

## Accessing Funds Held at DAFs

Donor-advised funds have become a very popular charitable vehicle for high net worth donors across the country. They are easy for donors to use, offer good technology platforms for self-provisioning donations and grant requests, provide low cost investment options, and deliver flexible reporting tools. As a result, the assets in donor-advised accounts are significant and continue to grow, and happily are already committed to philanthropy.

**But maybe you're feeling overwhelmed trying to understand the DAF model.** Do you sense that you're not getting your share of your donors' philanthropy? You may feel stuck in a zero-sum conundrum of either your loyal donors give to you OR their gift goes to a DAF.

Accessing the assets held in donor-advised funds requires a special approach. The DAFs are not the problem. The challenge is to recognize enough about both the DAF structure **and** your donors so you can be effective at tapping into these potential pools of funding.

The single key message here is:

### **Your attention should be on the donor**

The effort to move assets from DAF accounts to your charity needs to be centered on your donors, *not* on soliciting DAFs to send you more money.

You can begin by considering these five questions:

- 1. Who are the donors with assets held in DAFs?**
- 2. Why have they given to a DAF rather than directly to a charity?**
- 3. What makes a DAF attractive to a donor?**
- 4. How can the popularity of DAFs be leveraged by a charity?**
- 5. Should a charity ever contact a DAF directly?**

Soliciting donations from potential DAF account holders takes a bit more work and focus, but don't skip the effort. In the end, it will provide your team with a much more rewarding relationship with your donors. With this better insight and appreciation of both DAFs and these high potential donors, you can develop more energized patrons and alumni to become partners and evangelists with you for the long term.

The Acadia Squam Group can guide you and your team to brainstorm the answers to these questions. We will help you design an effective initiative to outreach for these DAF assets.

*The Acadia Squam Group LLC helps non-profits with two specific approaches to fund-raising to generate new gifts from donors – donations from DAFs and gifts of illiquid assets. We can facilitate this conversation in the next team meeting or tactical planning session. More information is available at [acadiasquam.com](http://acadiasquam.com).*