Advocacy & Communication SOLUTIONS

ACS Fundraising Quick Start Guide

You don't need a large donor list or a polished proposal to begin fundraising! Start with one clear funding need and a few people or organizations connected to your work. Then use the **ACS Fundraising Quick Start Guide** to prepare a request, approach potential supporters, and follow up.

Work through the steps in order, using the prompts and tables to record your decisions. Follow your organization's financial procedures and each funder's requirements.

1. Choose one funding need

- What do you want to fund, and who will benefit?
- What will it cost?
- How much funding is already available?
- How much do you still need and by when?

Write down the main costs, including staff time and other expenses needed to carry out the work. Subtract funding already confirmed for this purpose to calculate what you still need.

Complete this message:

We need $ _____ by _____ to make _____ possible for _____.

2. Explain why someone should give

- Why is the work needed?
- What are the repercussions if the work is not done?
- Why can your organization carry it out?
- What would a contribution pay for?
- What verified fact or approved story helps explain the work?

www.advocacyandcommunication.org

For more information about ACS, please contact us at info@advocacyandcommunication.org.

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Use accurate information and note your sources. Get permission before sharing someone's story, name, or photo. If you don't have an approved story, use facts about your work.

Complete this message:

People in our community face _____.

We respond by _____.

A contribution will help us_____.

3. Choose your first supporters

List a few people or organizations with a connection to the work. For each, identify why they might be interested and who will contact them. Check foundation eligibility and application instructions before preparing a request.

Supporter	Why the Work May Interest Them	Person Responsible for Contact

4. Prepare and make the request

Confirm who will receive and record contributions, and prepare clear giving instructions, such as a tested donation link or check-payee name and mailing address.

For a new contact, first introduce your organization and ask whether they would be open to discussing support. For a foundation, follow its application process.

Complete this message:

Would you consider contributing $ _____ toward _____?

This will help us _____.

Agree on a next step and follow-up date.

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5. Follow through

Record the response and any promised contribution. Record payment when it arrives, send the supporter a thank-you letter, and provide agreed-upon updates.

Keep a separate record of amounts requested, promised, and received. An unpaid promise is not money received. Respect requests to stop contact or decline further updates.

Supporter	Next Action	Due Date	Person Responsible

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