CROWDFUNDING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY:

Process, Preparation, and Execution

THE VOID ACADEMY

IN THIS WORKSHOP

1. WHAT IS CROWDFUNDING?

2. ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS

3. CROWDFUNDING MISCONCEPTIONS

4. THE COMMUNITY BUILDING CYCLE

IN THIS WORKSHOP

5. CREATING AN ONLINE PRESENCE

6. DOING THE LEGWORK

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INTRODUCING MYSELF

INTRODUCTING MYSELF

- Have worked at the intersection of art, tech, and justice for 15+ years
- Have helped artists and organizers raise over $2 million and counting
- Have worked on dozens of crowdfunding campaigns
- Have helped build hundreds of websites and newsletters

WHAT IS CROWDFUNDING?

What is crowdfunding?

- **Crowdfunding is not new**
- **Crowdfunding is community funding**
- **Crowdfunding can be a powerful tool to build sustainability**

- Who has seen a crowdfunding campaign?
- Who has supported a crowdfunding campaign?
- Who has thought about using crowdfunding for a project?
- Who has run a crowdfunding campaign?

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS

Elements of Successful Campaigns

- Strong web presence
- Trusting community
- Legwork
- Consistent communication

CROWDFUNDING MISCONCEPTIONS

Crowdfunding Misconceptions

- "I just put the page up and faceless strangers will give me money!"

Crowdfunding Misconceptions

- "I need to get press for my project to be successful."

Crowdfunding Misconceptions

- **"Missing my goal is failure."**

THE COMMUNITY BUILDING CYCLE

Community Building Cycle

Community segments:

- Strangers
- Walk-ins
- Supporters
- Enthusiasts

Strangers:
- **Know nothing about you or your project**

Walk-ins:
- Have happened upon you, your work, and/or your project
- The key is to avoid the missed connection

Supporters:

- Actively participate or engage with you or your work
- Interested learning more
- Often give financial support

Enthusiasts:

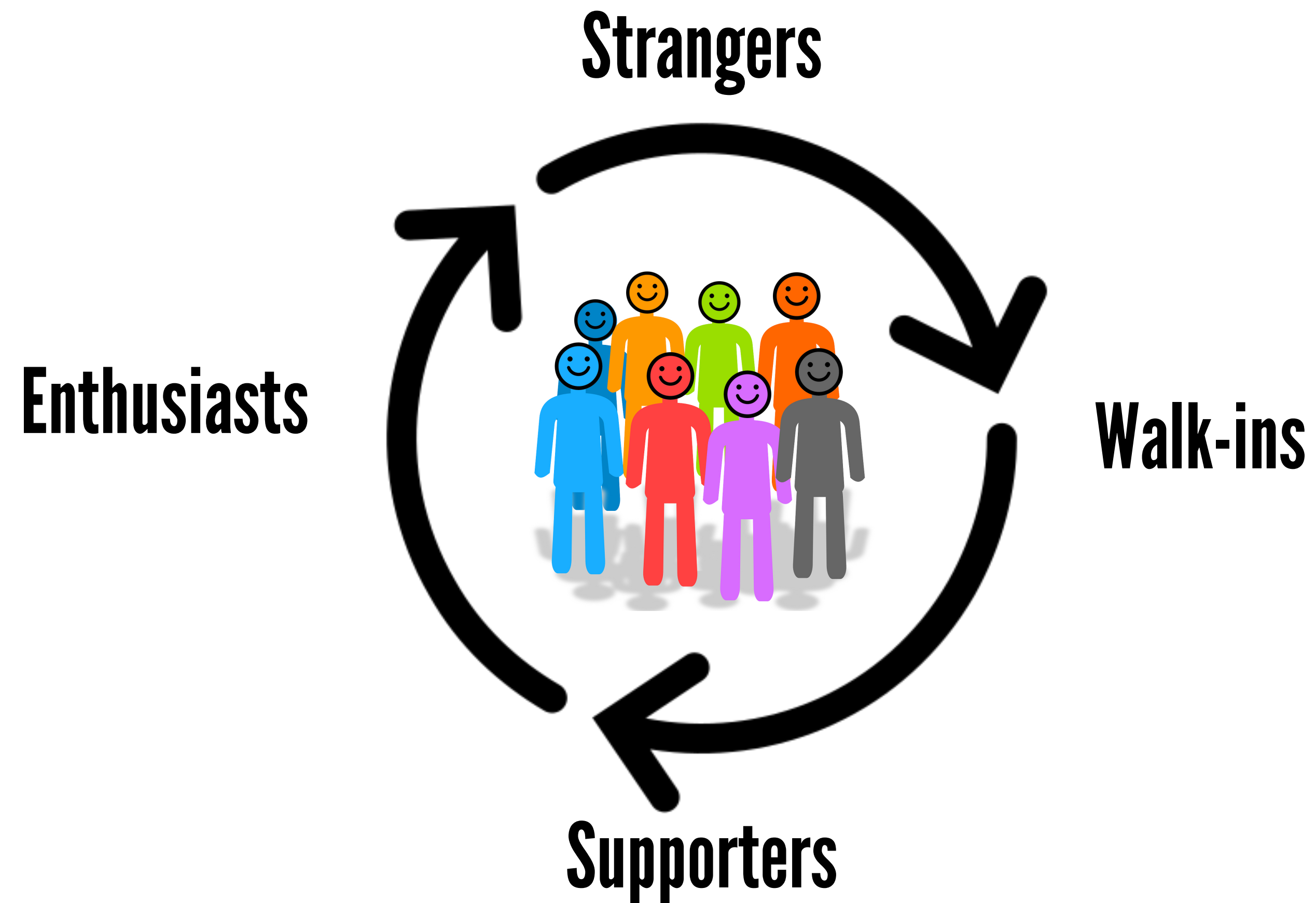- Will give financial support and other resources
- Will advocate on your behalf
- Will help you to turn strangers into walk-ins (and later supporters)

