



Fundraising Guide





Making travel more accessible

Every student should have the life-changing experience of traveling the world and exploring new cultures. Fundraising not only helps make this possible, it's also a great way to teach students important life skills like goal-setting, budgeting, and team-building.

When Group Leaders help their students raise money for tour, it engages students in the tour planning process and promotes strong camaraderie. Fundraising can also be a great way for you and other adults in the community to support a trip. Working together for a common goal unites students and Group Leaders and deepens their investment in the tour. You can celebrate your successes along the way together, knowing that every dollar raised is helping to take your entire group somewhere incredible.

This book contains tried-and-true methods from experienced Group Leaders who've led trips of all sizes. Find ideas that work best for your group and discover just how effective (and fun!) raising money for your tour can be.



5 questions to get you started

- 1** What is your fundraising goal? Is it a significant or small portion of your group's tour cost?
- 2** How much time and resources are you and your group willing to dedicate? Are you willing to invest any of your own money?
- 3** How many events or activities do you want to organize?
- 4** Who will lead the fundraising efforts? Will they lead every activity or event? Or will different people lead different efforts?
- 5** Which fundraising activities best suit your goals, your students, and your time and resources? Should you be working as a group or setting individuals up for successful fundraising?



Planning and preparing

The best piece of advice we hear from experienced Group Leaders is to get started early. The ideas and suggestions you'll find on the following pages will be much more valuable if you allow yourself enough time to raise money effectively.



Set goals

- Check out the fundraising ideas coming later in this guide and discuss any other ones you have with your students.
- Determine how much you want to raise.
- Decide the types of events or activities you want to do, and how many.
- Consider which ones can help you reach your goal the fastest.
- Think about which ideas will be most practical for your group. Factor in your facilities, your community, and your group members' skills and interests.
- Set realistic goals. You can always set another goal if you reach the first one!

Choose a leader

- Ask a chaperone or parent to take the lead or even pick a student to take responsibility. Someone should be in charge of raising tour money—but that doesn't mean it has to be you.
- Check your school's fundraising rules and guidelines; you can also form a committee and oversee it.

Manage the money

- Any money raised through group projects should be split equally among travelers. You may also want to consider funding scholarships to put toward group members who may not otherwise be able to go.
- Set expectations with a fundraising contract and have both parents and students sign it.
- Keep track of everything. This will help when you're ready to divide up the money. Many Group Leaders use spreadsheets to help them monitor everything.
- Put any money raised together in one account so you can easily divide the funds when you're ready. Remember, the final payment deadline is 110 days before tour.
- If your travelers are using our Automatic Payment Plan, money raised from activities and events can be applied to the accounts, decreasing the monthly payment amount (more information on page 7).



Benefits of fundraising

Besides the obvious benefit of easing the cost of travel and allowing more students to experience this opportunity, fundraising can help students develop a variety of life skills—all while bringing the group together.

Confidence

Fundraising often requires students to tell their story and share why they want to travel. By asking students to really think about and share what's important to them and why they want to travel, you are helping them develop storytelling skills and confidence.

Group bonding

Group fundraisers are a great time to build stronger relationships among your group. Make sure everyone has met each other, and encourage students to work with people they don't know well.

Money management

Setting a fundraising goal will give students real-world budgeting experience. For example, break down their goal into a weekly or monthly amount to make it less daunting. Or help students understand specific amounts by framing them in real-world terms, like forgoing their weekly \$5 treat to save funds over a long period of time.



Spread the word

The more people who know about your trip, the more support you'll get. Try to get free publicity instead of spending money on print or social media ads. And don't forget one of the best forms of advertising: word of mouth.

School communication channels

Make sure your efforts are listed in school announcements and newsletters. Ask to hang posters and flyers in the hallways, cafeteria, or teacher lounge. Plus, have kids tap into the best ways to get news out around the school.


