An aerial photograph of a coastline with dark blue water and white foam from waves crashing against the shore. A large, semi-transparent blue circular logo is overlaid on the left side of the image. The logo consists of a central circle, an outer ring, and a stylized 'C' shape that is open on the right side.

We exist to support
emerging movements
working for urgent systemic change
in response to the climate
& ecological emergency

Climate
2025

Purpose

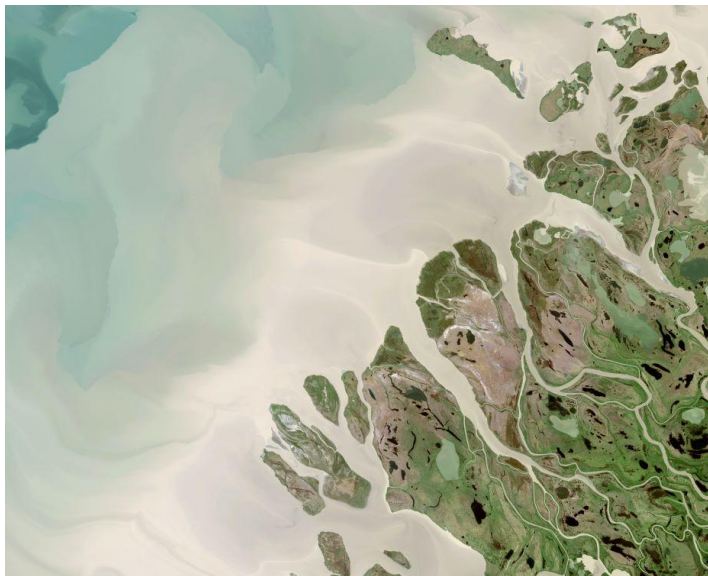


Case for Support Guide

The purpose of this guide is to enable emerging climate action and climate justice movements to **craft a clear** and **effective case for support** as a foundational tool for reaching out, connecting and guiding deeper conversations with funders. This resource is designed to guide your team through its stages of development and equip you with the know-how to develop a product that anchors your communication and inspires confidence in your fundraising.



Content & Learning Objectives



With this guide, we aim to enable your team to

- ✓ Recognize the value and function of a well-developed case for support
- ✓ Evaluate your team's readiness to develop a credible case and meaningfully deploy this tool
- ✓ Understand and think through each major building block that together comprises a strong case for support
- ✓ Craft a well-written argument that clearly articulates your movement's case and weaves each element together to create a compelling story
- ✓ Visually package your case for support in a way that informs and persuades different funder audiences
- ✓ Submit your case for support to Climate 2025 for review and feedback, along with potential opportunity for further development support and inclusion in our funder-facing portfolio.

An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. The top left shows dark, rocky terrain. Below it, a wide, light-colored sandy beach stretches across the middle. To the right, there are green, hilly areas with some buildings and roads. The bottom right shows more green hills and a small body of water.

Using This Guide

Advice for using this guide

We understand this isn't a 'one size fits all' process and that each Case for Support has its own feel and contains its own unique elements. We encourage you to adapt this content to what works best for you and your context, taking as little or as much as you need. We also encourage you to get back in touch with us with any questions or to learn about other potential opportunities for support.

So what is a Case for Support? First and foremost it is...

...**persuasive tool** for compelling potential funders to tangibly invest in your work and your vision.

...**a foundation** that serves as a base for all other fundraising efforts and ensures consensus, consistency, and buy-in across all members of your team around your messaging and funding priorities.

...**an engaging story** that illustrates the issue your movement seeks to resolve, how you plan to resolve it, your impact and what your movement could achieve with additional resources.

A case for support is itself another way of a call to action.

Developing a case for support can feel daunting and overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be, and investing the time to create this and to do it well **can really pay off**.

Having an effective case for support at your fingertips enables you to more swiftly react to funding opportunities and excite, compel, and inspire funders to invest in game-changing work.

