

NeVo Fundraising Guide

Getting In the Fundraising Mood

The purpose of this document is to help you get started in the process of fundraising for your NeVo experience. We realize it takes time and effort, but it can also be an enriching and highly satisfying experience, particularly if you believe in your cause. If we were to only give you one piece of advice, it would be the following: Don't feel bad about asking for funds for yourself, but rather feel proud that you are raising funds so you can provide much-needed help those who need it the most.

Remember, there are many people who want to help but don't know how... give them the chance and they can help through you.

That said, let's start.

Fundraising requires careful planning, persistence and patience. You may encounter many obstacles and negative responses along the way, but don't give up. Thousands of volunteers like you have fundraised and succeeded . . . many have even raised more funds than they originally intended! So **don't get discouraged!** Just plan carefully and enjoy the process! Remember, you are working for a good cause.

Choosing the right fundraising effort for you

There are several kinds of fundraising efforts you may pursue. You must choose one (or many!) that you feel the most comfortable with and that you think will be the most successful. There are 7 main kinds of fundraising efforts and sources:

1. Special events
2. Admirable tasks
3. Family and friends
4. Corporate donations
5. Grants and scholarships
6. Local civic groups and other groups
7. Loans and post-program refunds

1. *Special events – creating an event with a twist*

You can use creative special events to raise funds. Special events can be fun and raise awareness about what you are doing to help others – it may even inspire others to join in!

The first rule for a successful special event is for it to be creative. You cannot just mail invitations for a black-tie ball and expect everyone to pitch in. Your event needs to be special and offer something different. We recommend that you assemble together a group of friends and do a brainstorming session to come up with innovative ideas. You could have a dancing contest, an 80's ball (with all attendees dressed up like Madonna and David Bowie!), a good-will casino night, an art auction (with works of art from your artistic friends, of course!) or a fashion show or concert. Even a BBQ could work!

The second rule is cost effectiveness. You must make sure that your costs do not exceed your revenues! Your closest friends or family members may "donate" their time and some items (food and beverages for example) in order to help you out.

Give attendants ample opportunities to donate more! You must charge an entrance fee (that should at least cover all your costs) into the event. We suggest that the entrance fee be expressed as a range – say "Expected donation US\$ 25 – US\$100" so the generous ones will go for the upper range. You may also have "donation jars" at the special event, or organize a raffle. You can also sell the food and beverages! Remember, all you need is 15 people to give you US\$100 and you will already have a significant portion of your Nexos Voluntarios fees covered!

Be clear about the purpose of the event. Make sure the invitation explains the purpose of the event, so that your guests know ahead of time that they are expected to contribute, and will be ready for it. At the event, make a speech about your goals and how you expect your Nexos Voluntarios experience will contribute to the lives of others as well as the lives of your donors. If you absolutely hate public speaking, ask a friend of yours to speak on your behalf. Have some material on Nexos Voluntarios available for people who want to learn more about the program. You may find a one-page fact sheet at the end of this guide.

Dissemination, dissemination, dissemination is the fifth rule of thumb. Use every possible connection you have! Ask your doctor, dentist, librarian, friends, fraternity brothers and sorority sisters, to buy you tickets for the event. Promote your event with posters, through email, mail-in invitations... whatever you can think off!

2. Admirable tasks – dare to do it!

Many people have found that the best way to raise money is to show you are working hard for it. Besides, sometimes crazy ideas (or those that would sound crazy to potential donors) catch people's attention. Plan to run a marathon, hike for a day or bike to the neighboring state – do anything that you enjoy and may be amusing for potential donors.

Again: Dissemination, dissemination, dissemination. You will be better off if you publicly advertise your admirable task and get to as many people as possible. Talk to your local newspaper and ask for their support. Have them interview you and make sure to mention you are raising funds for a good cause and clearly indicate how people may make donations. Include your contact information and an address where people may send a check.