- ## As cycle repeats, your community expands

Strangers

Walk-ins

Supporters

Enthusiasts

CROWDFUNDING PREPARATION: CREATING AN ONLINE PRESENCE

Online Presence Overview

- What is online presence?
- Most important elements: website, socials, and mailing list
- Treat internet spaces how you would treat in-person spaces

Websites

- Simple websites are best
- Create opportunity for aesthetic and mission match
- Guide towards mailing list

Mailing List

- You own the email addresses, not subject to algorithms
- Devise simple strategy: what and when
- Incentivize sign-ups
- Send welcome email and set expectations

Social Media

- Pick one or two platforms to focus on
- Devise simple strategy: what and when?
- Brainstorm and create content in advance
- Research algorithms
- Guide people towards website or mailing list

Elements of an Effective Online Presence

Elements of an effective online presence:

- **Regularity**
- **Consistency**
- **Variety**
- **Authenticity**
- **Clarity**

CROWDFUNDING PREPARATION: DOING THE LEGWORK

Legwork

- Doing the legwork of community building and planning ahead of time is the most crucial aspect of any crowdfunding campaign

Setting Crowdfunding Logistics

- Choosing a platform (Kickstarter, GoFundMe, Patreon)
- Setting campaign timing and length
- Creating campaign narrative

Setting Crowdfunding Logistics (Continued)

- Creating a project budget
- Creating fun rewards
- Creating content, events, and reach-out plans

Project Narratives

- Create a 1-3 sentence project statement
- Create a one-paragraph project summary
- Create a long-form project narrative

