Contents

Introduction to Fundraising .......................................................................................................................... 3
Do’s and Don’ts ................................................................................................................................................ 3
Making a Plan of Action .................................................................................................................................. 4
My Fundraising Plan ...................................................................................................................................... 5
Competition vs. Collaboration ....................................................................................................................... 6
Individual Fundraising .................................................................................................................................. 6
Grants, Bursaries and Donations .................................................................................................................... 7
Group Fundraising ......................................................................................................................................... 9
Sample Letter 1 .............................................................................................................................................. 10
Sample Letter 2 .............................................................................................................................................. 11
Sample Thank You Letter ............................................................................................................................. 12
Introduction to Fundraising

Educational trips can be expensive and while the learning experiences are priceless, that doesn’t reduce the cost of airfare, accommodation and food!

This manual will provide you with some ideas and strategies to help you fund your trip.

Remember the three keys to successful fundraising

1. **Represent McMaster, the Student Success Centre and yourself with dignity and professionalism.**
   As you are fundraising you are not only representing yourself, but also the SSC and McMaster University. With this in mind, you want to make sure that you are always professional, organized and appropriate.

2. **Get creative!**
   Fundraising is not a new idea and often people can get ‘donor fatigue’. Make sure you set yourself apart and demonstrate how passionate you are about the experience!

3. **Organization is key!**
   People are less likely to give money to people who are, or appear to be, disorganized. The more organized you are, the more likely you will be successful in your efforts. Set goals and timelines and work hard!

**Do’s and Don’ts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO</th>
<th>DON’T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always report to the SSC any fundraising efforts you may be taking on.</td>
<td>Wait to the last minute and expect results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work together with your fellow participants: many hands make lighter work!</td>
<td>Be disrespectful or forceful with solicitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up with everyone you contact</td>
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</table>

**HOT TIP: Time Commitment**

How long does it take to work and save $2500? At about $10/hr, one would have to work 250 hours to raise $2500! Fundraising can be a full time job, and you need to be realistic about the time you can allocate to raising money.
Making a Plan of Action

Without exception, people who achieve goals take the time to develop a strategy and plan of action. Here are key tips to get you organized:

**STEP ONE: ARTICULATE YOUR OBJECTIVE (WHAT?)**
In order to raise any money, you need to know what you are asking for and what you have to offer in exchange. Once you have this written down, you will be able to use it in letters, meetings or presentations.

**STEP TWO: RESEARCH (WHO?)**
Start thinking about who would be the best people to approach for money. Your community may have a Community Resources Booklet or online resources to help you identify organizations and individuals that you might approach for funding.

Brainstorm with your family and friends to develop your list of potential donors (including personal contacts like relatives, family friends, etc...). Add them to your “Potential Donor List” on your action plan.

**STEP THREE: DECIDE ON YOUR APPROACH**
Individual: Actions you can take on your own to secure funds for your trip (i.e. seeking sponsorship)

Group: Events, programs or initiatives that require a group effort (i.e. bake sales, coffee houses, parties, candy/subscription selling etc.)

Brainstorm with your family, friends and mentors to develop a list of possible fundraising ideas and events. Discuss the time required, time conflicts, number of people you will need to help you out.

Identify non-cash donations that could be acquired to assist your fundraising (i.e. merchandise for a raffle, Canadian pins and flags, supplies, etc.). Always keep a wish list for what you need and don’t forget to ask. If you don’t ask, people can’t contribute!

**HOT TIP: Simple ideas to collect $$$**
1. For your birthday or any winter holidays- ask for a contribution to your trip rather than a gift.
2. Put $5-$10 away every week between now and your trip
3. Ask your family and friends to start holding on to their change, you would be surprised how fast it all adds up!

