

Tips on Fundraising

The keys to fundraising success are many and varied, but the key to fundraising failure is pretty simple: not being prepared. Develop your group's elevator speech and have some written bullet points that clearly illustrate what your group is, what you are trying to accomplish, and how people can help/what their donation would do to benefit the campus and community. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- It may be helpful to request money for specific programs or events, rather than a general donation. People like to know they contributed to something specific, rather than just operating costs.
- Co-sponsors can be your greatest assets. Bringing in other campus groups helps you share costs for putting on an event, provides an opportunity to network, spreads the message of peer education to a wider audience, and creates additional attendance at the event.
- Have, in writing, a short one- or two-page document that explains who your group is, what your program or event is, the goals of your program, who the program or event will benefit and why, and what you have done in the past. This demonstrates that you are an organization that makes good use of any money you are given.
- Ask for a specific dollar amount. You can ask for a general figure such as \$500 (of course, be willing to take any donations), or a more definitive amount to fund a specific event or project. It is wise to have this in writing as well.
- Be able to leave a document that has your contact information. It is likely that people who are in a position to help you out financially will need some time to think about their decision. Leave them with a packet. If they do not get back to you in a week, follow up with a polite phone call.
- Thank them for their time, regardless of the outcome.

Possible Sources of Campus Funding, Co-sponsorship, or In-Kind Donations

- President's, Vice-President's, Chancellor's or Dean's contingency funds
- Student Government



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- Community Relations Office
- Alumni Foundation Programming Board
- Athletic Department
- Athletic Boosters (Alumni Club)
- Parents' Council
- Residence Life
- Residence Hall Associations
- Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils
- Individual Fraternities and Sororities
- Professional Fraternities and Sororities
- Graduate Student Organizations
- Religious Student Organizations
- Multicultural Affairs Offices
- Disability Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Union Discretionary Funds
- Campus Dining Services
- Unrestricted Contributions Funds
- Speakers Bureau or Special Events Funds

With all the on-campus organizations at your disposal, you should be able to raise a considerable amount of money for your efforts. If campus funds are not enough, it is time to start looking off-campus.

Here are some suggestions for ways to raise money:

- Always look for local businesses to co-sponsor your events, whether they are donating money, prizes, food, or other services to make the event a little better. Always be professional and thank them profusely for their sponsorship, and give them high visibility at your event and in any promotional materials.
- Have an auction. Have students, businesses, faculty, staff and other people in the community donate things they do not want, and see if you can get some money for these items. Having an auction can be fun. Tacky items often bring in the most money.
- Hold a fair of some sort where area businesses or vendors can set up booths on campus. You could have a "Taste of (your town)" festival



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- where area restaurants donate food. Charge for each table and have your members on hand throughout the event to help the vendors.
- Hold a free car wash. Wash people's cars and ask them to make a donation. Promoting a free car wash gets more attention than a regular one, and you'll probably make more money.
 - Sell mocktails at parties, intramural games, in the student union, outside the library, at fine art performances, etc.
 - Some campuses invite groups to sell concessions at sporting events and concerts. This can be an easy way to make money in one day. Be mindful, though, if it involves selling alcohol and how that may impact the perception of your group.
 - Sell buttons. This is a particularly good idea if you have a good athletic team that people support. You can also sell them around issues, such as HIV awareness or impaired driving prevention. Buy them cheap, and then sell them at 100% markup. Remember that it is better to buy a small quantity to start with, then have to make more, than it is to get stuck with a bunch of buttons you can't sell.
 - Ask campus food services or a local business sponsor a free ice cream social on campus. You sell the toppings and take donations.
 - Get local bakeries to donate a free cake "certificate" and sell tickets to faculty, staff, and students. (Everyone needs a cake for a birthday, an anniversary, or a party). Draw winning tickets from the pool. The more cakes you can get donated, the more money you can raise.
 - Try a GoFundMe page where anyone can donate to your event/group fund electronically. (Check with the staff members who handle accounting to see if there are any restrictions or requirements for donations to campus groups.)
 - Develop a subcommittee within your group to research new and innovative fundraising strategies. Have them present their findings to the group.
 - Reach out to other peer education groups and your regional network to find other ideas.