

Strategies for Running an ERG Effectively

Fundraising Strategies

Look for funding beyond the ERG budget:

- Source funds from multiple departments/business units
- Partner with other business groups to hold activities or functions so that the cost associated is split across all groups involved
- Apply for grants from the company's charitable foundation, if available
- Approach ERG executive sponsor(s) for funding assistance

Best Practices for requesting budget from other teams, departments, or executive sponsors:

- Make a business case justifying the request and proving explanation of the value of the investment.
 - Include the value for individuals (i.e. professional development or direct correlation to personal passion), Employee Resource Groups (i.e. support of key strategic pillars or Diversity and Inclusion goals) and to the business overall (i.e. employer brand, recruiting or retention efforts, alignment to/support of organizational goals or values).
- Itemize and give options
 - Provide details the cost breakdown and where the funds will go (it might help to show where you already have funding and what it is supporting!).
 - Highlight key portions of the budget request that need priority funding and provide short explanation.
- Secure manager-level assistance
 - Seek out support from management to make the request (provide business case above!).
 - Strategize with management about what departments or groups you should solicit budget from.
 - Then, ask for their assistance in making the request as their support & assistance may give your request more weight or they may have a relationship with a key stakeholder that would help secure the budget.

Collaboration Strategies

Share resources and best practices

- Share documents, best practices, handouts, posters, flyers, event proposals, workshop outlines, presentations, successful engagement activities, etc. across all regions.
 - Utilize a document sharing tool like SharePoint, Google Drive, Box, or Drop Box for version control and easy access.
 - Send out an email blast when new resources are uploaded and lessons learned from the event/activity.
- Don't limit to sharing with other LGBT ERG chapters; be sure to include all ERGs across the organization, such as with the Women's, Veteran's, or People of Color ERGs. The intersectionality in the membership between ERGs is undeniable and we can support progress across the board by sharing information.

Virtual meetings

- Internal virtual meetings enable multiple geographical locations to sync up and share information, current events, and resources
 - Set these up to recur monthly or quarterly depending on audience and agenda.
- External virtual meetings enable collaboration with outside organizations' ERG/BRG
 - This is particularly helpful for smaller organizations who have small grass-roots ERGs or who are looking to create a ERG

Global ERG Newsletter

- Newsletters lend an opportunity to showcase the work that each ERG completes around the globe.
 - Promote cultural awareness through sharing regionally-specific events, holidays, celebrations or victories/struggles (i.e. policy change, info on political climate).

Establish cross-regional mentorship programs

- Connecting people across regions provides:
 - Cultural awareness and sensitivity
 - Business value when we understand our diverse employees
 - Communication between employees
 - A "safe-space" to learn about cultures and ways of being that are different from your own

How Leaders can Engage

Speak Up

- Leaders who believe in LGBT inclusion can utilize their position of influence to promote the ERG and the importance of inclusion in the workplace.
 - EXAMPLES:
 - Share articles related to workplace equality with your team via emails, in team meetings, newsletters, and/or on professional social media platforms (such as LinkedIn).
 - Forward ERG newsletters and events to your team stressing their importance and encouraging each team member to participate
 - Recognize and reward employee's ERG achievements in team meetings, newsletters, and/or emails.
- Encourage your team member to share their experiences during team meetings on what they've learned or the skills that they're building through their involvement with the ERG.
- Seek out ways to get involved with the ERG as an employee in general or as an Executive Sponsor, depending on your level

Provide financial support where you can

- Identify avenues for assisting an ERG financially:
 - Can your team budget help cover any costs?
 - Advocate for ERG financial assistance with other departments or business groups
- Consider providing funds to help cover small ERG-related expenses, such as:
 - Printing or multimedia costs
 - SWAG purchases
 - Raffle items
 - Registration costs
 - Booth fees
 - Food costs
 - Travel expenses (transportation, lodging, food, incidentals, etc)

Show up and engage

- The easiest option of all...make the time to attend ERG meetings and events!
 - Your presence speaks volumes and shows employees that you mean what you say.
 - If you don't show up, why should your employees?