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MEDIA RELEASE

NVPC RELEASES ITS FIRST-EVER IPC (INSTITUTIONS OF A PUBLIC CHARACTER) SURVEY RESULTS

IPCs should pay more attention to volunteer management

Singapore, 6 February 2007 - The National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) has released the results of its first-ever study on Institutions of a Public Character (IPCs). NVPC studied the characteristics of IPCs as well as issues faced in fundraising and volunteer management.

Survey findings

IPC Characteristics

1. 10% of respondents were large IPCs in terms of total financial receipts, 45% were medium-sized and the remaining 45% were small-sized¹. In the area of financial performance, over half of respondents with deficit² in 2004 were small-sized.

Fundraising

2. 69% of IPCs that responded to the survey engaged in fundraising activities in 2004. Respondents generally stated that they implemented governance structures (which includes accountability and transparency through audits and board reviews) and donor recognition to a large extent in their fundraising activities. However, few respondents stated that they thoroughly review donor relations.

¹ Total receipts were based on financial information for the year 2004 publicly reported by IPCs, comprising donations; grants / sponsorships; membership fees, investment income; investment gains and others. The banding according to size is: large ≥ \$5 million in total receipts, medium \$500,000 to <\$5 million, small < \$500,000.

² Total surplus (or deficit) is the difference between total receipts and total expenditure.

3. Among those who had used multiple fundraising methods, special events were the most effective fundraising method reported, in terms of absolute dollars raised, followed by direct mail and mass events³. However, direct mail, special events and presentations⁴ were the most efficient in terms of costs incurred per dollar raised.
4. The top concerns in fundraising include donor fatigue, donor restrictions on funds and limited resources for dedicated fundraising staff.

Volunteer Management

5. Among the IPCs surveyed, 86% engaged volunteers in 2004. However, among their pool of volunteers, only 53% were active, i.e. they participated on a regular or ad hoc basis during the year.
6. In volunteer management, respondents stated that their implementation of volunteer supervision and volunteer recognition were thorough, but few respondents reported that they thoroughly carried out volunteer exit reviews.
7. Top concerns in volunteer management were a lack of commitment from volunteers, inability to sustain volunteering interest and limited resources for dedicated volunteer coordinator or manager positions. Only 1% of respondents reported that gaining new volunteers was a problem.

Recommendations

8. Commenting on the survey results, Chief Executive Officer of NVPC, Mrs Tan Chee Koon said, "It is noteworthy that respondents found getting new volunteers less of an issue as compared to the lack of commitment from volunteers and sustaining volunteers' interests. The challenge is for respondents to find creative ways to engage those who are inactive and to keep those who are active, engaged, for example in fundraising."

³ "Special events" refers to events for specific target audience, e.g. gala dinners, while mass events are aimed at the general public, e.g. fun fairs.

⁴ An example of "presentations" would be meeting potential donors and making oral or audio-visual presentations of the organisation and its services.

9. “Currently, respondents tend to give more resources to fundraising than to volunteer management⁵. However, they should allocate more resources for volunteer management because there is a link between volunteerism and philanthropy. NVPC’s other research on individual giving shows that current volunteers donate more in terms of average amount compared to former and non-volunteers.⁶ Besides being donors, volunteers may, as a result of a positive volunteering experience, encourage others to donate. Respondents would do well to address the volunteer commitment issue they highlighted in the survey, because the problem could well lie with the organisation itself. For example, they may wish to adopt the practice of volunteer exit reviews as a way to address volunteer commitment,” she said.
10. NVPC also encouraged donors and grantmakers to consider funding overhead costs such as salaries for volunteer coordinators, and also suggested that respondents carry out donor relations audit as one way to reduce donor fatigue.
11. On its part, the Centre plans to expand its training courses and is looking for subject matter experts to address fundraising concerns identified in the study. This is in addition to the Centre’s current training courses in volunteer management and fundraising.
12. More details of the major findings and recommendations are available at www.nvpc.org.sg

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About the Institutions of a Public Character (IPC) Survey

The IPC survey was carried out through computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) with 287 IPCs from all sectors, an overall response rate of 33% from the almost 900 IPCs in Singapore⁷, and through desk research of financial information⁸ made available by IPCs.

⁵ On average, fewer staff were involved in volunteer management compared to fundraising.

⁶ Current volunteers donated an average amount of \$226, compared to former and non-volunteers, who donated \$108 and \$104 respectively. Source: Individual Giving Survey 2006, NVPC.

[http://www.nvpc.org.sg/resources/uploads/main/Individual%20giving%20survey%202006%20\(website\).pdf](http://www.nvpc.org.sg/resources/uploads/main/Individual%20giving%20survey%202006%20(website).pdf)

⁷ Results may not entirely represent the overall IPC landscape.

⁸ Financial information was for the year 2004.

CATI interviews were conducted from 16 Nov to 27 Dec 05. Financial information collection and data cleaning ended on 20 Jul 06. The research was carried out by Taylor Nelson Sofres Singapore Pte Ltd.

About the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC)

NVPC is the national body that promotes and develops volunteerism and philanthropy, functioning as a first-stop centre, catalyst and networking agency to foster the giving spirit in Singapore, whether of time, money or in kind.

We work with non-profit organisations, companies and public sector bodies to facilitate and strengthen Community Giving efforts through our promotional and networking platforms, public education programmes, training in volunteer management (including employee volunteering) and fundraising, as well as grants, research and publications.

Visit our website at www.nvpc.org.sg

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