Rising to the challenge

A study of philanthropic support for 'unpopular' causes

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About Migrant Help

Migrant Help is one of the largest charities delivering vital support and advice services to migrants in the UK today. The charity has for more than 50 years provided individuals with the resources and support they need to find safety, access appropriate services and information and develop greater independence. Migrant Help provides a wide range of services across the UK working, in particular, with asylum claimants and refugees, victims of modern day slavery (human trafficking), EU nationals, foreign national prisoners and detainees.
www.migranthelp.org

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Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Migrant Help Trading for financial resources, and in particular to Iain McArthur for his encouragement to explore this topic and to his colleagues at Migrant Help for insight into the reality of fundraising for an 'unpopular cause'.

Cover image

Foreword

Rob McCea
Chief Executive,
Migrant Help

In this time of public sector funding cuts and increased expectation of charitable support for the most vulnerable in society, the need to understand and maximise philanthropic giving is critical. There is a growing body of research and data on who gives, but there is far less information about why people choose one particular cause over another, and what charities can do to increase their chance of being chosen by potential donors – especially amongst causes that are thought to be less favoured by the public. This study begins to unpick this, exploring what is meant by 'popular' and 'unpopular' causes, and challenging the assumption of a hierarchy of popularity in charitable giving.

Founded in 1963 by Helen Ellis MBE, Migrant Help was established to support the most vulnerable migrants who set foot in the Port of Dover, Kent. Today we are a national charity and a leading provider of support services to asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking and other migrants across the UK. We owe our beginnings to the generosity of individuals and philanthropy, which remained our main source of income well into the 1980s. As we grew so did our reliance on government funding, and in recent years our voluntary income dropped to less than 0.1% of our overall income. With continued public sector funding cuts, we, like many others, face testing times in redressing this balance in our income.

Breaking down any barriers to giving, especially perceptions that donors might have about the worthiness of causes is therefore a key issue, and a daunting task, for us and many charities. This is why we commissioned this research. As a charity we are committed to using research-based evidence to improve and enhance our work and the work of others. We have experienced first-hand what it feels like to be an 'unpopular cause' and how engaging donors' sympathies can feel like an uphill battle. However, as this report highlights, there are few charities that find fundraising easy, and whilst some causes more easily attract public sympathy, all are likely to experience some of the 'barriers to asking' highlighted in chapter 5. Yet these barriers can be overcome, as the ten case studies demonstrate, creating useful lessons for all charities that wish to increase their voluntary income.

We believe this report makes a useful contribution to our shared understanding of fundraising and philanthropy. We hope it will be read widely by people involved with all types of causes, and that it helps many charities to maximise their philanthropic income.

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Executive Summary

Many recent efforts to grow and strengthen the culture of philanthropy in the UK have focused on two dimensions:

- Increasing the total amount of money donated to good causes
- Increasing the effectiveness of philanthropic spending

Whilst these are both admirable aims, they leave untouched a third, more controversial issue: the destination and distribution of donations.

This is not an accidental omission. A defining characteristic of charitable giving is that it occurs on a voluntary basis, so most people – especially politicians and policy makers – are wary of promoting one cause above another or implying that any beneficiary group is more or less 'worthy' than any other. However, the absence of much comment on, or significant research into, the destination of donations does not alter the situation that some groups succeed in attracting significant philanthropic funds whilst others struggle to secure any – or many – donations.

This paper makes a contribution to understanding the distribution of philanthropic support, alongside whether and how it can be altered in favour of causes that are perceived to be less popular. The introduction sets the scene by describing the current distribution of voluntary income to different charitable beneficiaries in the UK. This is followed by a review of insights from research into charitable giving and how it helps us to better understand the distributional pattern of donations. Chapters 4 and 5 identify barriers that affect the positioning of causes and their ability to attract voluntary donations, with ten case studies illustrating how they have succeeded in surmounting those barriers and countered prevailing trends. The final section summarises what can be done to increase the flow of donated funds to charities that feel themselves to be 'unpopular causes', and the report ends with a useful tool to help charities understand which barriers may be preventing them from maximising their philanthropic income.

We begin by noting that Britain is a generous country, but that generosity is not equally spread amongst all the tens of thousands of good causes seeking donated income. For example:

- There are 9 cancer charities in the top 100 most popular fundraising causes with a collective voluntary income of £656.5 million, but only 13 responding to all other types of health issues with a collective voluntary income of over £613 million
- There are 10 animal charities in the top 100 with a collective voluntary income of £534 million, but only 1 organisation responding to mental health issues, with a voluntary income of £16.7 million
- Whilst there are 10 arts charities in the top 100, with a collective voluntary income of £124 million, there is not a single charity supporting addiction issues, ex-offenders or refugees and asylum seekers in the top 250 charities by fundraising income

Executive Summary

Continued

The categorisation of popular/unpopular causes is more complex than those who bemoan the enduring popularity of 'cancer, kids and kittens' may realise. For example, within the category of the UK's favoured cause, cancer research (which has been the top destination for public donations year on year), different types of cancer attract more and less voluntary donations: whilst there are 2 breast cancer charities in the top 150 fundraising charities, there is no charity dedicated to bowel cancer amongst that top 150.

An extensive review of research into the motivations behind charitable giving reveals that, despite a commonly held view that beneficiary need is the prime driver of donations, philanthropy is in fact driven by a combination of donor preferences and the 'ask effect'. This means that people are more likely to give to causes as a result of:

- Being aware of the need and convinced of its importance
- Feeling connected to the cause and personally motivated to respond
- Being asked, ideally in a polite and compelling way by someone they know and respect
- Feeling appreciated by the charity, and gaining personal benefits that reinforce their decision to donate
- Having confidence that their contribution will make a difference to a cause they care about

This report therefore concludes by advising against a 'counsel of despair' for any charity, however difficult their 'ask' may appear, and suggests instead ten 'top tips' to uplift voluntary income for charities that have struggled to attract significant voluntary support:

- Actively ask donors for support
- Take a holistic approach to fundraising by embedding it throughout the charities activities
- Invest in fundraising
- Re-frame the cause to engage donors' emotions
- Empower cheerleaders and friends to fundraise on your behalf
- Seize opportunities to raise your charities profile
- Make donating an easy process for donors
- Thank existing donors and supporters promptly and sincerely
- Demonstrate and evidence impact
- Make donors feel part of something special

Introduction

"It's not easy for any small charity to obtain funding, but add to the mix an unfashionable cause that some people might find immoral and there are even more difficulties."

Alex Bryce, CEO, National Ugly Mugs Charity
Winners of the Small Charity, Big Achiever Award,
Third Sector Awards 2014

'Unpopular causes', 'unfashionable causes', 'neglected causes' and 'Cinderella causes' – these terms are widely used and understood but lack official definition. This report seeks to explore the concept of 'unpopularity' in the charity sector, especially in relation to its impact on fundraising. In the following pages we unpack what these loaded phrases mean, identify barriers faced by those seeking support and share ten 'best practice' case studies of charities that have overcome perceived unpopularity to achieve fundraising success. We suggest that by re-framing the cause, and focusing on the 'ask', no charity need assume it is their destiny to languish at the bottom of the fundraising league tables.

Feeling unpopular is not the preserve of the smallest and most niche charities. In 2012 the UK's Institute of Fundraising held a session during their national convention entitled 'Fundraising for Unpopular Causes'. Through the door came people working in a surprising array of organisations, including Shelter and NSPCC, which are both large and successful charities arguably leading their respective fields of homelessness and children's causes. Therefore we begin by noting that popularity, of the lack of it, is to a large extent 'in the eye of the beholder'. It is a common complaint heard from many charities that their cause is the toughest to fundraise for because not enough people care about the beneficiary or 'get' what they do. We therefore suggest that it is more useful to seek to understand why some causes appear to more easily attract widespread support whilst others struggle to raise any significant donated income, in order to help all charities maximise their philanthropic reach.

Introduction

Continued

Structure of this report

This research looks at the fundraising successes of causes that have commonly been defined in the media as unpopular, to explore how charities representing these causes have managed to overcome barriers, and to make that learning available to the wider charity sector.

Chapter 1 presents data on the income across and within types of cause. As the concept of 'popularity' is largely a proxy for the success – or otherwise – in attracting donated income we begin by presenting data on the unequal distribution of donations across causes. Medical research, international development, children and animal causes tend to dominate league tables of fundraising success, but within these more popular types of causes there exist more and less popular organisations. For example, whilst Cancer Research UK is consistently the most popular fundraising charity in the UK, there are many other types of diseases and medical conditions that struggle to attract voluntary income. We also note disparities in levels of support across income groups such that some causes succeed in attracting larger numbers of small donations from the general public, whilst other causes are preferred by the smaller number of wealthier donors able to make larger donations; thus 'popularity' is also related to donor identity and demographics.

Chapter 2 briefly reviews what is known about donor behaviour and how this relates to charitable giving decisions. We show that most donors do not make comparative decisions about the 'worthiness' or otherwise of any particular cause or beneficiary group, but rather their giving is prompted by personal experiences and preferences, and by serendipitous connections, thus most donations are 'taste-based' rather than 'needs-based'.

Chapter 3 presents three theoretical approaches to making sense of the notion of 'popularity' within the charitable sphere: the 'crowding out effect', the construction of sympathy and labelling theory.

Chapter 4 presents original research that identifies the ten areas of charitable activity most likely to be viewed as unpopular in the UK media. It contains ten case studies, representing each of these areas, to show how charities have achieved fundraising success despite working on issues, or with beneficiary groups, that are commonly viewed as challenging.

Chapter 5 builds on the case studies to identify eight barriers facing charities that perceive themselves to be unpopular. These barriers exist at three levels: within the individual charities, such as investing in fundraising; within the potential donor pool, such as lack of connectivity to the beneficiaries; and within wider society, such as awareness and visibility of the cause.

The concluding chapter summarises the report and presents implications for practice. These draw on the report's central theme of questioning the assumption that certain causes are incompatible with attracting significant voluntary support. This final section also includes a tool that charities can use with their board, staff and volunteers to map out the relative significance of the issues faced. Finally, we conclude that barriers to asking can be overcome by drawing on ten 'top tips', which focus on asking, developing a culture of philanthropy and framing the cause effectively.

Chapter 1
The distribution of donated income to different types of charitable beneficiary in the UK

This chapter presents data on the income across and within types of cause, with a particular focus on giving to three cause areas: medical research, international development and animals. It ends by comparing giving patterns amongst 'mass' and 'elite' donors.

