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Economic downturn 'an opportunity'

By Hannah Jordan, Third Sector Online, 17 October 2008

The looming recession should be seen as an opportunity and not a crisis, according to fundraisers at a hastily arranged meeting to discuss the economic downturn at the International Fundraising Congress.

More than 100 senior fundraisers who gathered for the special session on fundraising in a recession on Friday discussed responses to the economic situation and heard experiences from delegates whose organisations had survived the 2002 financial crisis in Argentina.

[Daryl Upsall, founder and chief executive of fundraising consultancy Daryl Upsall Consulting International](#), who co-chaired the discussion, said the key to surviving the slowdown would be open-mindedness and developing new ideas. "It will be those who don't innovate that will fall by the wayside," he said. "This is an incredible opportunity. We need to work out where our weak points are and improve what we do."

Ploughing more finances into data and market analysis and putting more funds into donor recruitment, relationship management and telephone fundraising and less into direct mail campaigns were also discussed.

Sean Triner, founder of Australian fundraising agency Pareto Fundraising, used the session to launch a website designed to allow fundraisers to post ideas, research and comments on how a recession might affect them.

The [Fundraising Recession Watch](#) website features a 10-point guide to fundraising in a recession.

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