Send out personal notes to people you know to inform them of what you are doing. Make sure the note explains the purpose of your task, your goals and how you expect your Nexos Voluntarios to benefit those you will meet in Peru. You may also want to include information on Nexos Voluntarios and on the particular project that you are interested in. You may find a one-page fact sheet at the end of this guide. If you need for information, don't hesitate to ask!

3. Family and Friends – asking those who know you

Parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, siblings and other family members can be generous sources of contributions for your experience abroad. Remember, they know you and they trust you, so, what better source than this?

Organize presentations. As with any potential contributor, you must convince your family members that you are asking for money for a good cause. Let them see how they will be helping a good cause through you. Take advantage of any family gatherings, or organize your own, and make a presentation to request support. Remember to include information about Nexos Voluntarios and the specific project you may be joining to make your presentation richer in content.

A creative way to ask for a contribution is to suggest to those from whom you expect to receive birthday, Christmas, Hanukkah and/or graduation gifts to forget the gift this year and instead pledge money towards your Nexos Voluntarios experience. Remember to "advance" the gift so that you have the funds before you go.

Sell subscriptions. Another creative idea for raising funds from family members (without directly asking for money) is to sell "subscriptions" to a regular newsletter that you will send while you are abroad.

4. Corporate Donations - reaping the benefits

Corporations usually have a special item in their budgets for philanthropic gifts. Reap the benefits! The money is there!

Create your own corporate information files. The first step is to create a list of your potential corporate donors. For this, you can use a variety of sources. Try to get the directory or membership list of the chamber of commerce in your university area and home town. Ask your friends and family members if they know any "big shot" corporate people you may address your request to. The yellow pages may also be a good source.

Keep your request simple and in accordance with the corporation's guidelines. Corporate leaders have little time to read endless proposals or long papers. Keep it simple! Write a brief letter explaining your goals and your financial needs. Do your research before you write. The corporation may have a standard form for you to fill out.

Show you are working for it. Indicate to your potential corporate sponsors that you are pitching in as well! Tell them about your other fundraising efforts and ask them for that "little extra money" you need to be able to travel and make a difference.

Express their donation as an investment. Traditional corporate philanthropy is being replaced with strategic investments that businesses hope will yield measurable returns. Commit to those returns and show your corporate sponsors what you have done once you return. Write a report with impact indicators that measure the "return on investment" they have made on you. Don't worry, we'll help you with those indicators once you are here!

5. Grants and Scholarships - digging for funds

Often colleges, universities, clubs and associations have money available for students who want to engage in public service work. It is just a matter of searching.

Ask around. Ask around at your university to all people who may give you information about the grants and scholarships available – ask administrators, professors, advisors, proctors, chaplains, and coaches. They may all be able give you support to your fundraising effort and help you find out if your school offers any formal fellowships or grants for students interested in traveling and/or doing public service work overseas.

Direct your inquiries to related institutions. Go speak with the President or Dean of your college for a contribution from his or her discretionary fund. You may also contact the Latin American Studies department, or the



Internships and/or Study Abroad Offices. Ask for their support, or their ideas for funding.

Search the net. Searching the Internet may be more rewarding than you think. With just a little research we found out some good opportunities for students from any university:

- The Samuel Huntington Public Service Award provides a \$10,000 stipend for a graduating college senior to pursue one year of public service anywhere in the world.
http://www.nationalgridus.com/masselectric/about_us/award.asp
- Public Service Fellowship Program – Northwestern School of Law
<http://www.law.northwestern.edu/admissions/tuitionaid/loans/lrap.html>
- Project-Based Fellowship Application from PSLAW Net
<http://www.pslawnet.org/>
- Marla Ruzicka International Public Service Fellowship
<http://marlaruzicka.blogspot.com/2006/03/marla-ruzicka-international-public.html>

6. Local civic groups and other groups –always willing to help

Usually civic groups are willing to help caring people like you. It is just a matter of finding out who they are and asking them!

