# **You Make the Difference Initiative**

# ***Systems for Sustaining Donors, Partners, and Grants***

## ***Purpose of This Exercise***

*Feeling overwhelmed is normal. Staying organized makes advocacy easier, more sustainable, and more impactful over time.*

*This system builds on the Volunteer Experience Plan you created earlier — expanding it to organize not just volunteers, but also businesses, foundations, government partners, and activity supporters.*

*Simple systems create powerful momentum across all Five Revenue Streams.*

## ***Three Tools to Stay Organized***

### *1.* ***Donor, Partner, and Grant Log***

*Create a master list of everyone who invests time, talent, or treasure into your fair — individuals, businesses, foundations, and government entities.*

*Track for each:*

* *Name or organization*
* *Contact information*
* *Type of supporter (Person, Business, Government, Foundation, Activity)*
* *Nature of support (donation, grant, sponsorship, participation)*
* *Date of support or commitment*
* *Recognition actions taken (thank-you, spotlight, etc.)*
* *For grants or government support:*
  + *Reporting requirements (e.g., interim/final reports, proof of use)*
  + *Report due dates*
  + *Contact person for reporting*

*Why it matters:*

*Consistency builds trust. Properly tracking obligations protects future funding and strengthens relationships.*

### *2.* ***Recognition Calendar***

*Create a simple 12-month calendar to plan monthly touchpoints for each supporter group.*

*Ideas for monthly touches:*

* *Individuals: personal notes, shoutouts, thank-you posts*
* *Businesses: social media highlights, fair signage mentions*
* *Foundations: progress updates, thank-you reports*
* *Government entities: interim impact reports, official thank-you letters*
* *Activity partners: spotlight features, community updates*

*Why it matters:*

*Gratitude is not a one-time event—it’s an ongoing relationship builder.*

### *3.* ***Story Bank***

*Capture real stories and moments that show the impact of the fair.*

*Good stories fuel recognition efforts, reports, fundraising campaigns, and social media outreach.*

*Collect:*

* *Testimonials from volunteers and visitors*
* *Youth exhibitor stories*
* *Photos and quotes*
* *Impact examples tied to grants, partnerships, or community service*

*Why it matters:*

*Stories make advocacy natural, emotional, and effective.*

# ***Quick Action Plan***

* *Set up a master spreadsheet or notebook that tracks all supporters across People, Business, Government, Foundation, and Activity streams.*
* *Build a 12-month Recognition Calendar, ensuring at least one meaningful touchpoint per month tailored to each type of supporter.*
* *Start gathering at least one new impact story per month to keep your storytelling fresh and powerful.*

# ***Final Thought***

Advocacy isn’t about working harder.

It’s about working smarter—with heart, with gratitude, and with systems that set you up to win.

*You are building not just support for your fair—you are building a movement.*