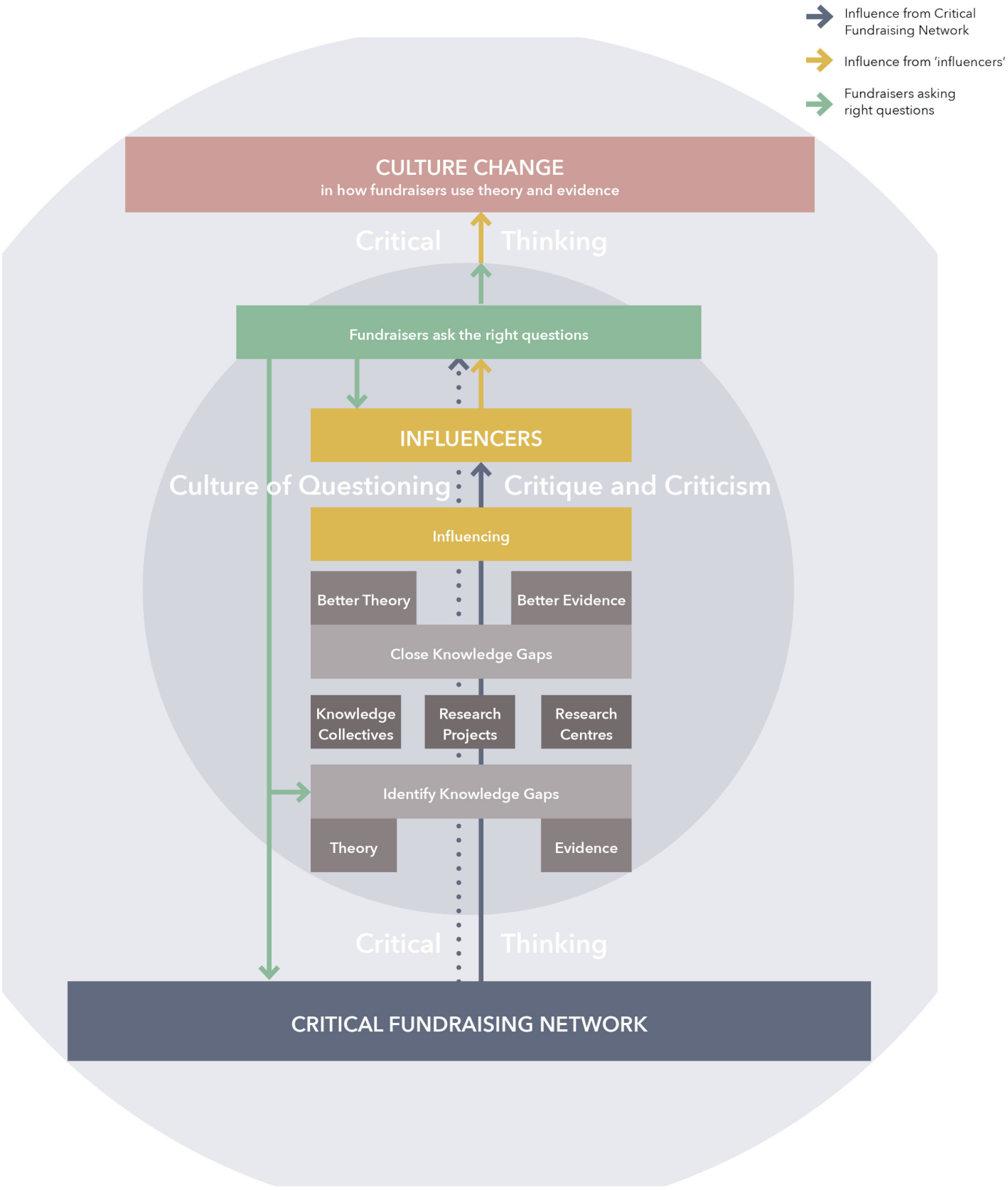
This will engender a **culture of questioning, critique and criticism** and informed debate in fundraising. In order to close the knowledge gaps in fundraising, Rogare will use the critical fundraising mode of enquiry to explore and investigate issues that are:

- **Under-researched** – Rogare will collate the evidence on which to base better decisions and policies through the Knowledge Collectives of the Critical Fundraising Network (s5.2.1)
- **Under-thought** – Through a transdisciplinary process, Rogare will synthesis the new theory with which to make better decisions.

This will lead to **better evidence** and **better theory** than we had before.

To achieve this change in fundraising, we will need to build, maintain and facilitate a self-sustaining, self-motivating **network of critical thinkers** that will make this change happen (more on this in s5) .