Social media

Stay active on as many social media channels as possible to help spread the word. Join local Facebook groups, have travelers post on their own accounts, and post on your trip's social media page (if you have one). Each student also has a personal fundraising page where people can contribute to their tour. Encourage students to share it with family and community members.

Community outreach

Use your community spaces to your advantage. A good old-fashioned flyer can go a long way (ask EF for one to help promote your fundraiser). Hand them out at a local event or ask to hang them in local businesses.





Frequently asked questions

If students are on EF's Automatic Payment Plan, how will a check donated through group fundraising activities affect their payments?

If the amount going to the student is greater than \$20, then each of the remaining automatic payment amounts will be reduced. If the amount going to the student is not greater than \$20, the difference will be subtracted from the final payment.

If students are on the manual payment plan, how does fundraising affect their payments?

Even if students are fundraising, families still need to make the scheduled payments outlined in the manual payment plan. Once fundraising money is collected, it can be used to cover future payments.

What if my group raises more money than they owe for the tour?

This situation will vary from group to group. Your travelers can ask for a refund through our Traveler Support Team for overpayment, or you can request these as refunds for your whole group.

Once fundraising funds are submitted to EF, how long until they're reflected in my account?

Once we receive your payment, it usually takes 3-5 business days to process and update your account.

How do I submit and allocate funds raised by the entire group?

1. Make the check out to EF Explore America or EF Educational Tours for the full amount. Put your tour number on the memo line. You can find this at the top of each tour on your Group Leader website.
2. Log in to your Group Leader website. Under your group tab, you will see a button that says "group checks." You will then have the option to submit a group check by creating a new form. In the form, identify how you want the funds divided among your students.
3. Print the form and send it along with the check to EF Explore America or EF Educational Tours.

Attn: Account Services Department
2 Education Circle
Cambridge, MA 02141

A student was allocated fundraising money and is now going to cancel. Can the money be returned?

No. Once fundraising funds are allocated to a student, those funds are now in the student's name. EF is not responsible for tracking where the funds on their EF account came from. Group Leaders may, if they would like, reach out to families directly to recoup any fundraising funds.

How to read this guide

Each activity suggestion has an estimated time commitment and starting costs, tips for smooth execution, and some information on the level of commitment to help you narrow down your ideas.



In school/out of school

While many activities can be done either in or out of school, this indicates the best or most successful place to carry out the activity.

Time commitment

Estimated set-up time required.

Starting costs

Estimated amount your group will have to spend in order to run the event.

High effort/low effort

We've estimated 'low-effort' as less than a week to set the event up.

One time/continuous

While you can turn a one-time event into a continuous one and vice versa, this indicates our suggestion. For a continuous event, the time commitment is still the set-up time, and you can run a continuous event for as long or short as makes sense.

Group Leader-driven/student-driven

While every event will need both Group Leader and student involvement, certain events will be more labor-intensive for you as the Group Leader, while others will give more responsibility to your students.

How it works

Details about executing the event, as well as tips and things to look out for.

Group activities

The next few pages include suggestions for fundraising activities. As you're looking through them, keep in mind the goals you've set and the types of commitments you're able to make.

Bake sale



- In/out of school
- Low effort
- One-time
- Group Leader-driven

🕒 1–2 weeks

💰 \$20–\$100

How it works: Sell handmade or store-bought baked goods at school or outside your local supermarket.

- Ask friends and family to donate baked goods.
- Gather a team to work the event.
- Set clear goals and pricing before the day of the bake sale.
- Promote the event ahead of time.

Trivia night



- In person or via Zoom
- Low effort
- One-time
- Student-driven

🕒 1 week

💰 \$0

How it works: A fun way to get the community together for some friendly competition.

- Choose a theme and come up with related questions.
- Spread the word about the event.
- Charge an entrance fee for individuals.

Movie night



- In/out of school
- High/low effort
- One-time
- Group Leader-driven

🕒 1–2 weeks

💰 \$20–\$40

How it works: Host a movie screening and charge for entry.

