



This guide will teach you how to create partnerships and fund your mission trip.

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING



## GETTING STARTED

Support raising provides the finances necessary to cover all Mission Trip expenses while incorporating others into Catholic mission work.

***"For in Him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through Him and for Him." - Colossians 1:16***

*Luke 8:1-4*

*1 Corinthians 9:13-14*

*1 Corinthians 16:1-4*

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

By committing to serve on a FOCUS Mission, you have become a member of a fundraising team that is expected to work together in an efficient manner.

Diligence, professionalism, and good communication are essential throughout the fundraising process because it will have a significant impact on the success of your mission team as a whole.

## WHAT'S COVERED IN THE OFFICIAL TRIP COST?

### **Your fundraised portion WILL cover:**

- All travel, food, and lodging
- Travel insurance covering orientation through debriefing

### **Your fundraised portion will NOT cover:**

- Travel or food costs en route to the departure city
- Passports or visas
- Immunizations
- Other personal incidentals

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING



## FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

To understand all the "rules" of fundraising, please see the Important Notes section on page 5. Here are the main points:

- We cannot refund any monies to you or your donors, even if you exceed your fundraising goal or your trip is canceled
- You are required to reimburse FOCUS for any expenses paid on your behalf

## FUNDRAISING DEADLINES

Failure to meet the two deadlines provided by your director can result in your removal from the trip, or having to pay out of your own pocket to meet the deadline. Final payment is due one month prior to the trip.

## WAYS TO DONATE

1. Online donation by EFT (preferred) or credit card
  - Direct donors to your personal fundraising page online
  - The link to your page can be found by going to [apply.focusmissions.org](http://apply.focusmissions.org) and clicking on Fundraising Details
2. Check (least preferred option):
  - Arrange a time to pick it up, or ask them to mail it to you so you can ensure accuracy
  - Make the check payable to FOCUS (this is necessary to achieve tax-exempt status)
  - Must include your MISSIONARY ID NUMBER (provide this to them) in the memo line
  - Keep a record of the check number and amount
  - You must mail any checks you receive to FOCUS within one week:

*Fellowship of Catholic University Students  
PO Box 17408  
Denver,  
CO 80217*

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING



## WEEKLY FUNDRAISING MEETING REQUIREMENTS

### OVERVIEW

*A missionary leading your trip will contact you to assist you in the fundraising process. Below are some guidelines for planning and executing effective coaching meetings. These are the best practices regarding fundraising to ensure the success in becoming fully funded:*

- Students and missionaries must plan to contact one another via phone call on a weekly basis throughout the entirety of the fundraising season.
- In extenuating circumstances, the student and missionary can agree upon an alternate method of communication for a particular week, but this should not become the norm.

### STRUCTURE

*The standard coaching meeting should contain the following elements:*

- Open in prayer
- General check in
- Review current progress in relation to total fundraising goal
- Review SMART goals from previous coaching meeting
- Student reports any updates and progress on action items.
  - This progress will be documented by the missionary on a tracking sheet.
  - *It is essential that you gather specific data and numbers so your missionary can best support you.*
  - *Students are also expected to keep and maintain their own records of their fundraising progress. This includes copies of checks, a log of donations (template included later in this guide), and emails notifying you of online donations.*
  - *This is especially important due to the lag in our online tracking system.*
- Create new SMART goals based on the progress you have made
- Close in prayer

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING



## THE FUNDRAISING PROCESS

### 1. PRAY

- Pray, focus yourself, and humbly ask God to provide for this mission He's called you to
- Entrust all aspects of fundraising to Him!

### 2. NAMESTORMING

- Develop an initial list of 50+ potential mission partners (see Appendix for brainstorming ideas)
  - No name is disqualified! Don't decide for an individual whether they're interested or not
  - Expect the unexpected and don't be shy about sending letters!
- Label each contact "H," "M," or "L" for high, medium, or low priority
- Collect all addresses and phone numbers
  - Your parents may have an address list you can reference
  - Utilize your parish directory
  - Find information online at [www.whitepages.com](http://www.whitepages.com)

### 3. PRACTICAL PREPARATION

- Purchase all necessary fundraising materials: paper, stamps, pens, thank you notes, etc.
- Create a system that allows you to track your communication and donations, including:
  - Appeal letter sent
  - Follow-up phone call
  - Further follow-up needed?
  - Committed amount (check number, if applicable)
  - Thank you sent
  - Newsletter sent
- Plan a weekly time to sit down and work on fundraising

