

Fundraising Guide





Making travel more accessible

Every student should have the life-changing experience of traveling the world and exploring new cultures. Fundraising not only helps make this possible, it's also a great way to exercise your skills in goal setting, budgeting, and collaboration.

This book contains tried-and-true methods from our very own groups. The majority are designed to support group fundraising efforts, however many can also be leveraged by an individual fundraising on their own. Find ideas that work best for your group and discover just how effective—and fun—raising money for your program can be.

5 questions to get you started

1. What is your fundraising goal? Is it the whole amount or just a portion of your program?
2. How much time and resources are you willing to dedicate? Are you willing to invest any of your own money?
3. How many events or activities do you want to organize?
4. Who will lead the fundraising efforts? Will they lead every activity or event?
5. Which fundraising activities best suit your goals, your peers, and your own time and resources? Should you be working as a group or setting individuals up for successful fundraising?



Planning and preparing

The best piece of advice we hear from experienced groups is to get started early. The ideas and suggestions you'll find on the following pages will be much more valuable if you have allowed yourself enough time to earn money effectively.

Manage the money

- Any money earned through group projects should be split equally among travelers who worked together on fundraising efforts. You may also want to consider setting up scholarships to put toward group members who may not otherwise be able to go. Or, you could raise money to pay for special on-program activities. It's up to you.
- Set expectations with a fundraising contract and have all participating travelers sign it.
- Keep track of everything. This will help when you're ready to divide up the money. Many fundraising teams appoint a treasurer to monitor all expenses and funds raised via a spreadsheet.
- Put the money all together in an account. Remember, the final payment deadline is 95 days before your program.
- If your group is using our Automatic Payment Plan, money earned from activities and events can be applied to the accounts, decreasing the monthly payment amount.

Choose a leader

If fundraising in a group, someone should be in charge of raising program money. Choose a traveler to take the lead or consider forming a committee to help delegate the responsibilities. You may want to check your school's fundraising rules and guidelines.

Set goals

- Review our fundraising ideas and discuss any other ones you have with your group.
- Determine how much you want to raise.
- Decide the types of events or activities you want to do, and how many.
- Consider which ones can help you reach your goal the fastest.
- Think about which ideas will be most practical for your group. Factor in your facilities, your community, and your group members' skills and interests.
- Set realistic goals. You can always set another goal if you reach the first one!



Benefits of fundraising

Besides the obvious benefit of easing the cost of travel and allowing more students to experience this opportunity, fundraising can help students develop a variety of life skills—all while bringing the group together.



Confidence

Fundraising often requires you to share your story and why you want to travel with multiple different audiences. Refining this pitch will help you build confidence in your communication and influencing skills, both valuable skills to leverage in the job market.

Collaboration

Group fundraisers are a great time to build stronger relationships among your group. Make sure everyone has met each other, and encourage students to work with people they don't know well.

Money management

Setting a fundraising goal will give you and your group real-world budgeting experience. Here are a few more money management tips to help.

Break it down

Thinking about money on a large scale can be daunting and confusing. To help understand what a reasonable goal is, break it down to a weekly or monthly amount and use that goal to help guide which fundraisers your group decides to run. This will also help you and your group understand the amount of money they should personally plan on saving to total the cost of the program.

Save

Try breaking down the amount everyone in your group needs to save by framing it in real-world terms. For example, if everyone needs to save \$10 a week to reach their goal, ask individuals in your group to reflect on whether or not they could do things like make coffee at home a few days a week, rather than stopping by the cafe.



Spread the word

The more people who know about your program, the more support you'll get. Try to get free publicity instead of spending money on radio or print ads. And don't forget one of the best forms of free publicity: word of mouth.



Local news coverage

Encourage your school or local newspaper to write an article about your fundraising activity or event. For community news, send a press release or pitch letter. You can also pitch your story to local TV or radio stations.

Use the web

Email and social media can help spread the word and generate interest. Each student also has a Personalized Support Page where people can contribute to their program. Share it with family and community members.

In school

Be sure your efforts are listed in school announcements and newsletters.

Local classified ads

Contact your local newspaper and ask them to donate a free classified ad for your fundraising activity.

Posters & flyers

An old-fashioned poster and flyer can go a long way in getting the news out. Ask EF for a poster to help promote your program.





Frequently asked questions

If students are on EF's Automatic Payment Plan, how will a check raised by fundraising activities affect their payments?

If the check is greater than \$20, then each of the remaining automatic payment amounts will be reduced. If the check is not greater than \$20, the difference will be subtracted from the final payment.

What if your group earns more money than you owe for the program?

This is on a group-by-group basis. Travelers can ask for a refund through our Traveler Support Department for overpayment, or you can discuss with the group to determine if you would like to apply it to cultural excursions your group can add to your program itinerary.