The fundraisers in this network are what links Rogare's academic and theoretical outputs with the professional practice that will utilise and apply them. Without a cohort of motivated fundraising professionals behind us, Rogare is little more than an academic institution producing reports that fundraisers may or may not read, let alone act on.



Further, we know that we cannot reach and influence the whole of the fundraising profession at one go. Our ideas and outputs may be too theoretical or too complex to engage many, perhaps most, coalface fundraisers.

Our goal therefore is to '**influence the influencers**' (see s6).

Our rationale for an 'influencing the influencers' strategy is that our goals are so big that they can't be achieved by trying to directly influence or change coalface professional practice, but will need to be achieved through a trickle-down effect by influencing those people or bodies who will buy in to our vision, take it on board, and then reach a much wider audience through their networks.

COMMENT

From theory to practice: advocating for fundraising – a quick case study

Neil Gallaiford
Member of the Rogare Council and Rogare Associate Member

Neil Gallaiford is chair of the board of Stephen Thomas Ltd, having served as CEO from 2006 until 2020, and was previously national director of fundraising for the MS Society of Canada.

Further parts of *Rethinking Fundraising* will detail all the work that Rogare has been involved in since it formed in 2014, as well as all the work it plans to do. But I thought it would be a good idea to present a short case study here that illustrates Rogare's way of working, as described in this report – Rogare's Theory of Change, Critical Fundraising and developing new solutions for under-thought problems

This is a project that I have been actively involved with – building a new 'narrative' for Canadian fundraising that will help fundraisers tell better stories about what they do and why they do it, and present new ways to engage with people who object to and criticise fundraising.

In Canada we had watched the media stories and regulatory changes that resulted from the death of Olive Cooke in the UK.* We were concerned that if a similar thing happened in Canada, we wouldn't be prepared for the fall out – and we wanted to handle things better than they'd been handled in the UK.

In the summer of 2017, I was with Scott Decksheimer – who was then chair of AFP-Canada – at the AFP International Conference in San Francisco. We both went to Ian MacQuillin's presentation on the ideological basis for most media criticism of fundraising. Ian's advice was not to respond as we always had by either just keeping our heads down and hoping we're not called upon, or by marshalling all kinds of facts to deflect the criticism. If the criticism is ideologically based, so too must be the response.

We decided this was exactly the right approach we needed in Canada to get ahead of the curve should we experience our own Olive Cooke-type event. We needed a better way to talk about the value and practice of fundraising. We needed a new narrative.

As it says in s2, Rogare does not do a lot of primary research. But we can't even start looking for new solutions unless we do a lot of secondary research, exploring literature on a given topic and anything else that might be related to it – this is Critical Fundraising. Rogare did this to consider what the cultural and political context for any new approach to advocating fundraising would be.

But some primary research is necessary, and the primary research Rogare does is that which is necessary to help us define and then answer the question we need answers to. That's why this project involved creating a database of Canadian media coverage going back 15 years, and analysing a selection of it for ideologically-driven content.

Long story, short – what we were able to do in Canada was build on the theory development about ideological criticisms of fundraising that Rogare had already been doing, by looking at this in a Canadian context, and crafting a set of key messages tailored to advocating for Canadian fundraising and defending it against criticism (some of which are specifically Canadian criticisms).

Working jointly, AFP-Canada and Rogare then adapted these into a set of training materials to

* For anyone not aware of this episode, in 2015, a woman in her 90s in Bristol took her own life. But the media wrongly attributed the reason for her suicide to her being overwhelmed by charity direct mail (the coroner made no reference to this and her family said it wasn't true). As a result, regulation of fundraising in the UK was completely overhauled. Rogare has explored the impact of these regulatory changes in our work for the European Center for Not-for-profit Law (see Self-Regulation section of our website).

"In Canada we had watched the media stories and regulatory changes that resulted from the death of Olive Cooke in the UK. We were concerned that if a similar thing happened in Canada, we wouldn't be prepared for the fall out – and we wanted to handle things better than they'd been handled in the UK."

show how fundraisers could use the Narrative in their everyday interactions with anyone who might not immediately 'get' fundraising, especially those who trot out the most common myths and criticisms. This isn't just the media, but legislators, regulators and politicians, and board members and even nonprofit colleagues (those who sometimes think of fundraising as a 'necessary evil' and fundraisers as not 'doing the mission').

AFP-Canada has trained a number of advocates in the use of the Narrative – influencing the influencers.

The Canadian narrative contains principles that are adaptable to the problems about how fundraising is perceived by various stakeholders in many countries.

