

2024–2025 Donor Relations Accelerator Cohort 1 Schedule

All meetings held noon Eastern Time

Friday, August 16, 2024: 60-minute presentation

Module 1: Your Role as a Donor Relations Professional – In this session, we'll provide a brief overview of the history and current state of our profession. You'll learn the goal of donor relations and what will be expected of you in this field—including an important discussion about ethics in donor relations.

Friday, August 23, 2024: 60-minute breakout meeting

Friday, September 13, 2024: 60-minute presentation

Module 2: Welcome to the Show – File this session under, “must-have donor relations knowledge.” We'll discuss the cycle of giving, break down commonly used terms and jargon (LYBUNTS, and SYBUNTS, and endowments, oh my!) and show you how donor relations plays an integral role in successful fundraising.

Friday, September 20, 2024: 60-minute breakout meeting

Friday, October 11, 2024: 60-minute presentation

Module 3: An Introduction to the 4 Pillars – This session is your donor relations game plan—the X's and O's of your work. We'll provide you with the framework for how a donor relations program should be structured—the 4 Pillars of Donor Relations. We'll break down the highlights of each pillar and explain how each element is crucial for creating a strong foundation. This session will help you organize your work and create a plan.

Friday, October 18, 2024: 60-minute breakout meeting

Friday, November 8, 2024: 60-minute presentation

Module 4: Meet the Players – Donor relations is a team sport and excellence cannot be achieved alone. During this session, you'll meet the starting lineup of players you'll need to work with to complete your job—like Development Officers, Budget Offices, Compliance Officers, Event Planners, and many more. You need them and they need you, and in this session, we'll show you why each of these relationships is necessary.

Friday, November 15, 2024: 60-minute breakout meeting

Friday, December 13, 2024: 60-minute presentation

Module 5: Working with Leadership – Each leader has a unique style of managing and communicating. During this session, we'll help you identify their needs and preferences, and then coach you on how to manage those expectations. We'll also provide tips on communicating with leadership and the best ways to keep them updated on your progress.

Friday, December 20, 2024: 60-minute breakout meeting

Friday, January 17, 2025: 60-minute presentation

Module 6: Know Your Donors – This is the most critical component of our work. All donors are unique, and the more you know about them, the stronger your donor relations program will be. During this session, we'll share our best tools for understanding your donors—including questions you can ask, common statistics, and valuable industry resources that can aid you in your work.

Friday, January 24, 2025: 60-minute breakout meeting

Friday, February 14, 2025: 60-minute presentation

Module 7: Measure Your Results – What is the ROI of donor relations? In this session, we'll teach you what you need to know to answer this question. We'll share tools to help you measure the ROI of your programs, projects, and events. You can use this data to report back to leadership and make data-driven decisions about which efforts are worth your time and resources and which are not.

Friday, February 21, 2025: 60-minute breakout meeting

Friday, March 14, 2025: 60-minute presentation

Module 8: Make a Plan – Margaret Thatcher once said, “plan your work for today and every day and then work your plan.” Learn how to build a work plan, create and manage a budget, and ask questions to get clear expectations and purpose for each project you take on. We’ll provide samples and inspiration that will help you create a plan that works for you—and your donors.

Friday, March 21, 2025: 60-minute breakout meeting**Friday, April 11, 2025: 60-minute presentation**

Module 9: Peer Comparisons – Our leaders often ask us to benchmark a program, project, or service against other organizations. This is an effective tool if you know how to do it properly. In this session, we’ll provide you with the tools to set up your own study, identify who to include, and teach you how to analyze the results and present them to leadership.

Friday, April 18, 2025: 60-minute breakout meeting**Friday, May 9, 2025: 60-minute presentation**

Module 10: Bringing It All Together – Our final session will bring this training full circle. We’ll go over our resource guide of everything you need to achieve excellence in your donor relations career—including which professional organizations to join and why, and an ongoing learning plan that will provide you with tools and resources to help you continue to grow and flourish in donor relations.

Friday, May 16, 2025: 60-minute breakout meeting