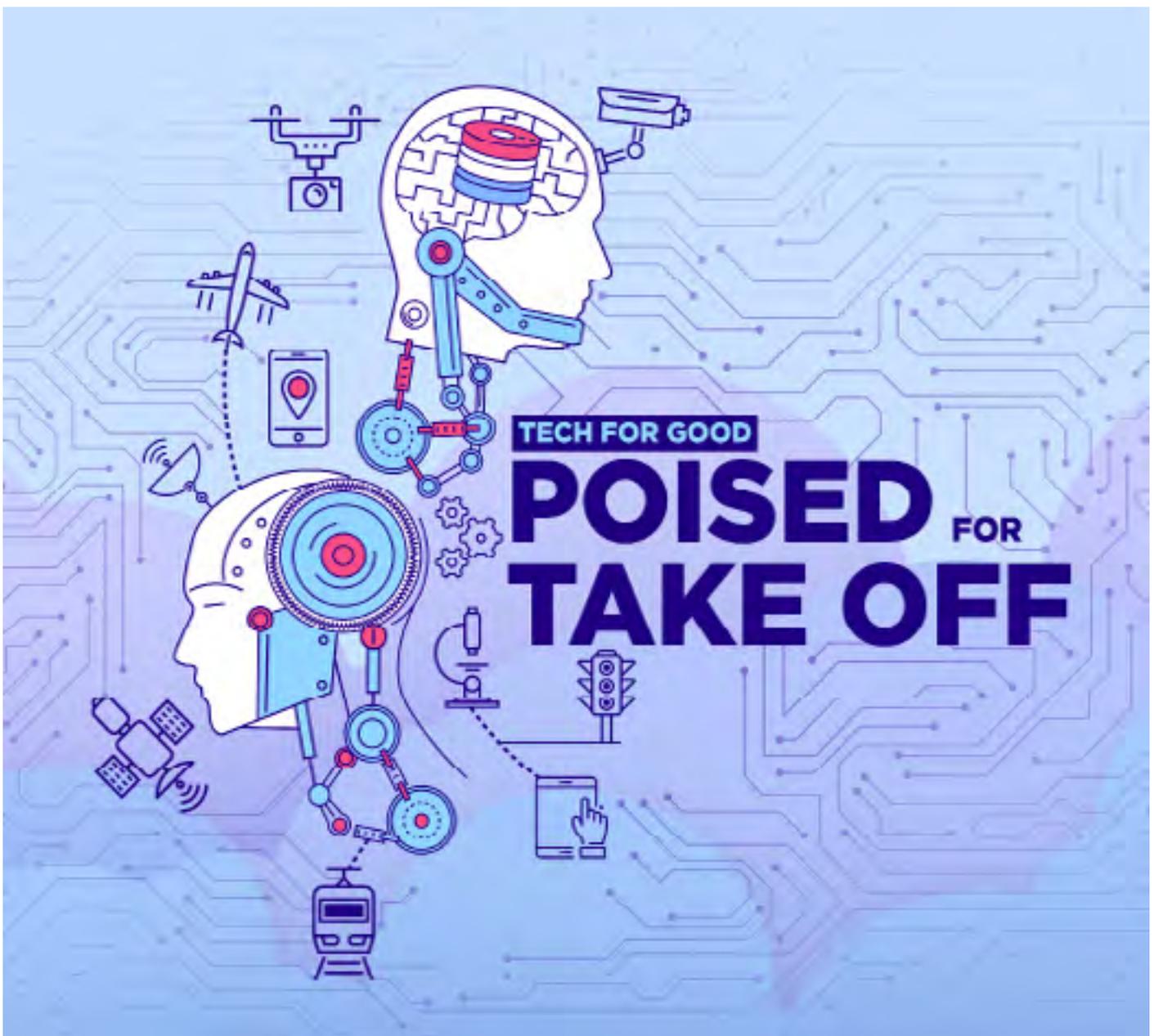


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Strengthening the Hands that Help

As individuals and foundations look to increase their social impact beyond their own countries, AVPN's partnership director **Caroline McLaughlin** presents a quick check-list to get started.



Caroline McLaughlin has over 15 years' experience creating and managing different networks globally. With an MBA from INSEAD, she has chaired many organisations such as the Ribbons of Hope, Invest In Women Foundation (as co-founder) and International Women of Istanbul.

For Singaporeans (and indeed, many who live in the Global North), travelling around Southeast Asia is often a vivid reminder of the contrast with their country. Therefore, it is not surprising to see people increasingly look for ways to give back and do more than donate money when they return home. They volunteer to support fundraising efforts, join a non-profit's committee or board or start a foundation to support a wide range of beneficiaries.

