

How to set up a Giving Club

1. Determine giving levels that challenge your donors to increase their financial support: for example \$1,000 (not \$1,000 - \$5,000).
2. Decide whether you wish this giving club to be for those who make a single annual gift, or whose cumulative giving reaches the threshold. In either case, be clear that the giving club requires annual giving.
3. Set an annual renewal date or deadline for giving club membership. December 31 works well since many donors make gifts at the end of the year; gifts received by that date qualify the donor for participation in the giving club for the subsequent year. Some organizations choose their own fiscal year or some time period of symbolic significance.
4. Plan at least three giving clubs, with three different giving levels—for example, \$250, \$1,000 and \$5,000. This will encourage donors to upgrade their contribution over the years.
5. Select a name for each of the giving clubs. Conventional names include Century Club, President's Society, Founder's Club, Dean's Roundtable. Consider, however, names unique to your organization: the name of your founder, a famous member or donor, historical figure embodying your organization's mission, or a concept important to your organization.
6. Determine the donor's benefits for each level or club: plaques or certificates, parking or library privileges, autographed book, listing of name in program or annual report, access to staff or faculty, invitation to special events.
7. Decide how and where you'll recognize donors to each giving club—newsletter, plaques, annual reports and special brochures are some possibilities.
8. Identify board members and key donors who can "seed" each giving club with their contributions. Contact them personally to ask them to serve as Charter Members.

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9. Prepare a brochure for each club—or a booklet for all clubs.
 - Describe how the giving club works: annual contributions of at least \$_____ for unrestricted support.
 - State whether the gift may be made in several payments, and whether deferred gifts will be counted. Some organizations have a giving club just for those who've remembered the group in their wills.
 - Identify the benefits of belonging to the giving club.
 - List the Charter Members.
10. For higher level giving clubs, plan an annual special event, such as a luncheon, dinner or seminar. The president or executive director must be on hand. Consider inviting a prominent person or special speaker. These events will encourage renewal of contributions.
11. At least once each year, list donors and giving levels for each club in your newsletter, annual report or (preferably) special publication.