

The Fundraising Guide

Practical, proven ways to fund your global service-learning experience — for individual volunteers, ambassadors, and campus chapters.

Funding should never be the barrier

A student's passion to serve should never be limited by financial circumstance. For more than two decades, participants in global service-learning programs have funded transformative experiences through creativity, persistence, leadership, and the support of people who believed in their journey. Most successful volunteers do not fund their programs alone — they build a community around a mission bigger than themselves.

Sustained behavior change through global service since 2006. HELP2SERVE.CARE is a U.S.-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to meaningful, ethical global service-learning.

Request an Info / Q&A Session

Want support building your fundraising plan? Request a live Info / Q&A session with HELP2SERVE.CARE and we will help you map a realistic path to your goal. **Request a session at help2serve.care/engage.html (Pathway 8 — Virtual Info Sessions & Events).**

Getting Started

A Mission Bigger Than Yourself

This guide was created to help you build that community. Inside, you will find practical fundraising strategies, realistic timelines, outreach templates, and proven approaches that have helped students raise thousands of dollars toward immersive global service experiences.

Start early. Stay consistent. Ask with sincerity. Lead with purpose. You may be surprised how many people want to support someone choosing service, leadership, and global engagement over comfort and routine.

Part One

Build Your Fundraising Plan

Successful fundraising is rarely one large donation — it is the result of many intentional actions taken consistently over time. The earlier you begin, the more opportunities you create for people to support your journey. Approach fundraising the same way you would approach service-learning itself: with preparation, persistence, humility, communication, and leadership.

- 1 Know your number.** Understand your full financial goal, including program costs, airfare, travel preparation, insurance, and personal expenses. A clear goal creates confidence and credibility when speaking with supporters.
- 2 Start earlier than you think.** The most successful fundraisers usually begin 4–6 months before departure. Starting early reduces stress and gives your community multiple opportunities to contribute over time.
- 3 Break large goals into smaller milestones.** Big numbers can feel overwhelming. Smaller monthly or weekly targets create momentum and make progress easier to track and celebrate.
- 4 Diversify your approach.** Avoid relying on a single fundraiser or social media post. Combine personal outreach, events, partnerships, sponsorships, and online sharing.
- 5 Track every supporter.** Create a simple spreadsheet with names, amounts, contact information, and thank-you notes. Fundraising is ultimately about relationships.

- 6 Tell your story often.** People are inspired by purpose, growth, and impact. Share why this experience matters to you and how it connects to your future goals, values, and desire to serve.

Part Two

Proven Fundraising Methods

Personal outreach

Personal outreach remains one of the most effective forms of fundraising because people support people — not just causes.

- Write a sincere email or letter explaining why this program matters to you personally.
- Share your goals, your passion for service, and what you hope to learn and contribute.
- Post regular updates on social media so supporters can follow your journey.
- Invite friends and family to share your fundraiser with others who may resonate with your mission.
- Remember: many small contributions often become one successful campaign.

Events & community engagement

Fundraising events do more than raise money — they build awareness, community, and momentum.

- Host a benefit dinner, bake sale, car wash, trivia night, silent auction, or talent show.
- Partner with a local restaurant or coffee shop for a community fundraising night.
- Organize a service-themed event connected to health, education, conservation, or community impact.
- Invite local businesses to donate raffle items or sponsor event materials.
- Use events as opportunities to share your mission and inspire others to get involved.

Community & campus partnerships

Many organizations actively support students pursuing service, leadership, and global learning opportunities.

- Reach out to local businesses about sponsorship opportunities.
- Speak with faith communities, civic organizations, alumni groups, and local foundations.
- Ask professors, mentors, and employers about scholarships or community grants.
- For campus chapters: combine fundraising efforts into larger collaborative events that support multiple students at once.

Part Three

Donation Appeal Template

The most effective fundraising messages are personal, honest, and specific. People want to know why this matters to you, what you hope to contribute, and how their support becomes part of something meaningful. Use the template below as a starting point — then make it your own.

Subject: Help me participate in a global service-learning program

Dear [Name],

I'm excited to share that I've been accepted into a HELP2SERVE.CARE global service-learning program in [destination].

Over the course of [length], I'll be participating in a structured immersive experience focused on [focus area], working alongside local communities through ethical, community-centered service and cultural engagement.

This opportunity is about far more than travel. It is a chance to grow as a leader, deepen my understanding of global challenges, and contribute meaningfully while learning from others.

To make this possible, I'm currently raising [goal amount] by [deadline].

If you feel called to support this journey, a contribution of any size would genuinely help move me closer to participating. Just as meaningful is your encouragement, support, and willingness to share this with others.

I would also love to keep supporters updated throughout the experience and share what I learn along the way.

Thank you for believing in growth through service and for considering being part of this journey with me.

With gratitude,

[Your Name]

Always Say Thank You

Gratitude is one of the most important parts of fundraising. Every contribution represents trust, encouragement, and belief in your journey. Thank supporters promptly and personally — and after your program, share photos, stories, lessons learned, and the impact their support helped make possible. People remember being included in something meaningful.

“Fundraising is not begging — it is inviting people to be part of something meaningful. Most are glad to be asked.”



Scan for programs & pricing
help2serve.care/apply.html

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