

40 Fundraising Ideas...

by Megan Lee

Link: <http://www.gooverseas.com/blog/40-fundraising-ideas-study-abroad>

- 1. Send letters to friends, relatives, acquaintances, old teachers, co-workers, professors... you get the picture!** If you opt to make contact with potential supporters via snail mail, be sure that your letter includes information about yourself (including a photo!). [see sample letter at the end of this document] Try to emit a contagious enthusiasm for your upcoming experience. Ease the reader into making a connection with you--perhaps describe what has happened in your life that have contributed to your decision to study abroad, more details on the nature of the program you have selected itself, or ways that you believe your study abroad experience is an investment in your future. Make donating as easy as possible--cash or check, and ask for a specific amount (\$50-\$100 is pretty standard). Always (always always!) follow up with "thank you" letters (preferably hand written) and try to keep in touch with your supporters through email while you are studying abroad.
- 2. Use your contacts from #1 to contact THEIR contacts!** Networking is huge. If you receive support from somebody, it may not hurt to ask them if they would pass on your letter of interest to their colleagues, friends, etc. You never know who will be inspired by your story and be willing to help out in even larger ways, such as recruiting further help! Consider asking close friends and family to write letters on your behalf to their contacts.
- 3. Storm local businesses**

Larger corporations may end up being a never ending line of dealing with sales reps and managers and those managers' managers; focus your energy instead on smaller businesses in your hometown or university town. A great starting point is your local Chamber of Commerce, who may be able to provide a list of contact information for most nearby businesses. Establish connections with the businesses--consider sending them letters (as in #1), or instead, hand-deliver your sponsorship request and introduce yourself directly to the staff on site. Follow up with phone calls. Be direct and polite, and ask for a specific amount of money. If you are planning on having an event to raise money for your trip, consider asking local businesses to donate their product (merchandise, gift certificates, etc) and opt to raffle them off at your event. If possible, consider partnering with your employer as a host or sponsor for the event.
- 4. Have a fundraising par-tay!** As I briefly just touched upon, it is possible to host a community event for fundraising your experience. Events such as spaghetti dinners or pancake breakfasts have proved successful in the past, among hundreds of other creative parties. Raffles or entrance chargers are a simple solution for raising money during the events. Sponsor a disco, a baked potato bar, an ice cream social, go crazy!
- 5. Tap into your hometown resources**

Did you grow up in one town your whole life? Turn to community groups and alumni associations from your hometown, county, or state as a means of support. Research local civic groups such as Rotary, Elks, Kiwanis, Lions, or other special-interest groups who might be interested in sponsoring you. One method of drumming up support is offering to hold an educational seminar or presentation about your travels for the group upon your return. Additionally, an announcement in a high-school or college alumni

newsletter (or fraternity/sorority alumni organization letter) may prove a solid method for gaining more financial support.

6. Connect with your place of worship

Your personal church, mosque, synagogue, etc. may be willing to hold a special collection during their religious service or general meeting specifically in your honor. Approach the proper leaders to organize this collection and provide any helpful information; it is important to find the best way to communicate your mission, your cause, and your need for support to the people in your network who might be able to contribute to your efforts. Additionally, the religious organization itself may be willing to sponsor you directly!

7. 15 minutes of fame!

Alert local newspapers, radio and television stations about your plans for studying abroad, and see if they are interested in partnering with you for your efforts. Pitch ideas that are mutually beneficial, such as writing regular letters to be published in the local paper or offering to do an interview upon returning. Write an article for your talking about the cause, event or organization you are fundraising for, and ask for donations. This would also be a great way to gather more support for your upcoming fundraising event, such as those outlined in #8!

8. Have a yard sale! Bake sale! Garage sale!

A great way to get the greater community involved in your project, or at the very least aware of your project, is to host your very own sale event. Have friends and family volunteer to help out on the actual day of the event, and to pass out flyers around the community. Get rid of your old junk to make room for new memories (or souvenirs!). Tap into your inner-entrepreneur and discover just how generous even strangers can be.

9. Create a website! We love: [GoFundMe](#)
10. Collect old or used books, CDs, computer software, etc. and have a sale.
11. Ask family members to donate frequent flyer miles.
12. Wave all holiday and birthday gifts to request financial gifts instead.
13. Ask a sorority, fraternity, or campus organization to sponsor a party for you.
14. Offer photos of people, landscapes, animals from the country where you are going for a \$10 donation.
15. Organize a night of "benefit performances" by well-liked local talents.
16. Shave your head.
17. Create cookbooks with you and your friends' favorite recipes and sell them.
18. Run errands for people.
19. Do yardwork in your neighborhood.
20. Host a _____-a-thon. (Draw? Skip? Leap? Cartwheel?)
21. In lieu of traditional birthday/holiday gifts, ask family to donate to your own account on [myTab!](#)
22. Singing. Telegrams.
23. Partner with your local grocer and sack those food items!
24. Offer public classes or private lessons (dancing, self-defense, foreign languages, any special skill!)
25. Collect used cell phones / ink cartridges from local businesses and recycle them.
26. Stand on the street corner and ask passersbyers. Engage and be friendly, not creepy.
27. Decorate a few coffee cans and place them in high traffic areas (such as local coffee shops!)
28. Virtual network via social media platforms.
29. Hold an auction. If you're artistic, showcase YOUR work!
30. Have a friend host a Mary Kay/Pampered Chef party and donate the profits to you.
31. Create and sell a custom calendar, featuring the photos from your trip (paid upfront of course!)
32. Take a local celebrity "prisoner" and only release him when a certain amount of \$\$ has been raised!

33. Collect gold (old jewelry) instead of cash.
 34. Have an ab-fab cake baking competition with prizes (high fives). Auction off the contributions.
 35. Host a pet pageant. Participants (and their furry friends) must pay to enter!
 36. Organize a tailgate buffet for a local sports competition. Hot dollars for hot dogs!
 37. Grab your goofiest friends and create a haunted house.
 38. Hold a themed fashion show. (Orange? 80s? Knitted?)
 39. Host a 5k. Themes also fun for this idea.
 40. Sing-songs-from-the-year-you-were-born talent show.
 41. Bonus! Organize a community mural composed of handprints, bought for 5 bucks/a stamp.
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Sample Student Fundraising Letter

Dear _____,

This summer I have an amazing opportunity to attend a music camp called the "CYMC Strings & Winds Program" in Comox, British Columbia. This is an intensive camp for serious intermediate to advanced string and wind players, and I have been accepted into the program.

The cost for me to attend this camp is _____ and I need your help in covering this cost.

Music is a very important part of my life and future, and this camp will help me accomplish a semester's worth of work in 2 weeks. Would you be willing to support me with a donation? If so, here is how you can help:

1. Send a donation to:
Comox Valley Youth Music Centre
Strings & Winds Program
#204 580 Duncan Ave.
Courtenay, BC V9N 2M7
2. Give a donation directly to me or my parent (**please make all checks payable to "CYMC" or "Comox Valley Youth Music Centre"**)
3. Help connect me with others who would be willing to donate.

If mailing in a donation on my behalf, please indicate on the cheque that it is for me specifically.

Thank you in advance for your prompt response. I look forward to sharing this journey with you. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]