

S U M M A R Y

PoMOCna KAWA #49



COOPERATION BETWEEN THE NGO SECTOR AND BUSINESS

39 REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANISATIONS ATTENDED THE MEETING: Right to Protection Foundation, Mudita Association, Internationaler Bund Poland Foundation, Migration Research Centre Foundation, Czas Kobiet Foundation, Polish Migration Forum, Centre for Integration of Foreigners, Stella Virium Foundation, JRS Poland, Good Start Foundation for Migrants and others

The topic of cooperation between the NGO sector and business returns from time to time at our 'PoMOCna Kawa' meetings. So it was this time, too - **on 24 October we hosted a representative of the Kordon Foundation and entrepreneur Łukasz Hozzko, who told us how to involve business in social activities carried out by an NGO.**

Observations

Lukasz Hozzko began by discussing issues related to current humanitarian funding. He noted that the amounts available are significantly lower than last year, and the areas of funding have also changed, which is a natural process. Another issue is the difficulty in attracting contributions from individual donors who may be 'tired' of the war in Ukraine. An additional difficulty is inflation. The speaker also outlined methods of funding volunteer activities. Volunteers usually working on short-term projects to meet a specific need in a particular place (e.g. food aid, clothes) cannot approach large international organisations without having their own foundation or association. The speaker concluded that aid funding should be based on market and business principles.

Contact with the company — what to bear in mind?

Obtaining funding from business depends on company's policy on supporting charitable actions. At the start, it is easier to work with those entities that are positively inclined towards such activities. You can very easily check whether this is the case - on the Internet! When reading about a company's pro-social activities, look for information about the professed vision and mission so that, when making contact they use the same language. The speaker also----

-----highlighted another interesting tactic for finding pro-social businesses. When attending charity conferences, it is useful to find out which companies have co-organised it. This will point us to pro-social enterprises. Industry events and conferences are also a great place to seek financial partners.

Łukasz Hoszko told that when contacting a company, it is important to accurately present the problem that we, as an NGO, want to solve. It is important to point out the benefits of the proposed solution. Of course, we have to face the possibility that the decision-makers in the company may not see this problem or think that the solution we are proposing is wrong. It is therefore worth contacting a number of companies. **The lack of a quick response should not be discouraging - companies are working, they have their deadlines and may not have the space to cooperate at a particular time, even if they would be happy to do so at other times.** Depending on the size of the company, the final decision to donate funds to our organisation's humanitarian projects will be made at different levels.

A request for proposal can consist of a briefly described proposal with pictures and a proposal for a meeting to discuss the details. In the case of small and medium-sized companies - it is advisable to address the owners or board members directly. A personal meeting should be our aim. It is worth pointing out in an indirect and unobtrusive way that help with our project might be a good idea for the company to show its positive side (e.g. by attaching previous publications in the media of our organisation).

Not only cash

The speaker pointed out that when seeking business support, it is worth looking for more than just cash for our projects. A project for its implementation may also require other resources, e.g. suitable furniture, electronic equipment, expertise. It is much easier for a business to donate a product it produces than a cash donation. And we can, on the example of furniture received from the company, save our own funds.

Something in exchange

If you are an organisation that specialises in a particular area of expertise, it is worth taking advantage of this. Łukasz Hoszko gave an example from his life - when submitting a request for proposal, he mentions the possibility of providing first aid training for a company. The income is donated - to the Foundation's activities. This is a win-win situation, and a positive impression of a well-conducted training course can convince an entrepreneur to become further involved - for the benefit of the Foundation. It is a win-win situation, and a positive impression from a well-run training course can convince an entrepreneur to further commit.

Small projects for start

During the meeting, the speaker also revealed a valuable piece of advice - it is a good idea to start requests for proposals with small amounts for our organisation's smaller projects. Let's do them as well as possible, showing the entrepreneur what benefits he or she can gain from further financing of our activities. It may turn out that the business owner will discover the potential and positives for himself from the cooperation.

Talk about problems

Lukasz Hoszko pointed out that it is necessary to have knowledge of the problem we want to solve with the financial assistance of the company we are approaching. He gave the example of the current situation with grain from Ukraine. The hypothetical owner of the company might have been in favour of supporting refugees from Ukraine, but as a result of the situation on the grain market, he might have changed his mind. As organisations, we need to be ready for the fact that funding may end for such sudden reasons. However, it is worth trying to salvage the situation by making the case for further action to solve the problem. The speaker advised to take an interest in how the war in Ukraine affects Polish companies, to catch worrying signals early and to be ready to discuss difficult topics.



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