Session:

Revenue Diversification Without Mission Drift

Grow your funding without changing who you are.

With Shakeia McPherson
Special Programs and Impact Manager
The Staten Island Foundation

The Staten Island Foundation

Q&A

The view from the funder's seat

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Laura Jean Watters

Executive Director

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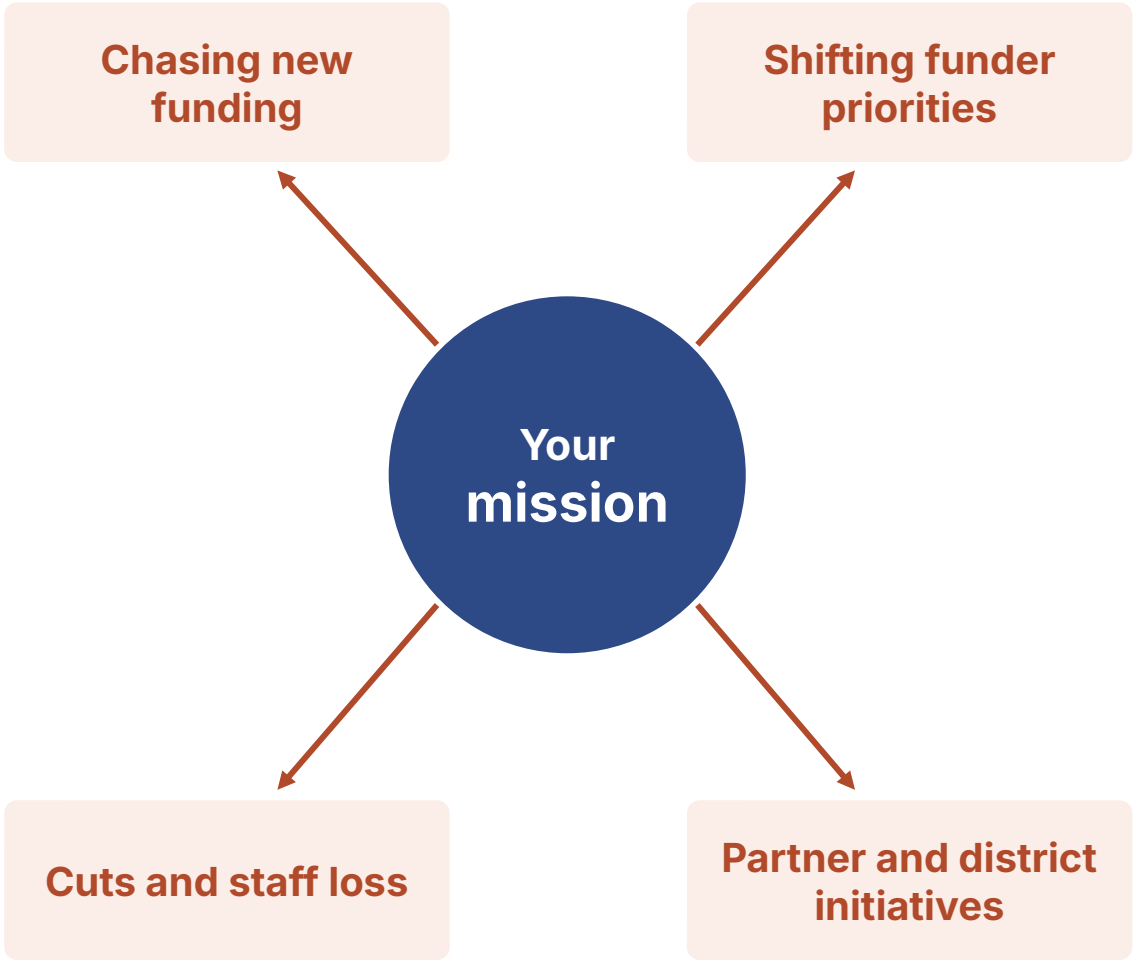
What Is Mission Drift?

MISSION DRIFT

When an organization is pulled in many directions, often by funding, and moves into areas outside its mission, purpose and expertise.

It rarely happens in one decision. It happens one "just this once" at a time.



Tips 1-3: Staying on Mission While You Diversify

1 Write your fit test first

Make the fit test your first step, before researching opportunities through Candid, Google, or any other source.

- Will this advance our mission for the people we serve?
- Without the funding, would we still pursue this work?
- Can we carry it out without diverting resources from core programs?

2 Understanding your non-negotiables

Mission, the people you serve, and the core programs

- Boundaries create clarity
- Alignment in staffing matters.

3 Diversify Funding so no one funder dominates

Broaden revenue across multiple sources.

