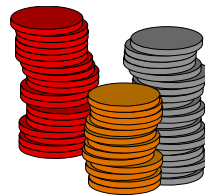
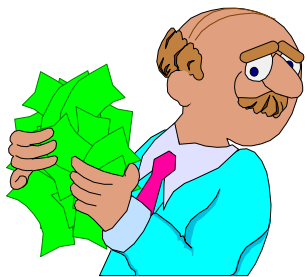


# INTERNATIONAL SERVICE LEARNING FUNDRAISING GUIDE



Revised and reprinted with permission from:  
WorldTeach

[www.worldteach.org](http://www.worldteach.org)



## Welcome to the wonderful world of fundraising!

We invite all University of Denver students to take advantage of the unique opportunity to gain knowledge and broaden their horizons through service learning overseas. Although we try to keep costs to a minimum and provide some funding through scholarships, we realize that some students are deterred from participating in such programs due to lack of financial sources. Based on these concerns, DU's International Service Learning Office has put together this document\* to aid students in securing their own sources of funding.

Let's be honest: Fundraising can be a real challenge. What you might not realize is that fundraising can also be a lot of fun, and a truly rewarding experience. Fundraising takes a combination of **creativity, planning, hard work, tenacity,** and a sense of **humor**.

Fundraising need not be viewed in a negative light. It is part of any non-profit work. If you can get past the feeling that you are raising the funds for **you**, and instead consider that you are raising funds in order to provide much-needed help to **others** (while learning lots yourself along the way), then you should feel proud - practically morally obligated! - to help people part with their money for a good cause. You can turn the activity of fundraising into an opportunity not only to **inform** others about your upcoming experience, but to **raise awareness** about needs and issues in the developing world. You will be amazed by how many interesting people you will meet who will support and applaud you, not only financially but also in spirit.

If you use any of these ideas or have any success stories you would be willing to share, please email Melissa Schaap, International Service Learning Coordinator, at [mschaap@du.edu](mailto:mschaap@du.edu).

We wish you the best of luck. **Now, let the journey begin!**

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\* Revised from resources developed by WorldTeach, Center for International Development, Harvard University-  
[www.worldteach.org](http://www.worldteach.org); used with permission 2001.

# Getting Started

## What to Do

- ♥ **Believe** in your product. *Be sure to convey your energy and excitement to your donors.* Give the donor concrete reasons why you think your international service learning experience will be valuable, both for you and for the people with whom you will work overseas. Your enthusiasm will help the contributor understand how committed you are, and how valuable your time of service will be.
- ¥ **Learn** about your destination country. Gather all the information you can about your country-of-service including its history, culture, and geography.
- \$ **Suggest** a specific amount to each donor. Donors will probably not know the amount you actually need to raise, and will find it easier if they do not have to choose a figure on their own. Do your homework and ask for an appropriate amount that matches each donor's resources.
- ❖ **Remember** that giving money should be a **mutually rewarding experience**. You benefit from the funds; the donor should receive something too, besides the satisfaction of giving to a worthy cause. *Draw your donors into the experience.* Many students find that their donors are excited about the opportunity to get involved in something they themselves never had a chance to do.
- § **Ask** for money - straight out, every time you meet or write to a potential donor. It is easy to talk about the program, but the donor will know that you expect something more. Be up front about it, and go ahead and ask!
- » **Network** like crazy, even if you don't particularly like the idea. Ask people to refer you to other people who might be interested in what you're doing. The more people you contact, the larger your giving base will become, *and* the more people you are able to involve in your experience. Meanwhile, incorporate international service learning and/or your country-of-service into every conversation you possibly can!
- ♥ **Have fun**, even if you are worried about the results. Raising funds should bolster your enthusiasm, not detract from it.

## What *Not* to Do!

- **Don't wait.** It takes more time than you realize for people to think about your request and make the decision to help you. Start now!
- **Don't be dismayed** when someone says "no." Don't take it personally or let initial disappointments deter you. You will likely get a few "no's" before you get that first, golden "yes." It can take a lot of requests to get just one positive response – but one positive response usually leads to another, and another, and another...