The Top 100 Charities by Fundraising Income

Individual donors are consistently more likely to donate to medical research above any other cause, followed by overseas aid, hospital and hospices and animal welfare. The most recent available data[1] names the top ten most popular fundraising causes as:

Rank	Name of Charity	Total donated income (£M)
1	Cancer Research UK	378.8
2	British Heart Foundation	195.7
3	Oxfam	182.3
4	Royal National Lifeboat Institution	145.6
5	NSPCC	123.7
6	Macmillan Cancer Support	117.9
7	British Red Cross Society	116.4
8	RSPCA	115.9
9	Salvation Army Trust	109.8
10	Sightsavers International	97.2

Table 1: The Top 10 fundraising charities in the UK, adapted from Charity Market Monitor 2011

1 C. Pharoah (2011) *Charity Market Monitor 2011*. London, UK: Caritas Data

Chapter 1

The distribution of donated income to different types of charitable beneficiary in the UK

Continued

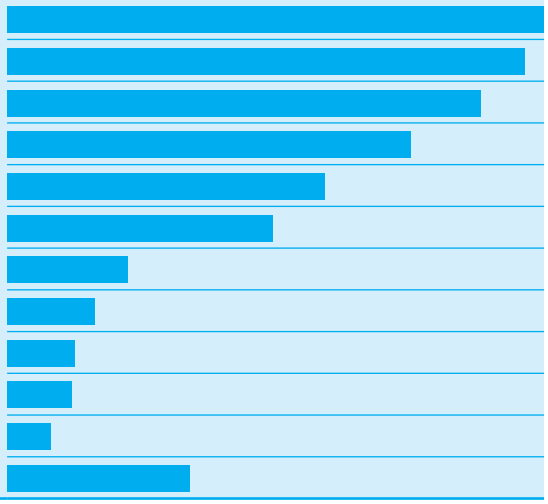
Disparity between charitable causes

Within the top 100 fundraising charities the disparity between types of causes is clear. Whilst their collective fundraised income was just over £4 billion, the distribution of this income across causes is unequal as shown in figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1

Fundraised income by cause for Top 100 Charities 2009/10

	£m
Cancer	711.6
Overseas	686.1
Health	627.6
Animal	534.5
Religion	420.9
Children	352.2
Emergency Response Services	159.4
Ex-service men and women	115.8
Art	89.4
Heritage	86.1
Homelessness	57.5
Other	242.3



Note: Other causes includes disabilities, the elderly, mental health, hospices, young people and sports)

Medical Charities

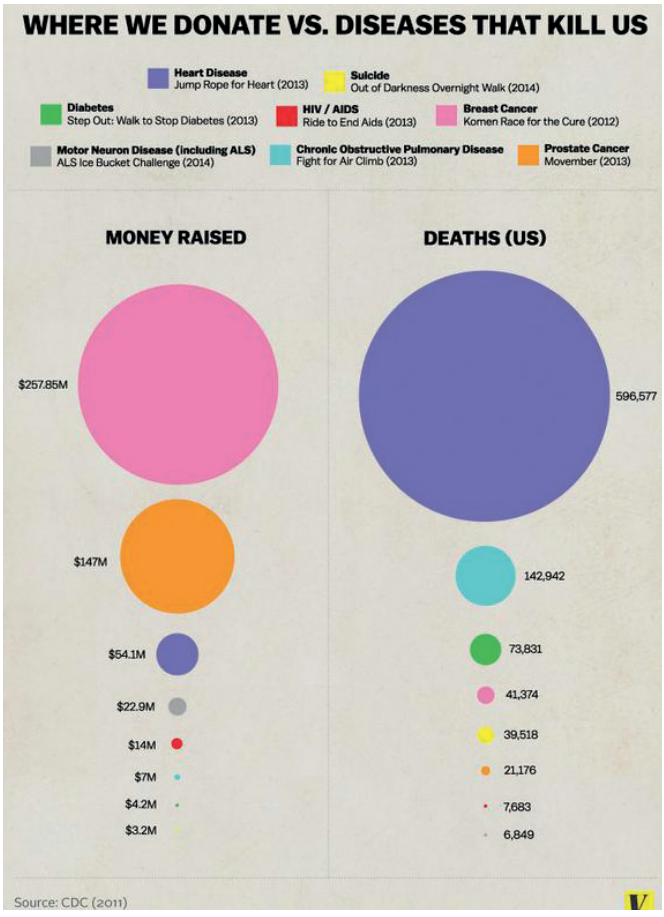
Almost a quarter of the top 100 fundraising charities are focused on cancer and other health-related charities; these 22 organisations generated £1.4 billion of donations which equates to a disproportionate 33% share of the total income of the top 100 charities.

Despite the domination of this cause, different types of medical charities attract different levels of support. For example, Cancer Research UK's donated income of £379m in 2009/10 is more than the total combined donated income of the top 3 charities representing other types of health issues (which were: British Heart foundation, Sightsavers International and the Royal National Institute of Blind People). There are 11 cancer charities in the top 100 most popular fundraising causes with a collective voluntary income of £657 million, which means that only 15 other medical charities in the top 100 are focused on all other types of health issues, and these enjoy a lower collective voluntary income of £628 million as shown in figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2

Cancer charities vs other health charities – fundraised income in Top 100 Charities

	£m
Cancer charities	711.6
All other types of health charities	627.6



Three further disparities within this cause area are noteworthy:

Firstly, 99% of the £1.4 billion donated to medical charities goes to those focused on physical health leaving less than 1% going towards mental health.

Secondly, there is no relation between the number of people affected by a medical condition and the voluntary income it attracts. The infographic adjacent, created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, highlights this disparity between where we donate versus diseases that kill us.

Thirdly, fundraising income is not related to the costs associated with any particular medical condition as the following numbers show:

Clic Sargent, a charity for children and young people with cancer, attracts approximately £13,275 per sufferer, the National Deaf Children's Society attracts £444.65 per beneficiary and Breakthrough Breast Cancer attracts £359.49 per sufferer. These all compare favourably with less 'popular' diseases such as Mental Health which attracts £2.35 per sufferer and Irritable Bowel Syndrome which attracts £0.02 per sufferer.[2]

2 A. Coopman, J. Saxton & S. Eberhardt (2014) *A Healthy Audience: does the number of people who have a medical condition or a disability dictate the size of charities that support them?* NFP Synergy

Chapter 1

The distribution of donated income to different types of charitable beneficiary in the UK

Continued

Overseas Charities

The extent of UK donors' support for causes overseas is notable, especially in relation to the US where international giving represents only 6% of total private giving. In the UK, 12% (12) of the top 100 fundraising charities work in this area, generating a combined total of £0.7 billion of voluntary income which represents a disproportionate 17% of the total income of that top 100. These charities mainly target areas of poverty, famine and disease, often responding to major disasters, conflicts and providing emergency relief. Clearly the combined population living overseas is massively larger than the UK population, but nonetheless there is a widespread sentiment that 'charity begins at home'. However, comparison of the fundraised total of overseas charities compared to charities in the UK tackling welfare issues reveals greater sympathies amongst donors for geographically distanced beneficiaries, as figure 1.3 shows. Even when combined, these UK based welfare-focusing charities achieve only three-quarters (78%) of the sum raised for overseas.

Figure 1.3

Donations to overseas causes vs UK based welfare charities

	£m
Overseas	686.1
Children's welfare	352.2
Homelessness	57.5
Disabilities	48
Elderly	41.4
Young People's welfare	20.4
Hospice	14.6

Note: Based on the top 100 charities by fundraising income 2009/10

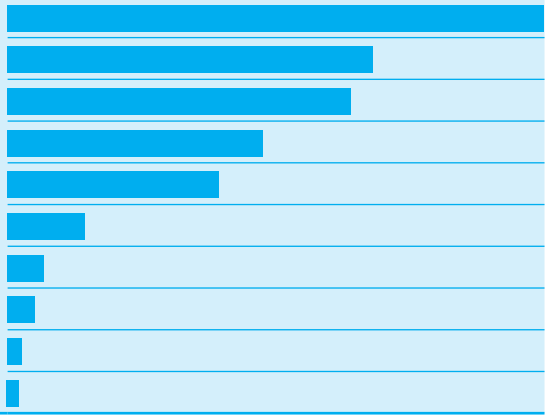
Animal Charities

Animals are well known as a distinctively UK charitable concern, and 10 of our top 100 fundraising charities focus on this cause area, receiving a combined voluntary income of £480m. However differentiation between types of animals is also prevalent. The Donkey Sanctuary is often cited[3] as a curiously popular cause that attracts over £20m of donated income per year, however in terms of animal charities it is a poor relation to Cats Protection which attracts nearly £33m and The Dogs Trust which attracts over £55m. More generic animal charities such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) all raise over £70 million a year, with a combined donated income of £269m.

Whilst it may seem a selective example, and unfair given that many animal charities also provide benefits to people – including people with a variety of health problems – we offer figure 1.4 as an attempt to illustrate the disparity in popularity of causes. Comparing the figures of the top 5 animal charities to the top 5 mental health and addiction charities, by fundraising income, it is clear that charities dealing with mental health and addiction issues struggle to secure the same level of donations.

Figure 1.4
A comparison of donated income for ten diverse causes

	£m
RSPCA	115.9
PDSA	79.0
RSPB	74.1
Dogs Trust	55.2
World Wildlife Fund UK	45.6
Mind	16.7
Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society	7.8
Samaritans	5.9
The Drinkaware Trust	3.2
The Mental Health Foundation	2.6



3 See for example this Guardian article in which Martin Brookes notes the disproportionate popularity of charities helping donkeys over those tackling domestic violence http://www.theguardian.com/society/2010/sep/29/charity-league-table-philanthropy-morality

Chapter 1

The distribution of donated income to different types of charitable beneficiary in the UK

Continued

Mass Support versus Million Pound Donors

Trends in giving are not homogeneous across all types of donor. In particular data shows that major donors tend to prefer different causes to the mass of the population. Mass giving is captured in the UK Giving Survey which uses a representative sampling method to capture information on the distribution of charitable giving across different causes, as shown in figure 1.5.

Figure 1.5
Proportion of total amount donated in 2011/12 by cause

	£m
Medical	16
Religious	13
Hospitals	13
Overseas	12
Children	12
Animals	5
Health	4
Homeless	4
Disabled	4
Environment	3
Schools	2
Elderly	2
Arts	1
Sports	1

Note: Adapted from NCVO/CAF UK Giving 2012

As with the Charity Market Monitor data discussed above, the UK Giving Survey, finds that a small number of cause areas dominate giving in the UK, namely medical, hospitals, overseas aid, children and animals as well as religious causes.

However some cause areas achieve fundraising success with a narrower base of support because they succeed in raising large sums from a few major donation. This can enable them to 'leapfrog over' better known charities that attract mass support,

For example, arts charities do not tend to attract high volumes of donors, indeed the UK Giving data in figure 1.5 above shows they only account for 1% of total amounts donated through mass giving in 2011/12. However, there is a long-standing connection between arts organisations and major donors, which historically took the form of patronage.

The five Arts charities that feature in the top 100 (Tate, National Museum Liverpool, Royal Opera House, Victoria and Albert Museum and Royal Academy of Arts), collectively raised £89.4 million. They typify what has been called 'high-value, low volume' fundraising, in contrast to the 'low-value, high-volume' fundraising of those charities that succeed in attracting mass support. Research on donations worth £1m or more finds that the Arts is regularly amongst the top 4 cause areas preferred by these biggest donors. Figure 1.6 shows that the other favoured causes of the UK's biggest donors, (aside from setting up their own charitable trusts and foundations which will then support a range of causes), are Higher Education, which receives minimal mass support, and International Development, which is popular with the general population as well as with major donors.

Figure 1.6
Proportion of total donations by million pound donors by cause 2013/14

	%
Higher Education	42
Foundations	23
International Development	8.7
Arts, culture and humanities	6.7
Health	5.8
Human Services	4.1
Overseas	3.6
Education (Not HEIs)	3.2
Religious	1.6
Public and Societal Benefit	1.4
Environment	1.2

Source: B. Breeze (2014) The Coutts Million Pound Donor Report. http://philanthropy.coutts.com/en/reports/2014/united-kingdom/findings.html

Conclusion

This chapter has sketched out general trends in private financial support for different types of causes in the UK. It has shown that whilst some cause areas dominate, not every charity working in the same area achieves the same level of fundraising success. It also shows that some causes are more and less successful at attracting mass and elite support. We can conclude that there is nothing inevitable about any particular cause or charity proving attractive to donors. The next chapter explores what is known about charitable decision-making and how that might shed light on the experience of more and less 'popular' causes.

Chapter 2
Understanding Donor Behaviour: a review of existing research

This chapter reviews research into charitable giving decisions, and how it helps us to better understand the distributional pattern of donations. We look at:

- Who gives
- Why do they give
- How donors choose charities

Who gives?

In short: most people give. The annual UK Giving research, regularly finds that over 50% of the population make a donation to charity in the preceding 4 weeks.

Figure 2.1
Percentage of UK adults giving to charity 2004–2013

	%
2004/05	57.2
2005/06	57.6
2006/07	54
2007/08	56
2008/09	54
2009/10	56
2010/11	58
2011/12	55
2012/13	57

Despite this broad picture of a nation of givers, there is much internal variation. Research shows that a range of demographic factors affect both propensity to give and the size of donations. For example, older people, especially older women, are more likely to give, and give larger amounts[4], This may be explained by common sense reasoning, such that women live longer and that donations from widows, including many significant legacies, might more accurately be characterised as jointly given, since they derive from both their own and their husband's wealth.

