



FRED HUTCHINSON CANCER RESEARCH CENTER

SUCCESS STORY



\$7.7m

Increased Gifts

Gifts that closed at a higher amount than forecasted.



\$5.5m

New Gifts

Gifts that would not have closed without the PDP program methodology, tools and coaching.



**53x
ROI**

Fred Hutch raised \$53 in new and increased gifts for every \$1 they invested in their team.

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center partners with Plus Delta to create a sustainable culture of impact-focused philanthropy, leading to larger gifts and long-term donor relationships.

Founded in 1975 and located in the heart of Seattle's tech hub, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center has a global reach in its work to discover new ways to prevent, detect, and treat cancer and other diseases. Known for its Nobel Prize-winning work in bone marrow transplantation and immunotherapy, Fred Hutch (as it is affectionately known) has touched the lives of millions worldwide.

It was an honor when the team at Fred Hutch turned to Plus Delta Partners for help in reimagining their approach to philanthropy.

Fred Hutch had long relied on a transactional, event-driven approach to donor engagement. With exceptional research programs, they recognized their opportunity to grow major and principal gifts through impact-driven giving.

"The DFF program is a cornerstone in how we're doing our work now. This program has not only built more confidence in the team but we are also asking questions differently. It has also helped us be proactive vs. reactive and we're all doing it together."

**Kelly
O'Brien**
VP Philanthropy

Doing so would require enhancing gift officer competencies, building donor relationships, and soliciting gifts designed to propel scientific discovery through philanthropic investment.

With these objectives in mind, the Fred Hutch and Plus Delta partnership began in 2019 with thirteen members of the Hutch's Philanthropy team—including annual, planned, and major gift officers—participating in the nine-month Discipline of Frontline Fundraising (DFF) program. They learned communication and facilitation tools needed to identify shared priorities with prospective donors, and to collaboratively define desired giving outcomes. The officers also worked to establish a shared fundraising process that helped to better align the work of frontline fundraisers with that of their prospect management, communications, and data analytics colleagues.

"The experience revolutionized our giving program and united our team," said Elizabeth Castleberry, Chief Philanthropy Executive at Fred Hutch. "We are performing at a whole different level."

LONG-TERM SUCCESS

One key to the team's success has been having a shared and clearly defined Donor Engagement Process™ (DEP). Using their DFF experience as a foundation, gift officers are now working with prospects more efficiently and effectively. The nature of their relationships has changed, too—transactional interactions have been replaced by more long-lasting partnerships. "With clear objectives and outputs for each stage, our fundraisers can take the time required to develop relationships as trusted advisors," said Castleberry.

Through their work with Plus Delta, leaders at Fred Hutch also hoped that gift officers would learn to recognize how their own assumptions were limiting their solicitation levels, and by employing a disciplined focus on defining mutually desirable outcomes with donors, they would increase giving amounts and related impacts. By the time the DFF program finished, that was already starting to happen. "One of our gift officers was expecting to close a gift between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Utilizing the language [from DFF] and recognizing some assumptions made, he was actually able to close the gift at \$500,000," said Kelly O'Brien, Vice President of Philanthropy at the Hutch.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Intentionality & Focus

Meeting management tools and asking specific questions has helped gift officers be more clear and direct and get to the point faster.

Deeper Connection

Throughout the program, gift officers collaborated energetically and successfully on exercises, which they continue to refine together for mutual success.

Aligned Goals

The DFF program helped the fundraising team develop a shared understanding of institutional priorities rather than individual projects and proposals.

Internally their practices changed as well. "There was a shift in conversation from what we knew (or thought we knew) to what we needed to learn about donor interests and priorities," said Castleberry. They aligned their reporting tools with their shared fundraising process to drive and effectively measure their work, and to reinforce their discipline, they integrated the tools into their internal meetings and discussions. Having a well-defined process also enabled team members to strengthen portfolio management practices, prioritize their time, and celebrate each other's achievements (including disqualification).

Upon completion of the DFF program, participating gift officers identified 71 gifts, totaling \$23 million, that were closed using the methodology, tools, and coaching provided during the program. Nearly 25 percent of that amount was non-forecasted gift revenue that the officers say Fred Hutch would not have received if not for what they learned in the DFF program.

"Our team is sharing examples of the success they're having with one another every day," said Castleberry. "Plus Delta's focus on teamwork, one-on-one coaching, and developing language for donor interactions in real-time was a great fit for what we set out to accomplish."

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**Elizabeth
Castleberry**
Chief Philanthropy Officer