## A Few Basic Principles

# of Fundraising

- #1**      **People give to people.**
- You will have the most success with people who are peers, or people you are somehow associated with. Alumni write to other alumni, athletes to athletes, club members to other club members. Even if some of the people you ask don't know you personally, try to establish something in common with them, and they will feel a greater pull to give.
- #2**      **Remember the cause!**
- You are dedicating your time and energy to volunteer in a country and a community that needs your service. Any funds you raise help you accomplish your goal: serving and learning. When you appeal to funders, remember that this will not only be a great experience for you, it is also a direct contribution to a disadvantaged community overseas.
- #3**      **Ask for amounts that are realistic.**
- Be sure to do your research before asking donors to give money. Don't ask a \$10 donor for \$100. Make every gift, however large or small, seem really important - because it is.
- #4**      **You can't thank a donor too much.**
- Thank you letters should be sent within 24 hours of the receipt of the donation. *You should also reply to those people, groups or institutions who do not grant you a donation as well, thanking them for their consideration. It's just good manners!*
- #5**      **Educate your donor about your program.**
- Even if your prospect is an expert in the field, don't assume they know about what you are doing, or what your goals and plans are. Take the time to tell them.

# The Target Figure

It is important to know how much you will need to raise, which will depend on which program you are participating in. Here is a worksheet to help you calculate your potential costs:

University of Denver tuition and fees	\$ _____
Spending money for the program (For recommended amount, refer to program's info packet)	\$ _____
Transport to destination and back (separate expense for some programs)	\$ _____
Medical exam, tests, immunizations (if not covered by your insurance)	\$ _____
Passport application fee, visa fee, and departure tax (if any)	\$ _____
<b>TOTAL FUNDS NEEDED</b>	\$ _____



## Before You Go Any Further...

Now that you've calculated how much you need to raise, figure out how much you will be able to contribute yourself. It looks much better to prospective donors if they know that you are investing some of your own funds towards the cause as well. Figure out how much you can earn before departure, and add it to the amount you can contribute from your personal savings. Subtract that from the total amount that you will need for your experience overseas. This way, when you approach funders, you can say, "I have already contributed X-amount of dollars, but volunteering overseas is expensive, and I need to raise X-amount more."

# The First Step



The hardest part may be just getting started! How to begin, where to go, who to call - these all seem like daunting hurdles at the beginning. One volunteer once likened fundraising to learning to dive: *“The longer you stand and stare at the water, the worse it becomes...the more apprehensive you feel. You just have to dive in.”* Understand and accept that fear and anxiety are natural feelings but that you can *still* take action while you learn to deal with these emotions.

## Part I: Direct Solicitations

One good way to start is to sit down and **brainstorm a list** of individuals and institutions that you can pursue for funding. Many volunteers find it helpful to make two lists; the first for their peers, classmates, teammates, and others who will only be able to contribute between \$20 and \$50. The second list could then be comprised of former teachers, professors, coaches, doctors, advisors, supervisors, employers, friends of your parents, and others who may be able to contribute \$50 or more. You can then prepare a letter for each group. The letters may be similar in content, perhaps one a little more formal than the other, explaining your plans and asking for their support. You can also follow up your letters with a phone call, especially to those who are likely able to give you larger amounts.

Below are some ideas of sources to which you can apply for funding. If you decide to conduct a direct mail campaign, you may want to include a pledge card, and, again, it’s always a good idea to follow up with phone calls. Remember, the more people you approach, the greater your chances for success!

### 1. **Your College or University** (DU **graduate** students can check with their alma maters)

Many colleges and universities have money available for students and alumni who want to pursue public service work. In addition, there may be people at your university who may be interested in contributing to your project overseas. Administrators, professors, advisors, proctors, chaplains, and coaches may all lend support to your fundraising drive.

- Check into DU International Service Learning Scholarships and check with your department of study to see if there are any scholarships available. PLP and Living and Learning students should talk to their directors about international service learning scholarships available to them.
- Go to your school newspaper, your athletic teams, your residential college, your dormitory co-op, your fraternity/sorority, and any clubs in which you have been a member. Ask the president if there are any funds available. If there aren’t any central funds available, you should consider soliciting your fellow members through direct mail or some kind of event.

*Have a Party! In the right kind of setting, a big party involving your college contacts can raise a lot of money. If you decide to try this, attempt to get donations of everything you will need, including space, food, beverages and music, so that all the proceeds will go towards your goal.*

### 2. **Your Church, Synagogue or other Religious Organization**

The church, synagogue, or other religious organization in your hometown, or at your university, may have funds available for members of the community. If you are a member of a religious group, ask for assistance from whomever is in charge. Many churches have money available from a centrally administered fund. They might also ask for direct donations from the congregation.

