



Finding a passion for development

by Kirsty Hassan, IDPE and IoF Certificate in Fundraising graduate and Director of External Communications at Colston's School

Why did you choose to do the IDPE and IoF Certificate in Fundraising?

My background was strong in marketing, admissions and alumni engagement and as a Director of External Relations, I felt that a qualification in development was an obvious way to enhance my skills.

How are you using the certificate in your role now?

I felt hugely confident having completed my certificate and was really motivated to apply my newly acquired skills and knowledge. I immediately conducted a fundraising audit (assignment one) to review past fundraising activity in the school which gave me a strong basis for eventually devising a fundraising strategy. I also used the tools learnt in assignment three, the community events module, which gave us a model for appraising prior events and to understand the financial costs and fundraising outcomes associated with them. This again led me to strong contextual insights which were used to inform my fundraising strategy.

What have been the main benefits to you and your school of doing the certificate?

Before the course I was really curious about development and whether or not it was something that I wished to pursue. After completing the course my enthusiasm for development has grown 110% and this has created a sense of purpose for driving development activity in the school. I have also devised and launched a small-scale capital campaign using learnings developed in the fundraising strategy module and am in the process of writing a long-term fundraising strategy.

Would you recommend the certificate to other development professionals?

Yes, absolutely. I gained so much from undertaking the course both in terms of personal development outcomes for myself and the school have also benefited greatly. The course is intense and you do need to be committed, I was thrilled to get a distinction, but I had to work really hard to achieve that. I really enjoyed the opportunity to read widely and delve in to the many articles on fundraising, as well as learning from case studies from the wider charitable sector. The networking was also brilliant and our cohort formed a very supportive group. I also met a colleague from another school who has become a friend for life. I liked the course so much that I have recently begun the Diploma in Fundraising!