We've taken this work on advocacy even further. During the Coronavirus pandemic, anecdotal reports suggested that many charities had stopped asking donors for support, driven by the mistaken views of many internal stakeholders that asking during this time would be wrong or unethical.

A team of Rogare volunteers did a short survey to gather some samples of these arguments, grouped them into themes, and then used the principles of the Narrative to devise some standard counter-arguments that fundraisers can use as and when necessary.

The small amount of primary research we did for this was the right amount we needed to help us frame the right question for which we needed answers. And then apply the critical thinking that has already been done to develop the Narrative to the specific context of board members telling fundraisers it's unethical to ask for money during an emergency.

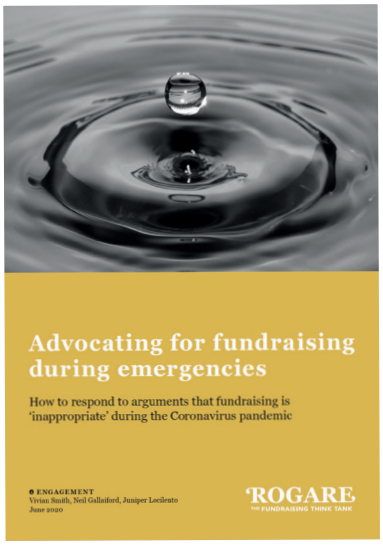
Further reading

There is a lot more on Rogare's work on advocacy and stakeholder engagement in *Rethinking Fundraising – Public Engagement*.

You can also find out about the stakeholder engagement work stream on our website, particularly the Canadian Narrative.

https://www.rogare.net/public-engagement

https://www.rogare.net/canada-narrative



5 The Critical Fundraising Network

The Critical Fundraising Network is the name we have given to the network of people who contribute to Rogare's ongoing initiative to rethink fundraising through our various projects and initiatives.

This section describes the various parts of the network.

There is the salaried Rogare executive – which runs the think tank day-to-day.

Supporting the executive is the Rogare Council (s5.1). The Council's role is to provide organisational leadership to the director/executive in the running of Rogare, and thought leadership and mentorship to the Critical Fundraising Network.

The various types of project teams CFR Network members can join, and the type of work they undertake in pursuit of our twin objectives – to build a more robust knowledge base for fundraising and change the learning culture so that fundraisers value and use that knowledge more – is described in s5.2.

We have said that Rogare is the bridge linking the academic and practitioner branches of the fundraising profession. We won't succeed in this unless we have plenty of fundraising practitioners on their side of the bridge calling out for new information, telling the academic side what information they need to fill knowledge gaps, and then, when they have it, using that new information to plug those gaps by disseminating it throughout professional practice.

The whole of the Rogare think tank encompasses the executive, the Council and the Critical Fundraising Network.

To a big extent, Rogare is *the members of its Critical Fundraising Network. We have set ourselves the big overarching objective of rethinking fundraising. The executive function cannot do this on its own; our success is contingent on finding active volunteers who will join the Critical Fundraising Network and take on the work that needs to be done.*

5.1 The Rogare Council

The Rogare Council consists of up to 30 people who are most committed to Rogare and our objective to rethink fundraising.

Council members have three main roles:

1. Providing organisational leadership to Rogare by supporting the Rogare director and executive with the running of Rogare, which members do by serving on at least one of six standing groups (see below).

2. Provide thought leadership to the Critical Fundraising Network by acting as mentors and facilitators, particularly for project teams.

3. Be ambassadors and advocates for Rogare, our ideas and our way of doing things.

Council standing groups

Funding and fundraising – to advise on strategy and tactics for fundraising for Rogare itself and to consider new funding options, both voluntary and commercial.

Communications, engagement and marketing – to advise on any matters related to these issues and to help devise relevant strategies and plans and ensure our ideas are disseminated through professional practice.

Membership – to set and keep under review the terms and conditions for Council membership, and to establish and run the processes for joining the Council.

Metrics and measurement – to set the key performance indicators of success and other metrics that will allow us to assess whether we are achieving our objective to rethink fundraising.

Events – to plan and organise Rogare's programme of events.

Governance and oversight – formerly the Rogare board. Its role is to provide financial oversight of Rogare, by monitoring budgets, signing off the annual accounts, and approving the director's remuneration, for example.

Members of the Rogare Council

Heather Hill, CFRE (USA) – Senior account executive, Chapman Cubine Allen + Hussey. Chair of the Council.