AVPN, a non-profit network for funders of social investment in Asia, has over 460 members who provide grants, debt and equity for non-profits and social enterprises across the entire Asia-Pacific region. We bring our members—organisations such as Rockefeller Foundation and

Microsoft—together with Singapore foundations like Tan ChinTuan and Temasek to talk about how they can be more effective in their social impact.

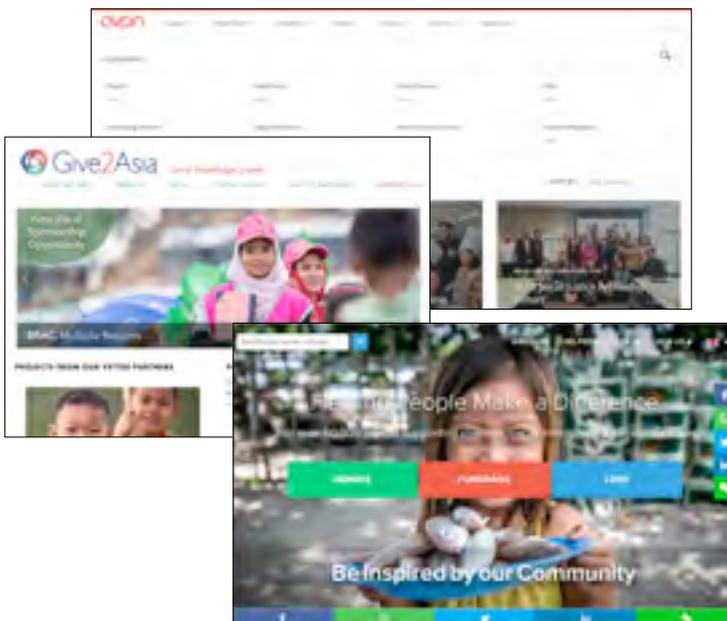
Especially for Singaporeans who wish to do more for organisations working elsewhere, traditional fundraising strategies such as charity balls are not viable because of the rule requiring 80% of those funds to be spent on local programs. Consequently, at AVPN's headquarters in Singapore, we are often approached by individuals or smaller foundations seeking advice on helping a Southeast Asian non-profit raise funds, awareness, or both.

We've distilled our experience of working with funders and donors from across the region to help all those looking to make a difference through their non-profit work. (This is by no means restricted to Singapore.)

Do Your Research.

If the social sector is new to you, learn all you can.

TIP #1: Know the competition. Your non-profit will be special but not unique, so look for organisations working in the same geographic and thematic area. A recent Epic Foundation report found that 63% of 3,500 non-profits surveyed said that they had a unique model, i.e. they were the first organisation to implement their product/program anywhere, which is rarely the case. You can look at AVPN's Deal Share Platform, Give2Asia or Simply Giving for similar non-profits.



TIP #2: Know the region your non-profit works in. Your non-profit is part of the greater social investment ecosystem; and every country in Asia has a nuanced social sector, comprising governments, aid agencies, local foundations and corporations that you can tap into for resources and support. AVPN has produced a comprehensive guide to the Social Investment Landscape in 14 Asian countries detailing key players in each sector.

TIP #3: Learn how non-profits work. The non-profit world is different, and you will learn this at your first board meeting. Experience with for-profit boards is good, but learning how non-profits work will help you ask relevant questions at board meetings, which will help steer the organisation.

Fundraising is hard.

This is, however, the life-blood of a non-profit.

TIP #1: You don't need to be that person who can sell ice to an Eskimo. It's a skill that can be taught, so you could take an online course to immediately add value to your board contributions and provide fresh thinking and approaches. Philanthropy University offers free online courses on fundraising strategies.

TIP #2: Corporations are tricky to engage with and rarely give cash donations. They might, however, be able to provide:

1. In-kind support;
2. Manpower, if you have an employee engagement opportunity; and
3. Some funding through employee donations and a matching scheme, if they have one.

TIP #3: Broaden your base of funders

1. Subscribe to resources such as AsianNGO and FundsforNGOs, which provide an overview of granting opportunities from funders all over the globe.
2. Look at who funds in the region or in your sector. Check out AVPN Landscape report, research other NGOs doing similar work in the region and make a list of their donors, and check which corporations are supporting your cause.
3. Reach out to local foreign government aid groups like DFAT or USAID and see how you can be accredited to receive government and multilateral funding.

TIP #4: While you are working on tips 2 and 3, don't forget your individual donors.

1. Recognise them annually with report on the impact of their donation.
2. Look for ways to increase their giving through monthly direct debits, and fundraising events.
3. Ask for introductions to their friends and family.

This is just to get you started; as you engage with the community and the non-profit of your choice, you will be able to formulate and iterate strategies that will work better for your cause. **i**