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Grassroots HUB

HANDBOOK 2

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

www.thegrassrootscollective.org

Grassroots Collective is an international movement committed to strengthening local community non-profits.

We believe that local community organisations are best positioned to implement truly sustainable development solutions. It is our mission to strengthen your work, foster local capacity and help you deliver durable development solutions to local communities.

This handbook has been created as a step-by-step guide to assist non-profits in planning and executing a crowdfunding campaign for social causes. It has been produced by a team of marketers, fundraisers, development practitioners and teaching professionals. Whilst the tools, frameworks and guidelines within this handbook have been designed with transferability in mind, it is essential that you contextualise their use and apply them within the legal limitations of your country.

This handbook is a living document. Concepts of best practice are constantly being reviewed and refined, as is the contents of this handbook. We cannot guarantee the completeness, accuracy or suitability of this information for any particular purpose. In addition, the information found here should not be treated as a stand-alone solution to all crowdfunding challenges. This information is simply a guide; the means by which it is applied is under your direction.

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A 'Mi Parque' team-member works in their Santiago office, Chile.

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MODULE 1

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

What is crowdfunding and is it right for you?

Crowdfunding is an increasingly popular fundraising method used by nonprofits and charities to raise money for social causes online. It has the capacity to generate large amounts of funds in a relatively short period of time, combining small donations from multiple donors all over the world. Crowdfunding is also a powerful marketing tool for community nonprofits, offering a new way for organisations to connect with new donors through social media and peer-to-peer fundraising techniques. However, if executed poorly, a crowdfunding campaign can quickly collapse, becoming a huge drain upon a nonprofit's limited resources and yielding little financial reward.

This handbook is designed to help your non-profit raise money through online crowdfunding. It has been created specifically for social causes, to help your organisation build, launch and market a successful crowdfunding campaign. If you want to explore a new and exciting means of fundraising, this handbook has everything you need to get started.

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What is Crowdfunding?

A way of gaining small and medium sized donations from a large number of people online

It was first used by entrepreneurs as a means to attract small-sized investments from every day people interested in their products. Now, with the help of user-friendly online platforms, everyone can access this powerful resource to help fund their projects.

For community nonprofits, the ability to appeal to potential donors from all over the world makes crowdfunding a particularly powerful funding mechanism.
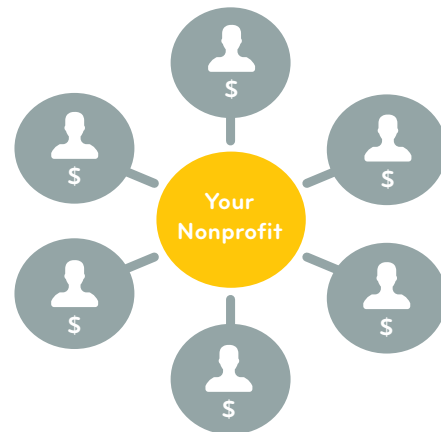
Your Nonprofit

How is crowdfunding different?

Nonprofit

Donors

Nonprofit

Donors

Traditional Fundraising

Chosen activities and interventions Non-profits seek a single large investment from an international foundation, angel investor or government sponsor.

- Organisations apply for a grant, presenting evidence like LogFrames, Stakeholder Analysis and detailed budgets in hope of receiving funds.

- You can think of this approach as a funnel, with local nonprofits at the wide end, and a small group of potential investors at the closed end. If you fail to point that funnel at the right investor, then you are wasting your time.

Crowdfunding

Nonprofits are given a simple online-platform to showcase their projects and work to attract mainly private sponsors.

- Organisations have the opportunity to build relationships with hundreds of potential donors simultaneously, many of whom they may never have known existed.

- Crowdfunding seeks to turn the funnel on its head by allowing you to reach donors all over the world and build meaningful relationships with people who want to see your project succeed.

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Taking Fundraising Online

At the heart of all crowdfunding initiatives is an online hosting platform.

There are hundreds of crowdfunding websites out there, many of which are tailored to the charity, non-profit and development industries.

Each platform has a distinct set of advantages and disadvantages – some take a cut of your profits whilst other do not. Some are more intuitive and user friendly than others. Whichever you choose, it will be the focal point of your entire fundraising efforts.