Before You Start: Planning & Preparation



STEP 1: Getting your ducks in a row

There are a few things you'll want to have covered before you even begin, otherwise you may start to see cracks appear in the fault of your 'case' if there are some major strategic questions you've overlooked internally. Before anything ever reaches "paper", you'll want to be sure you've reached an appropriate point in your movement's strategic planning and that your team has reached a consensus around your next activities and funding priorities. The former has everything to do with your [Theory of Change](#) and the latter how you plan to implement it.

It's easy to be compelled by a desire to do too much. And it's by no means uncommon for many changemakers and trailblazers to realise (maybe even a little too late) they might've bit off more than they can chew. Have no fear! Your case for support should still embody your movements' full aspirations, but you should be clear about how you break this down, how your activities relate to each other and how to prioritize next stage funding needs and wants. This doesn't mean going to the other extreme and limiting your capabilities too severely or being too humble. There's a balance to strike. This is why we encourage you to **first pause and reflect** on where you are in your development and what your priorities are.

In this first section, we'll walk you through a few of the things you'll want to be sure you have in place and what information to have ready at your fingertips.

Your mission, vision and values

Mission

Otherwise known as your focus. Your movement's statement of purpose and how it's working to address an issue or a problem.

Vision

This signifies your direction. It's your bold statement that highlights your hopes and ambitions for the future and describes the long-term desired change as a result of your work.

Values

Your behavior. The essential, unchanging values that underpin your movement's outlook and approach.




A plan for implementation and consensus around funding priorities

A credible plan for implementation demonstrates how your movement is able to **put your theory into practice**. Your plan should include a projected timeline of activities illustrating when you expect to reach key targets and milestones. It's ok for these to change later on- they likely will.

Once you've mapped this out, then it's likely your team already has a shared understanding of what your next step priorities are and what activities and capacities you're seeking to fund. Without clear consensus, these inconsistencies will be visible through in your case for support and demonstrate a lack of focus.

Your theory of change (ToC)

Your ToC is essentially a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why you're able to generate a desired change within a particular context. It enables you to demonstrate and understand your movements broader goals and objectives along with associated activities and outcomes. Don't yet have one? We recommend taking a look at these resources:

-  [Theory of Change in Ten Steps](#) from *New Philanthropy Capital*
-  [A Self-Directed Guide to Outcome Map Development](#) from *ORS Impact*
-  Get started with our in-house Climate 2025 [How To resource](#).

A clear budget

Make sure you've defined and understand what financial resources are needed to implement your planned activities and what type of support you're looking for - e.g. core costs vs. projects costs and how this is broken down. You likely won't need to include the full breakdown in your case for support, but you will need to have your top-line numbers set to inform your overarching ask. You'll also want to be ready to back up these numbers with a detailed budget when funder asks.

Take a look at these resources here for some additional guidance on creating a budget:



[Financial Planning and Budgeting Toolkit](#) from CIVICUS



[Planning a Budget for a Proposal](#) from *the Rebel's Guide to Project Management*

Proof of concept or impact

You'll want to ensure you're able to leverage **solid facts, figures and data** to **demonstrate your impact**.

If you are a new movement undertaking a new approach, you need to ensure you can sufficiently support your proof of concept or impact. For example, what's the underlying theory behind your strategy? What evidence or precedent has laid the groundwork for your operating theory of change?

Ultimately, you'll want to demonstrate progress to date and predictions for the future. Whether your movements is newly emerging or long established, make sure you're tracking major milestones, achievements and recognition around your development, activities and impact.

Funders, just like any other supporter, need to be feel convinced by the viability of your work and the solution you're bringing to an issue. You want to be able to bring your work to life.

Pull together personal stories, testimonials and images of your work in action- anything that can generate an emotive and persuasive connection to your cause.

Team structure, capacity and credibility

Be sure your team has established clear rules of governance and a coherent decision making structure. Even if your team is comprised exclusively of volunteers or includes only a few paid positions, this is all the more reason to map out clear roles and responsibilities, both for internal clarity and to demonstrate what capacities are truly needed to carry out your work and how all of these roles fit together.