Individuals professing a particular faith are not only more likely to give, they are more likely to donate higher amounts than the average donor. However the picture of religiosity as a factor for giving is more complex than it first seems. Individuals motivated by religion are in turn more likely to give to that religion than other causes. When we remove the factor of giving to a religious cause, individuals professing a faith are no more likely to donate to other causes than the average donor.

However other demographic factors appear more counterintuitive. For example, parents might be assumed to have more financial pressures, yet households containing children have a greater propensity to give – this is likely explained by the increased chance of being in social situations that involve fundraising asks, such as nurseries, schools and other community activities.

4 Sarah Smith (2012) *Mind the Gap: the growing generational divide in charitable giving.* London: Charities Aid Foundation, p.9 and UK Giving 2012, p.12

Other demographic factors are proxies for income. For example, the more educated an individual is, the more likely they are both to give and give above the average donation. Those with A-level qualifications are 5% more likely to give and the donation is on average 38% more than those without any qualifications, whereas college and university qualifications mean an individual is 11% more likely to give and likely to donate 80% more in amount.[5]

Demographic factors can reveal trends in giving, however care must be taken not to form a stereotypical view of the ideal donor as an older, middle class, women as the most likely person to donate to a charity, sometimes caricatured as 'Dorothy Donor'. We know the main reason most people give is because they are asked, and should beware confusing correlation with causation. If the older age group of women give more and more often, this could be either because this group are more responsive to requests for donations, or because they are on the receiving end of compelling requests for help more frequently.

We also know that there is a 'geography of giving' related to social and economic variations. Only 15% of the population engage in no philanthropic activity at all, leaving the remaining 85% participating in one form or another, though this philanthropic activity is unevenly distributed. Around a third of the population provide nearly 90% of volunteer hours, over 80% of donations to charity and nearly 80% of participation in civic associations.[6] An even smaller 'civic core' represents the 9% of the population who are the most philanthropically active, accounting for half of all volunteering, 40% of charitable giving and 25% of civic participation. These individuals tend to be highly educated, likely to be actively practicing religion, in professional and managerial roles, middle aged, living in the least deprived parts of the country and well settled in a neighbourhood.

Why do donors give?

A review[7] of over 500 studies into philanthropic activity, identifies eight mechanisms that drive donors decisions to give:

Awareness of Need

People need to be aware of a need to be able to support it. This awareness is reliant on beneficiaries coming forward and asking for help, and/or charities communicating the needs of beneficiaries and how donors can help. Donors are also more likely to give when they know a beneficiary or a potential beneficiary and can personalise the cause.

Asking

Asking donors to donate is the single biggest factor affecting giving. According to Bekkers and Wiepking's study over 80% of donations are solicited, showing that asking is crucial, it is after all called fund-raising not 'fund-catching'.

5 A. Sargeant A & E. Jay (2014) *Fundraising Management: Analysis, Planning and Practice*, 3rd Edition. London: Routledge

6 J. Mohan & S. Bulloch (2012) *The idea of a 'civic core': what are the overlaps between charitable giving, volunteering, and civic participation in England and Wales? Working Paper 73*. Third Sector Research Centre, University of Birmingham

7 R. Bekkers & P. Wiepking (2007) Generosity and Philanthropy: A Literature Review. Amsterdam: Vrije University/ Science of Generosity, http://generosityresearch.nd.edu/assets/17632/generosity_and_philanthropy_final.pdf

Chapter 2
Understanding Donor Behaviour: a review of existing research
Continued

Costs and Benefits
It costs money to make a charitable donation, but the cost can be reduced by tax breaks and matched funding schemes. Being a donor also involves other non-monetary costs, such as time and effort in researching potential recipient as well as transaction costs, therefore making donating as easy as possible also reduces these costs.

Costs for donating can be balanced out to some extent by perceived benefits. Charitable donors have always received benefits – whether it is their name on a building, invitations to special occasions or just a warm glow from 'doing the right thing'. Donors may also be encouraged to give for indirect benefits in terms of services they may access at some point in the future. For example the popularity of medical research charities may be explained by donors anticipating their own future health needs, or a donation to a local charity to help drug users may in part be motivated by wishing to improve the community and area the donor resides in.

Altruism
Altruism is present as a driver when people give because they feel compassion for the beneficiaries and care about what the organisation does. Whilst many people believe all giving should involve pure altruism, in reality mixed motives is the norm, such that donors are driven by a combination of compassion and by some or all of the other drivers described here.

Reputation
Being seen as charitable can be an important factor for donors. Giving decisions are influenced by friends, family and social connections, especially when these decisions are visible and are likely to be met with approval. Both the desire for this approval and the wish to fulfil social norms can drive up giving, meaning that individuals are more likely to donate if others around them are also visibly donating. This can also impact the size of gifts when an increase in donation amount encourages others to conform and 'anchor' their donations to the higher sum.

Psychological Benefits
Often termed as the 'warm glow' effect or the 'joy of giving', psychological benefits are wrapped up in donors' perceptions of their self-image as an altruistic, empathetic, socially responsible, agreeable or influential person. The motivation to 'feel good' by giving can be an emotional response to a situation which alleviates guilt and shows the donor to be a moral person.

Donors may also be motivated to give as a way of enhancing their self-esteem. Giving itself can increase a positive self-image, as can the social effects of recognition of charitable activity by others. Likewise celebrities and well known individuals can increase donations if individuals choose to emulate prominent figures.

Values
Values are an important driver of charitable giving. Values associated with 'making the world a better place' and pro-social values are more likely to stimulate giving. People are more likely to give if they value materialistic things less than others, are spiritual and care about social justice.

Philanthropy itself is an expression of a donor's value system, but the nature of the values being enacted differs from person to person. Donors may seek to distribute wealth more equally to tackle poverty, to empower marginalised groups, to protect animals and so on. Supporting a cause to change something in the world is a powerful motive, and thus people are more likely to give when the values of the charity match their own values.

Efficacy
Donors want to make a difference to the cause they are supporting, so achieving impact is a crucial factor, especially for major giving. But assessing which charities are more impactful is not easy. Few donors closely scrutinise charity accounts and annual reports. Many use heuristics (rules of thumb) such as looking for 'big name' supporters as a useful proxy for assessing a charity's calibre. Known as the 'leadership effect', famous and well regarded philanthropists and celebrities can send powerful messages about the worthiness and legitimacy of a cause.

The confidence a donor has in the efficacy of their donation is also important. For example if donors feel charities are using money on unnecessary overheads, they are less likely to give, but when donors believe that most of their contribution will go directly into service provision their likelihood of giving increases.

How do donors choose which charities to support?

Despite widespread assumptions that donors are primarily motivated to meet the perceived needs of beneficiaries, research[8] shows that giving decisions are highly reliant on donors' personal tastes and preferences and based on four non-needs based factors:

Donor tastes
Personal taste is a key factor in the selection of charitable beneficiaries. Donors state that they typically support 'things that happen to appeal to me', causes that are 'close to my heart', things that 'touch a chord' and charities 'that I admire' and 'am comfortable giving to'.

This approach is collectively termed 'taste-based giving', as opposed to 'needs-based giving', and is exemplified by donors who say they prefer to support one sort of animal over another, those who support causes aligned with their hobbies (such as participating in sports or visiting historic buildings) or those who give financial support to charities they are heavily involved with as volunteers, such as a scout group or their local theatre.

Research shows that taste and personal preferences are a factor in giving decisions, even when donors perceive themselves as motivated by needs.

Personal experiences
Tastes develop as a result of the individual's socialisation, which includes their upbringing, education, personal and professional experiences. People draw on their own life experiences to create what have been called 'philanthropic autobiographies'[9] which affects their choice of charitable recipients as they give to causes they feel some connection to, or affinity with, as a result of experiences and incidents that occur in their personal and professional lives.

This is exemplified by donors who support sea-rescue charities because they grew up near the sea, donors who sponsor a child abroad after having their own children and donors whose close personal experience of an illness motivates them to donate to research into that condition.

8 B. Breeze (2010) *How Donors Choose Charities*. London: Centre for Giving and Philanthropy
9 R. Payton & M. Moody (2008) *Understanding Philanthropy: Its meaning and mission*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p.21

Chapter 2
Understanding Donor Behaviour: a review of existing research
Continued

Perceptions of charities' competence
The third non-needs-based criteria evident in giving decisions concerns donors' judgements regarding the competence of recipient organisations, such that charities are selected for support on the basis of being 'well-run' and 'efficient', or 'charities that don't pay their staff too much' and 'charities that have low overheads'. There is a general consensus that charity competence, as demonstrated in the efficient use of money, is highly attractive and likely to prompt greater donations

A desire for personal impact.
The fourth non-needs based criteria for giving is a desire for donations to make an impact that is not 'drowned out' by support from other donors or the government.[10]

Donors are particularly keen to avoid their donations becoming a substitute for government spending. Concerns about 'additionality' are widespread, such that donors are keen to ensure that their contribution enhances, rather than replaces, the funding available for a particular cause. This is especially relevant in the areas of spending on human welfare, as studies show that very high proportions of the public believe that meeting social need is primarily the job of government rather than philanthropy.[11]

Conclusion
The research summarised in this chapter shows that donors are more likely to give to causes that resonate with their personal experiences and values. As currently a large proportion of charitable giving is limited to a rather narrow social demographic of people, typically those that comprise the 'civic core' as described on page 15, charities that resonate most strongly with those people are most likely to benefit from donations. Charities dealing with causes outside of the social experiences of these groups may therefore find it harder to attract funds.

10 This point is also made in B. Duncan (2004), *'A theory of impact philanthropy'*. Journal of Public Economics vol 88, pp.2159-2180.
11 P. Taylor-Gooby (1993) *The Future of Giving: Evidence from the British Social Attitudes Survey.* RSU Occasional Paper 4. Tonbridge: Charities Aid Foundation.

Chapter 3
Making sense of the idea of popular and unpopular causes

To date the idea of popular and unpopular causes has attracted little academic interest. However there is a greater body of work exploring the organisational behaviours of charities and their relationships with donors. This chapter draws on that literature to present three theoretical approaches which may be helpful in making sense of the meaning of 'popular' and 'unpopular' causes.

The Crowding Out Effect

'Crowding out' occurs when new income from one source leads to a reduction in income from another source. For example, when charities receive significant new government funding or attract a well-publicised major donation, the crowding out theory would suggest that other individual donors would not feel the need to provide the same level of support as they had in the past, and would withdraw or reduce their gift to that charity.

A 2011 study[12] suggests that another version of crowding out occurs when charities themselves reduce their fundraising efforts as a result of new income success, in some cases this was up to 75%. This suggests a plausible hypothesis for why some causes may be more 'popular' (as measured by success in fundraising) than others. It is possible that efforts to generate income from different parts of the state (e.g. from local, central or European government) 'crowds out' efforts to fundraise from private individuals and institutions. Certain causes receive more statutory support than others, for example charities providing services for the rehabilitation of ex-offenders receive more tax-funded support than charities re-homing dogs, therefore charities representing ex-offenders may focus their efforts on state funding opportunities rather than on fundraising from private individuals and institutions. Meanwhile charities re-homing dogs are entirely reliant on voluntary income from private donors and so focus a great deal of their efforts on donor fundraising activities.

There are other possibilities to explain the 'crowding out effect' including the idea that charities do not set out to maximise their income, but rather aim to raise enough money to meet identified needs or to address a particular issue; once this target has been met they do not continue fundraising efforts even if it were possible to raise more money from other sources.[13] The result in this scenario is also a reduction in fundraising efforts as a result of securing 'sufficient' funds elsewhere.

With popularity of a cause seemingly going hand-in-hand with the amount of voluntary income a charity attracts, the 'crowding out effect' can create circumstances within which a successful cause in terms of delivery and income is perceived as unpopular with donors.

12 J. Andreoni & A. Paynels (2011) 'Is crowding out due entirely to fundraising? Evidence from a panel of charities'. *Journal of Public Economics* vol 95, pp.334–343

13 B. Weisbrod (1988) *The Nonprofit Economy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Chapter 3
Making sense of the idea of popular and unpopular causes
Continued

The Construction of Sympathy

The second theoretical approach that is useful in understanding the concept of popular and unpopular causes focuses on Candace Clark's notion of the construction of sympathy, or the 'socioemotional economy'[14] as Clark terms it. This concept is based upon understanding sympathy as something the donor subjectively and socially constructs based upon their own experiences and the social world they live in. This suggests that the popularity of any given cause is governed by the level of sympathy it can attract at any given time.