How long does it take to apply the money you've earned toward your account?

Once we receive your payment, it usually takes 3–5 business days to process and have it reflected in your account.

What is the deadline for applying money your group has raised toward your program?

The deadline to apply money earned toward your program is 95 days before departure if you're not signed up for our Automatic Payment Plan. If you are on the Automatic Payment Plan, the deadline is 35 days before departure. Take into consideration the 3–5 business days it takes to process any money earned for the program.

Group activities

The next few pages include suggestions for group fundraising activities that you can run. As you're looking through them, keep in mind the goals that you set, and the types of commitments you're able to make.



How to read this guide

Each activity idea has an estimated time commitment, estimated money up front, more details about the activity, and a variety of tags to help you narrow down your ideas.

- **Time commitment:** The estimated set-up time that the activity requires.
- **Money up front:** The estimated amount that your group will have to spend in order to run the event.

- **How it works:** Details about executing the event, as well as tips and things to look out for.
- **Tags:** Designed to help you quickly narrow down the types of activities you want to do.

LOW EFFORT / HIGH EFFORT

We've classified low-effort as less than a week to set the event up.

ONE TIME / CONTINUOUS

While you can turn a one-time event into a continuous one and vice-versa, this shows our suggestion. For a continuous event, the time commitment is still the set-up time, and you can run a continuous event for as long or short as makes sense.





HIGH-EFFORT
CONTINUOUS

Cookbook

Time commitment:
2–3 months

Money up front:

\$0–\$200. Try to get design and production work donated or discounted.

How it works:

Create a cookbook with family recipes to sell.

- Request a certain number of recipes per traveler.
- Organize the recipes into categories.
- Try to find a local copy center to donate costs for the book in exchange for a free ad.
- Consider selling ad space in the book as well.
- Sell the books at school and community events for \$5–\$10.



LOW-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Voting day with coffee

Time commitment:
1 day

Money up front:

Minimal. Could include stickers, signage, and advertising.

How it works:

Turn your group into traveling baristas and sell coffee outside of your town voting locations on election day.

- Pick a variety of roasts to sell.
- Determine if you will offer frozen, iced, or flavored coffee besides regular.
- Try to get cups, sugar, and cream donated.
- Charge \$2–\$5 for a cup depending on ingredients.



HIGH-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Touch-a-truck event

Time commitment:
2–3 weeks

Money up front:

None.

How it works:

Secure a parking lot for the day and invite local families to bring their kids to explore and climb on trucks (fire trucks, police cars, ambulances, etc.).

- Ask community firemen, bus drivers, police, and EMTs to donate a few hours so kids can climb inside their cars.
- Charge admission for the event.
- For a true family event, see if students will dress up as characters, rent a bouncy house, and/or sell food.



HIGH-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Silent/live auction night

Time commitment:

1–2 months

Money up front:

\$0–\$200 if you need to rent a sound system or lighting equipment. Try to get items donated and refreshments to sell at the event.

How it works:

Invite the community to a night of bidding on merchandise and services.

- Ask a venue to donate their space for the event.

- Send a letter and call businesses to secure items.
- Mention each business will be advertised at the event and listed as a sponsor for their donation.

Live auction:

- Ask a store to donate food and drinks for the event.
- Find someone to run the show.
- Make paddles to hand out and to help keep track of who purchases which item.

- Pick one person to record bidder information and settle all money transactions after the event is over.

Silent auction:

- Secure an area and set up times for “open bidding.”
- Display items with bidding sheets for each item. Community members place bids (and can place more than one to outbid one another!) to win the auctioned items.



LOW-EFFORT
CONTINUOUS

Singing telegrams

Time commitment:

A few hours per week for
1–3 months

Money up front:

Minimal. Just the cost of flyers or
any promotional materials.

How it works:

Sing for donations.

- Advertise a singing telegram service for holidays like Valentine's Day, or do it year-round for birthdays, anniversaries, etc.
- Create flyers and advertise in the local newspaper.
- Charge \$5 per singing telegram.
- For an extra incentive, invest in a funny costume!



LOW-EFFORT
ONE-TIME / CONTINUOUS

Concession stand

Time commitment:

1 day

Money up front:

\$0–\$200 depending on donations
from local stores/restaurants.

How it works:

Sell concessions outside local shops
or events in town.

- Check with your school's sports teams (or other local teams) to see if you can set up concessions during a game.
- Consider setting up outside a local grocery store.



LOW-EFFORT / HIGH-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Chow down on culture

Time commitment:

2–3 weeks

Money up front:

\$0–\$50. Try to get the event space for
free as well as the tickets and posters.