Paula Attfield (Canada) – President and CEO, Stephen Thomas Ltd (Rogare Associate Member)

Ashley Belanger (USA) – Ashley H. Belanger Consulting

Damian Chapman (UK) – Director of strategy, marketing and income, The Charity for Civil Servants

Steff De Simone (UK) – Digital fundraising manager, St Vincent de Paul Society

Neil Gallaiford (Canada) – Chair of the board, Stephen Thomas Ltd (Rogare Associate Member)

Becky Gilbert, CFRE (Germany) – Director of development, ASSIST American Secndary Schools for Internatinal Students and Teachers.

Nigel Harris, CFRE (Australia) – Nigel Harris & Associates

Rick Holland, CFRE (UK) – Head of philanthropy and development, Good Food Institute Europe

Cherian Koshy, CFRE (USA) – Director of development, Des Moines Performing Arts

Esther Kwaku (UK) – founder and CEO, The Nerve Network

Craig Linton (UK) – Managing director, The Fundraising Detective

Damian O'Broin (Ireland) – Managing director, Ask Direct (Rogare Associate Member)

Anthony Petchel (USA) – Director of philanthropy and communications, REACH CDC

Mark Phillips (UK) – General secretary, Bluefrog London (Rogare Associate Member)

Dr Claire Routley, FCIoF(AdvDip) (UK) – Legacy Fundraising

Dr Ashley Scott (UK) – Marriott Scott Consulting

Ruth Smyth (UK) – Planning and insight director, BoldLight

Andrew Watt, FCIoF) (UK) – Senior principal, Accordant

Sarah Willey, CFRE (USA) – founder and principal, Sarah Willey LLC

5

5.2 Critical Fundraising Network project and work teams

It's the volunteer members of the Critical Fundraising Network who do so much of the work that Rogare does to help us to rethink fundraising, which is described in future editions of *Rethinking Fundraising* and on our website.

CFR Network members can join three different types of work groups:

- CFR Knowledge Collectives
- CFR Research Projects
- CFR Research Centres.

5.2.1 Knowledge Collectives

Fundamental to rethinking fundraising is to assess what we already know (and to provide access to and help fundraisers understand and use the knowledge that already exists); and to identify where the gaps in our knowledge might be.

So within the Critical Fundraising Network, we will assemble groups of people who have an interest in a particular fundraising topic, whether that's a type of fundraising (such as major gifts or face-to-face street fundraising), or a big or small issue in fundraising (such as self-regulation or the challenges posed by disintermediated giving).

These groups are called Knowledge Collectives, and they have two broad tasks:

- The first task is to convene in the manner of a study or discussion group in order to identify, consider and share new ideas, thinking and trends – and anything else that might be interesting or relevant – and introduce these to the rest of the CFR Network and the profession as a whole. The Knowledge Collective will also identify gaps in research, evidence and theory in their chosen subject and suggest ways to fill them.

  In doing this, each Knowledge Collective has a lot of ownership over what it does, and how it does it. For example, a Knowledge Collective can choose what topics it wishes to explore further, and how it might want to develop and share these ideas. This gives the members of Knowledge Collective plenty of flexibility in how they contribute and how much time they give to the collective. Some people might only want to throw in a few ideas or share these on social media; others might be more motivated to lead and run whole projects (and we hope the activities of Knowledge Collectives will provide a regular source of ideas that we elevate to full research projects, see s5.2.2).

- The second task is to collate and signpost the best existing knowledge about particular subjects so that fundraisers have a go-to source of the best available evidence and theory. There is a defined and robust process for doing this, which sets out, for example, the evidential criteria for discriminating between different types of source (e.g. an academic paper or market research). The part of the Knowledge Collective working on this task will be relatively small, perhaps just four or five people.

Our first two Knowledge Collectives – gearing up for launch in 2021 – will look at the evidence and theory underpinning legacy fundraising and corporate fundraising, as well emerging trends, themes and ideas in those two areas.

The former International Advisory Panel

When Rogare was first formed in 2014, we established an International Advisory Panel to ensure the work of Rogare was grounded in the needs of professional practice, and to disseminate our ideas through their own networks. At its peak, the IAP had more than 120 members from 16 countries.

However, the IAP didn't have any internal structure that would give members a sense of identity with and ownership of our work. So we took the decision to replace the IAP with the Critical Fundraising Network.

The CFR Network encompasses all that we wanted the International Advisory Panel to do, but provides, we trust, more guidance and support to members of the network about how to go about it.

5.2.2 Research Projects

Rogare's bread and butter has been discrete projects that aim to fill a particular gap in fundraising's knowledge base by synthesising new ideas and concepts, for example, developing new theories of ethics, or exploring the social psychology theory that underpins relationship fundraising, and more recent projects such the two we published in 2020 on fundraising during emergencies/ Coronavirus pandemic (legacy fundraising ethics and advocating for fundraising).

