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Page 2: Tell us who you are!

Q1 Contact Information

Name	Jody Doherty
Title	Managing Director of Corporate and Community Affairs
Station	WQED
Email	jdoherty@wqed.org
Phone Number	412-622-1363

Page 3: Award Categories

Q2 Select a category. **Special Achievement**

Page 7: Special Achievement

Q21 Project Title

A Kickstarter Called Rickstarter

2018 Development Awards - Application Form

Q22 What was the overall goal of project, problem it sought to solve or opportunity it sought to leverage? (suggested word count 100-250)

WQED's goal in the Spring of 2017 was to find funding for a new series of local TV programs produced by our popular producer Rick Sebak, and to see if we could do it with fresh strategies and a collection of old and new partners.

At the same time, WQED's Development and Membership Department had been hoping to experiment with a Kickstarter campaign as a modern technique for fundraising with hopes of reaching new audiences and new supporters.

Since Rick Sebak was well established on social media for many years, and he was willing to let us tap into his thousands of online friends, fans and followers, we thought this might be an ideal test project. At a series of station meetings with people from all departments, Rick suggested calling the new series "NEBBY: Rick Sebak's Tales of Greater Pittsburgh," a title that would allow him to include wide variety of local topics. Pittsburghers know the word "neby." It's an old local colloquialism that means "nosey" or "inquisitive," and all agreed it could add a spark to the project that was attention-grabbing and fun.

WQED took the idea to its Community Advisory Board, and support there was strong and enthusiastic.

A budget for six local half-hour programs was drawn up. The Buhl Foundation, a local foundation that has funded Sebak's local programs at varying levels for twenty years, agreed to supply some preliminary seed money outside the Kickstarter format. Then a big goal of \$113,000 was set. WQED's Development and Membership Department decided it was time to take a risk and kick off a Kickstarter.

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Q23 Describe the activity, what it achieved, and why it was successful. (suggested word count 200-400)

We studied the rules and parameters of Kickstarters. We consulted often with two local young entrepreneurs who had run successful campaigns. We carefully chose a 30-day period outside of regular pledge drives. All departments at the station were asked to suggest ways they might help spread the word and build buzz around the project. We decided to use the name “rickstarter.org” as an easy-to-promote connector to the actual Kickstarter home page. Working with our graphics department, we developed a logo, a set of contribution levels (from \$13 up to \$5000) and corresponding rewards that would be inexpensive and experiential (including spending a day with Rick and crew on location.)

Because WQED has been recognized as the first community-sponsored public TV station, the legacy of direct-to-the-people fundraising was encouraged as a talking point as well. The use of social media as well as mass media seemed to harken back to the earliest days of WQED in 1954.

WQED’s in-house promotion and social media producer Dave Hallewell created the term “Sebackers” for folks who contributed, and he worked closely with Rick to tease the March 27 start-date on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Our Kickstarter consultants told us we needed to get 30% of our goal on the first day so the launch would be very important. The midnight start was broadcast on Facebook Live. Watch here: <https://www.facebook.com/ricksebak/videos/10208920189986303/>, then at 7:30 pm on the first day, we ran a half-hour special TV program - watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ezjpArkcdM> and the excitement was palpable. Our first day pulled in just over \$35,000, and we were off!

Here’s the Rickstarter homepage: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1706885926/nebby-rick-sebaks-tales-of-greater-pittsburgh?token=c0155032>

The combined efforts of the Development Department, Sebak and Hallewell led to a remarkably sustained level of excitement and engagement over the 30-day Kickstarter campaign. Every day meant new graphics on various Social Media platforms. Special appearances were booked with commercial as well as other public media outlets. The local nature of the proposal as well as Rick’s track record and visibility in the community made Rickstarter a local news story. Pittsburgh’s CBS affiliate, KDKA-TV2, explained it this way: <http://pittsburgh.cbslocal.com/2017/04/20/rick-sebak-rickstarter-crowdfunding-campaign/>

