



Education
Advisory
Board

Advancement Forum

Crowdfunding

Disruptive Innovations in University Fundraising

Volume 3

Advancement Forum

Project Director

Liz Rothenberg, PhD

Contributing Consultants

David Bevevino

Jeff Martin

Molly O'Connor

Managing Director

Noah Rosenberg

Design Consultant

Sarah Elliot

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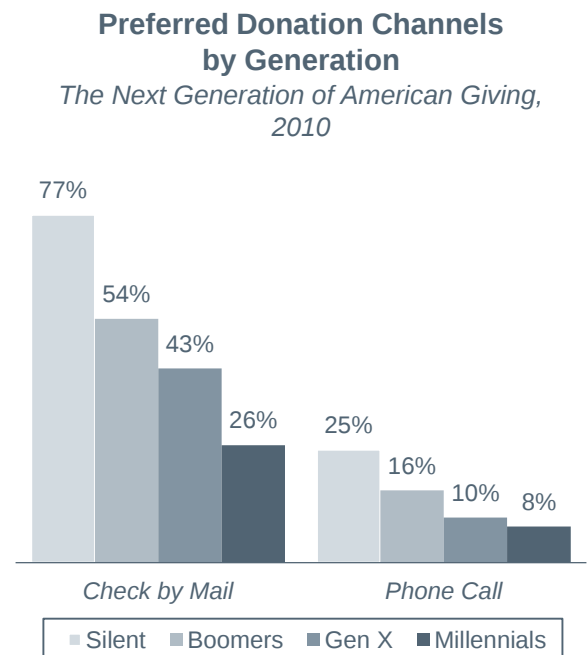
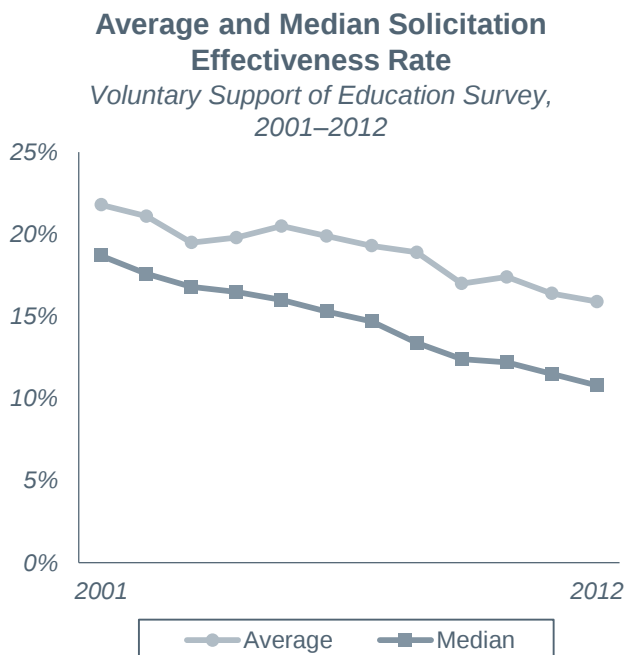
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Why We Care About Disruptive Innovations

Part Three in a Six-Part Series

Since the early 2000s, annual fund effectiveness has declined precipitously. Donors respond less enthusiastically to the solicitations that have traditionally bolstered college and university fundraising revenues. As enrollments grow and solicitation effectiveness declines, the question of scale looms large over higher education advancement professionals.



The downward trend in solicitation effectiveness and the damage it has caused advancement operations stem largely from generational shifts. Younger donors find inspiration not in direct mail outreach or phonathon calls, but rather in innovative fundraising strategies that utilize high-tech communication channels. Colleges and universities lag behind other organizations in adopting these new solicitation techniques. This report will explore how nonprofits and higher education fundraisers use crowdfunding to acquire new donors.

- 1 Social Media Fundraising**
- 2 Personal Fundraising Pages**
- 3 Crowdfunding**
- 4 Donor-Centric Websites**
- 5 Text Giving Alternatives**
- 6 Mobile-Optimized Giving**

Study Road Map

1 | Breakthrough Practices in Crowdfunding

- ## 2 |
- Toolkit: Crowdfunding
 - Student-Facing Fundraising Tip Sheet
 - Student Crowdfunding Application Template
 - Project Selection Guide
 - Post-campaign Assessment Matrix
 - Policy Documents

The Power of the Crowd

With its power to activate large numbers of people in support of a cause, crowdfunding has dominated headlines over the past few years. There is good reason for this publicity: crowdfunding revenues nearly doubled between 2011 and 2012, and they are set to grow sixfold across the next two years.

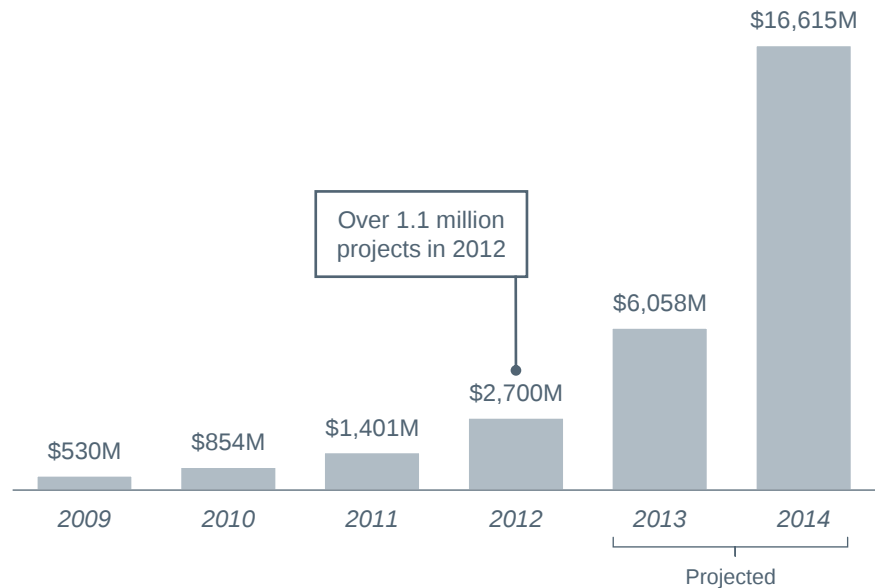
These crowdfunded dollars go to a variety of different types of projects, including microfinance, peer-to-peer lending, donation-based campaigns, and equity-based investments. While all of these types of campaigns continue to attract donations, the biggest increase since 2008 has occurred among donation-based campaigns.

Donation-based crowdfunding campaigns can support business-oriented, creative, or philanthropic projects. What unites them is that donors are guaranteed no financial return. Instead, they generally receive a non-monetary reward related to the project, like a t-shirt or a pre-release CD.

Crowdfunding Emerges as Popular Tool Across Industries

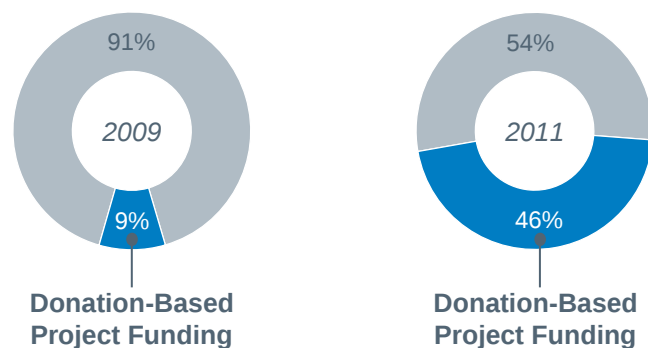
Dollars Raised Through Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding Industry Report, 2013



Crowdfunding Industry Breakdown

Crowdfunding Industry Report, 2013



An Explosion of Platforms and Options

Initially, entrepreneurs and artists flooded donation-based crowdfunding platforms to raise money for a wide array of projects, ranging from ballet to landmine-sweeping rats to food trucks.