Ask the Chamber of Commerce. Institutions like this are usually aware of local civic groups like Rotary Clubs, Lion's Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, and minority and cultural affairs groups. Get references about the president or whoever is in charge of external relations. Make a presentation before the group about your objectives and what you need, they may have a small grant hidden somewhere!

Approach local senior centers. Senior citizens might really enjoy sharing in your goals and hear about your experience upon your return. Make a presentation about your objectives and the project you will be involved in and offer to do a slide show on your adventures when you get back in exchange for a small donation from each member – many small donations will get you far!

7. Loans and post-program refunds –when nothing else works

When strategies 1 through 6 do not work, don't give up! We have one last option. Get a loan and pay it back with your Peru-experience "proceeds". Peru has many beautiful and low-cost gifts and handicrafts you may take back to your home country that people may be interested in acquiring in exchange for helping you pay your loan! Think about it!

Giving Back

Whatever fundraising tactic you pursue, one way to improve your chances of success is to find something you can offer your donors in return for their support and to involve them in your experience. Make sure you tell them you will be doing this when you are asking for the money! Here are some ideas:

- Create a mailing list of your donors so you can send them monthly “newsletters” describing your adventures and achievements. Send pictures... let them know how their donation is helping change lives as well. People will love the updates!
- Offer to make fliers or posters for local businesses that donate to your program: “Jeff Bookshop Cares! Thank you, Jeff, for supporting my effort to changing lives in Peru”
- Send an email to all your friends and family members thanking the local businesses that donate to your program – the say idea as the posters we have suggested.
- Send an editorial to your local paper describing your program and thanking the local businesses and donors for supporting you. Don’t forget to mention the businesses! And ask individual donors if you may mention their names (they may want to keep it private)!
- If you get a local senior center or school to donate, offer to do a slide show of your trip and experience when you come back.
- Offer to bring back small handicrafts for your kind supporters.

Some tips about fundraising

#1 -- Remember the cause!

The money you are raising is a contribution towards the costs of placing a volunteer in a project that will have a positive impact on hundreds or thousands of people in need. You are not asking money for yourself, but to participate in a good cause.

#2 - Ask for realistic amounts

You must know your target audience in order to know how much money you can ask for. However, do not look down on small gifts, remember they are also important.

#3 - Be thankful

Remember to thank your donors for believing in you and for trusting you. This is what a financial contribution really means: that your donor trusts that you will put his or her money to good use. Thank you letters should be sent within 24 hours of the receipt of the donation. You should also reply to

those who do not grant you a donation, thanking them for their consideration.

#4 - Share with your donors

Tell them about your goals and what you expect to accomplish and about the program you are about to join. They will want to know where they are putting their money!

#5 - Calculate how much money you need before you start asking

People will want to know how much money you intend to raise. They would also be more prone to donating if you tell them you have already raised xx amount and need xx more as this shows other people have already trusted you.

#6 - Suggest a specific amount to each donor.

Potential donors will probably not know how much you actually need or how much you "expect" to raise from each person. It will be easier (and faster!!) for them to make a donation if they do not have to choose a figure on their own. Give them some specific options that are within each donor's possibilities.

#7 Network as much as you can

Talk about what you are trying to accomplish to everyone who comes near you – you never know who will be opening doors for you! Ask people to refer you to other people who might be interested in what you're doing. The more people you contact, the more potential donors and the larger the amount you will be able to raise.

#8 Use the fact that you are joining a reputable institution to your advantage

Tell your potential donors about Nexos Voluntarios, our partners and the comprehensiveness of the program. This will make your plea more compelling and trustworthy. Insist on the fact that you are not raising money to go on vacation but rather to go and help those in need through a solid organization.

#9 Learn about Peru and its needs

Do some good research about the country and city you will be volunteering in, particularly its current affairs, and its more pressing needs. Also be knowledgeable about the NGO or specific project you will be joining and make sure you can talk about how you will be helping to support it.