We also recommend collecting photos and brief bios for core team members to showcase what experiences, perspectives, and talents your team is able to bring to this space.

Team buy-in

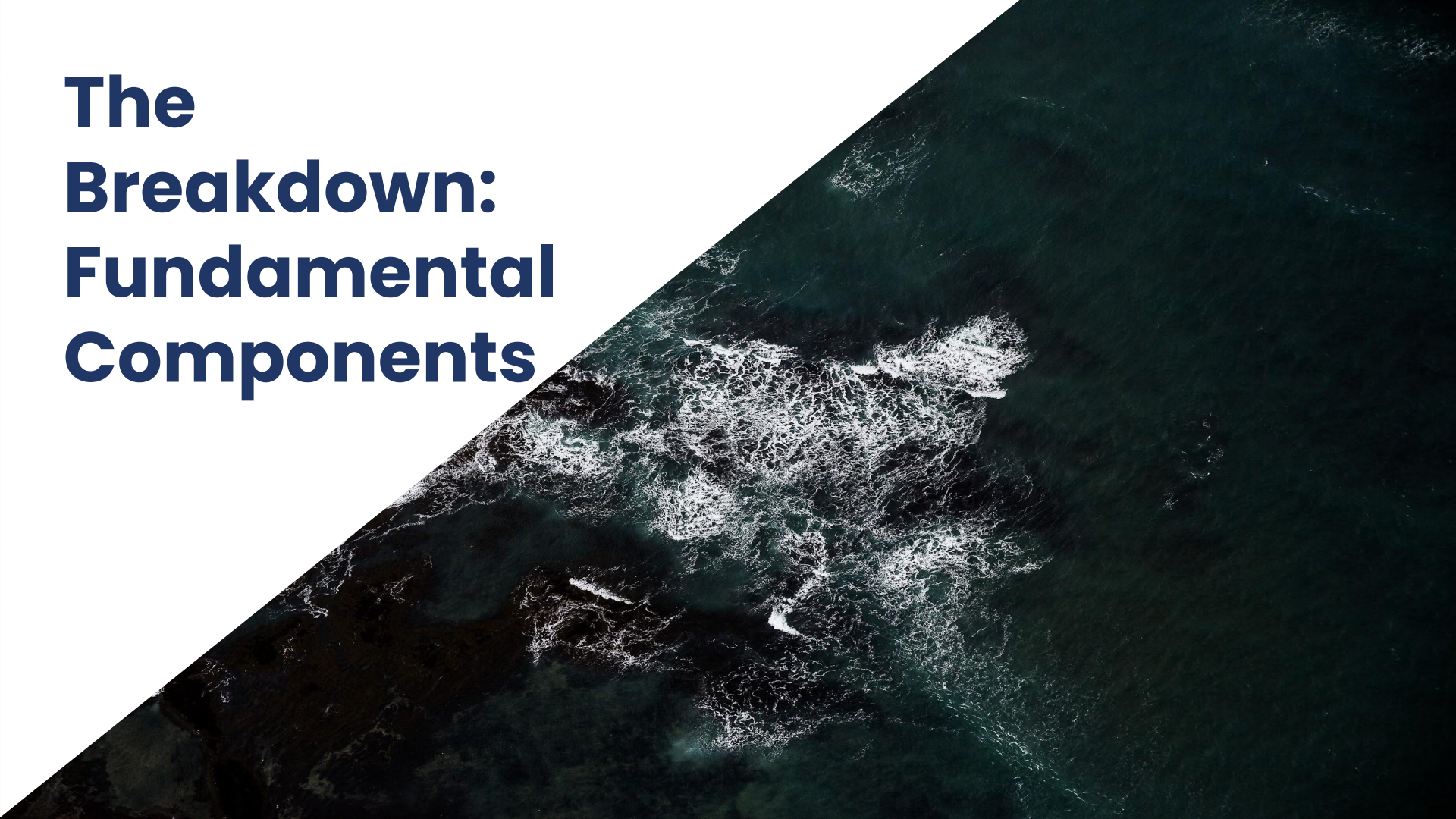
You'll need to ensure your team's buy-in before, during and after the development of your case and prepare to dedicate appropriate time and efforts towards reaching out and engaging funders around your work.