Although sympathy may be considered to be a natural, reflexive reaction, people are not born knowing how and when to distribute it appropriately. Individuals use external guides to modify their thoughts and behaviour by learning elaborate rules for the expression of sympathy that are considered appropriate to the time and social context. We normalise our behaviours and our understanding of when it is appropriate to be sympathetic by the behaviours of those around us. Donations to charity can therefore be understood in terms of distribution of sympathy through economic resources.

This construction of sympathy suggests that individuals and social groups will, for the most part, only readily give sympathy under certain conditions which can be governed by external factors such as the time, context and social situation within which the 'need' arises. For example our concept of need and sympathy changes over time – in past centuries, common objects of sympathy and charity included helping poor maids to marry, 'fallen women', rescuing captives from pirates and debtors from prison.

This understanding of sympathy is useful in understanding why some people will support certain causes over others, as a result of relying on social norms as a guide to distinguish worthiness between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' recipients of charity. For example the rise in negative media attention concerning asylum seekers and immigrants, may make it more challenging for charities seeking donations for this cause to fundraise. This leads us to question whether the concept of 'popular' and 'unpopular' causes really exists beyond that of the individual donors' sympathetic preferences and the context at any given time.

14 C. Clark (1997) *Misery and Company: Sympathy in Everyday Life*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Labelling Theory

A third useful theoretical approach looks at the self-labelling of causes, and the charities that represent them, as 'unpopular'. Labelling occurs when the self-identity and behaviour of individuals and groups is influenced by the language used by other people. Charities that often refer to their cause as unpopular, neglected or challenging – rather than using more positive terminology to encourage giving – may unintentionally be deterring donors who accept the negative label being attached to that cause.

Negative labelling of a charity could impact on the amount of voluntary donations it receives in two ways: Firstly by labelling themselves as unpopular or neglected by donors the charity may alter their behaviour by not asking donors for support and therefore excluding themselves from receiving voluntary income. Similar to the crowding out effect, if a charity decides the cause it represents is too unpopular to receive donated income and does not ask, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Secondly, we know that donors' giving behaviour is influenced by their social networks and peers. Indeed, some research[15] shows that social ties are better predictors of charitable giving than personal values and attitudes, and more recent research[16] on the impact of social media has underscored the importance of the 'personal ask': people respond more positively to fundraising requests that come from within their personal networks. To receive maximum reputational benefit and social recognition for their giving, donors may be attracted to support charities they perceive as more popular. However, this perception of popularity may be driven by both the charity and by external influences, such as the media and social media outlets.

This chapter has identified and discussed three theoretical approaches which may be helpful in making sense of the concept of 'popular' and 'unpopular' causes. The next chapter contains original research identifying what types of causes are most widely deemed to be 'unpopular' and presents ten case studies of charitable causes that work in these areas but are nonetheless enjoying fundraising success.

15 S. Sokolowski (1998) 'Show me the way to the next worthy deed: towards a microstructural theory of volunteering and giving'. *Voluntas* vol 7(3), pp.259-278

16 A. Payne, K. Scharf & S. Smith (2014) *Online Fundraising: the Perfect Ask?* Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy working paper no.194, http://is.gd/eUQbQ5

Chapter 4
Case Studies

Methodology for Identifying Case Studies

No definition of what constitutes an 'unpopular' charitable cause exists in the literature or media sources. Though used relatively frequently to refer to certain groups of charities the phrase relies on a widespread – but unelaborated – acknowledgement of what it means. Therefore to understand what causes are considered to be 'unpopular' we analysed how the term is used in practice.

Using the Google internet search engine and Nexis, a searchable online database of UK newspapers, the four terms 'unpopular', 'unworthy', 'challenging' and 'Cinderella' were all inserted, each alternating with the terms 'charity' and then 'cause'. The first 100 responses from the Google search engine were reviewed for appropriate references. Due to the large quantity of results, the Nexis analysis was confined to pairing the four terms with 'charity'.

The search was limited to UK based sources and within the last 20 years (1994-2014). Successful hits were considered as those which mentioned unpopular charities, or any of the relevant derivatives, and gave examples of what causes or charities may be considered as such. Whilst 152 sources referred to unpopular charitable causes, less than one fifth of these gave examples, underscoring the view that it is a self-evident concept.

A total of 27 successful hits were identified, listing 56 references to particular causes or charities considered to be 'unpopular'. These references were listed by themes and ranked in order of frequency; this resulted in the top ten 'unpopular' causes listed in table 2 which have been used to inform the selection of the case studies.

Case Study	Cause	Example Charity
1	Mental health (including suicide and eating disorders)	Mind
2	Refugees and Asylum Seekers	Refugee Support Network
3	Offenders/ Ex-Offenders	Storybook Dads
4	Improving the mental health and emotional resilience of children	YoungMinds
5	Support for travellers/ gypsies	Ormiston Families
6	AIDS/ HIV	Terrence Higgins Trust
7	Domestic Violence and Child Abuse	Lucy Faithful Foundation
8	Prostitution	Beyond the Streets
9	Homophobia	Lesbian and Gay Foundation
10	Drug and Alcohol Addiction	Addaction

Table 2 – 'Unpopular' causes as defined in UK media coverage

Case Study 1
Mind
www.mind.org.uk

Brief history
Established in 1946 when three major UK-based mental health organisations merged, Mind, previously known as National Association for Mental Health, has an established history of achievements over the past 65 years in terms of campaigning, influencing decision makers and delivering services to people experiencing mental health problems. The charity has, with partners, been behind some major national campaigns including the Mind campaign in the 1970s raising awareness of mental health problems and Time to Change, launched in 2009, to challenge stigma and discrimination.

Goals and outcomes
In 2010, concerned that the general public were unclear about the core work of the charity and struggling to recruit new donors, Mind 's fundraising strategy shifted from highlighting policy successes and the importance of correct diagnosis to focusing on the impact of real-life experiences of mental health.

Mind's annual voluntary income has averaged around £7m between 2009-2013 with a relatively stable percentage of almost half (just over £3m) coming from philanthropic donations. Though legacy giving has fluctuated over this period of time, the charity has experienced increased support from corporate donations and has almost doubled its income through 'challenge events' to a high of £1.8m in 2013, evidencing an increased participation and engagement of donors in fundraising for the cause.

Mind has worked hard to help support the ongoing reduction of the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems which is likely to have contributed to its fundraising success.

Framing the message
Mind focus on clearly conveying a simple message evident through their website homepage with the statement: "We're Mind, the mental health charity. We're here to make sure no one has to face a mental health problem alone".

The charity recognises the complexity and range of issues it deals with. To help donors and beneficiaries navigate the wide array of issues each topic is clearly laid out in terms of causes, research, help and support, and useful contacts. Each topic is then accompanied by a number of accounts and experiences of individuals helped by Mind.

Illustrating the message
The website reflects the focus on individual experiences with images depicting individuals either in a counselling or supportive setting and photographs of happy people accompanied by their individual experiences, including a whole section on 'your stories' and links to individuals blogs. The website utilises a range of tools to bring to life the personal stories including videos, voice recordings and first person written accounts.

Fundraising good practice
The charity purposefully placed fundraising at the heart of the organisation's communication strategy and worked with all staff and supporters to embed it as a key strategy across the organisation.

The focus on telling compelling stories is a key objective shared by the charity leadership. In an article about fundraising the CEO, Paul Farmer, stated *"Making people care about your cause means making them care about the people it affects, and helping them understand how your work makes a difference."*

Mind boasts a wide range of celebrity supporters and ambassadors who promote the work of charity and encourage philanthropic support. The writer, actor and comedian Stephen Fry is their President and ambassadors include former political aide Alastair Campbell, triple jump champion Phillips Idowu, comedian Ruby Wax and pop star Frankie Sandford, amongst many others capable of having a 'leadership effect' on potential donors.

Case Study 2
Refugee Support Network
www.refugeesupportnetwork.org

Brief history
Refugee Support Network (RSN) was founded in 2009 by members of Community Church Harlesden. It works with and supports asylum seekers, refugees and other vulnerable migrants. In five years it has grown rapidly and provides a range of educational and mentoring services primarily aimed at young asylum seekers.

Goals and outcomes
The initial aims of the charity were to raise funds to meet a primary objective of developing education work with young asylum seekers and refugees. In 2010 fundraising was the sole preserve of volunteer fundraisers who raised just £602, accounting for 1.5% of the young charity's overall income. By 2013 the accounts show an increase in donated income to £14,577 accounting for almost 20% of the charity's income.

Framing the message
The charity repeats versions of the following statement throughout their website and communications: "We work with young people affected by displacement and crisis, enabling them to access, remain and progress in education at multiple stages in the migration journey."

The framing of beneficiaries as deserving of support is clear in the following description: "They often experience isolation, loneliness, and difficulties communicating. Some have been brought into the UK by human traffickers and can experience on-going exploitation and abuse."

The charity recognises the need to assist their beneficiaries through educational opportunities as a meaningful response to the difficulties they face: "In the midst of uncertainty, we believe that investing in education sends a clear message that these young people have a future that is worth preparing for."

Illustrating the message
The imagery used primarily focuses on happy young people from a range of ethnic backgrounds positively engaging with one another and their local community, reiterating the message that education is a progressive way forwards.

Fundraising good practice
The charity makes good use of films throughout their website and social media pages to promote individuals' stories and experiences. Furthermore the charity has engaged over 100 volunteers who act as mentors and help champion the cause, raise awareness and support.

Case Study 3
Storybook Dads
www.storybookdads.org.uk

Brief history
Established in 2003 as a result of the founder, Sharon Berry's, personal experience of working with prisoners, Storybook Dads works with imprisoned parents. At first, prisoners recorded CDs of themselves reading stories for their children to listen to at home. As this initiative proved successful, both in promoting family bonds and in giving the prisoners meaningful activity which enhanced their skills and post-release prospects, the charity also set up an editing suite that enabled prisoners to film DVDs of their storytelling.

Goals and outcomes
In the past 5 years, fundraised income has tripled from £7,134 in 2008 to £23,581 in 2013, and donations now account for 11.3% of the charity's income, though a peak fundraising year occurred in 2012 when £42,956 was raised, accounting for 21.1% of overall income. The charity attracts corporate donations, support from groups such as church groups, schools, Women's Institutes and individual donations.

The 2013 annual report notes a significant increase in fundraising for the charity by members of the general public, and mentions the positive role that social media has played in this development.

Framing the message
The framing of the beneficiaries as primarily the innocent children of imprisoned parents is evident in the statement: "The stories bring comfort to the children and mean they can hear their parents voice whenever they need to". However the charity also recognises that assisting prisoners to undertake meaningful activity that may help them upon release, is also a good fundraising message: "Most of the work is done by trained prisoners who gain useful skills and experience of working in a busy, dynamic environment which can help with resettlement upon release"

Illustrating the message
The imagery used to illustrate the message is primarily of happy children listening to their storybook or reconnecting with family. Reiterating the child-focused approach, the whole feel of the website reflects this with a range of drawings and doodles, giving the impression that children have helped design the site and are directly asking the donor for support.

Fundraising good practice
The charity has made good use of celebrity patrons: Terry Waite, the organisation's current patron, features prominently on the website and Princess Anne opened the charity's new office in 2007. The charity has won 12 awards, all proudly listed on their website, and their founder was made an OBE in 2010.

Highlighted campaigns such as the 'No-Ball Ball Invitation' which encourages donors to create silly reasons as why not to attend the imaginary event and donate money instead, accompanied with the message: 'It's only purpose is to get you to give us a donation so that we can continue to help thousands of socially excluded families every year' have been successful in raising the charities profile. These campaigns have been shared widely via social media and supported by celebrities such as Joanna Lumley, patron Terry Waite and author Jonathan Emmett 'tweeting' their comical RSVP's.

