



MOVING BEYOND BRICKS AND PLAQUES: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON BUILDING INCLUSIVE NAMING & RECOGNITION PRACTICES

April 18, 2023



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AGENDA FOR TODAY

**Naming & Recognition Practices
Today**

**Evolution of Naming and
Recognition Practices**

**How to Create a More Inclusive
Naming and Recognition Practice**





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**Who is currently or
about to be in a
campaign?**

**Who has revisited
their naming and
recognition policy
in the last 2 years?**





WHY DO WE DO THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE? THE DONOR PERSPECTIVE

Legacy

Reputation

Pride of gift

Encourage others





WHY DO WE DO THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE? **THE FUNDRAISER PERSPECTIVE**

Tool to
upgrade

Meet donor
preference

Positive peer
pressure

Habit





COMMON TRAITS OF A NAMING AND RECOGNITION POLICY

**SPECIFIED
DURATION & GIFT
AMOUNT**

*(You get this at this
level for this long)*

**MORALS & VALUES
CLAUSE**

(Just in case moment)

**EXCEPTIONS
POLICY**

*(Who decides if we
want to go outside this
policy)*





COMMON FACTORS WHEN DETERMINING NAMING AND RECOGNITION

Traditionally, we look at:

- Square footage
- Visibility
- Appeal (lobby vs. restroom)
- Number of offerings
- Relativity to other naming opportunity levels
- Prospect capacity

We also need to look at:

- Constituencies beyond donors
- Community experience of the space
- Values communicated by public recognition
- Unnamed spaces





**How do you personally
experience named
spaces?
What does it make you
feel or think about?**





WHY RECONSIDER TRADITIONAL NAMING AND RECOGNITION PRACTICES?

- Named spaces can communicate a sense of ownership
- That presentation of power can be exclusionary
- Names do not always reflect passion and commitment
- There might be a lack of community input informing naming policies
- Permanently named spaces limit future opportunities for fundraising
- Permanently named spaces don't reflect changing community needs





HOW CAN WE DO BETTER? **GET CURIOUS**

- What do we want naming and donor recognition to communicate to the community?
- How do you define and therefore celebrate generosity?
- Who will be recognized?
- What message is delivered when an institution renames an important feature after a donor?
- What types of recognition will be most meaningful and motivating to donors, volunteers, staff?
- How do you personally experience named spaces or donor recognition?





PROCESS: CREATING A MORE INCLUSIVE NAMING AND RECOGNITION POLICY

**CONDUCT AN AUDIT
OF CURRENT POLICIES
AND GIFT
AGREEMENTS**

**HOLD COMMUNITY
DISCUSSIONS**

Include staff, faculty,
students, donors and
volunteers.

**CREATE AN
APPROACH THAT
REFLECTS YOUR
INTERESTS, GOALS,
AND ASPIRATIONS**

...and then
communicate it!





CASE STUDY: PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATION

- Large to mid-size organization in the middle of capital campaign
- Conducted nine-month project that included national benchmarking exercise, audit, outreach, and reporting
- History of active use of public recognition
- Determined: Emphasis on storytelling, increased use of non-permanent recognition, elevation of volunteers and that naming at the top levels were still critically important to some donors
- Received two additional leadership gifts as a result





What changes
could you make to
your current
recognition
approach to make
it more inclusive?



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IDEAS FOR HOW TO EVOLVE YOUR NAMING AND RECOGNITION POLICY

- Cumulative gifts or duration of giving rather than specific amount
- Acknowledging non-financial contributions, such as time and passion
- Recognition designed by the community or tells a story
- Naming selection rights from a list created by the organization
- Preserving community spaces by not allowing them to be named
- Creating a more defined alignment and values clause





Who could you
start this conversation
with next week?



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Thank you!

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