Crowdfunding has quickly expanded into the nonprofit space over the past few years. Today, nonprofits and charities of all kinds use platforms like Razoo, Crowdrise, RocketHub, and WeDidIt to raise money for their ventures. There are now more than 400 active crowdfunding platforms, many of which accommodate nonprofit organizations' fundraising needs.

New Sites Launching Frequently

Popular and Noteworthy Platforms

KICKSTARTER

indiegogo

crowdrise

PETRIDISH

razoo

WEDIDIT

gofundme

globalgiving



400+

Crowdfunding platforms
currently in existence

Sample Crowdfunding Projects

- Landmine-Sweeping Rats in Afghanistan (Global Giving, \$50,000)
- Bay Pointe Ballet in San Jose, CA (Razoo, \$10,000)
- Swimming for Safety Programme: Prevent Child Drowning (IndieGoGo, £5,250)
- Tesla Museum (IndieGoGo, \$850,000)
- The Gastro Gnomes Food Truck and Mobile Kitchen Catering (Kickstarter, \$12,500)
- BugASalt: Fly-Killing Device (IndieGoGo, \$15,000)
- Aurora Shooting Victim Medical Funds (IndieGoGo, \$250,000)

The Power of Perspective Campaign

One nonprofit that has used crowdfunding effectively is 100cameras, a small New York City-based charity. They decided to launch a crowdfunding campaign instead of holding a traditional fundraising gala due to low upfront costs and the ability to get a broad range of supporters involved. They set a goal of \$50,000 that would cover the operating expenses of two additional community projects a year.

The campaign lasted 45 days and was all-or-nothing, which meant that the organization would miss out on funding if they didn't meet their goal. However, the campaign's high stakes acted as a powerful urgency lever. Interviewees at 100cameras reported that most of the money came in across the final two days of the campaign as supporters rallied to push them over the edge.

100cameras Experiments with Crowdfunding



100cameras Overview

- Small 501(c)(3) based in New York City
- Teaches children in impoverished communities to take and sell photographs documenting their experiences
- Uses proceeds from photographs to fund education and health projects in the children's communities

The screenshot shows the campaign page for 'The Power of Perspective' by 100cameras. The header text reads: 'The Power of Perspective. Give a Child Photography. Change a Community. Support 100cameras by 100cameras'. Below this is a video player showing a group of children and adults. To the right of the video, a green tree icon represents the funding progress. The text next to the tree states: '101% FUNDED', '\$50,655 PLEDGED OF \$50,000 GOAL', '354 BELIEVERS', and '0 DAYS TO GO'. Below the tree is a green button that says 'Donate to this Campaign'. Underneath the button, it says 'This campaign has ended.' At the bottom right, there is a small image of a 'Thank You' card with the text 'Pledge \$10 or more' and '69 PEOPLE BELIEVE IN THIS ONE HUNDRED THANKS! To'. Below the video player, there are social media sharing buttons for Twitter, Facebook, and Google+, along with a '100cameras' logo and a '4,412' count. At the bottom left, there are buttons for 'About this project' and 'Comments'.

Campaign Details

- Goal: \$50,000
- Time Frame: 45 days
- Purpose: Expand capacity to fund two community projects annually

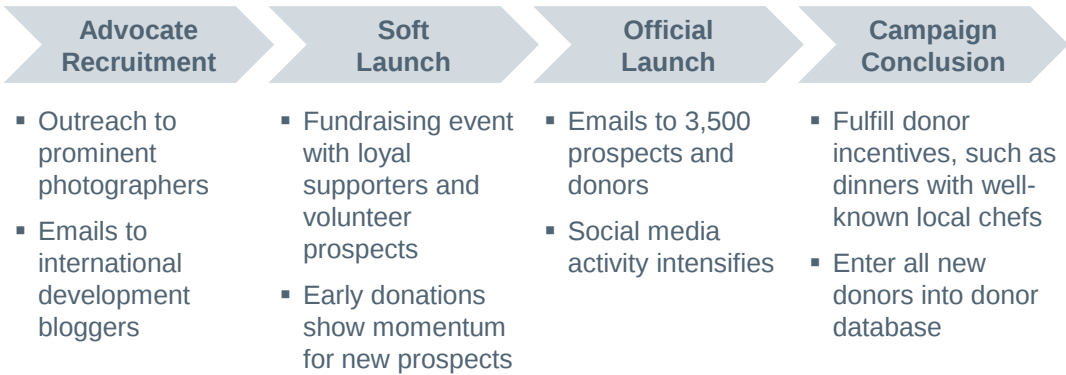
Turning Supporters into Advocates and Donors

100cameras launched the campaign by recruiting advocates for their cause. They then initiated a silent phase intended to garner lead donations. A fundraising event for loyal supporters provided some initial gifts that staff could use to demonstrate momentum to new donors.

After the soft launch, staff announced the official launch through a variety of communication channels. This multichannel strategy broadened the campaign's reach by connecting with a wide range of supporters.

Ultimately, the campaign exceeded its fundraising goal. It brought in more than \$50,000 and attracted lots of new donors. While 100cameras plans to try crowdfunding again, interviewees noted that they would not do it for operating expenses, as was the case with this campaign. Instead, they want to identify smaller projects for future crowdfunding efforts.

100cameras's Campaign Succeeds Due to Careful Planning



Notable Campaign Results

70%
Of all campaign donors gave their first gift

355
Total campaign donors

\$15,000
Amount raised in final two days

Giving Days Attract Higher Ed Participants

While university advancement offices should avoid gambling on crowdfunding as the mainstay of their annual giving efforts, these types of solicitations can nevertheless play a role in higher education. Many institutions have begun participating in statewide giving days to learn about crowdfunding and test its appeal with alumni.

For example, Give to the Max Day in Minnesota is a statewide initiative designed to get more residents to donate to local organizations. Schools such as St. Olaf College, Concordia College, and the University of Minnesota all participate annually, raising money for clearly delineated university projects through Razoo.

Results vary across institutions, but many interviewees reported positive experiences with crowdfunding during statewide giving days.

Campaigns Generate Excitement and Donations

Institutions Participating in Statewide Giving Days



St. Olaf College



Concordia College (MN)



The University of Minnesota



Hamline University



The University of Utah



Utah State University



Notable Results from Giving Days

- **St. Olaf College:**
Average of 1,500 donors per year with more than 100 new donors annually
- **Concordia College (MN):**
Raised \$159,747 from 1,300+ donors in 2010
- **University of Utah:**
Raised \$12,000 from nearly 200 donors in its first year of participation



Building Excitement Across 24 Hours

“We were going back and forth against [another nonprofit] all day. It was inspirational for our alumni to see us in the competition.”

*Matt Fedde
St. Olaf College*

A Win-Win for Donors and Institutions

One of the primary benefits of crowdfunding is that small donors can have an outsized impact. Low fundraising goals and clearly defined project aims help donors see the difference that their gifts make. This transparency is especially important to Millennials and members of Generation X, who tend to value involvement and impact even more than preceding generations.