**HOT TIP: Simple ideas to seek donations!**
1. Christmas tree takeaway
2. Boxing Day shopping porter
3. New Years day beer bottle collection
4. Wrapping gifts
5. Organize a party for friends/family with donation
6. Party clean up (for parents, friends)
# My Fundraising Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Cost of Trip</th>
<th>(A) $</th>
<th>What I can Afford on my Own</th>
<th>(B) $</th>
<th>Fundraising Goal (A-B)</th>
<th>(C) $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Individual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POTENTIAL DONORS</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>Letter/Email Sent</th>
<th>Follow-up</th>
<th>Money Received</th>
<th>Thank you sent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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### Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT/PROJECT</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>AMOUNT PER PERSON</th>
<th>THANK YOU SENT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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</table>

Final Tally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Raised: Individual</th>
<th>(A) $</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Raised: Group</td>
<td>(B) $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Raised (A+B)</td>
<td>(C) $</td>
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Competition vs. Collaboration

There will be many MacServe participants vying for funding across campus and in their home communities, not to mention the numerous clubs and groups raising money for their own trips and initiatives.

Fundraising works better when people work together to promote a specific issue or cause. Rather than creating mixed messages or hosting competing events, trip teams should work supportively and collaboratively to raise money:

- Individually
- As groups

Individual Fundraising

**Explain what you want and why:**
A key to successful fundraising is to have passion and a belief in the cause. As you generate excitement about your program and the potential learning opportunities it will encourage others to want to get involved.

You will be most successful if you can articulate why you are participating in the program in the first place. Think back to your original application- What do you hope to get out of this experience? How do you hope to grow as a person? What do you hope to learn?

**Direct Contact:**
A face-to-face meeting is one of the most successful ways to receive donations. It gives you the opportunity to explain your program and fundraising commitment. It is best to inform people why you wish to speak to them; a surprise meeting is usually not effective. Some simple things to remember are:

- Be organized: Have your materials and presentation ready, have your thoughts organized.
- Be passionate: Show them how excited you are about the program!
- Be prepared: What do you have to offer them in return? Why should they help you out?

**Writing letters/emails and phone calls:**
Writing a letter will rarely get you a positive response on its own. A letter should be used to initiate the first contact. Once you have a list of potential contact people and organizations you can draft a letter that will serve as a model. You should personalize each letter and let them know how you got their name (if they do not already know you).

Every letter should be followed up with a phone call to try and arrange a meeting. This is not always as simple as it sounds and you may want to practice with friends or family first!

Individual Letter Writing (see sample letters in appendix)

- Brainstorm a list of potential donors both in Hamilton and your home community (i.e. family, friends, organizations, businesses, clubs, professors/teachers, doctors, dentists, churches, banks etc). You will stand a greater chance of approaching people/organizations you already have a connection to.
- Create a standard letter making sure to include information about the project, yourself, your goals, the impact of the project and how their funding will be beneficial
- It’s a good idea to follow up each letter with a phone call and possibly arrange a face to face meeting.
**THE FOLLOW-UP**
We outlined three ways that you can interact with potential donors. Regardless of your method of contact, it is very important that you always follow up by sending a thank you letter, whether or not they are able to contribute.

Grants, Donations and Bursaries

This area includes both grants and bursaries. It can sometimes be difficult to navigate through the information available here to understand what will fit with your service-learning trip. Below is a summary of resources that are available to you in these categories.

**GRANTS**

**YOUR FACULTY OR DEPARTMENT**
Many faculties and Departments offer grants for co-curricular student experience such as MacServe. Check your faculty’s website for funding possibilities!

*Example:*

**Social Sciences Student Experience Grant** - Student Experience Grants are designed to provide financial support for student-initiated experiential learning opportunities, on- or off-campus, that allow students to engage in practical applications of theories learned through their Social Sciences education. [https://experiential-ed.mcmaster.ca/students/grants-and-awards/student-experience-grants](https://experiential-ed.mcmaster.ca/students/grants-and-awards/student-experience-grants)

**DeGroote Experience Fund (Commerce)** The DeGroote Experience Fund is used to help DeGroote students learn through experience by participating in conferences, competitions and other events. Funding is available to DeGroote students or student teams for national or international competitions, conferences, leadership workshops, or events. [http://www.degroote.mcmaster.ca/student-experience/degroote-experience-fund/](http://www.degroote.mcmaster.ca/student-experience/degroote-experience-fund/)

**FACULTY SOCIETIES**
Most student faculty societies have some funds set aside for sponsorship and donation. Inquire with your respective faculty society to identify if they fund students participating in volunteer programs.

