

## Creating sustainable funding models for small and medium-sized associations

*Facilitated by Kai Troll, CEO of Best Buddies Europe/Middle East/Africa*

Kai opened the workshop by giving a brief presentation of Best Buddies. The organization was founded by Anthony K. Shriver in 1989 with the main purpose of promoting the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities (ID) into society. The organization wants to achieve this by offering inclusive programmes. One of these programmes is the Best Buddies Jobs programme, designed to integrate people with ID into the community through supported employment and ongoing training. This will allow them to attain and maintain jobs, earn an income, pay taxes, and work in an environment alongside others in the community.

Next, Kai talked about the relationship between governance and funding. Creating a sustainable funding model will not succeed if organisations do not know why they really exist, and what it is they are actually trying to change. A good governance board model implies bringing people together from various expertise and backgrounds, including people with ID and their families.

Kai then explained the organizational development system which Best Buddies is using to help raise more funding. This system contains business components, with each one having certain standards and requirements, which need to be fulfilled in order to move on to the next level. Without this system, it would be difficult for Kai to make a donor or sponsor understand what he wants.

There are 4 key questions that need answering for funders to understand the significance of an organization, and why they should buy into it.

Are you solving a problem? Which one? (Exclusion of people with ID)

Solution? (Social inclusion of people with ID)

BB's part in solving the problem? (Offer the inclusion programmes for a better quality of life)

Impact? (Creating happy people, happy society)

Funding is a specialist expertise, and organisations should hire someone especially for this task. They should try to find someone who could perform this task on pro bono at first, and then maybe for a fee.

Another key element is that funding should originate from several sources of income; diversifying funding streams is essential. Organisations should raise unrestricted funding, preferably also project-related funding, and should ensure that funds are raised globally. Organisations should not do anything that does not support their strategic plan and growth.

Best Buddies generates income in a myriad of ways:

Special events (e.g. Best Buddies musical)

Merchandising

Licensing (licensed partners pay licensing fee)

Membership (different models for different types of members)

Accreditation fee (same value as revenue, which means no questions are asked about what is fair and not fair)

High-net-worth individuals

To promote funding, corporate and foundation partnerships are set up and celebrities are involved, among other things.

Kai concluded by repeating the key drivers for success: the organization development system, strategic planning, collaboration with partners, fast expansion, fast growth, diverse funding streams, different packages which cater for sponsor partners, and finally, the call to action.

Following the presentation, a group discussion was held. Because insufficient time was left, Kai addressed some key questions regarding Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs) and associations. Several questions were asked and answered by the participants.