Another benefit of crowdfunding is that it generates data about donor interests and preferences. This information can be used to target future solicitations and build comprehensive donor profiles.

Crowdfunding Empowers Small Donors and Reveals Their Interests

Benefits of Crowdfunding for Colleges and Universities

Small Gifts Make an Impact



Modest project goals ensure donors understand that their small gifts make a difference

All Donors Feel Valued



Targeted giving overcomes perception that donors' dollars do not have a tangible impact

Promotes Goodwill on Campus



Advancement partners with student organizations and faculty members to market projects and process gifts

Captures Donor Information



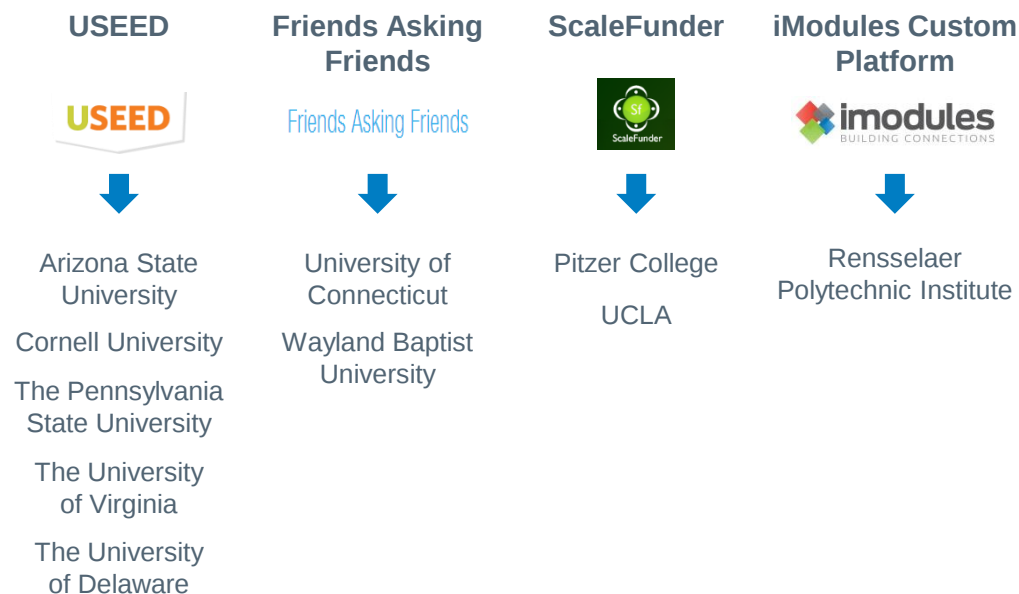
Passion-driven giving reveals donor interests that can be leveraged for future solicitations

A Rapidly Expanding Terrain

The burgeoning interest in crowdfunding among higher education advancement professionals has recently led some companies to develop industry-specific platforms for colleges and universities. Companies like USEED and ScaleFunder tailor their crowdfunding interface to the needs of higher education.

Their market-segmented approach has generated some early enthusiasm among advancement offices. For instance, USEED captured headlines with the announcement that Cornell, the University of Virginia, and Arizona State University's Foundation signed up to be pilot partners. Across the spring and summer, administrators at these institutions brought their sites live and launched small numbers of projects to assess viability.

Crowdfunding Platforms for Higher Education



Reaching New Donors

There are many possibilities for using crowdfunding in higher education, especially for student initiatives and faculty research. For example, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) uses a custom-built iModules platform to empower student organizations to fundraise for their own projects. Their aim in developing the weR Gold initiative was to engage young alumni who had either never given to the institution or hadn't given in many years.

They felt that specific projects with small dollar goals would motivate young alumni to give. Projects include theater lighting for the RPI Players, a "clothes closet" that provides professional clothing to students, and a small-parts vending machine for the Embedded Hardware Club.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's weR Gold Initiative



Inspiring First-Time Gifts

"We really worked to establish something that would be transparent, motivational to give to, and convey the fact that a small dollar gift would have a large impact.... We were looking for an innovative strategy to get these young alumni donors back into the fold or get a first-time gift from them. The issue was that they weren't giving, period. If we could get them as donors, it would trump anything they might give to the annual fund."

*Courtney Bissell
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute*

weR Gold Sample Project

RPI Players

Touch Screen and a Fader Wing for Theater Lighting

Project Purpose:

"The purchase of these new components will allow the Players to return to their previous high standard of theatrical lighting in the Playhouse, and will introduce new features for lighting designers. Improving the lighting system will allow the Players to put on higher quality shows and enhance their contribution to the arts community at Rensselaer."

Goal: \$4,100

Raised: \$4,970

Donors: 19

Time Frame: February – April 2013

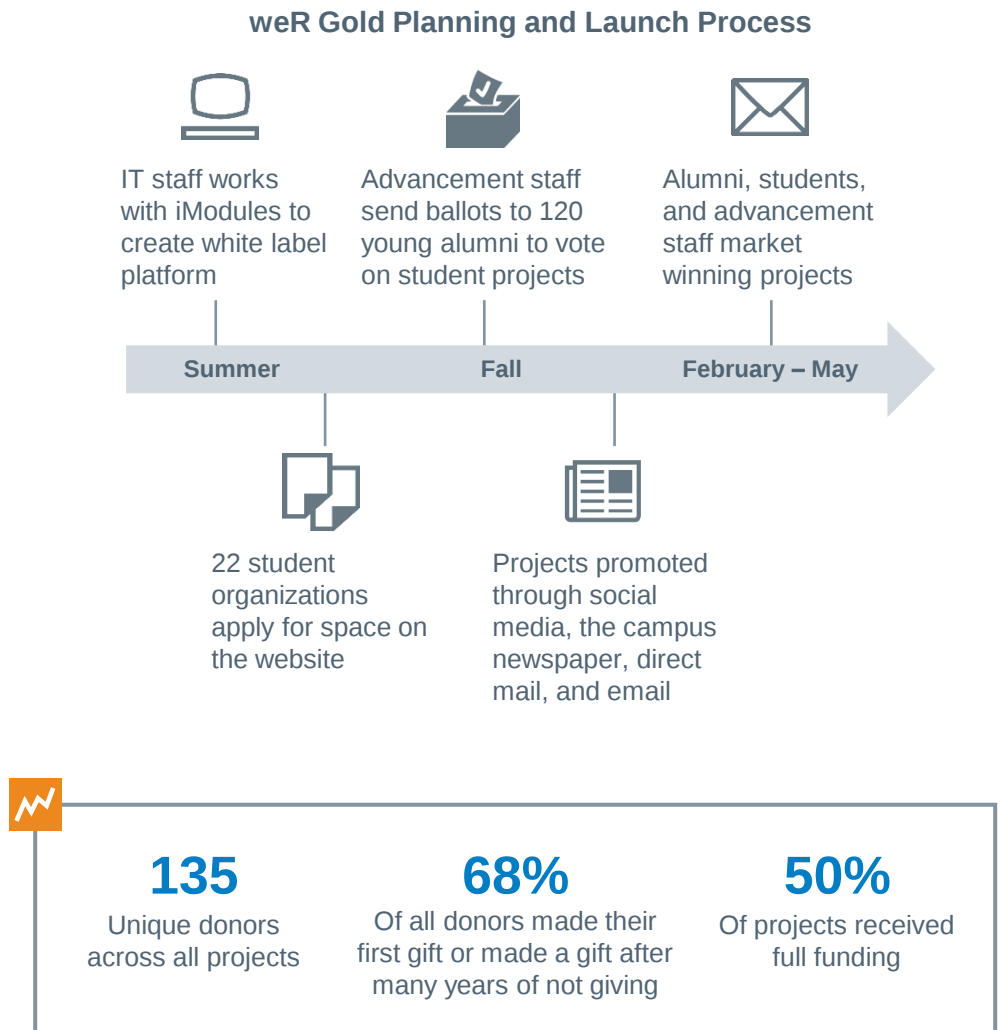
Engaging Young Alumni

Staff at RPI worked across the summer and fall of 2012 to select projects and prepare student organizations for crowdfunding. They polled young alumni to determine which projects would resonate most strongly and used multiple communication channels to publicize the campaigns..

