

## **ACTION ALERT: Donor infiltration**

In recent weeks we've noticed an uptick in [suspicious activity](#) from individuals posing as donors to organizations conducting civic engagement work. As we move closer to the election, and as more and more tactics are deployed to stifle your work and suppress participation in democracy, we wanted to provide these reminders to help you protect yourself from individuals lying about their intentions and working to undermine your organization. Please keep a close eye out for the following list of people/businesses and if you've had contact with them. Please search your email correspondence for interactions with the below list of people. If you've interacted with them, please contact your program manager immediately.

### **Donors to be aware of**

- James Fortune
- Jason Boles
- Cara Gifford

### **Volunteers to be aware of**

- Salena Rodriguez
- Javier Rodriguez

### **Businesses to be aware of**

- Blue Sky Medical Labs LLC
- 1859 Fund, Inc
- A Georgia for Georgians
- Audacious Faith, Inc
- Leading Georgia Fund, Inc
- Let Us Decide, Inc
- TransparencyPro LLC
- FlySentry LLC
- Superior Impacto SA
- B2 Legacy Investments

### **Journalists/Filmmakers to be aware of**

- Kurt Insley
- Brendan Holt

We strongly recommend that all new donors, and those donors you may have been in discussions with recently, are properly vetted before you share with them information about your program and before you accept donations. Now is not the time to let down your guard.

Here are steps to take with new prospective donors to protect yourself.

**To the extent possible, confirm their identity** - even if they were referred to you by a trusted friend or colleague. We've seen suspicious donors referred to organizations in our network from trusted partners in other states. Even these referrals must be vetted.

**What to watch for when vetting new donors.** Donors in our space usually have strong "paper trails." Most funders have websites. Individuals can be checked against FEC databases. Red flags include but are not limited to:

- Websites with little information and limited functionality and missing key elements like privacy policies, about us pages, and/or clear contact information.
- Use of personal email (gmail, yahoo, etc) instead of professional domain email (from a company or an organization).
- Checks or ACH payments from accounts that do not match the organization name provided by the donor.
- Social media channels that were launched within the last 12-18 months and have limited activity and small online community support (followers)
- Foundations that do not appear on the IRS' list of Tax Exempt Organizations, which can be searched [online](#).

Donors that ask specific questions about (1) registering non-citizens to vote; (2) finding special opportunities for their children to volunteer; (3) talk about "fighting dirty" or "cheating" because "that's what the opposition is doing"; or (4) reference the possibility of unusually large donations if you provide detailed information about your operations should be viewed with suspicion and should be flagged for your Program Manager and your legal counsel.

**Ask for references.** Ask potential new donors for references at organizations they may have funded previously. Do not accept a reference for someone that connected you to the donor. Call those references. Ask what the donor experience has been like. Ask them to identify additional funded partners.

**Scrub your fundraising documents.** Take a moment to look critically at the documents you share with external audiences like potential funders. Remove personal information about your staff, especially names and contact information for non-senior staff in your organization. Remove budget tables if possible. Check all language to ensure it is clear and consistent with compliance matters.

**Ask for help.** If you have a donor contact you can't seem to confirm as a good actor, please contact your program manager for additional assistance. Our protective strategies team can take additional steps or review your findings on potential donors.

The integrity of your program is the utmost priority. You've taken extraordinary steps to provide strong training for your staff and volunteers. You have ensured that your program meets and exceeds all

federal, state and local regulations. With less than 50 days to go, let's make sure the enemies of democracy can't undermine your work.