How it works:

Get a variety of restaurants to donate
food and have each traveler prepare
food that's native to a specific country
for a community buffet.

- Ask local restaurants to donate food items. Create various countries' national dishes.
- Sell tickets for \$5–\$10 for a buffet-style dinner.
- Work the event as hosts and hostesses to ensure everything runs smoothly.
- Use the school dining hall or a community center.



LOW-EFFORT
CONTINUOUS

Gift wrapping

Time commitment:

3–5 hours

Money up front:

\$0–\$50 depending on whether or not materials are donated.

How it works:

Set up a gift-wrapping station during the holidays and offer to wrap shoppers' purchases for a small donation or tips.

- Gift-wrapping can be done for tips and donations from companies.
- It can be done at local stores, shopping malls, etc.
- Pro-rate the money raised so that students don't have an advantage depending on the shift they work.



LOW-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Stadium clean up

Time commitment:

2–4 days

Money up front:

None. The stadium will most likely provide trash bags and other supplies.

How it works:

Clean up a stadium after an event.

- Contact a local stadium or arena and see if you can clean up after an event for a specified donation.
- If possible, advertise during the event and put out a donation jar.



HIGH-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Talent show

Time commitment:

2–3 months

Money up front:

\$0–\$200, maybe more if you need to rent a sound system or lighting equipment.

How it works:

Hold a talent show and charge admission.

- Get travelers who are interested in performing.
- Have a variety of acts but keep it under two hours.

- Secure a venue and make sure they have all the proper equipment with someone to operate it.
- Choose a student to emcee the event. Start spreading the word.
- Sell tickets in advance and at the door.
- We recommend \$6/adult and \$5/child at the door; \$5/adult and \$4/child in advance.



HIGH-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Spaghetti dinner

Time commitment:
2–3 weeks

Money up front:
\$0–\$75. Try to get as much donated as possible.

How it works:

Host a meal to support your program. Secure a venue and sell tickets at school and in your community.

- Get donations from grocers for supplies.
- Make sure you have enough group members to cook and serve based on the number of tickets you sold.
- Think about some entertainment to go along with your meal.
- Hold a silent auction with the dinner. Ask local businesses to donate gift cards, products, and services and then hold a silent auction for all of the items.



LOW-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Yard sale

Time commitment:
5 hours leading up to the event

Money up front:
Minimal. Could include stickers and advertising.

How it works:

Have a sale with donated goods.

- Get friends, families, and businesses to donate items. Your group can also go to other yard sales in your area and ask for any unsold items at the end of the day. This will help you have more items for your sale!
- Collect the items a week before the event.
- Pick a location to hold the event.
- Publicize the event throughout your area.
- Sort and price the items.
- Set up a station to collect payments.



HIGH-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Murder mystery party

Time commitment:
3–5 weeks

Money up front:
Minimal. Could include signage or a murder mystery kit.

How it works:

Host a themed, ticketed party. Secure a venue and sell tickets at school or in your community.

- Purchase or download a free murder mystery kit. These usually include a fabricated story about a murder, character descriptions for your attendees, and instructions to help you run the party.
- Send attendees an email or printed invitation with information about their character.
- Encourage them to dress up, use props, or adopt an accent to really get into the theme.
- Staff the event, making sure each student takes on the role of a different character. They can also provide additional clues and hints for your attendees if needed.



OUT OF SCHOOL
LOW-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Car wash

Time commitment:

1–2 Weeks

Money up front:

\$0–\$75. Try to get as much donated and brought from home as possible.

How it works:

Host a car wash at a local gas station or parking lot.

- Reach out to a local gas station or institution with a large parking lot that would be willing to host your car wash.
- Ask students to bring buckets, rags, sponges, and soap from home, or purchase them.
- Make signs.
- Advertise the event in school and on social media, and have students hold signs along the road during the event.



OUT OF SCHOOL
LOW-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Art party

Time commitment:

1–2 Weeks

Money up front:

Minimal. Try to work with your school to donate or offset costs of supplies.

How it works:

Host an art party at your school.

- Come up with an activity (painting, drawing, etc.) that your artistic students can help your guests accomplish.
- Try to make it connected to the theme of your program.
- Gather all the supplies necessary, and borrow or use as many from your school's art department as possible.



OUT OF SCHOOL
HIGH-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Summer language camp

Time commitment:

2 months

Money up front:

\$100–\$200 for snacks and other supplies.

How it works:

Hold a week-long language camp for local elementary school students.

- Invite students from local elementary schools to participate in your language-learning camp.
- Have your students participate as counselors.
- Plan engaging activities to practice vocabulary and learn about the cultures of the places you're traveling to.
- Ask to use space at your school or the elementary school.
- Note: Half-day camps can be easier to plan.