> **Helpful Hint**
>
> Choosing the right online crowdfunding platform is both vitally import and painfully difficult; but don't worry! We will guide you through this process in detail in **Module 2** of this handbook.

The Benefits of Online Crowdfunding

Whilst it is a time-consuming effort, crowdfunding might well be worth it. Here are a few of the reasons why online crowdfunding can be so effective for community non-profits:

+ Crowdfunding Campaigns have the ability to **reach people all over the world.** Your campaign can reach a far more diverse audience than a regular appeal. This is particularly valuable for small, local nonprofits situated in remote or isolated regions, far away from potential donors.

+ Crowdfunding campaigns can be **easily integrated into existing marketing strategies**. Most campaign pages on crowdfunding platforms are also specifically designed to be shared via social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram.

+ Campaign pages are great spaces to **open up new avenues of conversation with donors** and supporters, as many have integrated comment sections, forums and peer-to-peer funding options.

+ Crowdfunding helps to **diversify your organisation`s revenue**, as well as providing an easy way for your donors to use popular payment methods like credit card, Paypal and even bitcoin.

+ Crowdfunding helps **legitimise your organisation**. Many online platforms have excellent track records of accountability to donors, thus offering legitimacy that your non-profit can benefit from simply by being hosted on their website. However, in return, these sites generally ask non-profits to provide proof for how funds are being spent. Make sure you take this responsibility seriously. If your aim is to run multiple campaigns into the future, it is essential to cultivate transparent and trusting relationship with donors.

But is Crowdfunding the right type of fundraising for you?

Crowdfunding is an amazing fundraising tool, that much is clear. However, it must be used strategically. Before you get carried away, designing campaigns and tailoring marketing strategies, it is essential to assess whether crowdfunding is right for your organisation or your project. Time is valuable for nonprofits with limited resources and personnel. If you don't have the basic pre-requisites outlined on the following pages crowdfunding might not be for you.

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Prerequisite 1 — Do you have a website or social media presence?

Why is this important?

People considering a donation to a crowdfunding campaign will want to learn more about you. They want to see that you are a professional organisation that is trustworthy and accountable. They will likely have a few key questions that they want answered before they donate:

- Is this a real, legitimate nonprofit?

- Is there evidence that this nonprofit is doing what it says it is doing?

- Does this organisation have a record of success?

- Why should I give my money to this organisation instead of another?

The first place they will turn to for this information is a website. Ideally, your organisation's website will have a clear goal and mission statement, provide details about who you are and what you are doing, as well as evidence of your work with beneficiaries in the community.

What if I don't have a website?

Social media pages like facebook, Instagram and twitter can be another way for you to showcase and legitimise your work. These are easy to create and manage, offering a simple open platform to exhibit a portfolio of your work. Make sure that these pages are active. Try and post to Instagram every couple of days and to facebook at least once a week. Providing up-to-date evidence of your organisation's progress and success is essential.

Prerequisite 2 — Can you market your campaign?

Why is this important?

Crowdfunding campaigns don't just market themselves! Please don't fall into the trap of convincing yourself that just because your campaign is for a good cause, that it will 'go viral'. Be prepared to push your campaign hard if you want to raise the necessary funds. The aim of marketing your crowdfunding campaign is to tell as many people as possible about your campaign and how they can support your mission.

- Most organisations rely heavily upon their newsletter subscribers. Indeed, if people have been interested enough to subscribe to a newsletter, there is a good chance that they might become your first crowdfunders. This core group of followers will also hopefully begin lobbying your cause amongst their friends and family members. You might even like to ask if they could share your campaign on their social media accounts - a process called peer-to-peer marketing which we will explore in **Module 9.**

- An active social media presence is a great way to begin marketing your campaign and making your broader audience aware of your campaign. Try not to make a 'direct ask' for donations more than once a week but be sure to reference the campaign regularly in your posts.

- Holding live events, asking bloggers and social media influencers to share your campaign and contacting local media outlets and newspapers for interviews about your work are all great ways to market your campaign. You don't need to have plans for all of these marketing avenues yet, but you do need to have the capacity to pursue as many as possible if you want to create the buzz you need to achieve your funding target.

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Why is this important?

It is essential that you have a bank account in your organisation's name. However, even if you have this, there are many crowdfunding platforms that won't accept bank accounts from certain countries.