All aspects of the community were encouraged to take part. Food trucks came to WQED’s parking lot and helped promote the effort. One local community named Millvale dedicated a Saturday as “Rick Sebak Day” and boosted contributions by \$9000 that day. One local tavern revived its Rick Sebak cocktail (bourbon, bitters and maple syrup with a bacon garnish), one craft brewery created a Nebby Neighbor beer, and a Pittsburgh distillery donated 30% of one evening’s take to the Rickstarter. One local T-shirt printer created a stuffed Rick Sebak doll and contributed all \$1556 of its earning to the campaign. Zeke’s Coffee created a Rick Sebak Roast and a corresponding label for pounds of coffee (that were used as rewards at the \$250 backer level) and the folks at Tupelo Honey Teas invented a strong Nebby blend of teas. A local country band called The Beagle Brothers even created a theme song for the effort: (lyrics in the comments) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGvWYOBM77M>

The response was wonderful and reassuring. Twitter users chimed in often, tweeting “I just upped my donation. Who’s with me? Let’s try for 8 shows in the homestretch” and “This guy is a national treasure right here in Pittsburgh. Please visit the new #Rickstarter for the Nebby project.” The depth and variety of tweets were amazing: <https://twitter.com/search?q=%23Rickstarter&src=typd>

Huge reaction on Facebook as well: https://www.facebook.com/search/str/%23rickstarter/keywords_blended_posts

The initial goal of \$113,000 was met on April 17 – eight days ahead of schedule. The campaign continued with a “stretch goal” of \$133,000 to fund a seventh program, which was met on April 23. The 30-day campaign ended on April 26 with a total of \$142,777 raised from 1,411 “Sebackers.”

See Rick Sebak’s thank you message to supporters: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQRMrMMGtpU>

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Q24 Tell us any metrics or benchmarks that show the success of project. Please consider quantitative and qualitative data. (suggested word count 100-250)

Of the money raised in the Rickstarter campaign, 71 percent came from new donors and 14 percent from lapsed members. Both were added to the membership database. During the next giving cycle, the WQED Development and Membership team will steward and cultivate these new and lapsed donors, building awareness and value of the WQED brand.

Exceeded goal of \$113,000 by raising an additional \$29,777, enabling WQED to promise one additional Nebby show for a total of 7 half-hours.

Contributions arrived from 34 states and 2 Canadian provinces

17 Media placements

35 Community appearances

Q25 Tell us how the project leveraged national or local content (primetime, KIDS, pop-out, etc). (suggested word count 100-250)

Rick Sebak's work as a producer and narrator at WQED since 1987 obviously played a significant role in the project. Businesses, restaurants, community organizations and individuals who have been featured in his Pittsburgh programs as well as his national PBS documentaries coalesced into a team of supporters who enthusiastically backed our Rickstarter campaign.

Likewise, WQED's strong commitment to local programming is a significant factor in all fundraising and development efforts. Pittsburgh pride is strong, and WQED's history as the original home of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" as well as a variety of national series and specials has helped establish an iconic status for the station in the city and region.

The success and visibility of the Rickstarter campaign locally also led to additional corporate support (above and beyond the Kickstarter) of \$30,000 for the new series.

Production of "NEBBY: Rick Sebak's Tales of Greater Pittsburgh" is now in full swing with three 30-minute programs produced between October 2017 and April 2018, with four more on the way.

The first NEBBY program premiered on October 5, 2017 with "A Short History of Route 88." This episode took viewers for a ride along the region's historic Pennsylvania State Route 88, with stops at the Castle Shannon Firemen's Carnival, Mineral Beach Swimming Pool, the Joe Montana Bridges on Route 43, the 4th Street BBQ in Charleroi and the Skyview Drive-In near Carmichaels, PA, among many others. Each segment captured some charms of the people, towns and history in this corner of Pennsylvania. Watch the program here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94jJNLXyNgg&t=684s>

The second program in the NEBBY series was a celebration of several places in and around Pittsburgh where you can find good meat.

The 30-minute program titled "Meat Pittsburgh" premiered on February 1, 2018. Rick and his team traveled throughout the region to showcase farms, butchers, restaurant offerings and hot dogs. See a promo here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfuPRf6RgmE>

The third program in the NEBBY series is in production and is a look at local authors. The 30-minute program "People Who've Written Books Around Here" is scheduled to premiere April 26, 2018. The fourth program is in production and will be about a popular local vintage fair.

Q26 Do you have any supporting materials or items to upload? (optional) **Yes**

Page 11: Tell us what you thought!

Q32 This year, we've created an online form to streamline the application process. Please tell us what you thought.

The online form was helpful