LOW-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Photo booth

Time commitment:

1 week

Money up front:

Minimal. Try to bring things from home.

How it works:

Create a fun and festive photo booth at a school or community event.

- Find a high-quality camera or Polaroid camera.
- Bring silly props from home, and a sheet or large poster to hang for the backdrop.
- Charge \$1–\$3 per photo, and collect email addresses if you don't have a Polaroid camera.



HIGH-EFFORT
CONTINUOUS

T-shirt sale

Time commitment:

2–3 weeks

Money up front:

None

How it works:

Design T-shirts and sell them to your school and community.

- Have an artistic student create a T-shirt design, either about your home community or your destination.
- Use a platform like CustomInk's fundraising tool to design your T-shirts and send out the link so people can order them.
- Have students show off the shirts around school.



LOW-EFFORT
CONTINUOUS

Sales

Time commitment:

From 1 week to several months

Money up front:

Depends on the sale. Some fundraising sites will let you order without paying immediately.

How it works:

Organize a sale for travelers to individually fundraise.

- Check your school rules to see if you are allowed to sell items in school.
- Set a time frame for the sale so students can set realistic goals for how much they want to sell.



LOW-EFFORT
ONE-TIME

Restaurant fundraiser

Time commitment:

1 week

Money up front:

None

How it works:

Partner with a local restaurant to host a fundraiser.

- Many restaurants offer fundraising partnerships where they will donate a specific percentage of their profits for that night to your organization.
- Advertise the night around the school and the community. Ask the restaurant if they have any promotional materials you can use.



Individual activities



Odd jobs

Time commitment:

Timing is up to you

Money up front:

None.

How it works:

Everyone needs an extra set of hands, so encourage your group to offer theirs!

- Advertise what types of jobs you're available for.
- Reach out to friends and neighbors.
- Let people know what you're raising money for and see if they are willing to pay you a more favorable wage.
- Work with your group to think about what skills you have.



Babysitting

Time commitment:

Timing is up to you

Money up front:

None.

How it works:

Ask parents in your neighborhood if they need a babysitter.

- Students can get certified for babysitting and then check with local hotels/events to learn if they need babysitting for upcoming events.



Personalized Support Page

Time commitment:

2–3 months

Money up front:

None.

How it works:

Travelers email their personal URL to friends and family asking for their support in paying for their program.

- Each traveler's Personalized Support Page allows them to easily and securely collect funds through online credit card payments.
- Send an email to friends and family to ask for payments for their program. (See example on the next page.)
- Share your Personalized Support Page on Facebook, link it to your blog, or use other social networking sites.
- Send a public thank you. Not only does it give proper recognition, but it serves as a reminder to those who have not yet sent money that they should take action.

Using your Personalized Support Page

Use this email as a guide when spreading the word about your personalized support page.



Dear (First name),

I am planning on traveling on a short-term study abroad program with (school name) to (destination). I am so excited to have the opportunity to go abroad, experience new cultures, and learn important skills for my future.

My program is planned for X date. My group is working on several fundraising projects to help pay for this experience. I am also asking friends and family to consider making a payment to help defray the cost of the program. I have set up a personal support webpage for those interested in donating here (insert URL).

I'd be happy to tell you more about this program and answer any questions you might have. Thank you for considering helping to make this once-in-a-lifetime experience come true!

Sincerely, (Your name)

Community outreach

In addition to outreach around the individual donation page, your group leader may also want to reach out to local businesses, school alumni, and others asking for direct support for your trip. You can use this template as an example for how to connect with those community members who may want to support your travels.



Dear (First name),

I am a (role) at (school or group), and I am going with my (students/group) on an educational program to (destination)! We are so excited to have the opportunity to go abroad, experience new cultures, and learn important skills for the future.

Our (name of program) program is planned for (date). We are traveling with EF College Study, a respected and trusted organization in educational travel.

I am traveling with my students because (insert reasons for traveling here).

In order to achieve these goals, my students and I are working on several fundraising projects to help pay for this experience. As an engaged community member, I wanted to connect with you about various ways that you can support our program: (Insert any that apply)

- We have a group donation page, where you can donate to support our overall group costs, as well as learn more about our program: (URL).
- We would love to partner with your business to host a fundraising event or sale.
- We are having an upcoming (fundraising event), and would love for you to attend and spread the word!

I'd be happy to tell you more about this program and answer any questions you might have. Thank you for considering to help make this once-in-a-lifetime experience come true for my group.

Sincerely, (your name)

Looking for more?

Your team at EF is always available to offer more support and resources. Faculty can give us a call at 800-873-2250, and travelers and parents can reach us at 877-485-4184.