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING



## THE FUNDRAISING PROCESS (cont.)

### 4. WRITE & SEND APPEAL LETTERS

- Draft your appeal letter, including the following (see Appendix for example):
  - **Date** – when you are writing the letter
  - **Greeting** – Dear \_\_\_\_\_,
  - **Introduction** – Connect with your reader; bring them up to date with what you're doing
  - **Information** – Share what you will do on mission, why you've decided to participate, and what you hope to accomplish
  - **Needs** – State your financial needs and your fundraising deadlines
  - **Invitation** – Involve your reader by asking them to cover a specific portion of the trip cost and commit to following up with them by telephone within a specific time frame
  - **Practicals** – Direct them to your Personal Fundraising Webpage via your link (create a shorter one at [tinyurl.com](http://tinyurl.com)!) or instruct them on how to donate by check
  - **Conclusion** – Acknowledge your relationship again with an emphasis on appreciation, partnership, and commitment
  - **Contact Information** – Make sure they can reach you by sharing your telephone number, address, and e-mail
  - **Signature** – Type out your name but be sure to sign in ink as well!
- Add a personal touch to your printed appeal letters so your mission partners know you care about them and not only their gift:
  - Sign each letter by hand and add a handwritten P.S.
  - Handwrite addresses on the envelope; they'll be more likely to open it!
- Begin mailing your first round of letters one week after you have received your Fundraising Packet

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING



## THE FUNDRAISING PROCESS (cont.)

### 5. CALL

- One week after sending out your appeal letters, give your potential donors a call to see if they would like to support your mission trip
- Many people will want to help you but won't actually donate unless you reach out
- Always be gracious and courteous!
- Directing your phone call (see Appendix for sample script):
  - *Introduce yourself and then briefly mention the letter you sent*
  - *Explain your mission trip and share what you hope to see God do as a result of your time on mission*
  - *Remind them of the financial needs you mentioned in your letter, and ask them if they would commit to joining your support team*
  - *Be sure to get a specific number! ("Do you know how much that will be?")*
  - *THANK them!*
  - *Walk them through making the payment (see Ways to Donate)*
  - *Always ask them to refer you to other people who might also have a heart for your mission*

### 6. THANK YOU NOTES

- Write a quick thank you note as soon as someone agrees to support you
- Use professionalism and communicate gratitude
- Mail within 24-48 hours

### 7. FOLLOW-UP NEWSLETTER

- *"Some give by going, and others go by giving" – help your mission partners GO with you on your mission by sharing your experience (see Appendix)*
- Verbally describe the main portions of your mission experience, and explain how the external actions affected you internally
- Include lots of pictures
- Writing a follow-up letter increases donor confidence and the likelihood that they will support missionaries in the future

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING

## IMPORTANT NOTES

### DONATIONS

- Your fundraising goal is an estimate of the total cost for the trip. Your goal may increase or decrease based on various factors (ex: fluctuations in air fare)
- Anything above and beyond your personal fundraising goal will go toward the account balance for the trip as a whole
- In order to cover travel to the departure city, it is acceptable to appeal to specific mission partners or to retain funds from any checks written to you personally. However, these gifts of cash or check are not tax-deductible
- Due to tax laws, FOCUS cannot legally reimburse any money that you have donated from your own personal funds
- If you receive a cash donation you may either (1) deposit the cash in your account and use it for your personal incidentals and travel to your departure city, (2) deposit the amount into your account and make an online donation on their behalf, or (3) send a check payable to FOCUS to go toward your trip fee (\*cash donations are not tax-deductible)

### WITHDRAWAL FROM YOUR TRIP

- If you do not meet your fundraising deadlines, you run the risk of being prohibited from participating on the trip
- If, at any time, you must withdraw from the trip, all donations made to FOCUS are non-refundable
- If you withdraw from a trip at any point, you are required to pay for any remaining balance of expenditures that have been, or will need to be, covered in your name
- If you are prevented from attending due to extenuating circumstances (ex: death in the family, serious medical conditions, etc.), you must immediately contact FOCUS Missions to make a claim with the travel insurance company. If travel insurance has not yet been purchased, the matter will be handled on a case-by-case basis with FOCUS. No refunds are guaranteed through FOCUS in any situation

### SOLICITING ONLINE SUPPORT

- We ask that you do not create a Facebook “event” (or similar use of any other social media platform) to raise money for your mission trip due to its impersonal nature
- Please talk to your fundraising coach about acceptable ways to fundraise using social media



# STUDENT FUNDRAISING



## NAME STORMING

- List all the places you've ever lived, and with whom
- Starting with the previous year and working backward, jog your memory:
  - *Where have you lived? With whom?*
  - *What did you do? (think extra-curricular activities, clubs, jobs, classes, etc.) With whom?*
  - *Where did you go to school? Who were your teachers?*