Interviewees at RPI report that this initiative provided a great opportunity to partner with Student Life staff, who helped spread the word about the initiative and reviewed project proposals.

Given the success of weR Gold's inaugural year—over two-thirds of contributors were new or lapsed donors—RPI plans to expand the initiative across the next year. They are currently accepting student applications through a user-friendly web portal.

RPI's weR Gold Pays off in New Donors and Data Collection



Crowdfunding Faculty Research

Colleges and universities may also use crowdfunding to support faculty research. Recent years have brought a number of new platforms for scholars seeking donations to fund their work. Some popular ones include Microryza and FundaGeek.

Michigan Technological University saw the potential for faculty crowdfunding when a professor at the institution used a third-party platform to fund his research. He ended up far surpassing his goal, which revealed the extensive audience for research-based crowdfunding.

At the behest of the university president, a cross-functional team was pulled together and charged with developing a site for crowdfunding faculty research. They ended up developing their own faculty crowdfunding platform called Superior Ideas.

Michigan Technological University's Superior Ideas Platform

Superior Ideas Mission

"Increase external support for research, innovation, and creative work that promotes sustainable economic and social development."

Superior Ideas Description

"By harnessing the power of crowdfunding, we can raise funds for small, high-quality university research and public service projects that are not normally suited for grant funding. Funding is raised through many small donations, with social media and word-of-mouth spreading the news of exciting projects."

Implementation Steps

- 1 Michigan Tech created an in-house platform with leadership from the Research Development and Marketing Manager
- 2 Selection committee focused on innovation, need for start-up or bridge funding, and feasibility when choosing projects
- 3 Project leaders contacted their networks and prospective alumni donors to solicit funds

Superior Ideas Crowdfunding Platforms

**SUPERIOR IDEAS**

Fund
real research.

Submit
your project.

Why
fund our projects?

Successful Projects



Can a Good Night's Sleep...

Sleep disorders affect nearly one in three adults. Since chronic sleep deprivation leads to cardiovascular disease—the number one killer in the United States for almost 100 years—this is a critical health issue. We will investigate sleep disorders in great depth to better understand the

\$24,875 (funded) **\$25,000** (goal) [Contribute](#)



Mobile Medicine: Bringing Healthcare...

It's an interesting paradox: villagers in the most remote Ghanaian towns often receive better medical care than those in towns outside of larger cities. With a mobile clinic, we can help mitigate the spread of dangerous diseases and illnesses, and provide some emergency

\$8,319 (funded) **\$8,000** (goal) [Contribute](#)

Promising Results from Superior Ideas Platform

Since its beta launch in October 2012, Superior Ideas has raised \$56,000 from 200 donors, most of whom were never-givers. While not every project meets its goal, a number of research initiatives have successfully secured complete funding.

Interviewees note that the annual giving staff and the research office both play a small role in marketing the initiative. Yet most of the daily fundraising work is done by project leaders. This is key to the success of their projects, as they are often the best advocates of their own work. Additionally, they tend to maintain networks of alumni who are eager to support their research.

In the future, Michigan Tech hopes to open Superior Ideas up to faculty at other universities.

Successful Pilot Paves the Way for Additional Projects



Successful Projects

- Sleep Apnea Disorder Research
- Medical Clinic Van for Health Project in Ghana
- Open-Source Concrete Analysis Program to Improve Physical Infrastructure



Unfinished Projects

- Tracking Lake Superior Sturgeon
- Low-Cost Anion Exchange Membrane Fuel Cells
- Veterans Employment Project



\$56K

Total raised as of
May 2013

200

Total donors, most
of whom were
never-givers



Helping Donors See Impact

“People give to the university, and they can donate to different departments. So why not give them specific research projects that they can donate to in that department which will make them feel like they are making a difference, because they are?”

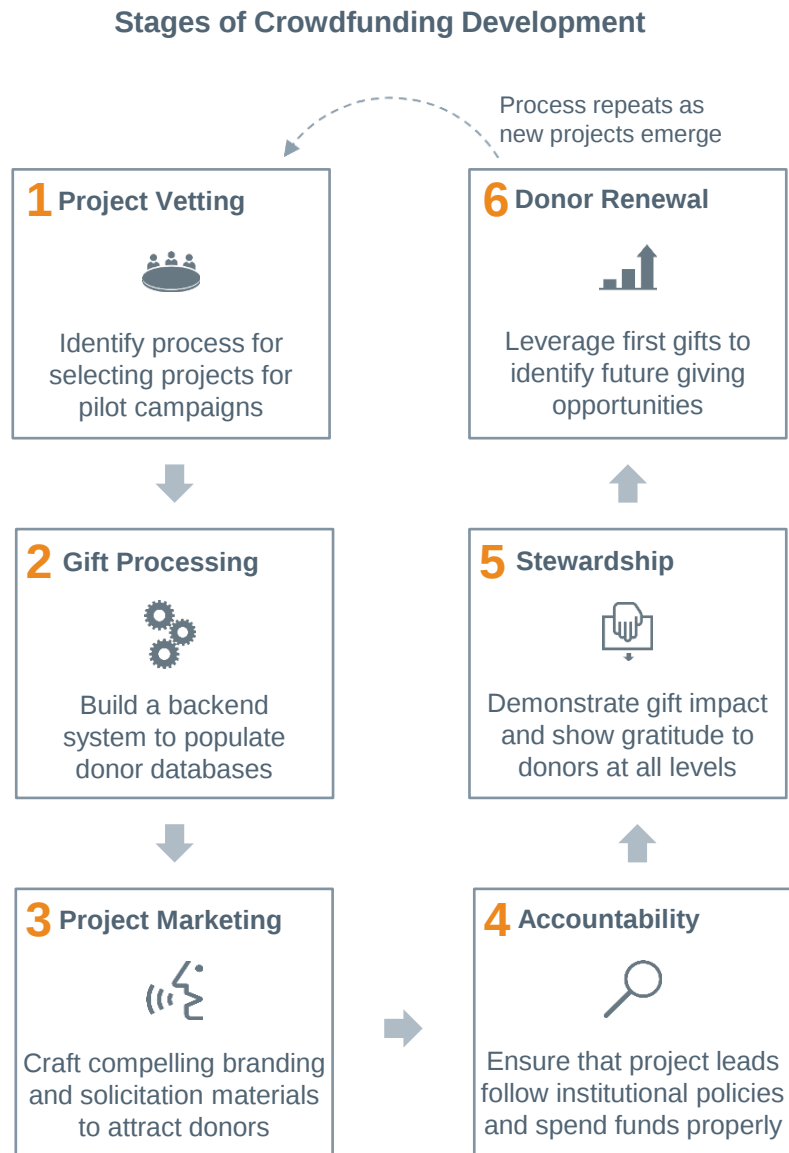
*Natasha Chopp
Michigan Technological University*

Navigating to Success

There is a lot for universities to like about crowdfunding. It has the ability to engage young alumni, increase overall participation rates, and collect donor data. These benefits can lead to stronger giving relationships and more targeted, effective asks.

