



FBB scripts, pitches and FAQs

1. Getting attention

Smile and say “hi” to everyone that makes eye contact or passes by the table, even if they don’t intend to stop. They are more likely to come up if you seem friendly, or they might think that they met you before and that they will be snubbing you if they don’t come up and talk. Smiling also puts you in a good mood.

If they slow down, ask them if they’ve heard of FBB.

If they have, **ask them whether they’re a “giving member” (use these words specifically) of the Humanist Giving donation program, or whether they’re part of BBN.**

If not, ask them why. If it’s a lack of money, remind them that monthly donations start out at \$5, or tell them about Humanist Disaster Recovery Drive (once-off donations after a disaster) or our volunteering projects (BBN, Humanist Service Corps, Humanist Disaster Recovery Teams/Network, LLS Light the Night walks). If they keep forgetting to join, suggest that they sign up for the email reminder, or if they feel comfortable, have them sign up right there.

If they are a member or part of BBN, chat to them about our new slate of charities, any current new projects (e.g. Humanist Service Corps), ask them if they are part of any local organizations that could join BBN (if not already) or if they’d like to become a member (if part of BBN but not a member). Also encourage them to spread the word.

If they haven’t heard of FBB, give them a short synopsis, and hand them brochures. Try to use vocabulary fitting for the conference you’re at; for instance, if it’s a conference for a humanist organization, say “humanists”; if it’s for an atheist organization, say “atheists”; and if it’s for freethinkers or skeptics, say “freethinkers” or “nonbelievers”.

2. Sample pitches

Try them out, try some of your own, and see what seems to be working for you:

1. Hi! Have you heard of Foundation Beyond Belief? We’re a **humanist charity working to encourage and demonstrate generosity among non-believers**. Members sign up for regular donations and 100% of their money goes to charities that we pre-screen for effectiveness and financial responsibility. We also have donation drives after disasters, a nationwide network of volunteer teams, and we’re starting up an international service project.
2. **We’re like an atheist collection plate**, working to raise funds for great charities from the atheist community. We research charities doing amazing work and collect subscriptions from members to



raise funds for these organizations. 100% of donations go to the charities, and we've raised more than \$1.5 million to date.

3. We're an organization **putting humanism to work**, raising funds for excellent charities and people affected by natural or humanitarian crises, running a nationwide network of volunteer teams, and starting an international humanist service project.

Try to emphasize that FBB is multi-faceted: we have donations through our Humanist Giving program and Humanist Disaster Recovery Drive; and we have volunteering programs of all kinds, with regular team volunteering in BBN, international volunteering with the Humanist Service Corps, on-the-ground volunteers after disasters with Humanist Disaster Recovery Teams, and a network of bloggers, podcast creators, and so on to help us spread the word, with Humanist Disaster Recovery Network.

3. FAQs

A full list of FAQs and answers is available on the website, so if you hit a tricky question on the fly, remember to look for the answers there (in the heat of the moment if you're dealing with a patient person, or to be prepared if you encounter that question again). If you don't know the answer to something, explain that you're just a representative, and encourage the person to email members@foundationbeyondbelief.org with any questions.

Here are some of the tough nuts:

1. How do I know FBB is doing what they say they are with members' money?

All compensation and expenditures are set according to established best practices for nonprofits, and regular financial disclosures are posted on the website. Financial information, including IRS Forms 990, is available on our website. [We are rated](#) Silver with independent analyst GuideStar and as we grow, our goal is to upgrade to Gold.

2. If all donations go to beneficiaries, how is the Foundation funded?

Through grants and direct donations to the Foundation itself. Members may also choose to allocate some portion of their monthly donation to the Foundation in their distribution panel if they wish.

3. Why is it necessary to have an explicitly atheist/humanist/non-believer charity?

We think there are three reasons to do this. Firstly, research shows that non-believers give less to charity than believers, but also that simply being asked to give is the single biggest stimulus for generosity. People who belong to religious communities are asked to give regularly, but people who don't belong to these communities aren't, and we think that's a big reason for the discrepancy. So we're trying to tap a new population to raise funds for charity. This is the "encourage" part of our mission statement.