In each of the annual reports the charity gives warm thanks to the donors who have supported them that year, listing them by their by individual name or the name of their group.

Case Study 4
YoungMinds
www.youngminds.org.uk

Brief history
YoungMinds was established in 1993 and promotes itself as the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. Drawing on more than 20 years of consulting with young people and parents about mental health, the charity places their views at the heart of the organisation, with an aim 'to improve the lives and futures of children and young people experiencing mental distress'.

Goals and outcomes
The charity website has a strong focus on fundraising, encouraging donors and volunteers to get involved in a number of different ways including through regular donating, challenges and an A to Z of fundraising ideas.

Between 2013 and 2014 Young Minds increased the amount they received from donations by 25% (£135,000). This equates to 27% of their income for 2014, compared to 16% for 2013.

Framing the message
The charity offers a clearly framed message about the work it does. Outlining 'the problem' the charity recognises that the young people it supports are often 'demonised by society', and breaks this down to the causes which are more likely to solicit emotive responses, such as isolation, unhappiness, eating disorders and self-harm. The message clearly frames the beneficiaries as the victim, by using statements such as 'Many are likely to become victims of crime, grow up in dysfunctional families, or left to cope with illness, drugs and/or alcohol issues – not necessarily their own' and 'disruptive, difficult, withdrawn and disturbed kids need to be supported and not just ignored or told off'.

Illustrating the message
The charity utilises imagery of children and young people throughout its website, focusing on individuals and their stories. The page promoting donating and fundraising is introduced through the voice of Oscar, age 11, who is a beneficiary of the charity and promotes fundraising to support children like him. Alongside this good use is made of videos to illustrate their activities and evidence-based research to underpin the effectiveness of their work.

Fundraising good practice
The website and marketing material of the charity is clear and concise, succinctly outlining the problem, solutions and impact the charity has had. For example, with messages such as *'850,000 young people in the UK are affected by mental health problems. That's three children in every classroom. Children can be affected by depression, anxiety, eating disorders, self-harm... very real and scary problems. We are the UK's leading charity improving the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. Please donate and help us continue our vital work.'*

Donating is easy, and examples are given of what certain amounts can support. The charity also promotes certain causes in urgent need of funding inviting donors to help them 'save' certain, vital services. They also facilitate a number of other ways to give including 'in memory' of a loved one, through donating a car, clothes donations and establishing corporate partnerships.

The focus on impact in their annual 'Impact Report' highlights the differences made to young people's lives and the 50 plus case studies on the website highlight the effectiveness of the work and helps donors connect with the beneficiaries of the charity.

Case Study 5
Ormiston Families
www.ormiston.org

Brief history
A children's charity based in East Anglia, Ormiston Families offers support to children and families affected by imprisonment, works with families from Gypsy and Traveller Communities, runs children's centres and offers a range of support to parents.

The charity was launched by the family of Fiona Ormiston Murray, after she and her new husband were killed in a car accident on their honeymoon in 1969. The Murray Family established the Ormiston Trust 'to create a living memorial to a woman who loved children but was denied the chance to have her own'.

In 2014 the charity changed their name from Ormiston Children's and Families Trust, to Ormiston Families and established four programmes of work to reflect the aims of the charity; the Nurture Programme, the Engage Programme, the Unite Programme and the Connect Programme.

Goals and outcomes
An investment in fundraising saw a rise in voluntary income to £178,000 in 2013/14 from £139,000 in 2012/13, an increase of 28%, this income was from a combination of donations and events.

Framing the message
The charity deals with a number of the causes considered unpopular as defined by UK media, including gypsies and travellers, offenders and children of families with addiction problems. However the framing of the cause focuses on children and happy families. The values of the charity are powerful and emotive, reflecting wording often associated with family and close communities; 'we are brave', 'we are effective' and 'we are caring'.

Throughout the website the voice of beneficiaries are represented in speech bubbles. There are also a number of case studies outlining emotive and powerful stories of families in difficulties and how the charity helped them overcome these.

Illustrating the message
The homepage of the website opens with large images of happy children on a rolling screen, with emotive captions such as, 'Worries soothed', 'Tears dried' and 'We gave her back her smile'. These images continue throughout the website, highlighting the plights of individual children.

The charity uses short films to try and challenge communities, for example one project 'Life Through a Lens – Our Voice' gave young people from the Cambridgeshire Gypsy and Traveller communities the opportunity to show their culture through their eye and their voice, highlighting individual cases studies that Ormiston has supported.

Fundraising good practice
The charity selectively and effectively frames their fundraising messages around supporting all children and families, rather than any of the specific groups they support. They invest heavily in fundraising. The charity has a strong focus on participation in fun events as part of the fundraising activities, including 'children's marathons', 'walk with a fork', sky diving, baking challenges and cycling events.

Donating is easy, with examples given about what individual amounts will support.

Case Study 6
Terrence Higgins Trust
www.tht.org.uk

Brief history
The Terrence Higgins Trust was set up in 1982 by friends of Terry Higgins, one of the first people to die in the UK with AIDS. According to the website 'the charity's roots were in the gay community', however they later expanded their work to include all people affected by AIDS and the provision of sexual health services, working across the UK and Europe.

Goals and outcomes
The launch of the 30th anniversary of the charity in June 2012 saw an increased focus on fundraising activities. Unrestricted voluntary income stood at £2,873,000 in 2012 rising by almost a fifth to £3,497,000 in 2013.

In 2013 the charity set a strategic aim of: 'Working to increase the level of charitable donations to HIV as a cause through continuing to develop new approaches to our fundraising work'.

Framing the message
The charity frames its message with the following vision statement: 'Our vision is a world where people with HIV live healthy lives free from prejudice and discrimination, and good sexual health is a right and reality for all.'

The charity illustrates this mission with statements and campaigns highlighting how AIDS can affect anyone in society. The charity makes good use of personal stories and videos showing a range of individuals from all backgrounds, ethnicities and sexual orientation.

Illustrating the message
The charity's website is focused on personal stories, which are hard hitting and emotive beginning with statements such as: 'I first met Beth after she tried to kill herself for the second time.' Illustrated with pictures of individuals, and various emotive statements highlighted in bold, the impact of AIDS on the individual is evident.

The imagery throughout the website is largely positive of individuals who are empowered or being supported by others.

The website is interactive and can be personalised around an individual's sexual orientation, ethnicity and gender. Once personalised, not only is the advice tailored but also the messages encouraging donations and the featured stories of success are also altered accordingly.

Fundraising good practice
The charity maximises the presence of its extensive list of high profile patrons, including the actress Dame Judy Dench, the pop star Sir Elton John, TV and radio presenter Graham Norton and entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson. Celebrity support is used to help attract major donors to the 'friends of life' group led by Stephen Fry, who hosts regular gala dinners for this 'exclusive' group of donors as a way of thanking them.

The charity has a network of over 10,000 campaigning members, 6,000 of whom are living with HIV, who help raise the profile of the organisation, campaign for change and support fundraising.

The charity prioritises asking for donations and carries requests for one-off and regular donations on the website's home page and constantly repeats the message throughout its communications: 'Donate now. Together we can stop HIV in its tracks'.

Case Study 7
Lucy Faithfull Foundation
www.lucyfaithfull.org

Brief history
Set up in 1992 in honour of the work of Baroness Lucy Faithfull, the Lucy Faithfull Foundation tackles child abuse by working with abusers, or those at risk of abusing, providing specialist treatment to change their behaviour. It also supports non-abusing partners and parents; runs a campaign and helpline for people worried about their own or someone else's behaviour, among other services; and has volunteer groups that monitor sex offenders on probation.

Goals and Outcomes
The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has faced particularly challenging times in fundraising, with proven projects being forced to close and withdrawal of funding pledges due to negative reactions from the public. The charity outlines in its annual report a primary focus on communication of its message with supporters, with fundraising as a secondary focus.

Though still only accounting for less than 1% of income the annual accounts show donations tripled from £11,066 in 2012 to £37,319 in 2013, this is attributed to increased efforts in fundraising by all staff, better communication with supporters and an improved website.

Framing the message
The annual reports define the charity's work in emotive language: "Imagine that you could put a protective shield around a child – now you can imagine the work of The Lucy Faithfull Foundation."

The website emphasises that the charity's focus is on child protection, rather than on the offenders it works with, by prominently displaying the statement "The Lucy Faithfull Foundation is a registered child protection charity which works across the UK to prevent child sexual abuse".

Illustrating the message
Though the website has very few pictures, which mostly illustrate the less controversial elements of their work such as training and advice, on the home page is a compelling image of smiling adults alongside a promise directed at children. The 'Yours Faithfully Promise' focuses on engaging supporters by asking adults to sign up to the following pledge, "Dear Children, I want you to grow up free from sexual abuse and exploitation. I wish to do something to make that happen. I sign up to protect you. Yours Faithfully".

Fundraising good practice
Despite the history of attracting public criticism, fundraisers for the charity have persisted in championing the cause in television and radio interviews, and made good use of social media, such as blogs, to take their message direct to the public.

In 2010 the charity was featured as a case study in a New Philanthropy Capital report, which identified two main strategies:

- focusing on building the evidence-base of activities to prove that direct work with paedophiles is an effective means of tackling child abuse;
- employing a media officer to promote the work of the charity and its message that working with paedophiles or potential paedophiles can help to prevent child abuse.

Case Study 8
Beyond the Streets
www.beyondthestreets.org.uk

Brief history
In 1995 a small network of grass-root projects met to share ideas about supporting people exiting prostitution. Originally named 'National Christian Alliance on Prostitution' or NCAP the organisation now heads up a network of over 50 projects addressing the needs of those involved in prostitution, providing direct support and campaigning for better awareness and removal of stigma.

Goals and outcomes
In 2009 faced with the economic downturn the charity invested in fundraising training for the whole charity. This resulted in new fundraising materials and a strategic fundraising plan that placed increased focus on fundraising from charitable trusts and foundations as well as engagement of individual donors. As a result the charity has more than doubled its voluntary income from £8,036 in 2009 to £18,204 in 2014, which now accounts for 21% of the charity's overall income.

Framing the message
The central message of the charity is clear and simple: 'a charity working to end sexual exploitation'. The website's homepage text focuses upon people working in the sex industry as victims and calls the sex industry 'a theatre for gender power dynamics to take stage'.

The website and communication resources about the charity all reflect the theme of 'moving beyond', with campaigns entitled 'beyond prostitution', 'beyond the limits' and 'beyond the label'. This message is further reflected in their change of name in 2008 from 'National Christian Alliance on Prostitution' to 'Beyond the Streets'. The charity directly appeals to donors through statements such as 'we receive a large proportion of our funding from people like you, who believe in the possibility of a life beyond prostitution'.

Illustrating the message
The imagery on the website is minimal, though includes emotive pictures such as a woman with 'whore' stamped on the back of her neck to illustrate stereotyping. Each of the campaigns is described by victims through their personal experiences, written as a narrative or as poetry.

Fundraising good practice
The change of name by the charity was a deliberate move 'to convey more clearly our belief in the possibility of life beyond prostitution.'

The charity is very clear that financial support is more urgently required than volunteers, highlighted by the following statement: *'Many people want to help by giving their time but we are increasingly finding that many projects are currently unable to take on new volunteers. What does make a huge impact are people who are prepared to give financial support. Even £5 a month can make a big difference.'*

Case Study 9
The Lesbian and Gay Foundation
www.lgbt.foundation

Brief history
Incorporated as a charity in 1998, the Lesbian and Gay Foundation is predominantly a campaigning charity with the mission: 'Ending Homophobia, Empowering People'. They campaign for 'a fair and equal society where all lesbian, gay and bisexual people can achieve their full potential'.

Though the charity has shown a fall in voluntary income over recent years, the charity has been successful in attracting philanthropic support through targeted one-off campaigns, which have been effective in terms of both income generation and profile raising.

Goals and outcomes
In 2011 the charity set a strategic target to focus on fundraising from charitable trusts and foundations, and on building relationships with commissioners.

In 2013 the charity received over £50,000 in donations through sponsorship, individual giving and fundraising at events.