Check to see if you're ready.



[Download and Complete Checklist](#)

The Breakdown: Fundamental Components



Step two: Establishing the Framework

Ok, you've checked all the boxes and you're ready to dive in. While every case for support looks distinctly different, there's some pretty fundamental information you'll want to make sure you're clearly communicating to any prospective funder.

We've broken this down into **seven key components** that typically comprise a case for support. Below you'll find an explanation of each component along with a few question prompts to aid in brainstorming and developing your content. This will also provide a baseline framework for where and how you should be pulling in key pieces of information and what sort of credibility you'll need to establish.

We encourage you to read through these first, jot down notes, and complete the basic case for support form at the end. Don't worry about perfection yet. This is an opportunity to decide on the real content and substance of your case. The frills will come later.

The problem statement

Problem statements get a lot of negative rap. Maybe you've heard that launching into a problem can create a sense of hopelessness or despondency. But let's face it, you're out there doing this work because there are problems that need fixing.

Part of being solutions-oriented is acknowledging and understanding what the issue is you're trying to resolve, what systems need reforming and how to imagine alternative ways of working and being.

By acknowledging the problem or issue at hand sets the stage for your movement's story, demonstrating what is actually at stake if you don't act.

Here are a few questions you may want to consider your problem statement to answer:

- *What's the problem or issue that your movement is responding to?*
- *Why does it matter?*
- *Who is most affected? Which communities and across which geographies?*
- *What is the scale or scope of this problem and what wider effects might it have if left unaddressed?*

Additional resources:



[Need Statement Toolkit](#) from The Harvest Foundation

Who you are

The 'who you are' speaks to your purpose, your motivations and your credibility. This is where your movement and the value of your work comes into play.

Your issue or problem statement may resonate with your prospective funder given their areas of investment, but you'll also want to establish why your team and your movement are the ones to tackle the issue.

Before you explain what it is that you do, this part provides the pretext for your motivations and priorities. This is your opportunity to speak to your identity and also distinguish your movement from other players working within or around these issues.

Here are some questions you may want to consider:

- *Who are the members of your movement? (e.g. concerned citizens, mothers, airline workers, etc.)*
- *What do you care about most? What are your guiding philosophies and core beliefs?*
- *Why is this problem important to you?*
- *Where do you belong within the existing "ecosystem"? What makes your movement suited to address this issue?*
- *What strengths, capabilities and perspectives do you bring to this issue?*
- *What is your founding story/history (if relevant to your identity)?*

What you do and how you do it

Now for the action! Here's your chance to showcase what it is you actually do. (Hint*: This is where your Theory of Change comes into play).

Your TOC provides the blueprint for all your activities, their anticipated outcomes and how these tie back to your objectives. You should not include all of the fine details of your TOC into your case for support, but remember to demonstrate that you do have one. This of this section as your abridged TOC.

If you carry out multiple activities, try to group these together under particular themes, pulling out the most important highlights.

Here is where it is most important to demonstrate the aspirations of your movement.

Try to think about this section through the lens of some of these questions below.

- *What activities does your movement carry out?*
- *Are you able to summarize your work into 3-5 categories?*
- *Who are your target audiences?*
- *How does these activities work to help you reach your intended goal(s)?*

Proof of Impact (or Proof of Concept)

You need to be able to establish and convince funders that what you're doing is worthwhile and that you can back up your work. Everyone, not just funders, wants to be able to see that your work is making a clear impact, or has evidence-based potential to make visible impact before they can fully invest their time and support. Ultimately, funders want to see assurances that what their directing funding towards can and will be used effectively.