At the same time, there are a lot of moving parts involved in crowdfunding. Inattention to any of the steps outlined here can undermine an initiative's viability. The next few pages will take a closer look at each of these steps and offer guidance on how to successfully navigate them.

Key Implementation Steps for Avoiding Roadblocks



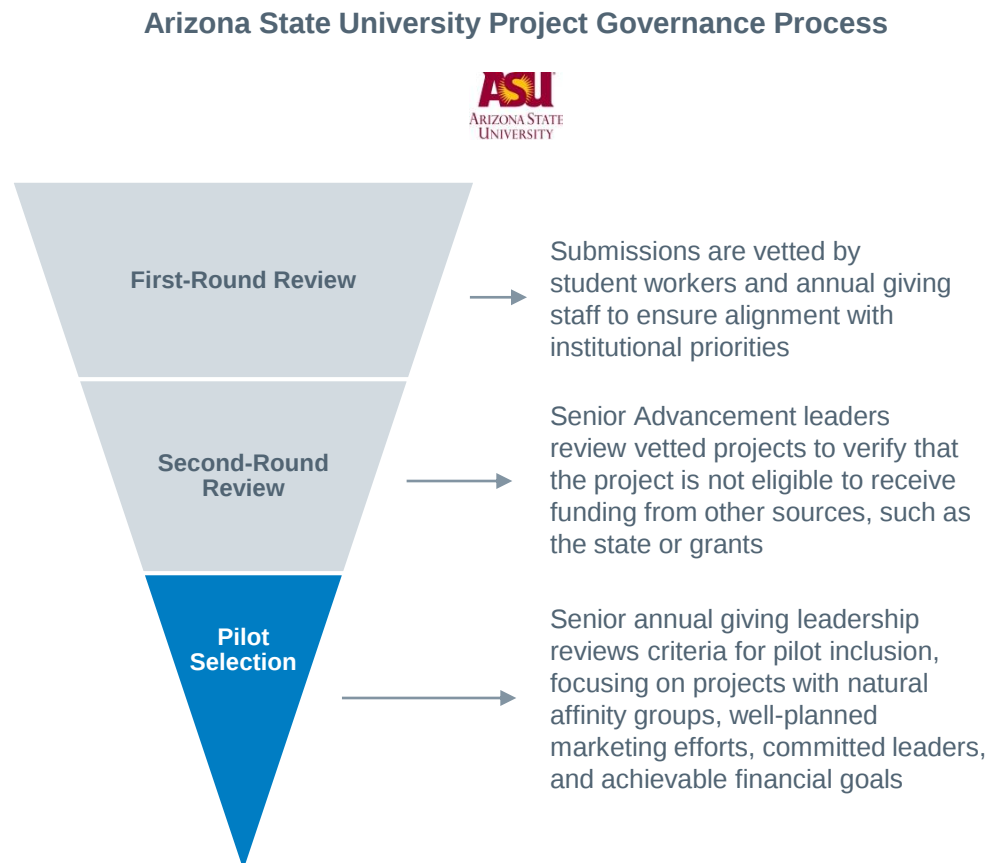
Stage 1: Project Vetting and Selection

Many crowdfunding initiatives fail due to poor project selection. Clustering multiple projects around a single subject area or posting vague-sounding projects can turn donors away. Successful projects typically have a clear need, a realistic goal, an urgency lever, and a natural affinity group.

An upfront process for project vetting and approval can help ensure that institutions launch a critical mass of successful campaigns. For example, the Arizona State University Foundation has convened a group drawn from across campus to vet projects for their USEED pilot. Criteria for their review include a lack of alternate funding sources, broad project appeal, strong leader commitment, and a well-planned marketing campaign.

Institutions where this approach is too formal or top-down should consider implementing a tiered support system, where projects are grouped based on alignment with institutional priorities and receive varying amount of marketing support. Alternately, they could open the platform to everyone who has something to fund on campus and allow winners to naturally emerge.

“We Need More Successes Than Failures”



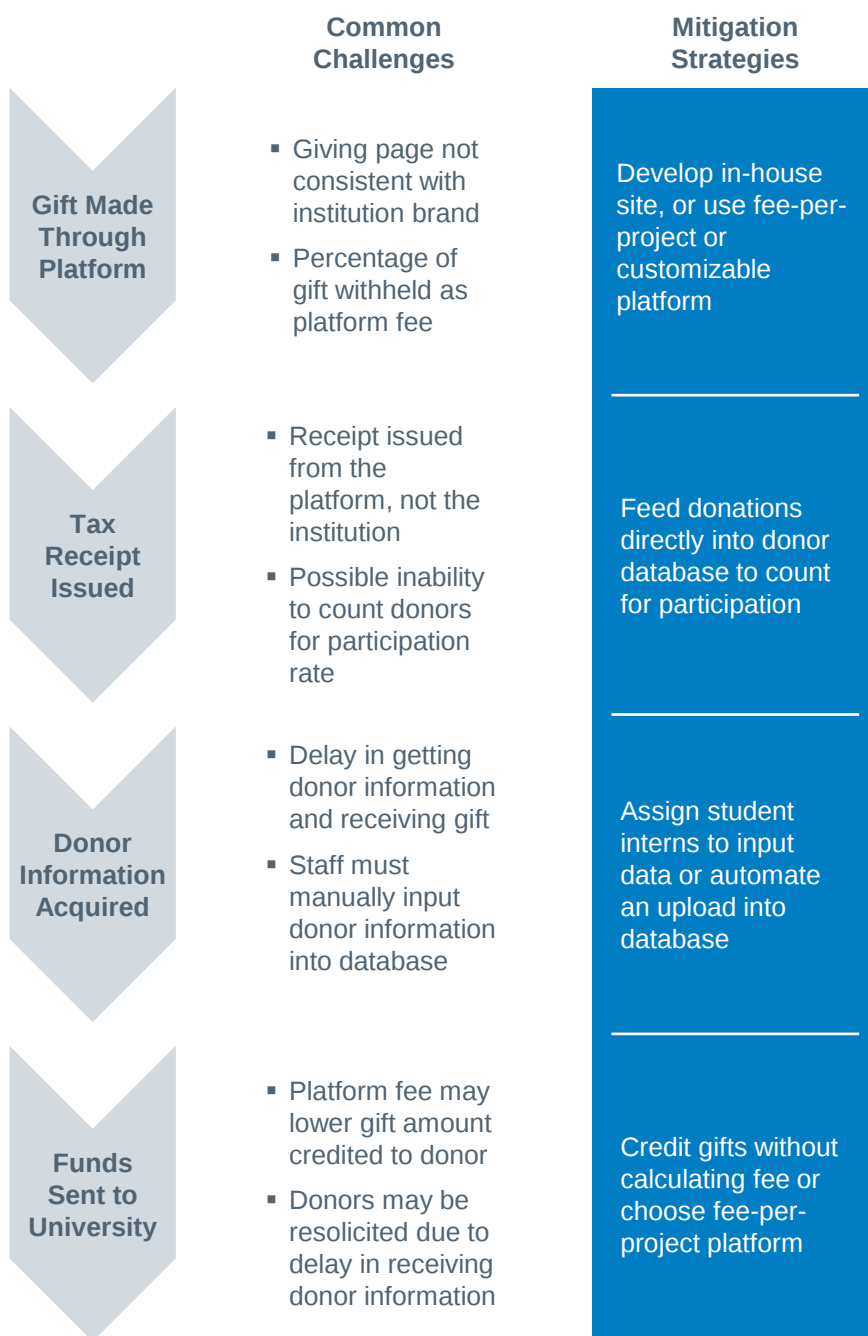
Stage 2: Gift Processing

Strong advancement infrastructure is vital to ensuring seamless fundraising experiences for crowdfunding participants. Potential areas of concern for administrators include gift processing and fund accountability.