### 1. PERSONAL CONTACTS

- Classes/school > professors, teachers, classmates
- Clubs/teams/groups > teammates, coaches, bible study leaders, friends
- Housing > roommates, parents of roommates
- Jobs/summer jobs/internships > co-workers, bosses, colleagues
- Church > CCD and RCIA teachers/peers, priests, youth ministers

### 2. FAMILY CONTACTS

- Family members > parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents
- Parents' friends > church friends, childhood friends, wedding participants/guests
- Parents' contacts > bible study members/leaders, co-workers, colleagues
- Family acquaintances > family doctor, mechanic, priest

### 3. COMMUNITY CONTACTS (those you believe have a stake in mission)

- Parish personnel > priest, secretaries
- Lay church leaders > parish organizations, Knights of Columbus, Holy Name Society, Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion
- Faithful and prayerful Catholics > those with adoration slots, those who offer mass for others, those who donate altar flowers

### 4. EVERYBODY ELSE

- Go through the contacts in your phone, your Facebook friends, your Instagram followers...if there's no good reason not to ask them, put their name on the list
- Be bold!

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING

## SAMPLE APPEAL LETTER

Dear (\*Aunt Lucy\*),

October 21, 2025

I hope you and your family are well. As you may know, I am currently attending (\*School\*) in (\*Location\*). God has blessed my time here, making my college experience positive and truly enjoyable. While at (\*School\*), I have come in contact with a missionary organization on campus called FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students.

This (\*spring/summer/winter\*), I have a wonderful opportunity to go and make a difference. I will be spending my (\*spring/summer/winter\*) break in (\*Mission location\*) on a FOCUS mission trip. (\*Number\*) college students, FOCUS missionaries, and a priest will accompany me to (\*Mission location\*) to serve and work alongside locals. We will be directly ministering to their material and spiritual needs (\*the village we are visiting only has a priest to say Mass every 6 months\*), as well as simply visiting people who may feel forgotten and insignificant – honoring their dignity as sons and daughters of God. Through this mission trip I hope to grow closer to God as I serve His people in (\*Mission location\*).

I write you today to invite you to join us on our mission in (\*Mission location\*). In order to have the ability to go serve God's people in (\*Mission location\*), I need to build a team of partners, people like you, who will give to FOCUS to make this trip possible. You can join me on this mission in a couple of ways: with your prayers and with a financial gift.

I ask that you prayerfully consider joining me as a financial partner as we serve in (\*Mission location\*) if it aligns with your goals for giving. I have taken the responsibility to raise (\*\$2,500 by March 1st\*). To meet this goal as quickly as possible, gifts of \$100, \$150, or \$200+ are greatly needed. There are no minimums or maximums and all gifts are truly appreciated!

If you would like to join my mission support team, simply go online and donate by credit card or bank transfer at (\*enter your Personal Page URL here\*). Gifts made online and checks made payable to FOCUS are tax-deductible, charitable gifts. Feel free to donate as soon as you are able.

In order to know how close I am to reaching my goal, I will call you the week of (\*Date\*) to follow up with you. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

Sincerely in Christ,

Joe Missionary

*Please note, as previously mentioned all charitable contributions made to FOCUS are preferenced for my mission trip expenses and are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Since the gifts are tax-deductible, unrestricted gifts to FOCUS, they are not refundable for any reason.*

*You must include the above note regarding charitable contributions in your letter, verbatim. Thank you!*

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING

## SAMPLE PHONE ASK

***"Hi (\*Aunt Lucy\*), this is (\*your name\*); how are you doing?"***

- Only allow a short amount of time for small talk, then quickly get to the point.  
***"I am glad you are doing well. I was wondering if you have received my letter this week regarding the mission trip?...great!...I am really excited about this opportunity and am calling to see if you would like to support me on my mission trip and to ask if you have any questions."***
- If they haven't received it, explain a little bit about the mission and why you are going, then ask for support.

### If YES:

***"Thank you! I am so excited to be able to share this mission with you. My goal is to raise (\*\$2,500\*) for my trip and I'm keeping a record of the gifts I receive. Would you consider giving (\*\$250\*) towards my mission trip?"***

- Always be sure to ask for a specific number!

***"Thank You! I am so grateful for your generosity!"***

***"There are two methods of submitting your gift. The best is to go online to (\*personal link\*) and make a donation there, or you can write a check payable to FOCUS. Both of these options allow for a taxable deduction. If you choose to donate by check, you can send it to me, and I will forward it to FOCUS."***

- If they prefer to donate by check, be sure to outline what must be included.