Try to make your impact real and relatable by sharing both quantitative and qualitative data, facts and figures, and stories or testimonials from people and partners that have benefited from this work. Talk about your progress and achievements in a manner that can inspire pride and motivate support. By providing a snapshot of where you've been and where you are you are setting the stage for how a funding increase could build on and potentially accelerate your current impact.

Try to think about how you might provide the answers to these questions:

- *What are your indicators for success & KPI's (Think in terms of who, how many, how often, how much etc. For example, number of individuals that engaged with your campaign, your team success and growth over the past year)*
- *What progress have you made toward your goals?*
- *In what way are your strategies effective?*
- *Why does this impact work towards your vision of the future?*
- *What are some of your greatest achievements/success stories?*

Additional resources:



[What Good Impact Reporting Looks Like](#) from NPC

Where you're going

What's on the horizon for your movement?

Here's where you lay out what to expect from your movement as you work towards your mission. This is not a description of your mission, but rather a clear idea of how you plan to get there. Demonstrate your plan of action for the short, and long-term remembering to keep these actions tangible and achievable.

Reflect on these questions to inform how you demonstrate your plan:

- *What are your next steps activities and objectives? (e.g. next 6 months, 1 year, 2 years?)*
- *What opportunities or key moments are you seeking to leverage?*
- *How do you need to position your movement?*
- *How do your next steps position your movement towards achieving your goals?*

What you need and why

You have laid out the plan for what's ahead, now think about what are the resources you need to put your plan into motion!

Thinking strategically, what are the tangible resources, capacities, and roles that need to be put in place to carry your your activities and maximize their full effect? Don't think about this in terms of financial resources just yet.

Try to think of it in this way:

- *What capacities/roles do you need to bring in?*
- *What tools and resources would enable you to deliver your work more effectively?*
- *What are some of the most pressing challenges that need addressing?*
- *Can you organise these needs into achievable goals or financial asks?*

The ask

Your financial need, in other words, your budget, is your ask. It is a translation of the resources and capacities needed to carry out your planned activities into real costs providing a picture of what the financial support needed to deliver on your work.

Your budget might be the thing funders look at first and it serves as a powerful tool through which to illustrate your credibility and impact, acting as an important part of the narrative in your case for support

You should be able to understand and clearly define exactly how much and what type of support you're looking for (e.g. [core costs](#) vs. project costs) and tie your funding ask to solid and realistic outcomes. Your budget brings your story home so to speak.

If your numbers don't add up, cannot be justified, or key aspects of your defined activities are missing from your budget, this could communicate to the funder that you might not be thinking strategically or realistically about your activities or their intended impact.

Be realistic – this doesn't mean you can't be ambitious. We recommend a 3-pronged approach:

1. **A minimum 'keep the lights on' budget** that supports ongoing work, baseline operational costs and can sustain existing members
2. **A comfortable budget** that allows you to deepen and/or scale many of your activities
3. **An ideal 'dream' budget** that enables you to take advantage of big opportunities and substantially grow and scale

Get started

Now it is time to get to it!

Download and complete a basic Case for Support template included below to flesh out each component and begin to draft out your content.



[Download and
Complete Case for
Support Template](#)