All of our past, current and planned project work is documented in future editions of *Rethinking Fundraising* and on our website.

In contrast to the Knowledge Collectives – which are owned and run by members of the Critical Fundraising Network, and thus represent what members of those collectives deem to be important – Rogare Research Projects are established and run centrally by the Rogare executive.

> *"Fundamental to rethinking fundraising is to assess what we already know (and to provide access to and help fundraisers understand and use the knowledge that already exists); and to identify where the gaps in our knowledge might be.*

5.2.3 Research Centres

We do more work in some subjects than others, with so much going on that it's possible for us to bring together all the individual project work under a single banner – which we call CFR Research Centres. Whereas the teams working on our Research Projects and Knowledge Collectives are often transient teams assembled only for the duration of the work, our Research Centres are permanent, semi-formal networks established to ensure a continued stream of new ideas and questions on particular subjects.

We intend to establish a Fundraising Ethics Research Centre during 2021, with plans for a Relationship Fundraising Research Centre in development.

Join the Critical Fundraising Network

If you're a thinker (perhaps even an overthinker) and you like what Rogare is doing and how we are doing it; and felt inspired by the quotes and comments by some of fundraising's leading thinkers in this paper – then you might like to join us in the Critical Fundraising Network.

If you want to get involved in helping us to rethink fundraising – which could be by contributing to a Knowledge Collective or Research Project, helping us to share our ideas with the profession, or joining the Rogare Council – then please get in touch.

You can email Rogare's director Ian MacQuillin (email address on the back cover) or reach out to any of the Council members (see p23) on LinkedIn.

COMMENT

5 At Rogare, I've found 'my people'

Member of the Rogare Council

Ashley Belanger runs her own organisational development consultancy in Rhode Island and chairs the professional development committee of the AFP's Rhode Island Chapter.

Rogare is not a tribe for fundraisers looking for immediate wins or sure-fire tactics to nail their next campaign. This is a group of individuals who want to think about the broader context in which those campaigns sit, the structures around which those tactical analyses are built, and to question…well, everything. We believe wholeheartedly it's our collective imperative to do so. If this is you, then welcome. Truly. You're home.

By nature, I'm a questioner. I'm an intellectual tinkerer, if you will – trying to make sense of how and why things 'work' (or don't). I can't help but interrogate underlying assumptions, sources of data, methodologies, and mechanics. I am constantly asking "Why?".

This doesn't always make me the most popular person in the room…or at the dinner table with my spouse. But it certainly does make my life – and my career – more interesting. And it has landed me among 'my people' at Rogare.

True, Rogare is not for everyone. But it is a place for the nerdiest and most inquisitive among us. And for anyone whatsoever who's eager to dip their toes into that pool. It's a forum for ideas, intellectual banter, critical thinking, and seeking. This is my fundraising tribe.

This is a community of thought and practice for those of us who don't simply accept what *is* as the only way, the best way, or even the way we suppose it to be. It's where I've had my most exciting conversations since university, and it's where I know I can bring my most challenging thoughts and ideas.

It's not for everyone, but it is for anyone.

Rogare is a space for anyone interested in questioning the notion of 'best practice' and seeking to define next practice – one that's grounded in research, in science, in applied theory, and in a belief that we must not accept the limited scope of the status quo.

Rogare's approach (Critical Realism) is just one method for exploration; it doesn't purport to be the only one. But it is a very practical starting point for challenging and engaging the 'why' in order to get to what's next, what's better.

We are grounded in a common goal and mission, but we each bring our own motivations and perspective.

We don't all share the same pathway to the field: we have different politics, job titles, demographics, years of experience, world views, and ideas about what changes when Rogare's mission is met. We disagree. We debate. We welcome conflict. How refreshing!

If you're tired of shallow echo chambers and baseless rhetoric, please join us. We know it's a small set who will be motivated enough to translate that fatigue into substantive work as change agents. Only so many people in our field will be thrilled to dive deep into academic journals, theory, research, history, behavioural science, or whatever else.

But for those who do, welcome home.

We will not agree on everything. But we do agree on one thing: ours is a tribe of people who are looking for a better way forward – the one our profession, our organisations, our sector, our communities, and our world deserves.

A message about diversity from the Rogare Council

Rogare is about rethinking fundraising globally and diversity is integral to this objective. We don't just mean diversity in terms of race and gender, although in this we recognize that we have a long way to go. Geographic diversity is important too. Colonialism is as much at play in the third sector as it is in any other; so many of the ideas that hold sway in fundraising emanate from the USA and the UK, and many of the most influential people in fundraising are thus American or British.