### If NO:

- Respond warmly and request their prayers for the mission; don't end the conversation abruptly.

***("(\*Aunt Lucy\*), I appreciate your time and consideration. I understand that you're unable to support the mission financially at this time, but would you consider praying for the success of the mission?"***

- Close on a positive note that reinforces your relationship with them.

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING - APPENDIX

## SAMPLE THANK YOU NOTE

Dear (*\*Aunt Lucy\**),

- Include something personal first.

***Thank you for joining as a member of my Mission Support Team! Your prayers and financial generosity are deeply appreciated. Your partnership will have a wide impact as our team travels to (*\*Mission location\**) to share our faith with others and to grow in our own love for Christ!***

***Please join me in praying for this mission trip and for those whom I will encounter, and let me know if you have any prayer requests you'd like me to bring on mission!***

God bless,

*Joe Missionary*

## SAMPLE DONATION RECORD

MISSION PARTNER SUPPORT RECORD

Your Name:					Mission Trip:					
Date:										
# of Donor	Title	Last Name	First Name	Address Lines	City	State	Zip-code	Phone #	Check Number	Gift Amount
Donor #1										
Donor #2										
Donor #3										
Donor #4										
Donor #5										
Donor #6										
Donor #7										
Donor #8										
Donor #9										
Donor #10										
Donor #11										
Donor #12										
Donor #13										
Donor #14										
Donor #15										
Donor #16										
Donor #17										
Donor #18										
Donor #19										
Donor #20										

# STUDENT FUNDRAISING - APPENDIX

Dear Aunt Maruska and Uncle Nicky,

September 5, 2019

If had to describe my entire mission trip to Ireland in three words I would say: challenging, inspiring, and exciting. Challenging, because not only did it continuously push me to step out of my comfort zone, but it challenged me to reexamine my life. Inspiring, because after spending two and a half weeks with some of the greatest people I have ever met, I became incredibly aware of the Lord's call for all Catholics to live extraordinary lives with the sole purpose of striving for Heaven. And exciting, because Ireland made me realize that God's plan for me is greater than I could ever image and now that I am back, I am more excited than ever to fully live the event that is life.

From July 8<sup>th</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup>, I was privileged to live and serve with 18 other college missionaries in the great country of Ireland. We spent our first week in the town of Castlebar, in County Mayo, at the Church of the Holy Rosary working with a group of young adults, ages 13-26. During our time there, we had the great joy of working alongside Fr. Shane Sullivan (pictured at [bottom] left), who is one of the greatest priests I have ever met. In just one week we visited the Cliffs of Moher; Galway City; Máméan—a beautiful pilgrimage in Connemara which ends at the Mass Rock where St. Patrick bestowed his blessing on all of Connemara, Ireland; participated in the Church of the Holy Rosary's family day, and ended with a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Knock [after many other adventures]. After leaving Castlebar, we spent the next 5 days in Cork doing street ministry, working alongside the Dominican friars. It pushed many of us to step outside ourselves in order to share the faith with everyone we encountered. I learned how to courageously stand up for the faith without fear of rejection[.]



It also gave us the opportunity to learn how to love the people in front of us, regardless of our surroundings and discomfort. In fact, one of the most powerful experiences of my mission occurred on our pilgrimage to Máméan—a pilgrimage that was full of discomfort and distraction. As we walked along [Mamean], a young man by the name of Christopher fell into step next to me and the two of us began one of the most powerful conversations I have ever been a part of, a conversation that was inspired by my testimony. As our conversation slowly came to an end, I could see on Christopher's face that something inside of him had changed; something great had





# STUDENT FUNDRAISING - APPENDIX



happened. This young man had finally encountered the Lord in very beautiful and intimate way, something which was made abundantly clear to me on our last day in Castlebar, when we found that he had slipped a letter through our mail slot thanking us for changing his life.

My life, much like Christopher's, was truly changed by our time in Ireland. The mission made me realize how greatly I desire to have the Lord in my life; it made me realize that the Lord is calling me to greatness; and it made me realize that my desire to serve others is not only obtainable, but that it is a gift from God. The Lord blessed me in more ways than I could have ever imagined possible, so I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for helping me get to Ireland and for praying for me and my team as we served. My mission trip to Ireland is one of the greatest experiences of my life. It was made possible by your prayers and generosity, so again I say, "Thank you," for enabling me to not only grow in my Catholic faith, but also for enabling to me to share my faith with others.

I will continue praying for you and if there is anything new that I can be praying for, please don't hesitate to let me know. Also, if you have questions or simply want more details about the trip, I am more than willing to answer any and all questions.

Thank you, again, for all your prayers and generosity!

Much Love,

Lizzie