If the platform you wish to use doesn't allow you to receive funds in your country, you can consider using a third-party organisation, volunteer or friend as an intermediary in a country where funds can be received. They can receive funds on your behalf and then transfer them through Paypal or Western Union

to your account in your country. Whilst this can be a useful solution, receiving funds in the way can quickly become cumbersome and complex – characteristics that are never good when money is involved.

It is thus essential that you make sure your organisation has the financial capacity to receive funds from an international, online crowdfunding source. Every country and platform is different, so be sure to check policy statements in detail.

Finishing Up

If your organisation does not yet meet these basic requirements, crowdfunding is probably not for you. It is a far better use of your time and resources to build an online presence or mailing list first, and then give crowdfunding a try. However, if you have been nodding your head as we have been going through this list, then it might be time to get stuck into the world of online crowdfunding. Getting started is easy but doing it right can be a challenge. You can learn everything you need to know about how to pull off a successful crowdfunding campaign in the following modules. Good luck!

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A 'Fundación Chol Chol' beneficiary works in Temuco, Chile.

HANDBOOK 2

MODULE 2

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

Choosing the right Crowdfunding Platform

Once you've decided to take the plunge and pursue online crowdfunding, the first step is finding the right crowdfunding website or 'platform' for your needs. There are dozens of online crowdfunding platforms out there, all with their own set of advantages and disadvantages, each tailored to different objectives and social causes. In Module 1, we explored the basics of online crowdfunding and used a brief checklist to identify whether it is a good strategy for your nonprofit. We will now take a closer look at some of the key questions you need to ask when choosing a crowdfunding platform to host your campaign, as well as suggest a few platforms that we think work best for small and medium sized community nonprofits.

Download Resource

As you complete this module, refer to **'Resource 2 - Choosing a Crowdfunding platform'** on p61. Use this resource as a guide when you are planning your own crowdfunding campaign.

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8 important factors to consider when choosing a platform

There are many factors to consider when choosing a crowdfunding platform. In this module, we will explore 8 of the most important criteria.

These criteria are not all equal. It is essential that you carefully assess which are most important for your specific needs and goals – there is no 'one-size-fits-all' crowdfunding platform. For some nonprofits, having access to online support in their native language will be most important, whilst for others, the ability to target an audience in a certain region might be key. It is up to you to consider these factors and decide which are most important to you. You can then begin selecting the perfect crowdfunding platform for your organisation's needs.

Funding Model
Mobile Friendly
Audience Location
Cost of Use
Support Services
Social Focus
Incentives
Peer to Peer

Does the platform specialise in social causes?

Some crowdfunding platforms focus specifically upon charities, nonprofits and international development projects. It is therefore important to consider: **Is the platform specifically designed to support social causes?**

Platforms specifically designed for nonprofits are great because they not only attract people who are interested in donating to social causes, but also lend legitimacy to your campaign. 'Generalist' platforms might reach a larger audience, but it is best to target quality donors interested in social causes like yours rather than trying to battle it out against fancy for-profit start-ups like those found on kickstarter and indiegogo.

Choosing a platform that specialises in social causes thus means that the platform knows what works best for nonprofits, and their community is only interested in projects like yours.

Helpful Hint

The layout of social-cause crowdfunding platforms is also tailored to donors, rather than investors. Whilst explainer videos and elevator pitches are encouraged, the use of colourful photos, a focus on storytelling and a thoughtful narrative are all touches that are specifically relevant to nonprofit audiences and are built-in to platforms specialising in social causes. Your donors want to feel good about supporting an amazing cause, rather than being swamped in information about financial returns.

Which crowdfunding model will you use?

One of the first questions you need to ask when choosing a crowdfunding platform is: **Which crowdfunding model do you want to use to receive funds and does the platform offer that option?**

There are two distinct funding models offered by most crowdfunding platforms, many only supporting one or the other:

'All-or-Nothing' and 'Flexible Funding'

You can only withdraw funds if you meet the target set at the beginning of your campaign.

If you fall short of this target, both you, and the platform, receive nothing, and the money is returned to the donors.

This type of financial return was initially used as a form of security for investors (donors) in the world of for-profit start-ups.

- It acknowledges that many projects require a minimum level of funding to reach viability. If the target is not reached, the project cannot be realised, and any attempt to do so with insufficient funds would merely waste the investor's/ donor's money.

Every dollar donated goes directly to your cause.

This method gives organisations more flexibility, but there are some flaws.