Framing the message
Using the tag line 'Ending Homophobia, Empowering People' the charity frames its message around action and campaigning. The website is populated with active drives for change and opportunities to get involved including campaigns around homelessness, HIV and AIDS, Drugs, GP services and community representation. At any one time more than 10 different campaigns are likely to be running.

Illustrating the message
The charity recognises it deals with a large number of complex issues. Though general support is sought, it particularly frames requests for donations around its 'Enough is Enough' campaign to take action against homophobia.

Whereas most of the imagery on the website is either an animated picture or symbol, the pictures involving people primarily contain large groups of individuals rallying together for a protest or shared cause, presenting a united front.

Fundraising good practice
The charity asks for donations towards a specific cause that is easy for donors to understand and deemed most likely to attract public sympathy; the 'Enough is Enough' campaign raised just over £50,000 in 2012/13.

The charity is particularly strong in promoting its impact, each year an impact report sits alongside the annual report, using case studies, personal stories and promotional literature to illustrate the impact their work has had in the previous year.

Case Study 10
Addaction
www.addaction.org.uk

Brief history
Initially known as the Association of Parents of Addicts (APA), Addaction was formed in 1967 when founder Mollie Craven wrote an article in *The Guardian* newspaper appealing to the families of addicts to start a support group. Support for families remains a central theme and their activities have expanded to include clinical treatment, social support and recovery services for adults, young people and their families.

Goals and outcomes
A self-defined 'unpopular' cause, Addaction launched a campaign in 2008/09 with the aim to "target head-on the perception of drug and alcohol treatment as an unfashionable and unpopular cause to support". Fundraising income stood at £225,000 in 2013 according to the annual accounts.

The charity highlights the effectiveness of its work with online statements such as: "Last year we helped 18,467 people through recovery from alcohol, 14,551 from opiates, 8,238 from cocaine and crack, 677 from novel psychoactive substances and 437 from prescribed medications".

Framing the message
The main image on the website homepage demonstrates how people the charity helps are also at risk in other ways – the picture depicts a person hidden in shadows and the statement "Women experiencing domestic violence are up to 15 times more likely to misuse alcohol and nine times more likely to misuse drugs than women generally."

'Recovery' is a strong theme in the charity's literature, with images of happy, healthy individuals and groups, this is a theme which continues throughout the rest of the website and marketing material. For example, the launch of 'Recovery Champions' in 2011 "spread[s] the message that this recovery is both achievable and worth aspiring to" and has, according to the charity's annual reports, been successful in promoting the charity both with other organisations and to the 'wider world'.

Illustrating the message
The charity uses personal stories and statements by service users to support each campaign and to illustrate their work. Powerful messages include: *"Without Addaction, I wouldn't be talking to you now. They got me the right medication to help me cut down and stop drinking"* and *"this will be my first Christmas free of alcohol, and I'm really looking forward to it... Sarah at Addaction didn't cost me anything, she didn't judge me, and she really, really helped me."*

Fundraising good practice
The charity makes good use of a variety of ways for donors to get involved in both donating and relating to the cause. For example, making text donations via the 'SKIP' Campaign which encourages donors to skip one drink and text to donate £3, as well as challenge events such as the 'Cycle to Break the Cycle' campaign,

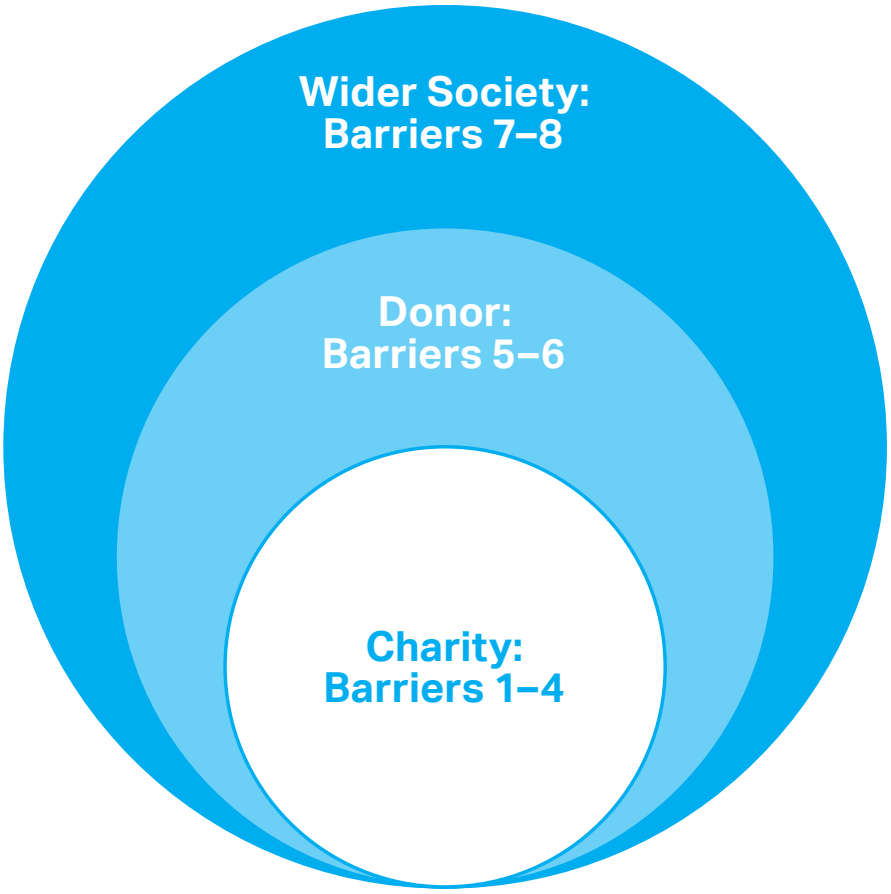
Chapter 5
The Barriers to Asking

As the previous chapters clearly demonstrate, asking for donations is a critical factor in fundraising. However there is a surprising lack of confidence amongst charities about asking people for support. Charities often rely on their work alone to attract support and do not directly 'make the ask'.[17] Drawing on the last three chapters – the literature review, the theoretical underpinnings and the case studies – we suggest eight barriers to asking that affect all types of charities, wherever they perceive themselves to be on the 'popularity spectrum'.

The barriers have an impact at different levels of the fundraising process:

- The organisational level of the charity;
- The interaction between the donor and the cause; and
- Wider societal norms and values.

The further from the actual charity that the barrier exists, the less influence the charity can have and the more external forces are at play. Therefore the 'ask' can become more challenging, but as our case studies showed, not insurmountable.



17 A. Thelkelsen (2011) *'Encounters with Philanthropic Information: Cognitive Dissonance and Implications for the Social Sector'*, Voluntas, vol 22(3), pp.518-545

Chapter 5
The Barriers to Asking
Continued

I Organisational level barriers

Barrier 1: Not having an established Culture of Philanthropy

Having a 'culture of philanthropy' means that a positive approach to philanthropy is embedded throughout the charity and realised in its core principles, behaviours and values.[18] A recent study[19] revealed that a third of charities (33%) felt fundraising was not a strong priority within their business plan, and 85% thought their fundraising approach needed strengthening. This was coupled with 44% experiencing a decrease in fundraising resources and just under 50% feeling that staff had no dedicated time to fundraise and generate income.

A culture of philanthropy is apparent when there is a shared responsibility for fundraising by all staff and volunteers, and reflected in the leadership of the organisation, the communication strategy and how the staff and stakeholders in that charity talk about and promote the work of the charity. It is about ensuring every single person connected to the charity – not just the person whose job title is 'fundraiser' – is empowered to effectively be a cheerleader and encourage donor support.

Barrier 2: Failure to cultivate Cheerleaders

Cheerleaders are in a particular position of influence with donors. We know that the behaviours of peers and shared social norms are strong influencers within philanthropic activity and therefore cheerleaders can prompt people to support causes. Cheerleaders can also offer a personal connection and help the donor feel closer to the cause. Cheerleaders can include beneficiaries, volunteers, staff, friends, ambassadors and celebrity supporters. Therefore empowering individuals to become cheerleaders increases the reach of a charity accessing these social networks.

Celebrity and high profile donors can use their position to send powerful messages about the charitable causes they support by highlighting the importance of the work being undertaken and/or the suffering of beneficiaries as well as by bringing some glamour to the issue.[20] Furthermore, people who aspire to emulate or identify themselves with cheerleaders may be motivated to donate. Being able to demonstrate support from popular cheerleaders can help potential donors to distinguish between the many competing causes seeking their funds, as some donors use celebrity supporters as a 'shorthand method of assessing a charity's calibre'.[21]

18 J. Bell & M. Cornelius (2014) *Underdeveloped: a national study of challenges facing nonprofit fundraising*. CompassPoint and the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund
19 C. Pharoah, T. Chapman & R. Choudhury (2014) *An Insight into the Future of Charity Funding in the North East*. London: Garfield Weston Foundation
20 O. Driessens, S. Joye & O. Biltereyst (2013) 'The X-factor of charity: a critical analysis of celebrities' involvement in the 2010 Flemish and Dutch Haiti relief shows'. *Media, Culture and Society*, vol 34(6)
21 B. Breeze (2012) 'How Donors Choose Charities: The role of personal taste and experiences in giving decisions', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol 4(2), p.165-183

Barrier 3: Difficulties encountered in donating
Making the donation process simple is an important factor in securing philanthropic support. Difficulties encountered when trying to make a donation can suggest a charity does not prioritise voluntary support, and is also unlikely to be 'asking' well or often. If a charity is trying to ask, either directly or indirectly through cheerleaders and ambassadors, potential donors are likely to be deterred if it is difficult to donate and in the worst case scenario take their support elsewhere.

The importance of this factor is highlighted by the upsurge in donations as a result of recent social media successes such as the '#nomakeupselfie', and the ice bucket challenge. Despite vociferous criticism by commentators about lack of awareness of the charitable causes supported and absence of evidence of impact, these campaigns enjoyed enormous success in the UK, raising £8m and £11m respectively, which was arguably in large part due to the simplicity of donating by texting a well-publicised number.

Barrier 4: The Framing of the Cause
Framing the cause effectively to both capture donors' sympathies and appeal directly to donors' personal tastes is key to securing donations. Charities campaigning for 'unpopular' causes often find themselves with a particularly high barrier to overcome because of the complexity of the issues being addressed. As with all causes, they must find a way to frame the cause so that it appeals most widely to public sympathies. Yet as they often represent the most complex causes they must find a way to represent these complicated causes in a simple and accessible way, because clarity is paramount in attracting mass philanthropic support.

Effective framing of the cause helps donors to connect to the charity. It is largely assumed that individuals donate to causes which they perceive to be 'worthy' of charitable support and in doing so are supporting the 'public good' outside of an individual's direct circle of friends and families,[22] however as chapters 1 and 2 reveal, this is an over-simplification of the real picture.

Charities can significantly increase the level of donors' connectivity to their work through better framing of the cause, in order to engage the emotions, and increase the likelihood of philanthropic support. For example, framing the charity's work in terms of the ultimate beneficiaries rather than those the charity directly works with, can make the cause more relatable for a wider pool of potential donors

22 R. Payton & M. Moody (2008) *Understanding Philanthropy: Its Meaning and Mission*. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press

Chapter 5
The Barriers to Asking
Continued

II Barriers that exist at donor level

Barrier 5: The Perception of Culpability

Donors are more likely to donate if the beneficiaries are perceived to be 'needy', ideally through little or no fault of their own and hence perceived to be free – or more free – of culpability.[23]

However the translation of this perception of 'need' into giving decisions is not a simple process. Donors often use three main judgements to assess the worthiness of a charitable cause:

- The seriousness of the situation and suffering;
- The extent of responsibility the donor feels for the situation; and
- The degree of sympathy felt by the donor.[24]

The social construction of donors' sympathy for recipients hinges upon a complex range of factors both internal and external to the charity. The charity can control how its cause is framed and this is a powerful tool in both raising the visibility of causes and challenging the perception of culpability. However, how donors assign culpability and deem worthiness remain primarily personal and subjective.[25]

Studies[26] into donor behaviour suggest that sympathy can be impacted by a wide range of external influences such as personal experiences, family, friends, social media, media outlets, political, social and economic circumstances, and therefore are beyond the complete control of the charity, yet steps can be taken, as illustrated in the case studies, such as a pro-active and positive communications strategy.

