

## 5 Reasons Higher Ed Leaders Should Invest in Annual Giving Programs

Annual giving has often been a secondary priority for advancement efforts focused on major and principal gifts. However, as institutions grapple with compounding issues like declining tuition revenue, less engaged donors and alumni, staffing challenges, and constrained budgets, a focus on annual giving can help bolster the bottom line. Here are five reasons why Presidents and executive leaders should reevaluate and reinvest in annual giving programs.



### 1. Generate immediate, flexible, and spendable revenue.

One of the distinct advantages of annual giving lies in its ability to generate immediate and spendable revenue for your institution. These funds can be swiftly allocated to address pressing needs and support ongoing projects. They allow higher education leaders to be more flexible in their spending and investment in strategic initiatives.

**91%** of presidents cite cultivating new donor bases as top priority.



### 2. Identify donor prospects not currently on your radar.

Engaging a wide range of donors through annual giving campaigns can provide valuable insights into more donors' interests, giving patterns, and level of engagement. Analyzing this data strategically can unearth new prospects, enabling you to cultivate and nurture these prospects into future major donors.

Donors on average take **seven years** to make a \$1,000 gift.



### 3. Share your vision consistently across audiences and channels.

Annual giving campaigns allow you to consistently engage with your entire portfolio of stakeholders, ensuring that everyone has equal access to information about your institution's strategic goals. By strategically deploying these communications across various channels, you ensure multiple touchpoints and opportunities to get in front of your audiences.

**8+** touchpoints are needed before most never-givers make their first gift.



### 4. Foster donor retainment for long term sustainability and growth.

While alumni participation no longer influences *US News & World Report* rankings, the emphasis on annual giving remains paramount. The critical shift is toward nurturing donor and alumni retainment. Harnessing the potency of annual giving campaigns to continuously engage donors plays a pivotal role in extending their commitment lifecycle.

**80%** of donors renew who give for three consecutive years.



### 5. Optimize your team's efforts.

Staffing challenges and overbearing workloads have made it imperative that institutions audit their current efforts and ensure a strategic focus on the programs with the highest ROI. By investing in external partners to support annual giving programs, advancement leaders can ensure their teams are focusing on highest revenue efforts.

**58%** of fundraisers said they're asked to do too much

**80+** Advancement Marketing Services partners | **14%** average increase to donor counts in first year of partnership  
**30%** average increase to gifts attributed to EAB's digital strategy | **10+** years of aggregated donor data

To learn more, visit [eab.com/products/advancement-marketing-services](https://eab.com/products/advancement-marketing-services) or email [eabadvmrktgcommu@eab.com](mailto:eabadvmrktgcommu@eab.com)