Students should consider the appropriateness of asking their minister or rabbi to make an announcement at weekend services about their involvement in the international service learning program. Sometimes, students can make the announcement themselves, addressing the congregation about their plans to participate in an international service learning program. You may also want to add a note to the newsletter that circulates to all the members of the congregation, or post an announcement on the bulletin board.

### 3. Other Schools or Learning Institutions



Many high schools, junior high schools, and even elementary schools, have special funding set aside for their alumni. Arrange a meeting with your old principal to discuss any available sponsorship from your school. Offer to guest teach for a week when you return, or to speak in an assembly or school chapel service.

### 4. Family and Friends



No one enjoys asking their parents for money, especially if their parents are contributing significantly to their tuition.

Despite this, your parents, grandparents, sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles and other extended family members can all be excellent sources for contributions. As with any potential contributor, if you can convince your family that you are making a responsible decision to participate in international service learning, and if you involve your family in your preparations, they may be more willing to support you. Take advantage of any family reunions that are planned. Make a formal presentation to request support from your family and pass the hat.

**Or**, ask those from whom you expect to receive birthday, Christmas, Hanukkah and/or graduation gifts to instead pledge a gift of money toward your project.

**Or**, using the vernacular of a hot stock market, offer to sell “shares” of your service learning experience as an “investment” in you and your future colleagues overseas.

*If you are asking fellow students or friends, suggest that they give up a movie or two cups of Starbucks coffee and donate \$7-\$10 for your cause. If you are feeling bold and want your friends to get into the spirit of giving, ask them to sacrifice a lift ticket (\$50) or an item of clothing they would have otherwise purchased (\$25-\$75).*



## 5. Print Media

Write an open letter to the editor of the paper or local magazine describing your project and asking for support. Or approach the newspaper's editor individually about helping to sponsor you in return for regular, publishable letters from you. You can also contact radio and television stations and offer to send "reports from the field" or give interviews in exchange for their sponsorship.

Even if you come from a big city, there is probably a smaller newspaper serving your neighborhood or suburb. These smaller papers are more likely to be interested in your project.

***We kindly ask that the International Service Learning Office first clear any such letters or articles for publication in order to ensure accuracy.***

If you are a graduate student, let your college alumni magazine or newsletter know about your plans for your time abroad. This is a way to get the message out to your classmates and other alumni about your wonderful opportunity to participate in an international service learning program. It may also end up being a great way to drum up extra fundraising support!

## 6. Community Based Organizations

- ✦ Ask your Chamber of Commerce about local civic groups (**Rotary Clubs-[www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org), Lion's Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, Soroptimists**, minority and cultural affairs groups, etc.) in your area. Ask the president, or, better yet, a friend who is a member, for an opportunity to make a presentation before the group.
- ✦ Often a service club or sports team will sponsor a community event. These events are excellent opportunities for you to make a plug for your cause. If the organization publishes a program for the event, you could submit an article describing international service learning and asking for support.

## 7. Corporations

Most big corporations have foundations that do not give grants to individuals. Small companies, however, may be able to contribute to your fundraising campaign. Students who have had success fundraising at corporations have solicited funds either from their former employers or from small, local stores and companies.

- ❖ Many companies have resources to make **matching grants** to employees or employees' children. Ask a company where you have worked (or where your parents work) to match the funds you raise elsewhere.
- 🎯 Solicit funds from **local businesses**. Try to get support from the stores and restaurants that you frequent the most. The extra publicity you offer may be of enough value to them to make a donation to your time overseas.
- ✍ If you are fortunate enough to work for a company that will allow a "sabbatical" or leave of absence for your service learning abroad, ask them if you can write a piece for the **employee newsletter** informing other employees about what you will be doing, and ask for their support.

***Helpful Hint:*** Target those stores and businesses where you have a personal contact, or that may share a common interest with the international service learning program or the country where you will be serving.