Gift processing rules and protocols require a great deal of care. Many third-party crowdfunding platforms are ill-suited to conform to these protocols. Often, they accept gifts on behalf of the institution, withhold a portion of the funds, and then write a check for the net amount. Though colleges receive donor information from the platform as soon as someone makes a gift, most schools will have to input that information manually into their donor databases. With thousands of gifts coming through these platforms, staff can spend significant time entering data.

Some strategies for mitigating these challenges are outlined here. While building a proprietary platform overcomes all of these obstacles, it also requires significant manpower and expertise from institutional staff.

Strategies to Avoid Backend Concerns



Stage 3: Project Marketing and Promotion

Dedicating time and resources to marketing can be easily overlooked with crowdfunding, since so much control is vested in student and faculty fundraisers. Indeed, many advancement leaders seem to be under the mistaken impression that crowdfunding projects are self-propelled engines driving donations from hordes of online philanthropists. Sadly, this is not the case. Institutions that fail to bolster the publicity efforts of project leads with their own advancement resources will see little return on their investment.

Advancement leaders must remember that crowdfunding is still fundraising. To launch a successful initiative, they have to invest time and resources in educating donors about the program, training project leaders, and creating marketing guides and templates. Most importantly, they must make crowdfunding as easy as possible for busy project leaders who have many other responsibilities and little experience with fundraising.

“This Is Still Fundraising; You Have to Get the Word Out”

Marketing Plan and Timeline



- Emails are sent to alumni and social media updates are posted at least one month before campaign
- Email outreach schedule is developed for volunteers and advancement staff

Volunteer Management



- Advancement staff help project leaders identify prospect pools before campaign begins
- Project leaders receive training in proper fundraising and stewardship techniques

Central Staff Responsibilities



- Marketing and branding materials are developed
- Training and reference materials are provided to volunteers
- Donor stewardship plan is laid out, especially for first-time donors

Stage 4: Accountability

Fund accountability also poses a challenge for institutions, especially when the funding goes back to student organizations or faculty research projects. Institutions must use donations according to donor guidance, so setting up accountability frameworks is imperative.

At many institutions, student organizations go through intensive training to understand how to appropriately use the money they receive. Additionally, administrators generally mandate that students choose a faculty or staff sponsor to ensure official oversight.

General counsel should also work with advancement staff to develop a cease and desist policy for illegal or unethical projects. In some cases, these policies can be modeled after other research administration or student organization policies on campus.

Oversight Critical for Risk and Reputation Management

Inappropriate Use of Funds



Solution

Assign faculty or staff sponsor financial oversight and require project leaders to undergo development training

Project Fails to Meet or Exceeds Financial Goal



Solution

Direct all excess funds or funds from underperforming projects to the sponsoring department's unrestricted fund

Illegal or Unethical Activities



Solution

Create a terms and conditions policy that allows the institution to issue cease and desist orders for noncompliance

Stage 5: Stewardship

Ensuring that project leaders steward donors poses a challenge for many institutions. Yet it is essential to create a good impression with supporters and establish a basis for future gift asks.

Thoughtful upfront preparation for stewardship will help advancement professionals take full advantage of crowdfunding's benefits. Questions to consider include ownership of supporters, ongoing communication plans, and timelines for second asks.

As many crowdfunding campaigns involve student and faculty leaders, advancement staff will need to determine how to balance stewardship from the advancement office with stewardship from those in charge of the project. In general, the advancement office should send the tax receipt and institutional thank-you, while the project leaders should send progress updates throughout implementation. If the institution chooses to use a third-party platform that automatically sends a gift acknowledgment message, the institution's thank-you should come as quickly as possible so the donor connects the gift with the institution instead of with the platform.

Beginning with the Donor Relationship in Mind

Crowdfunding Stewardship Checklist	
	Provide guidelines for updating donors on project progress after campaign
	Determine thank you responsibilities for project leaders and central development
	Segment communication to crowdfunding donors
	Determine timing for next annual giving solicitation, preferably within the same fiscal year

Segment 1: Donors Inspired by the Cause



- Segmented thank you that provides additional information about the crowdfunding initiative as a whole
- Direction to other causes related to the original project
- Communication about related projects or units on campus

Segment 2: Donors with Personal Connection to Project Leader



- Tax receipt and standard thank you
- Updates from the project leader on the campaign's progress
- Annually increasing solicitation for the same project or another initiative

Stage 6: Donor Renewal

At many institutions, advancement staff worry about how to retain crowdfunding donors. The fundamental shift to project-based giving raises questions about whether donors will keep giving after the projects they support end. Some staff even argue that crowdfunding runs counter to the best interests of fundraisers, since it teaches donors to disregard broad institutional support in favor of niche, often unreplicable causes.

Yet some forward-thinking advancement leaders see crowdfunding as an opportunity to reach an audience that isn't currently giving. They see the ability to form a connection and get those donors giving as a sign of success. After that first gift establishes trust and engagement between the donor and the institution, the advancement office must work to persuade donors to support other causes or unrestricted funds.

Conflicting Views on Crowdfunding Success and Donor Retention



Identifies Donor Interests

"The thing I like about crowdfunding is that there is a clear and present connection between the impact and the engagement. It overcomes the biggest challenge to getting people emotionally involved. It will help us understand where our donors are and what they are interested in supporting."

*Vice President for Advancement
Public University*



Creates One-Time Donors

"Crowdfunding is a fad because the sound mechanics aren't there. It's going to kill people's retention rates.... We're teaching our donors bad habits by asking them to give to something that has an immediate impact but that doesn't have a lasting, consistent message."

*Director of Annual Giving
Private University*

The Operating Expense Upsell

The most severe skepticism about crowdfunding's sustainability comes from staff at institutions that rely largely on unrestricted support. They tend to believe that crowdfunding undermines their case for unrestricted gifts.

These objections are not as insurmountable as they may appear. Many third-party crowdfunding platforms build an ask for unrestricted funds or operating expenses into the donation process. Donors tend to regard this ask favorably. For example, 76% of DonorsChoose donors give 15% of their gift to support the organization's general operations. Additionally, some schools using the USEED platform, notably the University of Virginia, have built in an upsell that allows donors to add an unrestricted gift to the Innovation Opportunity Fund to their donation.

Platforms Build In Asks for Unrestricted Support

Unrestricted Upsells from DonorsChoose and the University of Virginia

The screenshot shows the DonorsChoose.org checkout page for a donation of \$124.01. It includes a 'Check Out' button, a 'Review Your Donation' section, and a 'Dedicate' section where 12% of the donation is allocated to support DonorsChoose.org. A 'Make This Donation in Honor of Someone' section is also visible.

The screenshot shows the University of Virginia's Innovation Opportunity Fund donation page. It includes a 'Support the Innovation Opportunity Fund' section with a description of the fund's purpose and a donation amount of \$10.