- Ask to use a space at your school (classroom, gym, etc.), or host it via Zoom.
- Make posters and hang them around the school.
- If you don't have a projector, ask around to borrow one for the event.
- For an in-person event, increase potential funds by selling concessions.

Digital art auction



- Out of school
- High effort
- One-time
- Group Leader-driven

🕒 2–3 months

💰 \$0

How it works: Gather donated pieces of art from local artists and hold an in-person or Zoom auction.

- Ask friends, family, and community members to donate handmade, original art (they might even make a piece just for the event!).
- Make flyers and spread the word leading up to the auction.
- Charge an entry fee for the live auction.
- Encourage bidding amongst attendees.

Scavenger hunt



- Out of school
- High effort
- One-time
- Group Leader-driven

🕒 2–3 weeks

💰 \$0–\$20

How it works: Invite people to search for hidden clues, snacks, and donated prizes.

- Secure a venue to hold the hunt (like a school or local park).
- Sell tickets at school and in your community.
- Get businesses to donate gift cards or prizes.
- Write out clues specific to your chosen venue.
- Hide clues and prizes an hour before the event.

Concession stand



- In/out of school
- Low effort
- One-time
- Group Leader-driven

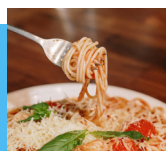
🕒 1 day

💰 \$0–\$200

How it works: Sell concessions outside local shops or events in town.

- Check with your town, local sports teams, universities, and community colleges about setting up concessions.
- Consider setting up outside a local grocery store.
- Adults can also work at concessions at sporting events.

Spaghetti dinner



- Out of school
- High effort
- One-time
- Group Leader-driven

🕒 2–3 weeks

💰 \$0–\$75

How it works: Host a meal to support your tour. Secure a venue and sell tickets at school and in your community.

- Get donations from grocers for supplies.
- Make sure you have enough group members to cook and serve based on the number of tickets you sold.
- Think about some entertainment to go along with your meal.
- Ask local businesses to donate gift cards, products, and services, and then hold a silent auction for the items.

Yard sale



- Out of school
- Low effort
- One-time
- Group Leader-driven

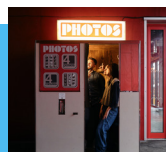
🕒 5 hours leading up to the event

💰 \$0

How it works: Have a sale with donated goods.

- Get friends, families, and businesses to donate items. Your group can also go to other yard sales in your area and ask for any unsold items at the end of the day. This will help you build your inventory.
- Collect the items a week before the event.
- Pick a location to hold the event.
- Publicize the event throughout your area.
- Sort and price the items.
- Set up a station to collect payments.

Photo booth



- In/out of school
- High effort
- One-time
- Student-driven

🕒 1–2 weeks

💰 \$0–\$20

How it works: Create a fun and festive photo booth during school or at a school or community event.

- Find a high-quality camera or Polaroid camera.
- Bring silly props from home, and a sheet or large poster to hang for the backdrop.
- Charge \$3–\$5 per photo, and collect email addresses if you don't have a Polaroid camera.

Online raffle



- Out of school
- Low effort
- One-time
- Student-driven

🕒 1–2 weeks

👁️ \$0–\$20

How it works: Gather everyone you know for a chance to win a grand prize!

- Select your virtual raffle platform.
- Promote your raffle.
- Encourage people to buy multiple tickets for a better chance.
- Ask local businesses for prize donations.

Online gaming tournament



- Out of school
- Low effort
- One-time
- Student-driven

🕒 1–2 weeks

👁️ \$0

How it works: Gather your most competitive friends and family for a few hours of fun.

- Select your streaming platform.
- Promote your event.
- Charge individuals an entrance fee.
- Ask local businesses for prize donations for the winners.