Barrier 6: Lack of clarity of the Cause

The clarity of a cause is evident by how easily the charity conveys the plight and need of their beneficiaries to donors. When clearly defined, donors can understand the mission of the charity and the impact that donations will achieve.

We know that donors like to understand what impact their donation will have.[27] For example 72%[28] of the major wealthy donors in the UK prefer to donate to charities which are able to clearly demonstrate their impact and have a lasting effect. Therefore if a cause is particularly complex, as is often the case for 'unpopular' causes, fundraising is more likely to be successful if donors can donate to particular projects within the charity[29] where the impact can be clearly identified.

23 N. Fenton, P. Golding & A. Radley (1993) *Charities, media and public opinion*, Loughborough: Department of Social Sciences, University of Loughborough
24 R. Flores (2013) 'When charity does not begin at home: Exploring the British socioemotional economy of compassion'. *Sociological Research Online*, 18(1)
25 R. Bennett (2002) 'Factors underlying the inclination to donate to particular types of charity'. *International Journal of Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, vol 8(1)
26 B. Breeze (2012) 'How Donors Choose Charities: The role of personal taste and experiences in giving decisions', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol 4(2), p.165-183
27 P. Ly & G. Mason (2012) 'Individual Preferences over Development Project: Evidence from Microlending on Kiva', *Voluntas*, vol 23(4)
28 CAF (2014) *Why We Give*. London: Charities Aid Foundation. https://www.cafonline.org/publications/2014-publications/why-we-give.aspx
29 M. Bachke, F. Alfnes & M. Wik (2014) 'Eliciting Donor Preferences', *Voluntas*, vol. 25(2)

III Barriers that exist at a societal level.

Barrier 7: Lack of visibility of the Cause

By definition, donors cannot support causes they are unaware of. This partly explains why the most popular causes are often in synergy with the most visible issues. It is difficult to determine in every case whether visibility precedes or follows philanthropic support, but there are some long-term broad charitable causes that enjoy ongoing high visibility, and others that have been relatively invisible, and suddenly due to a particular event or sequence of events – not necessarily positive – can become highly visible. For example, the Manchester Dogs Home raised just £1 million in donations in 2013, but following a widely publicised fire in September 2014 it attracted twice that amount in just one month.[30]

Whilst some people suggest that one charity's gain is another's loss, it is not the case that all donations are substitutable.[31] Different causes attract different sorts of people and most donors do not allocate a finite amount of resources to donate, therefore elevating the visibility of one charity can increase the overall size of philanthropic contributions, rather than simply lead to a re-slicing of the pie.

Finally it should be noted that though strategic marketing campaigns and events do raise visibility and donor awareness of a cause, this is often reliant on forces external to the charity, for example the extent – and tone – of media coverage.

Barrier 8: Lack of coverage of Cause in the Media

How and why media outlets frame certain social issues and which ones they decide to place on the public radar is an interesting area with a large literature. However the impact media can have on donors' understanding and perception of particular causes is relevant to the present discussion.

Many charities lack the funds, resources and networks to launch significant media campaigns, and their supporters and leadership may not endorse spending precious funds on such activities. Even when a media campaign is launched it is very difficult to ascertain the factors that lead to success. It is therefore often beneficial for charities to work together to raise the profile of specific 'invisible' causes and use their combined resources and networks to secure sufficient media support for the effort to be fruitful.

However despite restricted access to corporatised media markets, charities can negotiate and expand media opportunities by strategically selecting mission-relevant media projects that match their existing resources and networks, and fit with current social interests.[32]

Social media, entails a democratisation of 'gate-keeping' and opens new opportunities. Recent research[33] reveals significant increases in fundraising via peer-to-peer solicitations utilising outlets such as Facebook, demonstrating the importance of being asked by someone who is known to the potential donor.

30 Manchester Dogs' Home Fire donations reach £2m'. *BBC News Online* – http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-29561323 (accessed 9/6/15)

31 R. Bennett, R. (2002) Factors underlying the inclination to donate to particular types of charity, *International Journal of Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, vol 8 (1)

32 C. Ryan, M. Anastario & K. Jeffreys (2005) 'Start small, build big: negotiating opportunities in media markets'. *Mobilization*, vol 10(1)

33 M. Castillo, R. Petrie & C. Wardell (2014) 'Fundraising through online social networks: a field experiment on peer-to-peer solicitation'. *Journal of Public Economics* vol 114

Conclusions and Implications for Practice

This final section draws together the findings discussed above to present implications for practice. Key messages for 'unpopular' charities include;

- Charities need to focus on overcoming the 'barriers to asking' rather than creating a self-fulfilling prophecy by dismissing their cause as 'unpopular'.
- Building a strong culture of philanthropy and investing in fundraising, should enable all charities to expect some success in fundraising.
- Targeting fundraising activities to overcome the eight barriers to asking, should also help, charities to maximise their philanthropic income,

Table 3 demonstrates that most (75%) of the barriers to asking can be overcome, or significantly reduced, through pro-active action on the part of the organisation seeking funds, and the remaining 25% can be impacted to a limited extent.

Barrier	Cause	What is it about?	Who influencers the barrier the most
1	Culture of philanthropy	Charities' internal processes, policies and marketing approach	The charity
2	Cheerleaders		
3	Ease to donate		
4	Framing of the cause		
5	Perceived culpability	Relationship between the charity and the donor	Charity and donors
6	Clarity of cause		
7	Visibility	Wider societal impacts	Larger social forces, i.e. media, politics, cultural context
8	Coverage		

Table 3

Understanding how the eight 'barriers to asking' can impact on philanthropic reach

Much of the current research focuses on donor demographics, dispositions and decision making. One unintended consequence of this important body of work is that it has created some stereotypical images of donors (such as the 'Dorothy Donor' caricature) and the type of charitable causes they are willing to support (to be very reductionist: 'cancer, kids and kittens'), which are unhelpful for the many donors and causes that do not fit these stereotypes.

We argue that this situation can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy in which charities exclude themselves from, or barely engage with, the fundraising arena. It is no wonder they then experience the barriers to asking that are explored above.

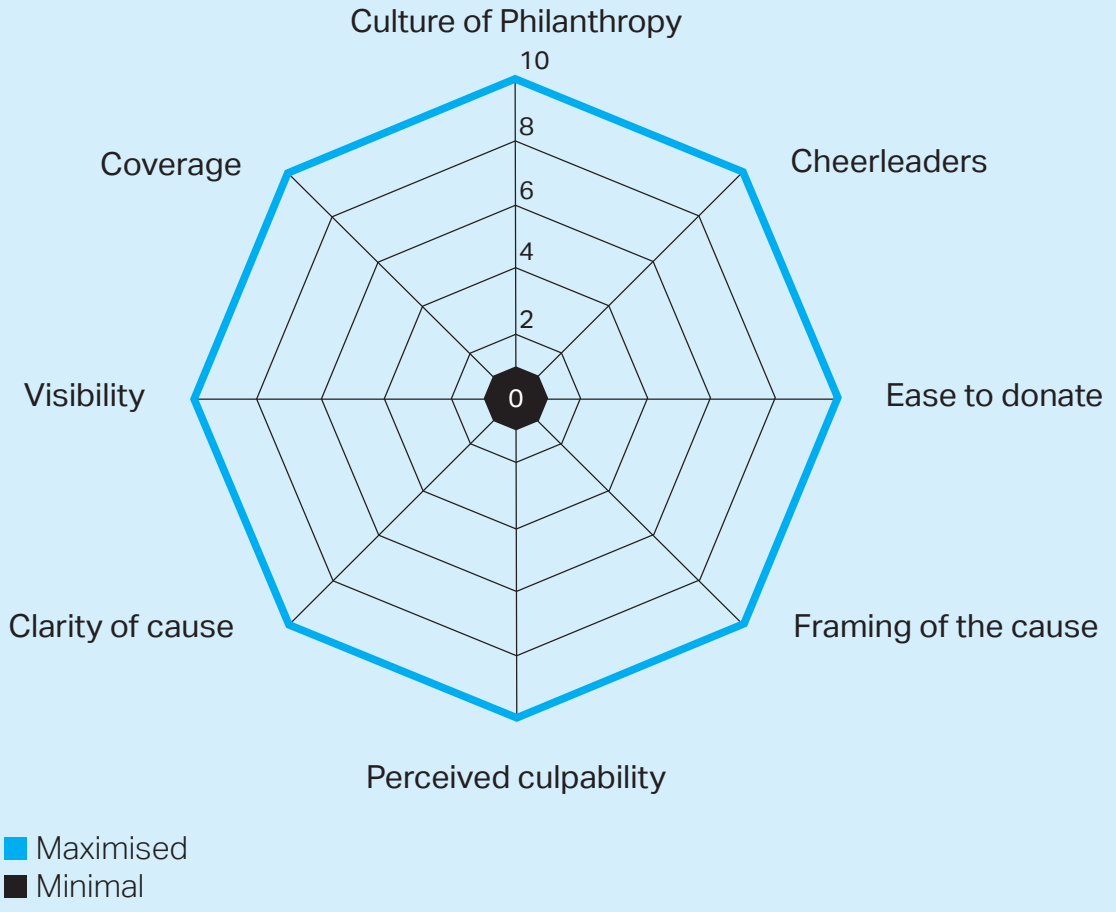
Faced with varying degrees of 'barriers to asking' these charities are more likely to focus their efforts on pursuing contracts and statutory income, and view fundraising from private individuals and institutions as a risky area requiring the input of scarce resources, which of course perpetuates the situation.

The importance of Philanthropic Reach

The impact of each of the eight barriers on fundraising can be depicted in terms of the philanthropic reach of a charity. The wider a charity's 'philanthropic reach' the more successful its fundraising efforts are likely to be. A charity which clearly addresses all of the barriers will have a wide philanthropic reach and is likely to receive a high level of fundraising income. Unsurprisingly a charity that has not considered, let alone addressed, these barriers is likely to receive very minimal philanthropic income.

This model is not meant to suggest that the barriers are of equal importance for every charity. But it is intended to provide a useful tool to help charities understand which barriers may be preventing them from maximising their philanthropic income.

Maximised versus minimal philanthropic reach



Conclusions and Implications for Practice

Continued

Top Ten Tips

Drawing on the findings of this report and the examples of good practice highlighted in the case studies, we suggest 'ten tips' to help ensure a maximum philanthropic reach for charities. Whilst this list is relevant for all charities, it is specifically developed with 'unpopular' causes in mind.

1. Ask

Asking donors to donate is the single biggest factor affecting giving. Research shows that over 80% of donations occur in response to a solicitation.

Asking means going beyond offering information about the need and creating opportunities to donate. It means proactively embracing fundraising and directly approaching donors. The 'askers' do not necessarily have to be professional fundraisers, but can be friends, cheerleaders, beneficiaries and stakeholders of the charity. The 'asker' should be well informed and able to communicate easily about the particular appeal, as well as provide clear and concise information about the overall mission and work of the charity. Therefore it is important that the communication strategy is owned by all those who represent the charity.

2. Take a Holistic Approach

No barrier to asking can be considered in isolation from the others, and nor should they be. Each of the barriers and potential solutions are interlocking and require a holistic, whole system approach for a charity.

Many of the case studies illustrate this holistic approach to fundraising. For example, Mind clearly places fundraising 'at the heart of the organisation' ensuring that it is the business of every person who works for or is involved in the organisations. Too often fundraising is seen as a separate activity to the main business of a charity rather than a mobilising factor that enables the work to take place.

The fundraising strategy needs to be an integral part of both the communication and business strategy. The brand of the organisation, the 'ask', the marketing, imagery, framing and methods of fundraising all need to support the compelling story that donors hear.

3. Invest in Fundraising

For charities to achieve and grow their philanthropic income they must invest resources in proportion to the size of their fundraising goals; however such resources do not necessarily have to be purely financial.