Renewal Through Customized Recommendations

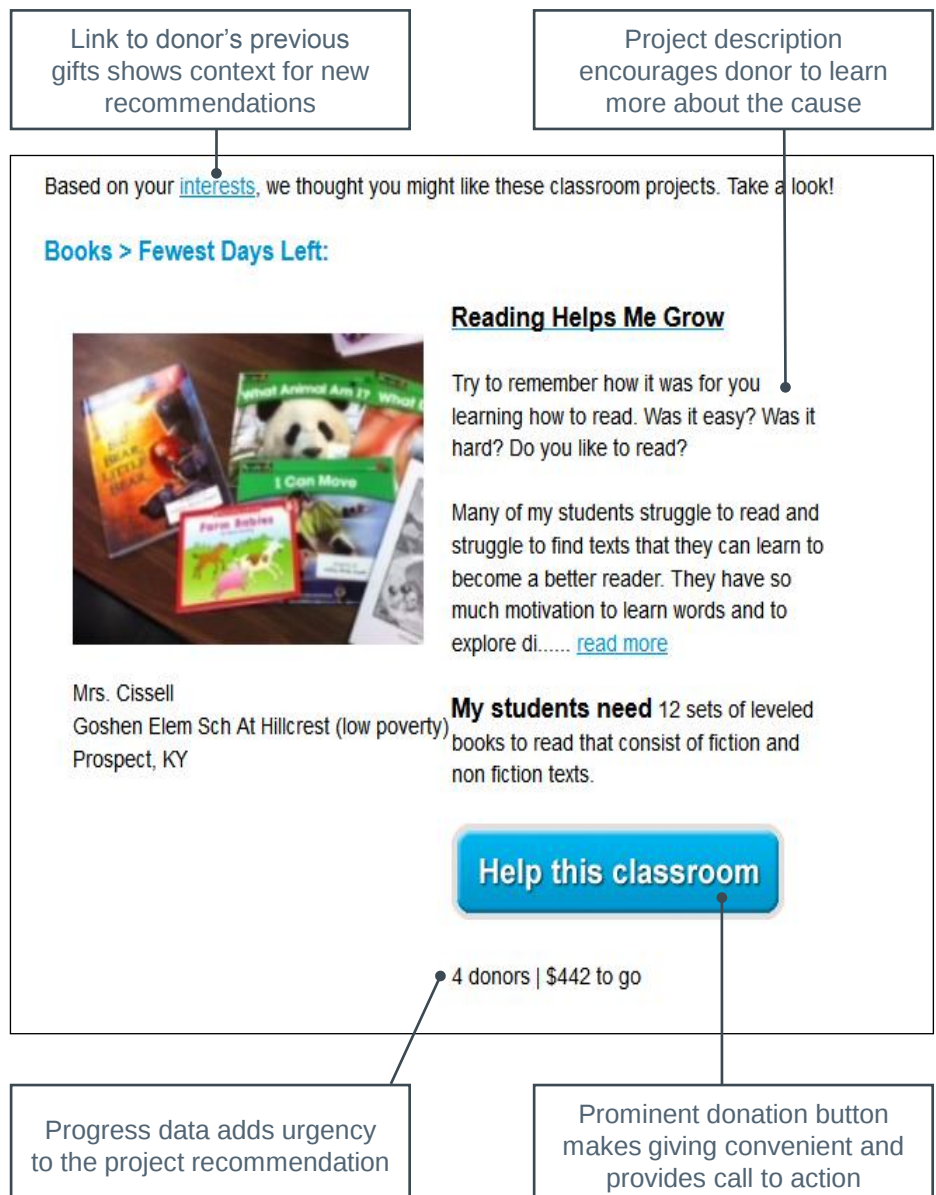
Besides an unrestricted upsell, customized project recommendations can help extend a donors' support to the institution.

DonorsChoose sends customized project recommendation emails to donors based on their prior giving behavior. Project descriptions are embedded in the email as well as data about the number of donors and progress to goal. There is also a link to the donor's giving history in case he or she wonders why these particular projects are being recommended.

For colleges and universities the first step to building this type of infrastructure is to consider how to segment crowdfunding donors after your pilot projects. Precisely defined segments based on giving interests will help staff make persuasive solicitations to renew crowdfunding donors. Additionally, the more projects donors support, the more likely they will be to convert into unrestricted givers.

DonorsChoose Suggestions Inspire Future Gifts

DonorsChoose New Project Recommendation Email



Harnessing the Power of the Crowd

Crowdfunding initiatives have the power to convert non-donors who never before considered supporting their alma maters. Campaigns circumvent common barriers to giving by illuminating direct impact and making small donors feel essential to project success. While the dollars may be somewhat meager, crowdfunding creates a good first impression that advancement staff can later expand on to deepen giving relationships and cultivate continuous support.

EAB Recommendations

Key Components of Crowdfunding Campaigns



Project Vetting Process

Careful selection of projects increases chances of success



Flexible Platform

Pages include space for videos, descriptions, and progress updates



Staff Support

Advancement staff create fundraising toolkits and train project leaders



Natural Affinity Groups

Projects resonate with discrete groups of alumni with relevant interests



Accountability and Oversight

Staff monitor projects to ensure compliance with institutional policies



Multichannel Solicitations

Project leaders and staff promote giving through email, direct mail, and social media

Study Road Map

1 | Breakthrough Practices in Crowdfunding

2 | Toolkit: Crowdfunding

- Student-Facing Fundraising Tip Sheet
- Student Crowdfunding Application Template
- Project Selection Guide
- Post-campaign Assessment Matrix
- Policy Documents

Student-Facing Fundraising Tip Sheet

Many student crowdfunding volunteers have no prior experience with fundraising. Training materials soften the learning curve and amplify students' effectiveness at raising money from their friends, family, and fellow students. The following information can be circulated to students to introduce them to high-impact approaches to fundraising.

Tell Your Story

Student and young alumni donors respond to your passion along with the ability to relate to your experience on campus. When compiling your web profile, try to answer the following questions:

- What is unique about your project?

- How is it innovative?

- What impact will it have on the institution, the greater community, or the world?

- How is it going to help members of your group in the future?

Marketing

Engage prospective donors through video and photos. The sky is the limit! Provide honest and convincing testimony about your organization, why your cause is important and how prospective donors can help. The goal is to provide donors with a personal connection to you, so let your group's personality and passions come through in your messaging. A fun message that gets people excited is more likely to become viral, resulting in more visits and more donations. Consent forms are to be signed by any identifiable individuals providing audio, video, or other testimonial in your cause's materials. Please ask rather than assume anything.

Student-Facing Fundraising Tip Sheet (cont.)

Networking

It's up to you to build momentum for your cause. We'll do our part to spread the word to the broader young alumni community, but to be successful you must use your own networks to drive prospective donors to your project site. You can reach out to past members of your organization, pass out flyers on campus, and use creative advertising and social networking tools. Be sure to have a plan in place to spread the word.

Stewardship

How you thank donors and share information about your cause is very important. Sharing information and appreciating your donors may result in an even more successful fundraiser. Say thank you often. Timely sharing allows donors to see the direct impact of their gifts, making them more likely to give again.

- Do you have upcoming events that you can invite donors to?

- Do you have a new video that you can post or share with donors?

- Did some of your members participate in a notable event or competition?

At the end of the competition, your team will provide advancement staff with a thank you note that will be sent on your behalf to donors via email.

