



## About Us

### What is Researchers in Fundraising?

Researchers in Fundraising (or RiF for short) is the official representative body for professional prospect researchers in the UK.

From its humble beginnings as an informal networking group, RiF has grown to become the leading forum for the exchange of ideas and best practise amongst those carrying out prospect research in fundraising and development departments throughout the UK.

The **RiF Committee** is made up of professional prospect researchers from charitable institutions, educational establishments and fundraising and research consultancies and is responsible for establishing and reviewing the direction of the group's activities and for the practical, hands-on work of delivering services to our members.

We seek to do this through four main areas.

### Website

Extensively redesigned in 2008, the RiF website is the home of Researchers in Fundraising on the internet, providing information on all aspects of our work and allowing our members to see what we have achieved, and what we hope to achieve, for prospect researchers in the UK.

### Events

We currently hold two conferences a year. Previous conferences have discussed such topics as the Data Protection Act, researching the City of London, European Trusts and Foundations, the ethical screening of prospects, researching corporations, international research and prospect management. You can learn more about our conference on our Events page.

### Working groups

Over the years, the RiF committee has set up a number of working groups to report on areas of relevance to our membership. For example, in 2004 the Data Protection Action Group produced a set of guidelines to help prospect researchers understand their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act. More recently, a RiF Training Committee was set up to develop a specially tailored prospect research training course to be run in conjunction with the IoF/DSC alongside their **[existing fundraising courses](#)**.

### Email Alerts

We send out regular emails notifying our members of job adverts, conferences and other events that may be of interest to them, including events run by other Special Interest Groups and organisations. If you would like to receive these, please email George Overton.

### A little History

The RiF story began in the summer of 1993, when Chris Carnie, Carrie Cocke and Alison Montgomery met up to talk about a new idea called research in fundraising.

When they met in those early days, huddled round a corner table in a wee cafe near Piccadilly, as Chris describes it, they had three main concerns:

- That researchers were isolated, with most working alone in large fundraising teams
- That research was undervalued by fundraisers, who were failing to utilise and reap the rewards of good research
- That researchers needed to learn from each other (both in the UK and abroad) but because of 1 and 2, this was not happening

From these early meetings three clear aims developed:

- To raise awareness of prospect research
- To increase understanding of the importance of prospect research in the fundraising community
- To provide opportunities for researchers to meet, discuss, share, network and learn from one another

In 1997, to further these aims, RiF became a Special Interest Group of the Institute of Fundraising (or the Institute of Charity Fundraising Managers, as they were then known). Over the next few years, the membership of RiF steadily increased, passing the 100 mark in 2001 and the 200 mark in 2003, and reaching the current total of over 500 members in the last couple of years. As such, RiF can now claim to be one of the Institute of Fundraising's largest Special Interest Groups and the leading representative body for prospect researchers in the UK.



### **RiF Committee**

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