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Street Fund Raisers Go After Wrong Age Group, Consultant Says

Most people who give to street or face-to-face fund-raising campaigns — in which paid solicitors sign up pedestrians who agree to make automatic monthly gifts from their credit card or bank account — are in their 20s. But charities that do this type of fund raising should instead be pursuing “the perfect donor demographic,” a 38.5-year-old professional woman.

That’s the conclusion of Daryl Upsall, who heads a Madrid fund-raising consulting firm that specializes in face-to-face fund raising, and Owen Watkins, an international face-to-face fund-raising specialist for Unicef Switzerland. The two men will present their findings next month at the International Fundraising Conference in the Netherlands.

Based on an analysis of the records on the millions of donors recruited by face-to-face fund raising in the Britain and Spain over the last five years, Mr. Upsall said, the 38- to 40-year-old professional female has emerged as “the donor that tends to stick around.” They are more stable financially and give for longer periods, he said.

By contrast, a large percentage of 20-something donors recruited in face-to-face fund-raising campaigns will stop giving within the first year, said Mr. Upsall. Indeed, among the 750,000 new donors expected to be recruited by street fund raising in the U.K. alone this year, he said, 40 to 50 percent of them will stop giving within 12 months.

In recognition of how valuable older female professionals are to such fund-raising drives, Mr. Upsall noted, some charities such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees — which is now doing face-to-face fund raising in Spain — have started paying a bonus to inhouse street fund raisers who recruit such donors.

— [Holly Hall](#)

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