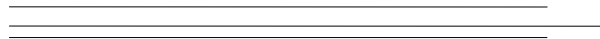


## PART II: Activities and Events

One of the most enjoyable elements of fundraising is thinking up creative events to help you reach your goal. The best approach to event planning is to think of an activity that you really enjoy, and find a way to raise money doing it. With a little planning, you can use sports, music, drama, comedy, or almost any other means to help you raise money. (But be careful - don't spend more money on the event than you are sure to get back!).

- Have a “Project Bosnia/Nepal” Party. Make sure the invitation explains the purpose of the party, so that your guests know ahead of time that they are expected to contribute, if only a little. At the party, make a speech about your goals for the upcoming experience, and then pass a hat to ask for contributions. Have some material on DU’s International Service Learning Programs available for people who want to learn more about these opportunities.
- Run, swim or bike in a race, or from one state to another. Get sponsors for every mile that you complete. Persuade a friend to join you.
- Organize a walk-a-thon, dance-a-thon, or golf-a-thon.
- Sponsor a pancake or theme dinner.
- If you’re artistic, sell some of your artwork. Have a special event - a Gallery Showing featuring nothing but your work - and invite everyone you know to come bid on your art!
- Hold an ice cream fest and invite your friends. Ask a local store to donate the ice cream, and charge your friends an “admission price.”
- Hold a raffle of donated goods or something that you have made yourself that is truly unique - like a quilt featuring squares of scenes or fabric patterns of your country-of-service.

## Part III: In-Kind Donations



In-kind donations are gifts of either services or objects rather than money. Many potential donors won't give cash, but might contribute something else. Many expenses you will incur can be covered by in-kind donations.

- Approach a travel agent or airline about donating your airfare.
- Ask someone you know who travels a lot to transfer frequent flyer miles to you.
- ! Ask a doctor about providing immunizations and other health work free.  
*Note: If either of your parents are in the Armed Forces, you may be able to get immunizations free. Be sure to ask them if their benefits will cover your shots!*
- 📖 Approach a local bookstore about donating books or supplies that you might need.
- 🛒 Ask “gear” stores or catalog companies to donate clothes, a backpack, or other supplies.

## Giving Back

One of the ways to improve your chances of success is to find something you can offer your donors in return for their support and to involve them in your experience.

- Either right before you go or just after you return home, give a “Bosnia or Bust” or “Into Nepal” party for everyone who helped.
- Promise to bring back small handicrafts for everyone who supported you.

### **Other Practical Suggestions**

- \$ Start setting aside a percentage of each paycheck from your current job.
- \$ If you have the option of living with your parents, children, or friends for a few months, rent free, take it. You might also consider sharing an apartment with a friend for a few months, and apply the money you save in rent to your fee.
- \$ Even if you’re a full-time student, try to get a part time job. If you work fifteen hours a week for three months as \$6/hour, you will earn almost \$1200.

## **List of Attachments:**

A) Fundraising Log

B) Verification of Participation Letter  
(for Alternative Spring Break in Mexico program)

C) See Melissa Schaap for other types of sample letters



January 23, 2001

To whom it may concern:

(Student's name) is a/n (undergraduate/graduate student) in the (program/department/school) at the University of Denver. (Student's name) has applied for the Alternative Spring Break in Mexico Program organized by the International Service-Learning Office and the Community Action Program, University of Denver.

The International Service-Learning Office is committed to preparing students for life and work in a global society through experiential, cross-cultural learning opportunities. The Community Action Program is committed to promoting civic awareness among the DU community. These two offices have come together to plan the Alternative Spring Break in Mexico Program. This program is a community service initiative in El Tepetate, Zacatecas, Mexico. Students will have the opportunity to work with the community on a renovation project, such as rebuilding a school or community center. Students who participate in this program will think about what it means to serve as they contribute to a deprived community in Mexico.

The cost per student to participate in this program is \$600 per student, which covers airfare, transportation, room and board, a cultural day away, and a contribution to the community of El Tepetate. In addition to this cost, students should budget about \$50 for personal expenses. To participate in this program, the cost per student must be paid in full by February 7, 2001. Students are encouraged to raise funds to cover their program fee and expenses.

If you need further information about the Alternative Spring Break in Mexico or (student's name) application you may contact me at (303) 871-4909 or via email at [mschaap@du.edu](mailto:mschaap@du.edu).

Sincerely,

Melissa Schaap  
International Special Projects Coordinator  
Office of Internationalization  
University of Denver