But we believe that the only way to truly rethink fundraising is to engage ideas and schools of thought from all over the world and we are excited to welcome new voices and perspectives.

We would therefore like to extend an invitation to fundraisers everywhere to join us in the Critical Fundraising Network, so that our efforts to rethink fundraising reflect the diversity of people who do fundraising around the world, and the diversity of new thinking and ideas they bring to the profession.

As well as this broad invitation, we are doing specific work on diversity that you might be keen to find out about and get involved in. We are improving our process to recruit people on to the council and this is already starting to improve the diversity of people involved in shaping Rogare's work. We have a current project exploring gender in fundraising. We are also looking specifically at how we can improve diversity within Rogare both for active participants of our work and to make sure we communicate outputs to a broad audience.

We look forward to working with you.

6 How we engage with the fundraising profession

The Critical Fundraising Network lives on the social media project management platform Slack, where we host our various project and work streams and teams.

To reach further afield into the wider profession, we publish long-form articles on the *Critical Fundraising Blog*, and host and facilitate conversations about issues on the *Critical Fundraising Forum* on Facebook, which has more than 1,900 members. Rogare also has 2,500 followers on Twitter. We intend to increase our presence on LinkedIn.

We structure our outputs in three levels, each aimed at a different audience:

Level 1 – developing the ideas

Level 2 – influencing the influencers

Level 3 – reaching coal-face practitioners.

Level 1 – developing the ideas

This is the level of the big ideas and theoretical work. We are communicating complex and sophisticated ideas, which will often be new to fundraisers, through the likes of white and green papers, research reports, etc. Level 1 outputs can be thought of as analogous to a fundraising case for support: the case for support being the master document that contains all the information and detail needed to produce various targeted fundraising propositions to relevant audiences. If at any point someone is reading a Rogare Level 2 or 3 output and there is something in there they don't quite get, then the answer will be in the Level 1 document(s).

Examples of Rogare Level 1 outputs (see relevant editions of *Rethinking Fundraising*)

- Ethics white paper
- Green paper on the status of fundraising as a profession
- Four volumes of our relationship fundraising review
- Two papers on the ethics of beneficiary framing
- Review of global self-regulation
- Consultation responses.

Target audiences for Level 1 outputs

- Members of the Rogare Council and Critical Fundraising Network
- Fundraisers with specialist interest in relevant topics
- Intellectually curious fundraisers with ambitions to be thought leaders in their profession
- Regulators and legislators
- Sector leaders (e.g. umbrella bodies)
- Academics
- Highly-engaged journalists.

A Level 1 output might only be read by 100 people globally, but if they are the right 100 people, then that's what matters.

Level 2 – influencing the influencers

Having developed the new ideas at Level 1, we now need to get these out to the influencers. Of course, all our target audience for Level 1 outputs are influencers. But there are many other influencers we will need to reach.

The purpose of communicating our ideas at Level 2 is to present them in an engaging way, yet in a way that doesn't dumb them down – the sophistication, complexity and nuance still needs to be there.

At this point we are not just putting solutions into the professional domain. Rogare is predominantly about helping fundraisers to work out solutions for themselves through critical thinking rather than providing them with the answers.

So Level 2 communications are presenting ideas to a wider audience than would be attracted to Level 1, but it is still an audience of critical thinkers with the capacity to explore and develop new ideas and challenge ideas they already hold, and this will not be all fundraisers, probably not even close to the majority.

We are still not providing the answers with Level 2 outputs, but engaging in a conversation with people who have the time and interest to critically think through new ideas and share these among their networks.

Examples of Rogare Level 2 outputs

- Critical Fundraising Blog and Forum
- This paper - *Rethinking Fundraising*
- Media articles
- Conference presentations.
- The *Barriers to Relationship Fundraising* report (see *Rethinking Fundraising – Relationship Fundraising*)
- National Critical Fundraising Reports (so far USA, Scotland and Ireland)
- Advocating for Fundraising during the Coronavirus Pandemic paper (see *Rethinking FR – Engagement*).

Target audiences for Level 2 outputs

- All those at Level 1, plus:
- Any Level 1 target audience who didn't read the relevant level 1 output (and this persuades them to go back and read it and/or find out more information), particularly:
  - Intellectually curious fundraisers who might simply have missed the original Level 1 output because it fell through a marketing/comms gap
  - Sector leaders who might not have had time to read the original Level 1 output
- Fundraisers who might have thought that Rogare and its ideas were 'not for them'
- Fundraisers who were not previously aware of Rogare and what we do
- All sector media
- Bloggers and social media.