Student Crowdfunding Application Template

Contact information

Contact name _____

Contact's role in organization _____

Contact phone _____

Contact email _____

Organization information

Organization name _____

Brief statement of mission and purpose _____

How many active members do you have in your club? _____

Please include a brief history of your club _____

List any additional club fundraising activities and dates _____

Campus address _____

Club faculty/staff advisor _____

Club website _____

Club Facebook page _____

Club Twitter _____

Student Crowdfunding Application Template (cont.)

Project Information

Project title _____

Project summary (goals, objectives, and a brief description of how funds will be used)

How will this project impact the institution or the greater community? _____

Fundraising goal _____

Is this a project you are currently actively fundraising for? _____

If yes, what is the total cost of the project? _____

How much money have you raised so far? _____

Goal justification and budget with supporting documents (vendor quotes, expense rationale, budget, etc.)

Student Crowdfunding Application Template (cont.)

Project time frame _____

Names, class years, and majors for all club members involved in your project

Name	Class Year	Major

Does your organization communicate with its alumni? How frequently and in what ways?

Project Promotion and Commitment

What is your plan for communicating with donors? _____

How will your club reach out to the on-campus community to raise awareness and funds to support your project?

How will your club reach out to recent graduates and former club members to enlist their financial support?

Project Selection Guide

Questionnaire for Proposed Crowdfunding Projects

Crowdfunding projects do not succeed randomly. Those that meet and exceed their goals feature a number of common characteristics, including a built-in affinity group, a motivated project leader, and a clear plan for achieving full funding. This project selection diagnostic will help advancement staff select projects that are poised to do well with donors.

1. Will the funds raised stay within the institution?

Yes ____ No ____

1. Does the project satisfy an institutional need or strategic priority?

Yes ____ No ____

2. Are project team members willing to actively participate and publicize the project among their networks?

Yes ____ No ____

3. Does the project have a compelling story, topic, or cause?

Yes ____ No ____

4. Does the project have a built-in affinity group or population segment that might be willing to support it?

Yes ____ No ____

5. Does the project help satisfy the crowdfunding initiative's need for diversity in project topics, funding levels, and schools/units represented?

Yes ____ No ____

6. Is the project leader an influential teacher, well-known student, thought leader in his or her field, or some other highly networked individual?

Yes ____ No ____

7. Have project participants identified desired funding levels and outcomes associated with those funding levels?

Yes ____ No ____

Number of "Yes" responses ____

Number of "No" responses ____

Post-campaign Assessment Matrix

Pull-Up Document

After concluding a crowdfunding initiative, advancement staff should record fundraising results in an accessible and easy-to-read manner. Doing so will allow them to decipher lessons to apply to future crowdfunding initiatives and communicate outcomes to senior leaders.

Team/Project Name	Project Cause or Topic	Number of Donors	Amount Raised

Policy Documents

Terms and Conditions (Example 1)

[INSTITUTION], in its sole discretion, will select the participating projects. [INSTITUTION] reserves the right to discontinue an active fundraiser at any time for any reason, without notice, including without limitation because of a group's eligibility status or a group's failure to comply with the [INSTITUTION]'s policies.

To ensure compliance with [INSTITUTION] policies, all projects must be approved by an appropriate [INSTITUTION] program director, staff advisor, or faculty member.

Volunteer fundraisers are responsible for promoting their cause, preparing a personal thank-you message to donors, and submitting status updates to [INSTITUTION]. [INSTITUTION] will provide all official tax receipts issued to donors.

All participating groups are required to comply with [INSTITUTION] policies and procedures for the solicitation of gifts. Policies and procedures will be reviewed at a required training session on[DATE].

All funds raised must be directed to the [RECEIVING OFFICE] for deposit. All monies raised will be used for the stated intention of [INSTITUTION] fund identified in the solicitation.

Premiums are not to be used to induce gifts. Incentives and sales such as, without limitation, bake sales, t-shirt giveaways, car washes, or similar events or activities are not permissible.

Volunteer fundraisers are strictly prohibited from keeping any portion of the funds raised as profit or compensation.

Policy Documents (cont.)

Terms and Conditions (Example 2)

All monies raised must be used towards the stated intention. Projects that reach the stated goal before the allotted time will be removed from the active projects listing. Awarded funds may not be applied towards projects that will generate profit for individuals.

Each project will be hosted on the [INITIATIVE] website for a pre-determined amount of time. If the project is not funded within this timeframe, student groups are encouraged to continue fundraising efforts; however, [INSTITUTION] will no longer actively market the project.

Club representatives for accepted projects must attend a mandatory accepted-projects meeting prior to the beginning of their fundraising campaigns. They must also attend a minimum of one stewardship workshop during the semester. Dates, times and locations for both sessions will be made available in advance.

Students are responsible for promoting their own campaign via social media and on campus, preparing a personal thank-you message to donors, submitting monthly updates on the status of our project, and upon invitation, taking part in a student showcase event.

Projects must be completed within one year of a successful fundraiser.

Multi-stage projects may be broken into multiple campaigns if stages can be defined by a completed product, event, activity, or service.

[INSTITUTION] reserves the right to decline any project based on content or discontinue an active fundraiser at any time due to any changes in the student group's eligibility status.

Policy Documents (cont.)

Confidentiality Agreement

The user acknowledges that he/she may have access to certain Confidential Information (defined below) of [INSTITUTION] during [INITIATIVE] and, as a condition of accessing such Confidential Information and using [INSTITUTION]'s resources, hereby agrees as follows:

1. "Confidential Information" means all confidential and proprietary information owned by or relating to [INSTITUTION] or any of its affiliates, potential donors or donors, however disclosed, and including, without limitation: names, addresses, donation amounts, contact details, financial information, and other information relating to donors or donations; internal practices and procedures; and any other information relating to the business of [INSTITUTION].
2. The Confidential Information is highly valuable and proprietary to [INSTITUTION] and shall remain the exclusive property of [INSTITUTION]. The user shall hold the Confidential Information in strict confidence and shall only use the Confidential Information for purposes that have been pre-approved by [INSTITUTION] and are consistent with [INSTITUTION] policies and procedures.
3. Without limiting the restrictions set forth in Section 2, (a) the user agrees not to, without the prior written consent of [INSTITUTION], disclose, print, copy, download, place or store in a retrieval system, transfer, or make any unauthorized use of the Confidential Information; and (b) the Confidential Information shall not be used, directly or indirectly, to confer a private benefit upon one or more individuals, to participate or intervene in any political campaign, or otherwise to the detriment of [INSTITUTION].
4. The user agrees that unauthorized use or disclosure of the Confidential Information would cause the Institution serious or irreparable harm. Breach of this Agreement may result in (a) the restriction or denial of access to the Confidential Information and [INSTITUTION]'s resources, (b) a report to [INSTITUTION] and appropriate disciplinary action by [INSTITUTION], and (c) legal action against the user by [INSTITUTION] and third parties.
5. Upon notice from [INSTITUTION] or upon completion of the pre-approved purpose for which any Confidential Information is obtained or provided, the user shall immediately destroy or deliver to [INSTITUTION] any Confidential Information and all copies thereof, whether in hard copy, computerized, or other form that he or she has in his or her possession or control.
6. The user agrees to take all measures necessary to safeguard use of and access to those accounts to which user is granted access by [INSTITUTION] ("Account Credentials"). The user agrees to keep confidential and not share with any third parties his or her Account Credentials and to notify [INSTITUTION] immediately if he or she believes that any unauthorized person has gained access to the Account Credentials or if the Account Credentials have otherwise been compromised.