- Overdependence on a single funder can weaken your position when priorities change.
- Develop funding sources outside program support
  - Reserve contributions
  - Endowment collaborations
  - Corporate Support
  - Individual donors

Tips 4–6: Staying on Mission While You Diversify

4 Utilize Free Resources

- Volunteer expertise
- Programs or complimentary training
- Effective time management creates space to develop and maintain these relationships.

5 Your board is another source of support

- Guardrails of the mission
- Diversify Relationships with new donors or funders
- Expertise within the organization

6 Negotiate and invite funders in

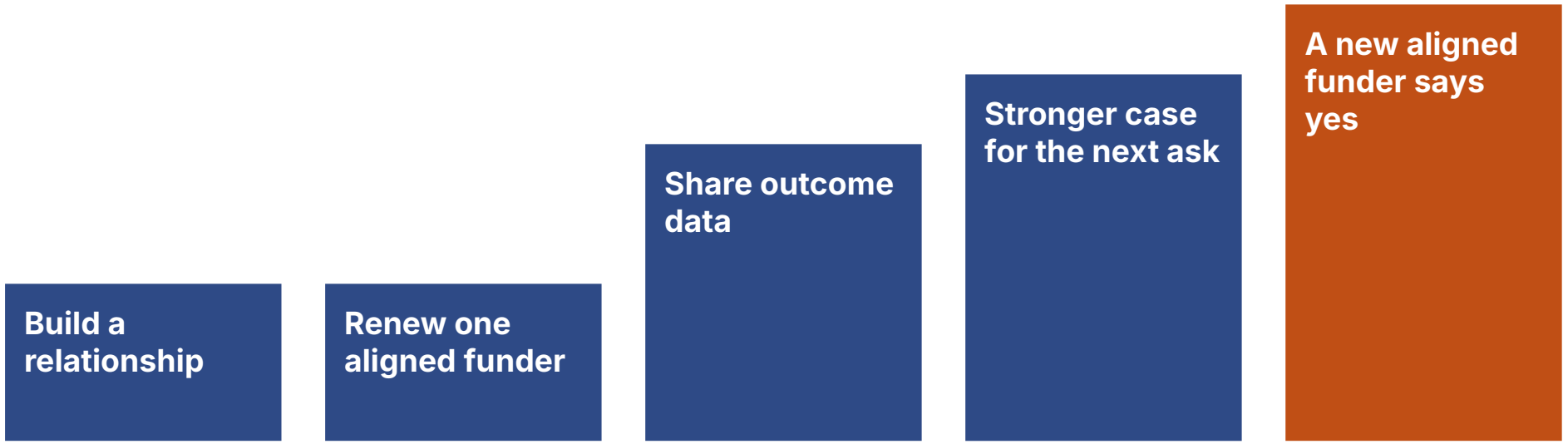
By understanding your perspective, funders can often see how a genuine partnership benefits both parties and supports shared success.

- Follow-ups (progress and final reports) matter

Let Small Wins Compound

Small wins compound

Each aligned win makes the next ask easier.



Drift compounds too: each off-mission grant pulls you a little further.

Clarity attracts the right funders. Consistency turns small wins into momentum.

Know Your Uniqueness

“We are the only _____ that _____ for _____, and we can prove it with _____.”

- Which contributions are unique to our work?
- Who benefits, and what makes us the right choice?
- How do data, stories, or partners demonstrate our value?
- **Authenticity in your work opens doors to opportunity.**

Current Opportunities with The Staten Island Foundation:

Community Research Grant Program

In partnership with AmeriCorps RSVP/SERVE

1. **Train** Senior volunteers learn to research grants using Candid's Foundation Directory.

2. **Match** Each volunteer is paired with a participating nonprofit.

3. **Research** Together they identify funding sources that match the nonprofit's needs.



📅 Make an Appointment to Research Grant Opportunities

⭐**Candid Funder Information Directory**

- Candid Funder Information Directory is located at the Foundation office. The directory has access to over 140,000 grant maker profiles. This is a valuable resource for your organization that can add to your fundraising tools. Please contact Shakeia McPherson, the Special Program & Impact Manager at mcpherson@thestatenislandfoundation.org, with any related questions.

Please Note 📝

- The Candid Funder Information Directory does not guarantee support from The Staten Island Foundation. All requests to the Foundation must align with the Foundation's guidelines and focus areas outlined on our website. Please contact Aleyah to discuss submitting an application to The Staten Island Foundation.

Appointment Details

✅Tuesday and Thursday timeslots from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. Make an appointment using the Calendly link HERE or scanning the QR code. Reservations must be made a minimum of 48 hours in advance.

✅Users will have access to the Foundation's computer workstation and printer. Searches of the directory may be printed but they may not to downloaded to users' devices.