Crowdfunding and Community Health Projects: A Quick Intro for Public Health Professionals

2013 Oregon Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Conference
Presenter:

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So what the heck is crowdfunding, anyway?
Basically, you try to get large numbers of people excited about your project...
So that they will give you a lot of this…
In the old days, we would apply for grants and wait and wait and wait and wait and wait.
Sometimes we got the grant...
but sometimes we did not.
How is crowdfunding different from the process of getting grants?

- Crowdfunding is a very public process. It is conducted online and in front of the whole world of the Web.

- Crowdfunding can take quite a bit less time—the writing process can be less arduous and detail-heavy.

- Crowdfunding requires more showmanship than traditional grantsmanship.
Crowdfunding is not going to solve all our funding problems. Running a crowdfunding campaign is hard work. But it does offer some advantages:

- **Because crowdfunding is fairly new just the novelty of engaging in crowdfunding can raise the visibility of your project locally.**
- **Crowdfunding can leverage talents and creativity among your staff that are not often utilized in traditional grantsmanship.**
- **Crowdfunding can engage stakeholders in new ways and engage new audiences.**
Disadvantages

• If you don’t meet your funding goal, you have will have failed a lot more publicly than is the case with traditional grantsmanship.

• Crowdfunding often involves (but does not require) the use of video, which requires some know-how and often more time than anticipated.

• On Kickstarter you have to provide “rewards” to backers and this requires some planning and adherence to Kickstarter’s rules (and Kickstarter itself takes its own cut).

• Because crowdfunding is new, many of your stakeholders may not be comfortable backing the whole idea or of pledging online themselves.
Where can you try to crowdfund a community improvement project?
There are others, such as
The pitch:

- What is CHPPD Section of APHA and the CHPPD Student Committee?

  **Community Health Planning and Policy Development (CHPPD)** Section develops and advocates for health planning, policies and practices to eliminate disparities through community empowerment and social justice.

  The main purpose of the **CHPPD Student Committee** is to build a peer network by creating a sustainable role for student representation in all business and governance of the **CHPPD Section and APHA**.

- What We Need & What You Get

  The APHA Annual Meeting attracts more than 13,000 national and international public health professionals and health care workers from across the United States. From research presentations to learning institutes to job fairs to professional networking; this meeting is a one stop opportunity for students and aspiring professionals like us! Not only does the APHA Annual Meeting help to keep students up to date with the latest research, but a little time talking with the person sitting next to you during the conference proceeding might be a potential employer or collaborator on a research project! To learn more visit: [http://www.apha.org/meetings/AnnualMeeting/](http://www.apha.org/meetings/AnnualMeeting/)

- Proposed BUDGET

  - APHA Membership + Conference Early Registration = $275
  - Transportation (airfare/public transportation in host city) = $300 - 400
  - Off-Site Hotel = $100-200/day = $600-800
  - Meals = $120 (@$30/day)

As a BIG thank you for your kind contribution, we have several perks to offer!
Let’s stick for the rest of this talk with my personal favorite, Kickstarter.
The most common public health/community health projects on Kickstarter are those related to community gardens or farmers’ markets.
This one is in Boston:
City Growers - Converting Urban Lots into Sustainable Farms

by Margaret, Glynn and team

You're a backer

Funded! This project successfully raised its funding goal on Aug 7.

245 backers

$29,305

pledged of $15,000 goal

0

seconds to go

Funding period
Jul 11, 2013 - Aug 7, 2013 (26 days)
It emphasizes both jobs and food production.
This one is in Maine:
FARMS Community Kitchen -- Building a Local Food Economy

by FARMS • You're a backer

Funded! This project successfully raised its funding goal on Jun 2.

270 backers
$21,991 pledged of $20,000 goal
0 seconds to go

Funding period
May 2, 2013 - Jun 2, 2013 (30 days)
It emphasizes health education:

“The Community Kitchen will provide a space where people of all ages can learn and share cooking, preserving, and gardening skills.

What is FARMS?

FARMS, Focus on Agriculture in Rural Maine Schools, is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Damariscotta, Maine. It was started in 2004 by a group of parents, teachers, farmers, and food service personnel who wanted to find ways to offer fresh, local foods in Maine school cafeterias. Over the years, FARMS has successfully offered hands-on culinary opportunities, garden curriculum, and local foods procurement assistance in nearby schools (over 200 such events so far this school year in 8 local public schools).”
This one is in Chicago:
A Fresh Food Market with a Mission
by Garfield Park Community Council

You're a backer

Funded! This project successfully raised its funding goal on May 17.

110 backers
$7,171 pledged of $5,775 goal
0 seconds to go

Funding period
Apr 2, 2013 - May 17, 2013 (45 days)
It emphasizes livability and community involvement:

“The Garfield Park Fresh Food Market will create a safe place for residents to shop while strengthening community connections.

The Garfield Park Community Council has created a public safety campaign built around coordinated actions by businesses, community organizations and residents to revitalize the Kedzie Street business corridor on Chicago’s West Side. The campaign’s theory is that reducing crime along the commercial corridor will lead to greater business confidence and reduced fear among residents, resulting in more engaged community members and, ultimately, a safer and more livable community.”
This one is in Virginia:
Hoist Up Our Hoophouse!
by City Schoolyard Garden • You’re a backer

Funded! This project successfully raised its funding goal on Apr 10.

159 backers
$6,971 pledged of $6,000 goal
0 seconds to go

Funding period
Mar 18, 2013 - Apr 10, 2013 (23 days)
It emphasizes a specific construction project for a school-based community garden:

“The Buford Schoolyard Garden needs a hoophouse to grow seedlings for school and community gardens in Charlottesville.”
These are just a few of the public health/community-health-related projects I have backed since I joined Kickstarter in September 2012. Crowdfunding is growing and a possible source of funding for your community partners and you.
Thanks for listening!