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How to Write a Historical Value Statement for Your Nonprofit

A Historical Value Statement highlights your organization's story, achievements, and ongoing purpose. It helps donors understand why your work matters and how their support drives real impact. For GivingTuesday and other campaigns, this statement serves as the foundation of your messaging. It reminds supporters what you have accomplished and what still needs to be done.

Remember, your Historical Value Statement is similar to but different from your Mission Statement. A Mission Statement defines your organization's purpose at the highest level. It explains *why* you exist and *what* you aim to achieve in simple, timeless terms.

Example:

Our mission is to provide access to healthy, affordable food for families in need.

On the other hand, a Historical Value Statement shows *what your mission has accomplished in practice*. It connects your mission to real-world results, tells your story of impact, and explains how supporters have helped you move forward.

Example:

Over the past year, we expanded our food distribution network to reach 5,000 additional families, reducing food insecurity in our community by 30 percent. With continued support, we plan to add new delivery sites in underserved areas next year.

In Simple Terms

- The Mission Statement tells people why you exist.
- The Historical Value Statement shows what you've done and where you're going.

Here's how to write your Historical Value Statement

1. Purpose and Focus

Your goal is to connect what you have achieved in the past with what you plan to accomplish next. The statement should:

- Show how your nonprofit has made a measurable difference.
- Emphasize ongoing needs and how continued support creates impact.
- Build confidence that your organization uses resources effectively.

Think of it as a bridge between past success and future opportunity.

2. Tone and Style

Keep your tone authentic, clear, and centered on your mission. Avoid overly formal or promotional language. Write as if you are speaking directly to a supporter who wants to understand your story.

Style tips:

- Use active voice (e.g. "We provided food to 2,000 families last year.")
- Keep sentences short and easy to read.
- Avoid jargon or internal acronyms.
- Use language that is emotional but grounded in real results.

3. Structure and Flow

A strong Historical Value Statement follows a simple structure:

- a. Introduction: Who you are and why your mission matters.
- b. Achievements: Key milestones and measurable results.
- c. Challenges: The needs or issues that remain unsolved.
- d. Vision forward: How you plan to use future resources to continue making an impact.

4. What to Include

Include these elements in your statement:

- A single clear sentence that states your mission or purpose.
- Highlights from recent years, both numbers and stories.
- A short example that shows your impact.
- A summary of ongoing needs or goals.
- A closing line that looks ahead.

Example:

Over the past year, we expanded our after-school program to reach 300 students who needed academic support. Our volunteers provided more than 4,000 hours of tutoring, helping students improve confidence and performance in the classroom. With continued support, we can bring this opportunity to even more families next year.

5. Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Writing too formally, like an annual report.
- Focusing only on accomplishments without showing what comes next.
- Using internal language that donors may not recognize.
- Making it too long. Aim for 150 to 250 words.

6. Where to Use It

You can use your Historical Value Statement in:

- Your GivingTuesday campaign page.
- Emails, newsletters, and donation appeals.

- Social media bios.
- Your website's "About" or "Impact" page.
- Interviews, presentations, and volunteer training materials.

Final Tip

Before sharing, read your statement out loud. It should sound natural, passionate, and easy to follow. If it feels stiff or complicated, simplify it.

The GivingTuesday Success Center

👉 [**Explore our full GivingTuesday Success Center**](#) for more helpful resources and links.