A recent study[34] revealed that voluntary sector organisations were excluding themselves from receiving philanthropic funding as a result of neither asking nor investing in fundraising. The reluctance to invest scare resources in what is often considered the risky venture of fundraising is widespread and understandable. But refraining from, or reducing, investment in fundraising, leaves charities increasingly reliant on existing sources of income rather than expanding their potential support.

Investing in marketing campaigns to raise awareness about the charity and cause is particularly important for 'unpopular' causes where public perceptions are often cited as one of the major barriers for these charities to overcome. By appropriately framing the cause to maximise the pool of potential supporters and by supporting the development of empathy for the cause, the raising of funds should become less of an uphill struggle.

34 C. Pharoah, T. Chapman & R. Choudhury (2014) *An Insight into the Future of Charity Funding in the North East.* London: Garfield Weston Foundation

4. Frame the Cause

Framing the cause in the most effective way is essential to ensure the charity's aims are viewed as important and appealing by the largest number of potential donors. Research shows that framing the cause in relation to an individual beneficiary, such as one child, is far more effective than focusing on large numbers of potential beneficiaries.[35] Furthermore personalising the message of the charity through story-telling and individual case studies is more likely to appeal to donors' sympathies. Underpinning this approach with images that donors can personally connect to and that elicit empathy, is also likely to increase the likelihood of donations.[36]

'Unpopular' charities need to consider carefully the type of stories they tell. For charities campaigning for complex causes, highlighting personal and compelling stories of individuals helps the donor emotionally connect to the cause and feel empathy with the beneficiaries. Almost all the case studies highlighted in this report tell individual beneficiary stories as a representation of the work that they do. Such approaches allow donors to understand and visualise the impact of their gift. Furthermore when campaigning for a range of complex issues under a single cause, highlighting one or two issues that are particularly appealing to the public can be advantageous.

5. Empower Cheerleaders and Friends

The idea of friends and advocates of charities often bring to mind either celebrities or high profile donors. It would be naïve to understate the importance of the role these individuals can play in promoting a cause, however engaging such individuals can be difficult, especially for smaller charities with fewer resources.

But cheerleaders do not need to be famous. A key lesson of the impact of social media is that anyone who is connected to other people can promote the work of a charity. By encouraging the people at the heart of 'unpopular causes' – including beneficiaries, former beneficiaries, their parents and loved ones, as well as volunteers and staff – to ask their friends, family and social networks to support the cause, the funding can soon add up. Who better to approach donors with a personalised message, provide clarity, demonstrate connectivity, effectively frame and address issues around perceived culpability than the staff, friends and stakeholders of a charity itself?

This point is also illustrated in the case studies. The Refugee Support Network has over 100 volunteers who champion the charity, whilst the Terrence Higgins Trust has over 10,000 campaigning members, 6,000 of whom are beneficiaries of the charity as well as an impressive list of celebrity supporters promoting the charity.

35 M. Bachke, F. Alfnes & M. Wik (2014) 'Eliciting Donor Preferences', *Voluntas*, vol. 25(2)

36 D. A. Small, G. Loewenstein & P. Slovic (2007) 'Sympathy and Callousness: the impact of deliberative thought on donations to identifiable and statistical victims'. *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes* vol 102, pp143-153

Conclusions and Implications for Practice

Continued

6. Seize opportunities to raise your profile
Opportunities to raise profile can be created through calculated marketing efforts, or they can be opportunistic. Accepting that the visibility of a cause is largely influenced by wider social factors means that a charity needs to remain vigilant of opportunities to discuss and promote the work of the charity at all opportunities.

Again this is illustrated by a case study. The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has faced particularly challenging times in fundraising, with proven projects being forced to close and withdrawal of funding pledges due to negative reactions and organised protests from the public. In response to this they have focused on championing the cause in television and radio interviews, and made good use of social media, such as blogs, to take their message direct to the public.

7. Make donating easy
A common trend throughout the case studies, and supported by the majority of the top 100 fundraising organisations is the importance of the ease of donating. Each of the case studies offers a clear and accessible form of donating online, with most offering a range of options.

Most of us receive a huge amount of communications every day, primarily from people trying to sell us things we don't really need. Charities have to shout loudly and make it easy to follow through when their message succeeds in being heard. Both the issue and the ways in which individuals can respond need to be clear and easy to act on. Charities have a relatively short amount of time to gain donors, attention and even less time to encourage them to donate. By using easy methods such as texting or online donations, the donor is less likely to give up.

8. Thank donors and supporters promptly and sincerely
This sounds like an obvious tip, however it is often overlooked by charities in pursuit of attracting an increased number of donors. Yet investing in efforts to hold onto existing supporters is more productive than investing in recruiting new donors. Donors will often continue to support causes they have supported previously, if they receive prompt and sincere thanks, as well as timely feedback on what their donation has achieved.

Many of the charities featured in the case studies invest effort in thanking donors promptly and sincerely, for example Story Book Dads thanks each of their donors personally and in their annual reports.

9. Demonstrate impact
We know that donors' decisions are influenced by their judgements regarding the competence of charitable organisations. Efficient use of money is a common proxy for judging overall competence, so having clear accounts and figures that demonstrate effective impact are likely to increase donations.

The Lesbian and Gay Foundation is particularly strong in demonstrating impact. Each year they publish an impact report which sits alongside their annual report, detailing how donations are spent and using case studies and personal stories to underline the impact of their work in the previous year.

10. Make donors feel part of something special
Finding ways to help donors feel connected to the cause and part of the solution, will help increase the pool of cheerleaders, raise awareness and visibility and encourage donors' connectivity to, and sympathy for, a cause. All these outcomes help a charity to increase its philanthropic reach.

As illustrated in the case studies, Storybook Dads works with families where a parent is in prison and recently hosted a 'No Ball' Ball. This was a fictional event, supported by a number of high profile donors, which encouraged individuals to donate whilst sharing on social media their amusing excuses as to why they could not attend. The methodology was simple and extremely cheap, but donors were made to feel part of something special, alongside the likes of celebrities such as Joanna Lumley. As another example, the Terrence Higgins Trust hosts exclusive dinners for the 'gold' donor members, hosted by Stephen Fry to thank donors and retain their loyalty.

Conclusion

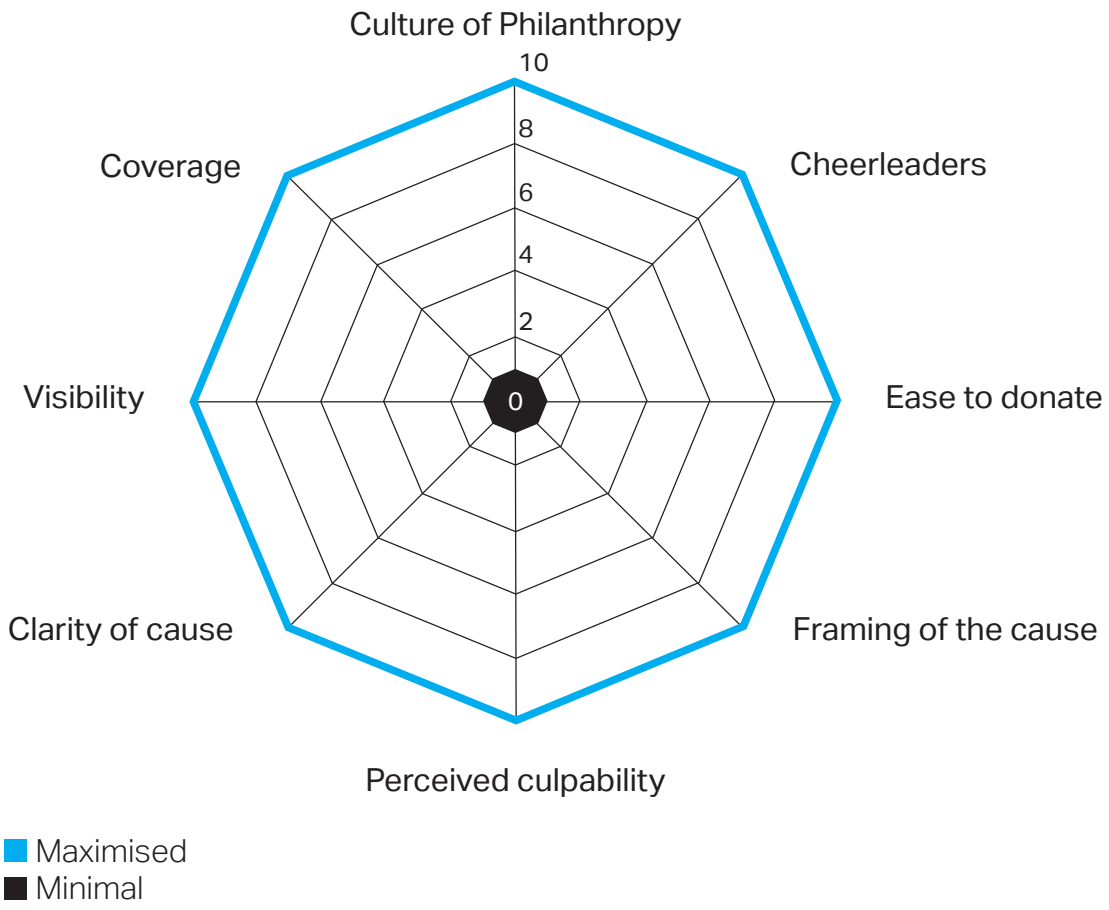
This report has questioned the widespread assumption that certain causes are inevitably 'unpopular' and unlikely to attract significant voluntary support. The UK is a generous country, but this generosity is not evenly distributed or rationally allocated according to some criteria of 'worthiness'. Therefore all charitable organisations need to work hard to help grow the overall size of the philanthropic pie and to secure the biggest possible slice to fund their work.

The landscape of charitable activity is awash with well-framed, emotive causes competing for donors' support. Whilst we know that an individual's decision to donate is hugely influenced by subjective experiences and personal taste, we also know they are unlikely to seek out charitable causes beyond their normal frame of reference or experiences. This can mean that it is difficult for charities outside of this framework to gain donors' attention, so they need to work even harder to make their cause visible and compelling.

There are, as identified in this report, socially constructed barriers which can affect the positioning of causes and their ability to attract voluntary income. These barriers are a combination of internal and external factors that impact on a charity's ability and confidence to 'ask'. Each barrier to asking has a different degree of impact depending on the cause in question, however we argue that none of them are insurmountable. Barriers can be overcome by taking steps to extend the philanthropic reach of a charity, as demonstrated by the case studies of 'unpopular' causes, and as re-capped in the top ten tips. Whilst some causes are undoubtedly a tougher 'ask' than others' every cause is more likely to achieve its goals by taking steps to extend its philanthropic reach.

Appendix A:
A tool to depict philanthropic reach

Maximised versus minimal philanthropic reach



About the Centre for Philanthropy at the University of Kent

The Centre for Philanthropy is based within the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research in the University of Kent. It is a leading academic centre that seeks to make a positive impact on the understanding and practice of philanthropy. Founded in 2008, the centre team comprises full-time staff members, associate staff, honorary fellows and PhD students. We have conducted research on a range of topics including: 'million pound donors', 'how donors choose charities', 'the philanthropic journey' and 'user views of fundraising'. We offer teaching on fundraising, philanthropy, volunteering and the third sector at both undergraduate and masters level. We work closely with academics and practitioners in our field based in the UK and abroad. We have a strong reputation for public engagement as a result of building good relationships with the charity sector, featuring regularly in sector and mainstream press and maintaining a strong social media presence.

Further information about the centre is available at:
www.kent.ac.uk/sspssr/philanthropy

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Philanthropic support is a crucial source of income for most charities, especially during a period of public sector cuts, yet some find it tougher than others to attract donations.

By exploring what is meant by the phrase 'unpopular causes', and by presenting ten case studies of best practice, this report challenges the suggestion that fundraising is inevitably destined to be an uphill struggle.

Despite demonstrating that all types of cause can prove attractive to donors, it is also suggested that fundraising goals are more achievable when steps are taken to increase each charity's philanthropic reach.

This report will be of interest to charity leaders, fundraisers, policymakers and all concerned with growing a stronger culture of giving in the UK.

University of Kent | Centre for Philanthropy

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