

CRAFTING A NONPROFIT ARTS ELEVATOR PITCH



WHAT YOU'LL GET OUT OF THIS GUIDE:

An elevator pitch is a brief, persuasive speech used to spark interest in a nonprofit arts organization. It should be concise, emotionally engaging, and clearly communicate the mission. Whether delivered at a networking event, during a donor call, or in response to “what does the organization do?”, the elevator pitch should leave a memorable impression.

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STEP 01: UNDERSTAND THE MISSION

- Identify what the organization does.
- Clarify who is served.
- Articulate why the work matters.

Tip: Review the nonprofit's mission statement, then restate it in natural and heartfelt language.

STEP 02: KNOW THE AUDIENCE

- Determine the audience: donor, local artist, or community partner.
- Tailor the pitch slightly to align with the listener's interests.

EXAMPLES:

- To a donor: emphasize impact.
- To an artist: highlight opportunities.
- To a community member: emphasize access and inclusivity.



STEP 03: STRUCTURE

THE PITCH (30–60 SECONDS)

OPENER

Begin with a simple, engaging statement or question that relates to the mission.

Example: “Art can change the way people see themselves and their communities.”

IDENTITY & WORK

Clearly describe the organization and its specific programs in plain language.

Example: “Creative Futures offers free and low-cost arts programs for youth and adults across the city – from mural projects to theater workshops.”

IDENTITY & WORK

Suggest a natural next step by inviting further conversation or highlighting relevance.

Example: “The organization seeks to connect with those who care about creativity and community.”

STEP 04: MAKE IT CONVERSATIONAL

- Ensure the pitch sounds natural and approachable.
- Use plain, accessible language.
- Encourage practice with peers or colleagues.
- Keep flexibility to adapt in the moment.

STEP 05: INCLUDE A STORY (OPTIONAL BUT POWERFUL)

A brief success story can reinforce impact:

- Provide one sentence about an individual who benefited.
- Use real names (with permission) or a strong anecdote.

Example: “Last year, Maya, a shy 14-year-old, performed in the youth theater showcase. Today, she leads her school’s drama club.”

STEP 06: PRACTICE & REFINE

- Rehearse with a mentor or team.
- Time delivery to ensure it is under one minute.
- Gather feedback on clarity and inspiration.



ELEVATOR PITCH TEMPLATE

“*[Organization Name]* is a nonprofit that *[states mission and primary work]*. The team is passionate about *[reason it matters]*. Recently, the organization *[impact story or statistic]*. Partnerships are welcomed with those who believe in the power of the arts to transform lives.”

Write Yours Here

QUICK CHECKLIST

- ❑ Clear articulation of organizational identity and work
- ❑ Emotionally engaging and audience-appropriate tone
- ❑ Under 60 seconds in length
- ❑ Includes a call to action or invitation
- ❑ Optional: brief, compelling story



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