Telling Your Story: Framing Your Case



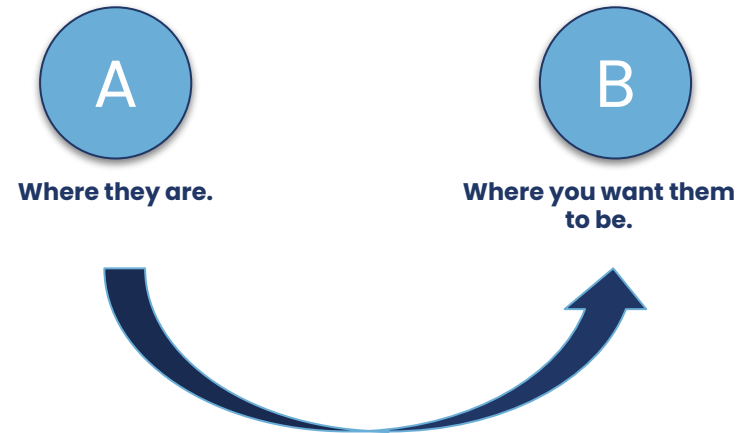
STEP Four: Tailoring your content

How you tell your story and who you're telling it to matters. If you're doing it right, your story likely won't be identical every time. Your case for support should be agile and adaptable, enabling you to mold your case in such a way that it can easily resonate with whoever you're putting it in front of. At the heart of this lies your framing, how you shape your content and the meaning of information, e.g. exemplifying what's at stake from different perspectives, and the thoughts, feelings and behaviors it's meant to inspire from your audience. Think strategically about what you say and how you say it, what is included or excluded, and what associations are created. Your ability to appropriately tailor and adapt your content will greatly influence how funders hear you, what they understand, and how they act.

When crafting your case for support it's to ask, "what do I want to say?". But be careful- if you anchor your narrative too firmly in this question, you're likely heading down the path toward telling a story or solving a problem, that while may be compelling to you, could be prone to falling on deaf ears.

Joel Bradshaw, a veteran political strategist who works with environmental organizations, is all too familiar with this mistake: "Most conservation organizations think that you persuade people by marshaling a series of scientific arguments and facts to change people's minds...but in reality, that isn't what happens. You change people's minds by figuring out what is important to them – which is rarely science – and you present arguments on their terms."

To keep your focus on the audience, think of your story as your funder's journey along this continuum:



The core of who you are and what you do should always be consistent. Stay true to who you are. But how you frame the challenges(s) and outcome(s) can vary, enabling you to illustrate the issue through a variety of lenses with story arcs that allow you to more deeply connect and speak to particular audiences.

Storytelling & Framing



Pro Tip: When drafting your case for support, first try to build out from the core of your messaging. Establish who you are, what you do, and how you do it. Then leverage this core messaging to reframe your problem/challenge statement(s). This enables you to make the linking between the problem and (your approach as a major part of) the solution clearer, more explicit and more convincing.

Illustrating your case through diverse lenses not only enables your audience to connect the dots it also gives you the tools to think more critically your place within the broader climate action and climate justice movement. And the more attune you are to this, the more you can engage a diverse array of funders around your work.

Storytelling & Framing



Practice communicating your work through diverse lenses with the [Framing Climate Justice Tool](#).

Check out some of these additional tools that might help you to get those creative juices flowing.

[**The Science of What Makes People Care**](#) outlines five principles rooted in social science that may help your movement connect your work to the issues people care most about (*Source: Stanford Social Innovation Review*).

[**Webinar - Unlocking Vital Funds via Compelling Communications**](#) provides tools for developing smart, targeted, and inspiring messages along with a toolkit of communications assets for unlocking new sources of revenue (*Source: Black Fox Philanthropy*).

[**The Power of Story**](#) demonstrates a practical example of formulating story to engage funders and influence how they think feel and act (*Source: Black Fox Philanthropy*).

[**Storytelling and Social Change**](#) is a comprehensive strategy guide specifically targeted toward activists and changemakers enabling you to leverage storytelling in service of your cause and to incorporate these techniques into your case for support. (*Source: Working Narratives*)

[**Storytelling for Good**](#) connects you to a suite of tools for leveraging the power of narrative and increase resources for your organisation. (*Source: The Communications Network*)

The Finishing Touches: Format & Design



STEP Five: Packaging your case

You've managed to pull together a pretty solid case for support. Even still, all that effort could wind up falling flat if you're not able to carry it through to its presentation. Don't forget, humans are visual communicators, and even the most powerful ideas can get obscured behind lengthy, discursive text or poorly thought-out visual elements. How you package your case is instrumental for enhancing your story, transmitting your message and arousing desired reaction. This doesn't mean you need to be a design expert or spend hours fidgeting around to generate fancy graphics. In fact, simplicity is often more effective. Here we'll outline two primary formats for packaging your case for support along with the most effective visual strategies that can only serve to reinforce your narrative.

a pitch deck.

