

# Donor Retention Plan 2020

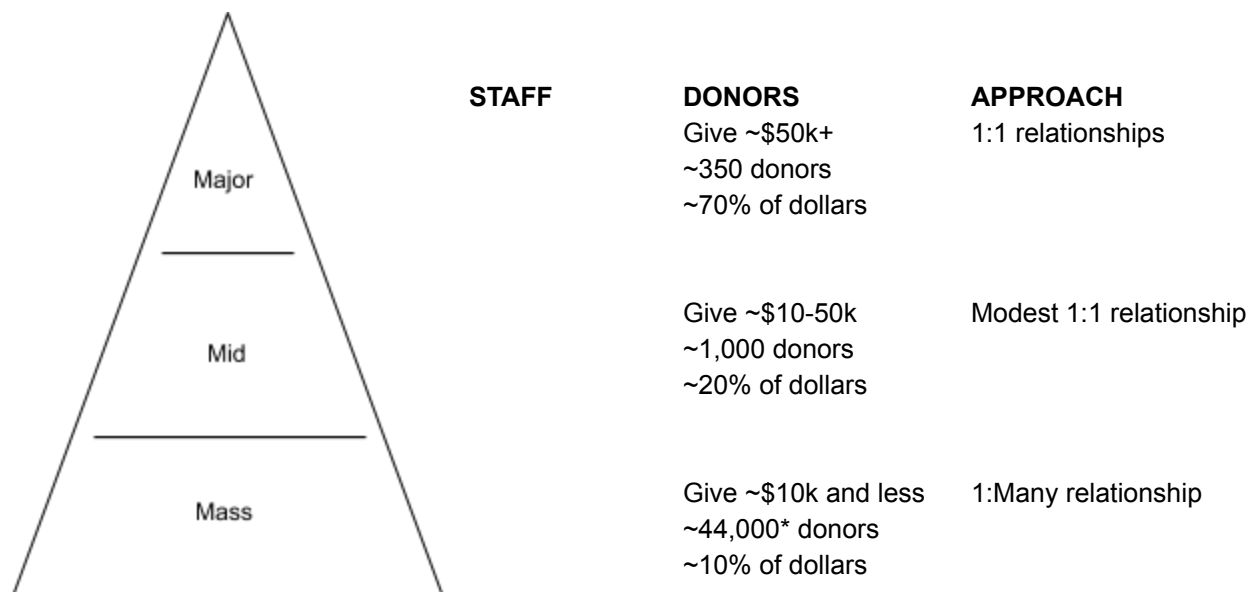
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## Background

In April 2019 we started a major gifts program to test whether more traditional relationship building and solicitation frameworks would work with GiveWell donors.

Following promising results in 2019 (securing just over \$1,000,000 in incremental donations), we decided to ramp up major gifts work and build out donor retention programs at lower levels of giving. The main argument in favor of building out donor retention programs at lower levels of giving is that the donor pyramid works as a pipeline—it often takes 3-4 years of giving at lower levels and building a relationship with GiveWell before a donor makes their first major gift. We cannot risk losing too many lower-level donors due to poor retention rates.

## 2020 donor retention structure



*\*You may be thinking: I thought we had over 50,000 donors! Why are there fewer donors in the retention program? Answer: we can only include 'contactable' donors in our retention program as we have to be able to contact a donor to be able to influence their giving. As such, we have removed all anonymous donors and donors without emails or addresses from our denominator (as well as those who have actively opted out of hearing from us). We are also mainly focused on donors who give via GiveWell (not direct to charity) in this first year of the program. Direct to charity donors may become a larger focus in later years.*

## Broad 2020 goals

1. Increase engagement opportunities for current donors and build greater loyalty/affinity with GiveWell.
2. Increase incremental money moved from current donors:
  - Major: \$3,000,000
  - Mid: \$500,000
  - Mass: \$500,000

## Plans/activities to achieve 2020 goals

### Each domain

	Better engagement	Incremental dollars
Major	<p><b>Ensure gift officers work their engagement plans.</b> Gift officers have a 12 month engagement plan for each donor in their portfolio. Through monthly reporting on gift officer activity, we will ensure that each plan is being executed and donors are being actively engaged with each month.</p> <p><b>Launch GiveWell Council.</b> We plan to launch GiveWell Council (name TBC) so that major donors have a volunteer opportunity. The charter for the council is to help GiveWell attract and grow its supporter-base, so they will explicitly be charged with helping outreach initiatives.</p>	<p><b>Create specific giving opportunities.</b> We will be pitching top charity gaps (for example, country gaps), incubation grants, and seeking funding for special projects like matching campaigns for marketing channel and messaging testing. We will explicitly highlight fungibility with donors.</p> <p><b>Plan and make enough incremental asks.</b> Our assumption is that we will 'close' about 50% of asks and about 25% of total dollars (some donors agree to the ask, but end up making a smaller gift than asked). We currently have ~\$15m in asks planned for 2020. Plans will shift throughout the year.</p>
Mid	<p><b>Monthly personal engagement.</b> Send monthly emails with information about GiveWell's research and top charities.</p>	<p><b>Personally solicit all donors at year-end.</b> Send solicitations at year end.</p>

	<b>Year-end personal engagement.</b> Offer year-end calls to discuss GiveWell's recommendations and answer questions.	
Mass	<p><b>Personalize engagement.</b> Segment donors based on past behavior. Move to donor- and benefit-focused communications.</p> <p><b>Send year-round communications.</b> Plan a consistent flow of communication that starts out thanking donors, moves on to cultivating them with impact stories, and finally solicits them with a compelling ask.</p>	<p><b>Test messaging and calls to action.</b> Tests include recurring gift messaging, matching gifts, funding gaps, etc.</p> <p><b>Solicit donors throughout the year.</b> Create urgency outside of year-end to seek multiple gifts or shift donors to give ahead of cycle. Tests include integrating with marketing campaigns, using external events (e.g. World Malaria Day), quarterly allocations, etc.</p>

Pipeline development

Pipeline/pyramid development is an important priority across all domains. In 2020 we plan to:

1. **Fast track donors up the pipeline.** As a result of deeper engagement, we hope to learn more about our donors and identify top candidates to 'fast track' up the pipeline. We plan to:
  - a. **Research** new donors via publicly available information and identify those with higher giving capacity.
  - b. **Validate** donors through calls/meetings to move donors with high capacity and high affinity into mid-level and major gift portfolios.
  
2. **Identify new major donor prospects.** As we have limited capacity for prospecting work, we plan to use the following strategies opportunistically as they arise in 2020:
  - a. **Referrals** are a strong source of new high-capacity prospects. We plan to work with the GiveWell Council and donors in major gift portfolios to seek personal referrals of friends, family and corporate connections.
  - b. **Partner with select institutions.** While we don't have the capacity to roll out an institutional giving program, there are a handful of aligned companies, wealth advisors and peer organizations like Founders Pledge and Effective Giving that reach out to us and are good sourcing partners for GiveWell. We will ensure that there is capacity to develop these relationships.

Detailed metrics and progress

Available here [REDACTED].