*Examples:*

**McMaster Science Society Student Opportunity Grant** - The McMaster Science Society (MSS) allocates $10,000 annually to the grant requests of full time undergraduate students within the Faculty Of Science. These grants can help fund participation in field courses, attending conferences, joining a workshop or any other extracurricular academic opportunity. Open to iSci and Kinesiology students. [http://mcmastersciencesociety.com/student-opportunity-grants/](http://mcmastersciencesociety.com/student-opportunity-grants/)

**Humanities Student Initiative Fund** - The Student Initiative Fund is a program run by the MHS to help Humanities students get involved in their communities and grow as individuals. Its goal is to ensure that Humanities students interested in pursuing self-growth opportunities are able to overcome any financial barriers present by funding them with up to $275. [http://www.machumanities.ca/sif/](http://www.machumanities.ca/sif/)
DONATIONS

McMaster Student Union
The Sponsorship & Donations committee can receive applications for a variety of student interests and students can apply more than once per academic year. The MacServe program meets the requirements for funding from the project.

To view the rules and guidelines for applying: https://www.msumcmaster.ca/governance/executive-board/sponsorship-donations

The President’s Office
The President’s Office has generously offered to provide a donation for every MacServe Reading Week participant. The exact amount of this donation will depend on the number of participants in the program, but will be approximately $60. Once registration has been completed and your first deposit has been paid, this donation will be automatically credited towards the remaining cost of your trip. You DO NOT need to email the President’s office to receive this donation, as has been done in previous years.

Bursaries
Bursaries at McMaster University are difficult to acquire and are seldom rewarded for the purpose of fundraising. There are two major divisions in the bursaries available. The first are bursaries awarded by McMaster University that are available on MUGSI starting in November. Students can apply to be considered by going to MUGSI and will then be automatically assessed in January for a bursary. The second are bursaries that are endowed to McMaster University by donors. There are a wide variety of bursaries available through these means and they can be viewed on the Undergraduate Calendar. It is important to note that many of these bursaries have no application process, are automatically awarded by the university and have no financial component to them. They are listed as notations on your transcript. There is a small group of awards that are open for application but they are due in early November. Of these awards, some have the potential to include a financial contribution but further inquiry is necessary by the recipient. In summary, bursaries will most likely not prove to be a resource for fundraising for your trip.

McMaster Undergraduate Calendar: http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php?catoid=13

Details of bursaries available for application: http://sfas.mcmaster.ca/bursary/macbur.html

For more information, check out the Student Financial Aid & Scholarships website. To help you navigate the website, start with the Facts & Forms section (scholarships tab) to begin your investigation. http://sfas.mcmaster.ca/
Group Fundraising

As stated above, fundraising works much better when people work together. Here are some group fundraising ideas that you could try:

- Coffee houses
- Bake sales
- Silent auctions
- Speak at lectures – delegate members of the group to speak in front of different lectures and then pass around donation boxes

Reminder: Please notify Laura Fenwick-Sehl (fenwicl@mcmaster.ca) at the Student Success Centre if you plan to do any of these initiatives so that we are not overlapping/duplicating our efforts.

**SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR GROUP FUNDRAISING EVENTS**

- Advertising and promotion
- Booking a space
- Staff/Volunteer Support- set up, clean up etc.
- Equipment needed- sound, AV, tables etc.
- Catering/Food: Needs to be Paradise Catering if on campus
- Prizes
- Supplies: pens, markers, tape
- Accessibility: can everyone attend?
- Timing: will the event conflict with anything else?
- Decorations
- Logistics: What tasks need to be delegated out and accomplished ahead of time?
- Money management: check with Laura if you will be handling any amount of money, how are you going to divide up the money?

HOT TIP: Keep in Mind

Fundraising is NOT begging for money: Your activities are a way of involving the community in your experience - one that will ultimately have great benefits for the community itself!