A pitch deck is a simple yet effective tool for packaging and presenting the highlights of your case. Your deck can either serve as a stand alone product or an important supplement when meeting with potential funders. The ideal length of a pitch deck is around 15-20 slides, with each slide consisting of a snazzy heading, brief text, a visual image or a combination. A pitch deck is meant to be flexible, making it easy to revise and swap slides and adapt your messaging to suit specific funder audiences.

a funder brief.

Often referred to as a case statement or even a concept note, this can be a 2-10 page document that includes more extensive written content. But don't be fooled, while a funder brief may be more text heavy, it doesn't (and shouldn't) have to read like a dry rambling report. A funder brief can also be arranged in a powerful and effective way, punctuated by visual assets and that are simple, straightforward and engaging.

Whichever you choose, both should incorporate all the fundamental components of your case for support, strategically synthesizing and weaving together these elements. When appropriately deployed, both are capable of effectively aiding you in hitting the right notes, enabling your audience to feel the impact of your work and energize funders. If you're not sure where to start, we recommend checking out these guides:

[Using Design to Create Connection](#) offers a framework process for determining which formats might best suit the information you're trying to convey. (*Source: Mission Minded*)

[How to create visual presentations](#) provides six steps for designing effective and engaging presentations that can both inform and persuade audiences. (*Source: Bright Carbon*).

Pitch Deck Development

[The Complete Guide to Building a Winning Pitch Deck](#)

Walk through the basics of a pitch deck. Although some of this content is geared more toward start up investing and may require some adapting, the general framework and deployment still applies and this resource provides a nice comprehensive guide for creating an agile pitch deck. (Source: *Base Templates*)

[Pitching for Good](#)

A resource designed specifically around pitch deck development for donors, volunteers, and governments and the importance of leveraging good design. (Source: *beautiful.ai*).

Tools & platforms for getting started on your pitch deck

[Pitch.com](#) provides tools for creating professional-quality pitch decks fast with an intuitive editor for those without a flair for design.

[Canva.com](#) offers professionally designed slide templates you can easily customize for free.

[Slidebean.com](#) expedites the design process by letting you focus on content and taking care of the rest.

[Slidesgo.com](#) provides professionally designed templates that integrate with already accessible tools like PowerPoint and GoogleSlides.

Use of Imagery and Graphics

[The Do's and Don'ts of using images in presentations](#)

The devil's in the details. Don't distract from your content with poorly used imagery. (Source: *SlideTeam*)

[The Ultimate Guide to Infographics for Non-Profits](#)

A detailed guide for bolstering your messaging through well-designed graphics that enables reader to absorb key information at a glance. (Source: *Visme*)

[How to Tell a Story with Data](#)

Learn how to communicate data effectively and leverage visuals to reinforce your argument and compel viewers. (Source: *Venngage*)

**Submit your
Case**



Share your case with us

We encourage you to share your case for support with us and complete our Expression of Interest form to learn about potential opportunities for support.

If your movement aligns with our funder work, we'll invite you to be included as part of our funder-facing portfolio, routinely elevated to a network of funders looking to invest in movements and projects working across the intersections of climate and social justice.

We also provide additional support to our portfolio movements through routine workshops that enable you to independently and fearlessly leverage your case for support by honing your argument and delivering compelling pitches that resonate with diverse funder audiences. Contact us to learn more.

[Submit an Expression
of Interest](#)

An aerial photograph of a coastline, showing white surf breaking against dark, deep water. The landmass is visible in the center, surrounded by the ocean. The lighting is dramatic, with the white foam of the waves contrasting sharply with the dark water.

Get in touch.

To learn more about any of our
movements and the work we do to
support them, find us:

[Email](#)

[Website](#)

[LinkedIn](#)