COMMENT

5 Influence the influencers and the profession will take care of itself

Giles Pegram, CBE

Giles Pegram CBE is a respected fundraising consultant, former director of fundraising at the NSPCC and former vice-chair of the Commission on the Donor Experience.

People have been thinking about fundraising for thousands of years.

At the start of my fundraising career the people who influenced me most were Guy Stringer and Harold Sumption. I use Harold's aphorisms constantly. More recently my great friend Redmond Mullin, who died in 2011, was a profound thinker about fundraising.

He read prodigiously about the history of fundraising back into antiquity. He analysed a huge range of actual practice. What was common about good practice? And bad practice? He distilled his insight into books which I often recommend to young fundraisers.

These people thought, and thought deeply, about fundraising.

Rogare is different. It does meta-thinking: thinking about thinking about fundraising. As far as I am aware this is relatively new.

The ethics of fundraising. What fundraising, if any, is intrinsically wrong? When might focusing on the donor be at the expense of the beneficiary, both in principle and in practice? What, if any, entry-level qualifications should there be for fundraisers entering the profession? Why?

These are examples of things I had never thought about before, but are now in my head constantly. Another way of looking at it, or maybe another aspect of Rogare's work, is the epistemology of fundraising. The philosophy of what we know, and how we know it.

But for whom is all this work? Rogare's director Ian MacQuillin and I had an exchange of views when I said that Rogare's work was 'dense'. This wasn't meant to be pejorative, not at all. But it isn't an easy read. You need to read, think, read again and then do more thinking before turning the thinking into practical things to do. Ideas to discuss with like-minded others. And pass on.

Much of Rogare's work is of interest to the intelligent fundraiser or fundraising thinker. Most important, for me, is where Rogare's work influences the influencers. The people who can influence others. The people who can pass the thinking on to other influencers. Who themselves start to ask questions about their own work.

Suppose a particular idea of Rogare's gets through to just 100 influencers. (Forgive me, Ian, a huge underestimate. But for the sake of argument.) Those pass it on to 200 others who pass it on to 400 others, etc. The lay person may regard this as pretty slow growth. But you, dear reader, will recognise that this is exponential growth.

(I can't resist my favourite exponential story. The man who invented chess was summoned by Shiram, the ruler of Persia 800 years ago, and asked to name a reward. The old man thought, and said: "I would like one grain of wheat for the first square on the chessboard, two for the second, four for the third, and so on until the chessboard is full". Shiram was angry at the meagre request. But granting it would have included the entire world's production of wheat from that day to this, and for another 1,200 years.)

So you will see how quickly exponential growth will reach great numbers of fundraisers. Influence the influencers. Then, over time, the rest of the fundraising profession will look after itself.

Fundraising is a noble vocation and fundraisers everywhere should share a sense of pride in their profession.

But with fundraising and fundraisers so often misunderstood – and that misunderstanding so often becoming the basis of criticism and attacks on both the fundraising profession and individual fundraisers – rallying round a shared experience of being a fundraiser can be challenging.

That's why we have produced our fundraising manifesto.

Titled 'This is a fundraising office', it is based on Beatrice Warde's famous 'This is a printing office' manifesto that was posted in almost every print room in the English-speaking world during the 1930s and 1940s, and is cast in bronze outside the US Government Printing Office in Washington DC.

We hope the Rogare manifesto will do for fundraisers what Warde's did for printers – instil and foster a huge sense of pride in what they do.

The manifesto has been supported by all Rogare's Associate Members, but special thanks go to Bluefrog for their excellent design and production, which was done by their head of design Rebecca Woodall.

Since we first launched this in July 2015, the manifesto has been posted in fundraising officers all round the world.

Level 3 – Reaching coalface practitioners

As we have stressed, our Theory of Change (s4) is not about providing answers to fundraisers' questions but encouraging them to ask better questions about their current knowledge to work out better answers themselves. That way we are co-creating new knowledge with fundraising professionals. However, not all fundraisers will want to take part in that co-creation process, either because they don't have the time (fundraisers are very busy) or they're simply not interested (and why should they be – they have a full-time job and a life).

But once we have co-created all this fantastic new knowledge at Level 1 and started to influence the influencers at Level 2, we do want coalface fundraisers to take notice by getting information out to them at Level 3 though more bite-sized outputs.

Examples of Rogare Level 3 outputs

- Twitter
- This is a Fundraising Office manifesto
- Theory of change graphic (see s4)
- Ethical decision-making framework graphic (see s3 *Rethinking Fundraising – Ethics*)

There is much more from our major projects that we could translate into more bite-sized information, such as infographics, graphics, posters, animations, videos, memes, podcasts etc.