Virtual scavenger hunt



- Out of school
- Low effort
- One-time
- Student-driven

🕒 1 week

👁️ \$0

How it works: Come with a list of items most people would have lying around their house, and make everyone race to retrieve them and come back on screen.

- Spread the word before the event.
- Come up with a list of trinkets, knick-knacks, and tchotchkes.
- Charge an entrance fee for the event.
- Announce a winner for each round.
- Ask local businesses for prize donations for the winners.

Individual activities

Odd jobs



🕒 Timing may vary for everyone 👁️ \$0

How it works: Everyone needs an extra set of hands, so encourage your students to offer theirs!

- Advertise what types of jobs you're available for based on your personal skill set.
- Reach out to friends, family, and neighbors.
- Let people know what you're raising money for, and see if they are willing to pay you a more favorable wage.

Babysitting

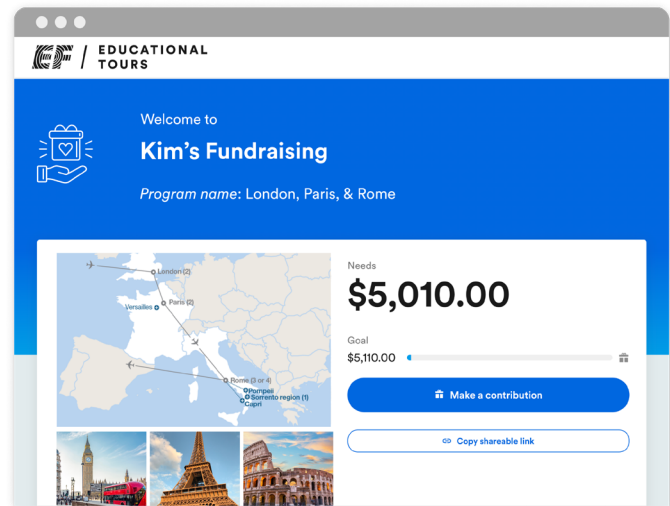


🕒 Timing may vary for everyone 👁️ \$0–\$65

How it works: Have students ask parents in their neighborhood if they can babysit.

- Students can get certified for babysitting and then check with their community to see if anyone needs babysitting for upcoming events.

Personal fundraising page



How it works

Travelers can share their personal URL to friends and family, asking for their support in paying for their tour.

- Each traveler's fundraising page allows them to easily and securely collect funds through online credit card payments.
- Encourage your students to send an email to friends and family to ask for payments for their tour (see example below).
- They can also share their personal fundraising page on their social media channels.
- Send a public thank you. Not only does it give proper recognition, but it serves as a reminder to those who have not yet sent money that they can still take action.

Ideas on how to use it:

- Create a “bingo board” to share on Instagram stories with squares representing different activities that contribute to a donation or prize (e.g., donate \$10 to sponsor a treat while I’m on tour). People can contribute an amount to your fundraising page to get credit on your story.
- Students can use it for birthday and holiday gifts.

Using your personal fundraising page

Students can use this email as a guide when spreading the word about their tour fundraising.

Dear (First name),

I'm planning on attending an educational tour with my school to (destination)! I am so excited to have this opportunity to go abroad, experience new cultures, and learn important life skills.

My (name of tour) tour is planned for (date), and I'm traveling with EF Educational Tours, a trusted organization in educational travel.

My travel group and I are working on a few fundraising projects to help pay for this bucket-list experience. We are also asking friends and family to consider making generous donations to help cover the cost of the trip. I've set up a fundraising page so you can help support our trip. Just visit (URL) and you can make a secure online payment by credit card or checking account that goes directly toward my tour account balance.

I'd be happy to tell you all about this tour and answer any questions you might have. Thank you for considering helping make this once-in-a-lifetime experience come true.

Sincerely, (Your name)



Looking for more support?

Your Tour Consultant is always available to offer more support and resources. Just give them a call! You can also check out our blog for fundraising ideas and stories from other experienced Group Leaders: eftours.com/fundraising