Project Narratives

- As often as possible when writing about your campaign, answer the questions: What are you doing? Why are you doing it? How are you doing it? When are you doing it? Why now? Why should someone else care?
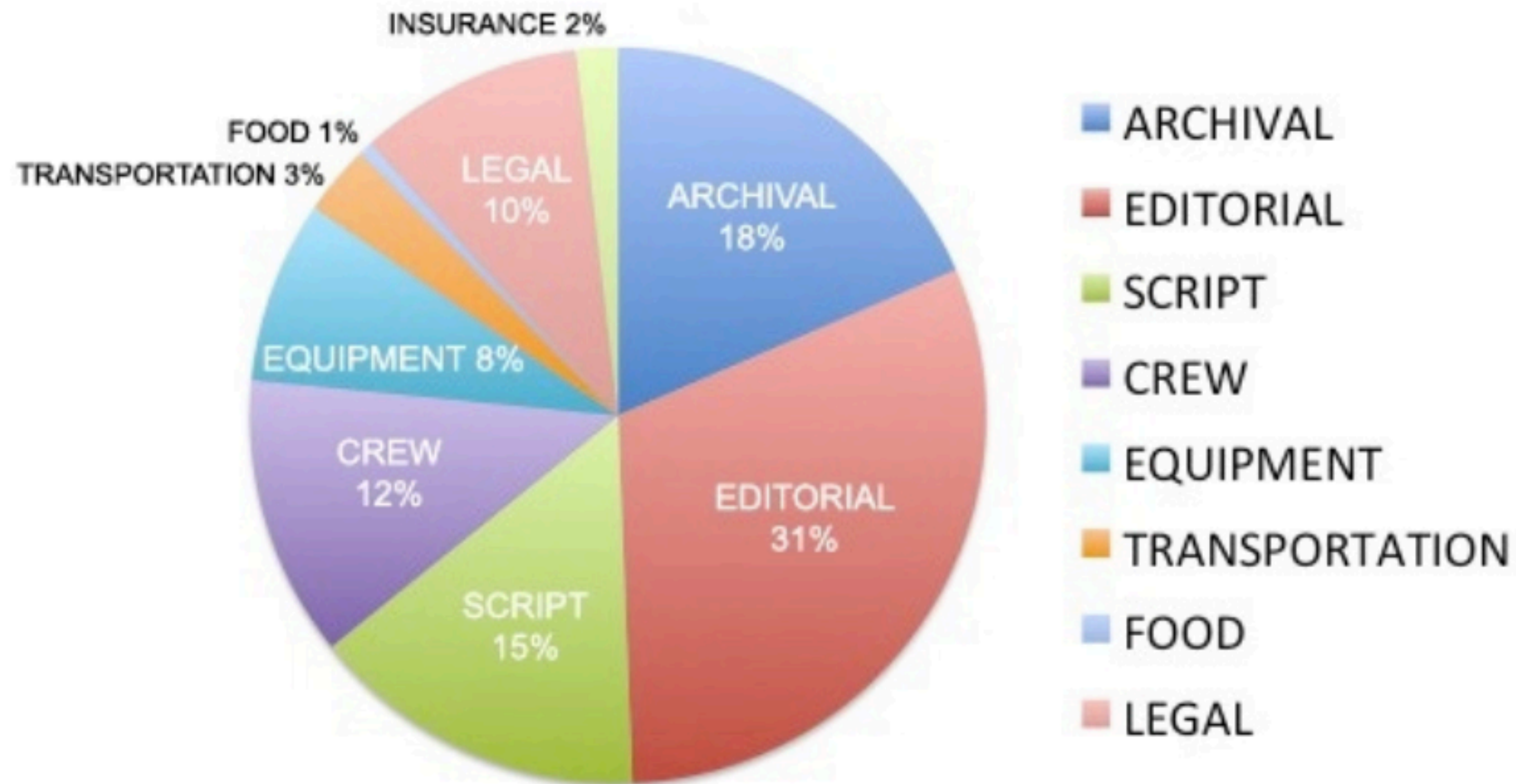
Qualities of an effective ask
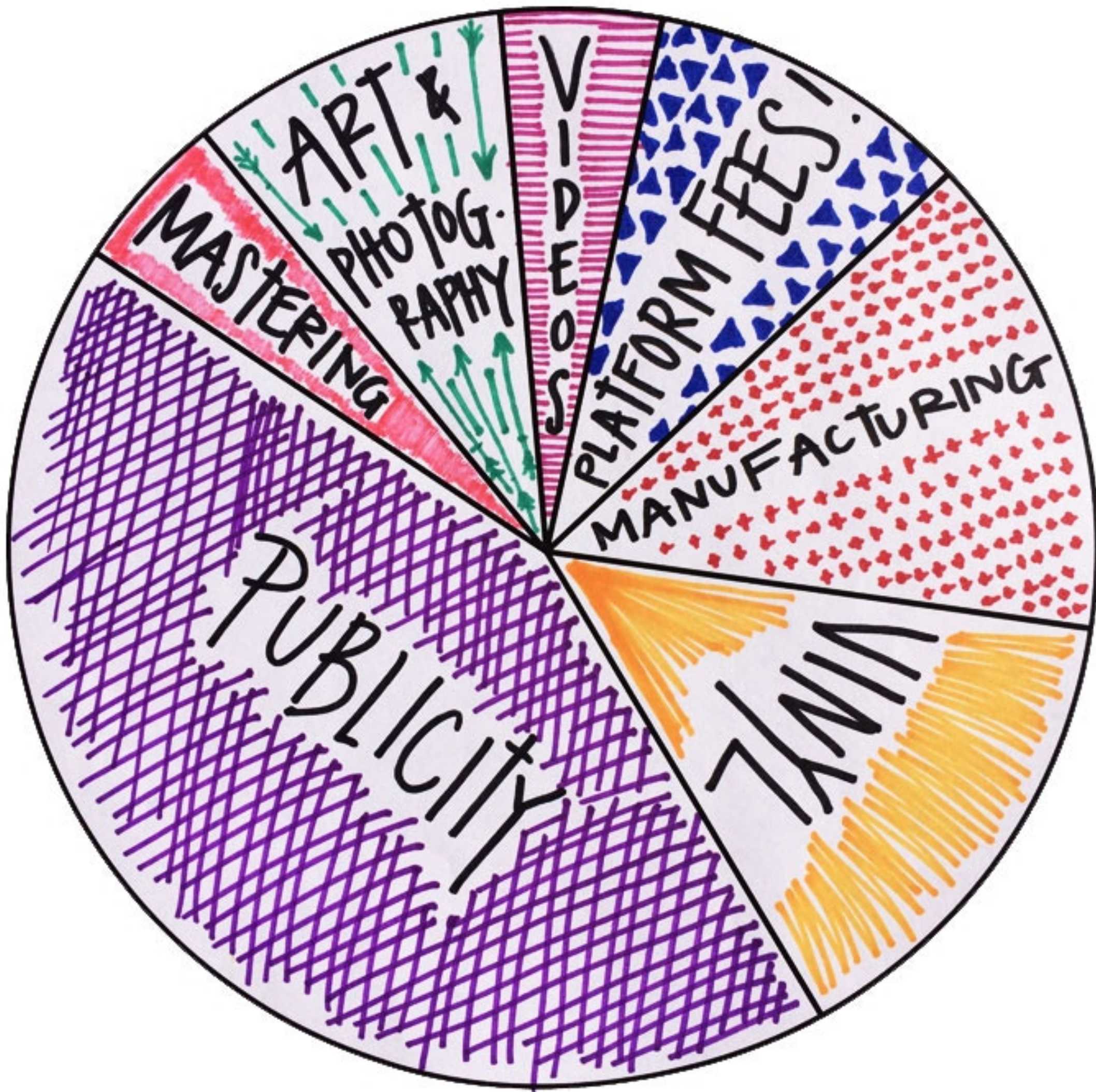
- Timing
- Trust
- Clarity
- Value proposition