Secondly, many people enjoy giving as an expression of their worldview. Humanists believe that



making a better world is up to us, and tend to coincide in their goals -- for instance, humanism overlaps with values such as prizing education and supporting LGBT rights. We believe that it's valuable to give people the opportunity to express their values by donating as part of a humanist community, and that it also helps to direct our funding power into more powerful, large donations. This is the "focus" part of our mission statement.

And finally, atheists suffer from ongoing discrimination, assumptions about our morality and generosity, and general bad press. Giving as a group allows us to do some work in combating these assumptions. This is the "demonstrate" part of our mission statement.

However, if you're interested in building interfaith bridges, you should be aware that one of our charity categories -- along with human rights, education, poverty and health, and the natural world -- is "Challenge the Gap", which is a category for liberal, non-proselytizing religious charities that align with the humanist worldview.

4. I heard you support religious charities. I don't want my money to go to religion.

We know that this is a concern for many of our members, which is why we divide the charities we support into categories. This allows members to direct their money away from charities they don't like -- e.g. supporting animal rights -- and towards charities they do support -- e.g. education. In four of our five categories, we ensure that the charities supported are 100% secular.

The fifth category, Challenge the Gap, is there for members who want it, and these charities are carefully screened to ensure that their work does not involve proselytizing, caters for people from all faiths and none, and aligns with the humanist worldview. For instance, we would never support a homophobic organization. We have recently supported the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Rights, the Child-Friendly Faith Project (which fights against religiously-motivated child abuse), and the Joint Baptist Committee for Religious Liberty (which fights for separation of church and state).

5. Why is the Foundation necessary? Can't I just donate directly to these charities?

Of course you can. We try to make it easier for people to donate, by finding and thoroughly researching good charities, and setting up automatic donations. We're also about more than our Humanist Giving program: we run drives for donations and volunteering after disasters, an international humanist service project, we've started an annual conference on humanist philanthropy, and our Beyond Belief Network brings together non-believers to work for the good of their communities, with support and sometimes grants from us. Some people also enjoy the idea of working together with other humanists to make the world a better place as a direct expression of their beliefs.

6. What are the criteria for selecting beneficiaries?

Beneficiaries are chosen for efficiency, effectiveness, compatibility with humanist focus on mutual care in this world and this life, and geographic diversity. Beneficiaries must work for the common good -- not advocate for, defend, or promote any single worldview, even our own. Organizations with annual



expenditures under \$50 million are preferred, with preference given to those with budgets under \$10 million. In addition to direct research, FBB makes use of Charity Navigator, the Better Business Bureau, GiveWell, GuideStar, and other third-party sources of information and charity review. Beneficiaries in four of our five categories (Natural World, Poverty & Health, Human Rights, and Education) are strictly secular, while a fifth category called Challenge the Gap gives those members so inclined the option to support a non-proselytizing, progressive religious charity working for the common good.

7. What is the Beyond Belief Network and how do I join?

BBN is a network of over 100 local freethought organizations putting compassionate humanism into action through community volunteering and charitable fundraising. To date, our BBN teams in over 82 cities and 34 states have donated over 60,000 hours of community service. BBN staff assist teams with ideas and tips for service, planning events, and finding existing opportunities for service in their areas. Teams can submit reports about their events to earn perks like t-shirts, grants for service activities, and national recognition. Events that provide direct aid (e.g., fundraisers, food and supply drives, park cleanups), staff support for charities (e.g., shelter, food bank, staffing events, etc.), and educational/advocacy (e.g., canvassing, literacy, operating educational programs, etc.) are all examples of qualifying service projects. Teams can join up online, and you can email cathleen@foundationbeyondbelief.org with any questions.

8. How do I join as a member and donate?

You can sign up on our website at foundationbeyondbelief.org/humanist-giving/become-a-member. Our standard payment procedure is to use your credit card, but if you're not a fan, you can use PayPal, or email members@foundationbeyondbelief.org and we can work out a plan for you.

4. Finally...

- **Don't bombard** the person you're talking to with information -- bring these answers out if they ask the questions, and **suss out their responses**. Did something you say make them spark? Carry on in that vein! Did it make them hesitant? Backtrack and reassure them!
- If you are having a longer conversation with someone, **step to one side** and try to not obscure the sign and flyers
- Try to bring about some kind of **follow-through** (signing up for a reminder email or the mailing list; taking some brochures (be sure to point out the website address!); browsing the website on the device at the table, or even signing up; making a donation or signing up on their own device).