

Subject: GLOBE fund-raising

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Title: Fund raising for GLOBE

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Body of abstract:

One of the challenges of running GLOBE within a country is raising the funds needed to make it happen. We have worked at two levels – country and school – to enable the GLOBE Programme in the UK to develop. At the country level we have targeted Government and the corporate sector, with results that have generated £75,000 - £100,000 p.a. for the last 6 years, as GLOBE meets many targets of both government and business. At the school level we provide schools with draft publicity and promotional ideas, so that they can then go to local sponsors for any equipment they need. Recently our national sponsors have also been interested in helping targeted schools near their offices.

Paper

“Raising funds for anything is never easy. Spending funds is always much too easy.”

One of the key requirements of the GLOBE International Partnership is that it pays for itself. The central funding from NASA and others supports the US management and administration of GLOBE, but all other funding both in the States and Internationally has to come from somewhere else.

So why is any money needed? The main area of cost is obviously salaries for people to do things. Although many people can - and do - volunteer their time, once you plan having paid staff to do things, you have costs. In schools there is also the issue of buying equipment to carry out the GLOBE Protocols. This paper summarises some of the issues that we have come across in running GLOBE in the UK, in the hope it inspires and challenges us all to do more.

The UK Government signed up to the GLOBE Programme in 1995, didn't really do anything in 1996, then realised it had to do something, so commissioned a pilot study to see how the programme could work in the UK. We (as the Wildlife Trusts, and our consultancy company Middlemarch Environmental Ltd) tendered for this contract, and after a competitive selection process we were awarded the one-year contract (of about £13,000/\$23,000) in 1997. With this money we had to trial the programme in eight schools throughout England, look at GLOBE's relevance to our curriculum, and come up with a plan for possible implementation.

As a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) and UK Charity, we have to get funding from a variety of sources to achieve our mission. We get no regular or routine state support, but rely on grants, sponsors, donations and members for all our income. As our membership income is specifically for our Warwickshire-based activities, we could not use this to support GLOBE throughout the UK. Instead we had to look for grants and sponsors. But how much did we need, and what for?

The key starting point was the plan – to identify what we wanted to achieve and how we intended to do it. We aimed to offer GLOBE Training to any school in the UK that wanted it, rather than targeting a set number of schools. We had to ‘translate’ the GLOBE Teacher's Guide into English, in a form our teachers could use to enhance their teaching. And we had to promote the programme in four countries, with different teaching curricula and new devolved Governments.

Our initial plan envisaged two full-time members of staff for three years to deliver this work, plus some support and management time too. This worked out at about £80,000 (\$144,000) p.a. so we developed a proposal for a specific grant scheme and were delighted to get it awarded – except that the UK Government only ever pays a proportion of what you want, in this case just 50%. So we still needed to find the other 50% and were exceptionally fortunate that a new tax-funded grant scheme had just been launched. With a following wind and some corporate sponsorship, we got the remaining funding approved and we could start to run GLOBE in the UK.

Since then we have maintained this level of income at £75-100,000 (\$135-180,000) per year through an on-going programme of grants and sponsorship – but it has certainly not been easy. Funding packages in the UK are usually only for 3 years at the most, with some for just a year. We have had to develop a programme of constant applications, so that when one stream finishes another (hopefully) begins. But we have found the corporate sector a very useful source of funding.

Why should a company want to support GLOBE? The answer depends to an extent on the company, and a key starting point is to understand what the company's aims are in relation to any sponsorship they may be giving. Fortunately the web provides most of the answers, and can save time in targeting who to approach for what. Key features of GLOBE that are attractive to corporate supporters in the UK are:

- Children - the next generation to influence
- Schools – always short of money, and good to support
- Science – for science-based companies
- Technology – for technology-based companies
- Environment – for a wide range of organisations
- Sustainable Development – again a wide range of potential supporters
- World-wide Connections – important for multi-nationals in different countries
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) – the new buzzword linking companies with their local communities, neighbourhoods, and environments, where GLOBE delivers on the ground
- Government Support – to make the project 'important'

The next stage is to tailor your plan to their needs, so you can help them do what they want. In our case this has involved inventing a number of 'mini-projects' within GLOBE, and offering each to different companies. The final three steps are who, when and how much? 'Who' is usually the Director of Corporate Relations or Environment or whatever else. The name of this person is good to know – depending on how much time you are investing in developing the relationship. 'When' is ideally when their budget cycle needs some input – but you can never be sure of this, and be prepared for a long wait. 'How much' is the greatest unknown. Sometimes they say their maximum amount – sometimes you just need to pitch in. You should also always offer them returns in terms of publicity, promotion, involvement and then ideally, a long-term relationship will develop.

What about GLOBE Schools? Here the funding needs are different, as the teachers' salaries are paid for, so it's mainly equipment funding you are looking for. And you've really only got a choice of companies in your immediate neighbourhood. But again check them out, establish a contact (with parents working for the company where possible) and make your pitch. Many companies are on the look out for good local publicity, and obviously a press photo-call at a school with a beaming business person giving a weather station to a group of smiling kids is a wonderful bit of coverage. To try to encourage this process, we send out draft press releases to all our GLOBE schools for them to use locally to publicise them joining GLOBE. Once this has been done, an approach to local companies can prove successful as they've just read about GLOBE in the paper.

Overall, GLOBE needs more money everywhere if it is to prosper, so we all need to work together to develop funding strategies that benefit GLOBE around the world.