Target audiences for Level 3 outputs

- All those at Levels 1 and 2, plus:
- All other fundraising practitioners.

7 Associate members

Rogare is supported in our work by a number of Associate Members – partners to the fundraising sector who share a similar critical ethos and vision about how rethinking the ideas underpinning fundraising will lead to change in how we practise fundraising. When people look at who is a Rogare Associate Member, they'll think, 'yes, that makes sense, I can see why they'd be working with Rogare'.

We think it is important that people should be able to access all the ideas coming out of Rogare, and we are able to give them this access through the ongoing generous support of our Associate Members

This is not just corporate sponsorship. Associate Members are genuine partners and thought leaders in our work, helping us to identify areas of research and plan the publications, events and other outputs that will bring this research to the attention of the fundraising practitioner community.

The number of Associate Memberships that we offer is limited. We have a separate brochure on the benefits of Associate Membership and anyone interesting in finding out more about how to support Rogare through Associate Membership should contact Rogare's director Ian MacQuillin.

Associate Members since 2019 (*=current Associate Members) are:

Bluefrog* (2014 to date)
Creative agency (UK)
https://bluefroglondon.com

Stephen Thomas Ltd* (2017 to date)
Full-service fundraising agency (Canada)
https://stephenthomas.ca

Ask Direct* (2017 to date)
Strategic and creative agency (Ireland)
https://www.askdirect.ie

Goalbusters* (2021 to date)
Fundraising consultancy (USA)
https://www.goalbusters.net

Ethicall (2016-20)
Telephone fundraising agency (UK)
https://www.ethicall.org.uk

Former Associate Members (2014-18) were: Rapidata Services, Home Fundraising, Pursuant and DTV.

What fundraising's thought leaders say about Rogare

"If you're happy with the state of charity or nonprofit fundraising, the levels of income it is generating for charities, its sustainability, and the levels of social good that it is enabling, then Rogare is not for you. If, however, you believe fundraising could achieve far more by understanding and questioning how and why we fundraise as we do – and who fundraises from whom, then I urge you to join in with its work. Rigorous and analytical, it is surely unique in the charity fundraising sector in its independent willingness to question established assumptions and propose alternatives. Rogare doesn't have all the answers, but it is asking all the right questions. And if those questions irk or discomfort us from time to time, it is doing its job."

Howard Lake, UK Fundraising

Rogare's work provokes reaction – it will engage your intellect, your emotions and almost dares you to find out more…Be curious, join the debates and enjoy!

Glenys Garth-Thornton, head of professional development, Chartered Institute of Fundraising

To bring about the kind of transformational change that will take the donor experience to the next level, and lift up the help we can provide to our beneficiaries, we need to change how fundraisers value the evidence that's in front of them. Through the Critical Fundraising Network, the Knowledge Collectives, and the Theory of Change for Fundraising, that's what Rogare is doing, and that's why Bluefrog is an Associate Member.

Mark Phillips, Bluefrog Fundraising

Rogare challenges the fundraising profession to think beyond the 'how' of fundraising and consider the broader historical, philosophical and social context of our work. Their critical questions about the nature and value of fundraising as a practice and as a profession are particularly relevant in this age of extreme wealth inequality. Rogare challenges long-held assumptions with a balanced view of complex issues and offers a robust framework for fundraisers seeking to engage in critical debate.

Juniper Locilento, Community Food Centres Canada

Rogare is different. It does metathinking. Thinking about thinking about fundraising. As far as I am aware this is relatively new. The ethics of fundraising. What fundraising, if any, is intrinsically wrong? When might focusing on the donor be at the expense of the beneficiary, both in principle and in practice? What, if any, entry level qualifications should there be for fundraisers entering the profession? What are they? Why? These are examples of things I had never thought about before, but are now in my head constantly.

Giles Pegram, CBE

Get in touch

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Facebook: search 'Critical Fundraising Forum'

Rogare – The Fundraising Think Tank CIC is a community interest company registered in the UK, registration number 11807930.

Rogare brand identity created by Rebecca Woodall at Bluefrog Fundraising.

Associate Members

Rogare is supported in its work by a number of Associate Members – partners to the fundraising sector that share our critical fundraising ethos. Our Associate Members are:

Ask Direct
Strategic and creative agency (Ireland)
https://www.askdirect.ie

Bluefrog
Creative agency (UK)
https://bluefroglondon.com

Goalbusters
Fundraising consultancy (USA)
https://www.goalbusters.net

Stephen Thomas
Full-service fundraising agency (Canada)
https://stephenthomas.ca

ROGARE
THE FUNDRAISING THINK TANK