Project Budget

- Start with the barebones budget
- Remember to include payment for labor and cost of rewards
- Set stretch goals

Kids' Documentary Kickstarter Budget

Anna Vogelzang's Kickstarter Budget

Rewards

- Primarily unlimited rewards that are easy-to-deliver
- 7-9 rewards max at launch
- Hold back a few to release as content
- $1 reward is crucial
- $25 is the most common pledge
- $100 makes the most money

$1
- Something exciting or exclusive
- Easy to deliver
- For those who have some curiosity

$10-$100
- Mainly unlimited
- Combination pre-sale or
- Patronage rewards for those who love the work

$100-$1000
- Mainly limited edition reward packages
- Include lower level tiers
- For longer-term supporters

$1000+
- You probably know these folks already.
- Find out prior to campaign what they want!

Content, Events, and Reachout Plans

- Create simple content plans for social media and mailing list
- Create list of reach outs and how you will reach out to them
- Create a simple, shareable reach out template
- Plan easy online or in-person events for the launch, plateau, and/or final push

CAMPAIGN EXECUTION

Campaign Execution

- Launch day: Have early backers to create momentum
- Mid-campaign: Follow your content, events, and reach out plans
- Final week: Release new rewards, encourage pledge bumps

MOVING FORWARD AND BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY

Moving Forward

- Keep backers updated
- Deliver on rewards
- Continue the community building cycle
- Consider grants and other supplemental forms of funding

Exercises

- Practice creating project statement sentences
- If you are able to, back a crowdfunding campaign for $1
- With a partner, practice describing project and asking for support

Q&A