

# Asking Accordant

## Aligning Organizational Priorities with Funding Priorities



Our hospital has a number of capital projects that need funding, but there is now also discussion about where special projects, such as community health, fit in. How can we best identify and prioritize projects and funding?



Too often, hospitals fund the initiatives they deem to be most important out of hospital resources and pass the projects not deemed worthy of their funding to the foundation. This forces philanthropy into the position of funding low priority initiatives. We must discontinue this pattern and, instead, work alongside our executive leaders to identify critical projects for philanthropic funding within the hospital's strategic plan.

First, health care organizations must position philanthropy as a viable strategic revenue source to enable the organization's most important efforts. Philanthropy is no longer a "nice to have" extra. It is an effective and efficient way to fund mission-driven improvements and bridge the gap left by declining operating margins. While it has been historically common for hospitals to simply tell their philanthropic organizations the projects for which they are expected to raise funds, progressive organizations have discovered a much better way.

It is vital that health care organizations maximize resources and funding by identifying and aligning hospital priorities with donor priorities. To maximize donor funding, offer your donors those priorities that are important, transformational and connect with their passions.

Projects cannot just be identified. They must be prioritized and pressure tested. [Strategically Aligned Project Selection™ \(SAPS\)](#) enables enterprise-wide alignment between the health care organization's strategic priorities and charitable funding priorities. This creates a shared vision to maximize the impact of donor dollars by funding projects that meet donor preference and expectations.

Start this process by reviewing your organization's existing strategic documents to uncover potential priorities:

- Master Facilities Plan
- Strategic Plan
- Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)
- Business Development Plans
- Capital Budgets
- Operating Budgets

Assemble a group of several key leaders and stakeholders from the C-Suite, board, clinicians and philanthropy team who have the ability to move priorities forward and who will bring unique expertise to the discussion. Using an effective rating and measurement tool, this group then determines the most important projects for focus and direction. A measurement tool establishes clarity and consensus as to the top initiatives to be included in your case for support. Armed with this valuable information, the philanthropy staff can then do what they do best...connect their donors to the projects they are most excited about. Not only does this process provide consensus and direction, but it also serves to advance both the organization's mission and donors' philanthropic goals.

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