People give to people. Even when you ask an organization or company for money, it is people who make the decision to give or not.
Sample Letter 1 (Note: Change Reading Week to Engage if Necessary)

Dear Mr. /Mrs. /Ms. NAME:

My name is [NAME], and I am a [YEAR] student studying [PROGRAM] at McMaster University.

I recently applied and was accepted to participate in the MacServe Reading Week program on the [DESTINATION] team. During my reading week I will be traveling to [DESTINATION] with a group of fellow students to learn about [LEARNING THEME] through a variety of volunteer service placements. The program promotes active citizenship as we will be learning through hands on activities in our host community. This program is run by the McMaster Student Success Centre.

Personally, I am looking forward to broadening my perspectives of the world and gaining a better understanding of [LEARNING THEME]. In addition to exploring this topic, I am excited to travel, work and collaborate with my teammates, develop my communication skills and try new things. Upon my return, I plan to share what I have learned with my family, friends and classmates.

I am currently seeking financial sponsors to help me cover the cost of the program, and hope I can count on your support. The program cost is [COST], which includes all transportation, accommodations, meals, and educational activities. I am asking [NUMBER] contributors to each donate [AMOUNT] to help me reach my goal. Is it possible for you to assist me by making a contribution? Any amount would be appreciated. Upon my return, I would love to give a speech and share my journal, photographs, and experiences with you and any contributors.

Please feel free to contact me at [phone number] if you need more information. Your generous contribution would enable me to share in this wonderful opportunity. Every contribution counts.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Sincerely yours,

[NAME]
Sample Letter 2 (Note: Change Reading Week to Engage if Necessary)

Dear (name of person you are contacting);

My name is (name) and I am writing to request funding from your company for the McMaster MacServe Reading Week program which is an experiential education program I will be involved with this February. This service-learning experience is an initiative of the Student Success Centre at McMaster University and involves groups of students learning about a specific topic through volunteer service. The reading week program has been offered by the Student Success Centre for several years now and has introduced McMaster students, staff, and faculty to the importance of volunteering and being engaged in local and international communities.

During the month of (month or months), (year), I will be traveling with a group of McMaster students to (destination) to learn as much as we can about (learning theme). While there, we will be working on diverse projects designed and chosen according to the host community’s needs. These include: improving and constructing service facilities such as classrooms, community halls and other structures to enhance community infrastructure; cultural activities that promote cultural exchange such as English classes and community games; and last, environmental sustainability projects that help with maintenance, protection, and improvement of community areas. (change to better reflect your tasks as necessary).

A donation of ($) would be greatly appreciated. The total cost of this program is ($) per participant and it is my goal to fundraise the total amount by February (year). In addition to being a practical opportunity for me to further my skills and studies in my educational field, this trip is an opportunity for intellectual, emotional, and personal growth. Lastly, in recognition of your support, upon my return I would be pleased to write a letter, provide photos, or meet with you to share what was accomplished in (destination) with your help.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at: (your email@mcmaster.ca address). To learn more about the Reading Week Series please visit: [http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/students/service-learning.htm].

Sincerely,

[NAME]
Sample Thank You Letter

**If they have promised a donation:**

Dear (contact name),

Thank you very much for (meeting/speaking) with me (yesterday afternoon). I appreciated the opportunity to tell you more about my upcoming (MacServe Series) experience to (destination).

I especially appreciate your very generous donation of ($). Your donation will be processed by McMaster University and you will receive an official receipt for income tax purposes soon.

Thank you again for the time you spent with me and your support.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

**If they did not promise a donation:**

Dear (contact name),

Thank you very much for (meeting/speaking) with me (yesterday morning). I appreciated the opportunity to tell you more about my upcoming (MacServe Series) experience to (destination).

I understand that you get many requests for donations and with (the current difficult economy/needs of your business/whatever reason was given to you), it is impossible to give to everyone who asks. As you requested, I will call back (when they said to) to inquire about a donation at that time.

I am enthusiastic about the experience I will gain by participating in (MacServe Series) and hope that I will be able to tell you about it when I return.

Sincerely, [NAME]