This type of funding requires an increased level of trust on the donor's part. In order to feel comfortable donating, the donor must trust that even if the total amount required for the project is not reached, their money will be put to good use.

- It is often, but not always, suited to development programs that offer workshops, training projects and education programs.

eg: Example: All-or-Nothing

Raising money to build a school classroom: You would need to raise the total amount required in order to finish the project. If the amount raised doesn't cover the total costs, then the project would collapse. There is no point having a classroom without a roof, and donors won't be happy to learn that their money went towards a half-finished building with no prospect of completion.

eg: Example: Flexible Funding

If you proposed a target of $1000 to help run a series of domestic violence prevention workshops but only raised $500, you might still be able to offer a meaningful project. Whilst you may only be able to reach half as many women, or visit half as many communities, the donors' money would have been used on a socially constructive project that directly reflected its original goal.

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So which fundraising model should you choose?

Whilst it is tempting to choose the 'flexible funding' method in order to secure funding, some projects may perform better under the 'all-or-nothing' model. Indeed, if you take the risk and choose all-or-nothing, your campaign will enjoy a distinct advantage – urgency!

Urgency, the need for immediate action, can benefit your crowdfunding campaign in two different ways:

Organisational Urgency

How it works:

Nonprofit fundraisers will push their crowdfunding campaign twice as hard if they know that they need to reach their target in order to receive funds. Fundraisers are more inclined to explore every possible avenue of support if they know that failure means that all of their hard work will go to waste.

It is important to consider however, that for organisational urgency to be effective, you must first have the resources and capacity to dedicate significant amounts of time and energy to your campaign.

Donor Urgency

How it works:

If you announce, with one week to go in your campaign, that you require $1000 more or you will lose everything, we guarantee that those who may not have already donated will more strongly consider doing so, and those who have already donated will start appealing to friends and family for the final funds. If your donors know that your project will collapse if you don't reach the necessary amount, they are far more likely to push your cause and help you reach your goal. They want to see your project succeed – that's why they donated in the first place. This process takes full advantage of 'Peer-to-Peer Fundraising', a powerful crowdfunding tool that we will explore later in **Module 9.**

Carefully considering whether your campaign is best suited to 'all-or-nothing' or 'flexible funding' models is of the upmost importance. Ask yourself and your team the following questions:

- When and how do we want to receive the funds?
- Is our priority to ensure that we receive at least some funding, or go for the big target but risk losing it all?
- Do we have the resources or capacity to take full advantage of organisational urgency?
- Do we have a group of core supporters who might be susceptible to 'donor urgency' strategies?

Whilst in most cases, a flexible fundraising option will work best for small nonprofits, the all-or-nothing approach has the capacity to raise far greater amounts of money and reach many more new donors if executed well. Whichever you choose, you will have to check whether the crowdfunding platforms you're considering supports it. Some offer both, whilst others specialise in one or the other.

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Does the platform allow incentives?

Some platforms require that you offer some type of incentive or reward to donors. You therefore need to consider: **Does the platform allow you to offer incentives, should you offer them, and if so, what kind?**

Whilst this may seem like a logical way to increase donor interest, Yale researchers George Newman and Jeremy Shen, found that rewarding donors supporting social causes actually cut donations in many contexts. They identified that donors who received a gift, felt selfish, which in turn reduced the motivation for giving. Indeed, if you are going to offer a gift in return for donation, Rob Wu, CEO of the crowdfunding platform CasueVox, says that nonprofits should focus upon impact-focused rewards.

Helpful Hint

An impact-driven fundraising gift is one that is directly relevant to the project that the donor is supporting. This might include offering a hand-made scarf from a family who started a local business as a result of your project, or a personal letter from a child that your nonprofit provided education to.

Considerations when deciding whether to use incentives

(✓) When compared to other types of incentives, impact-driven gifts are an all-round win-win because they match the donor's motivations to give with the tangible impact on the beneficiary.

(✗) At the same time, you must be careful about the goods you provide. In some ways, a gift produced by a child on a large scale could be misconstrued or misunderstood as a form of child-labour.

(✗) From a legal perspective, you also need to consider if your gift would be considered a 'product' for which the donation is considered a payment. If so, you could be eligible for taxation upon the donation as a payment for goods. The legality and ethics surrounding the gifting model can therefore be a little tricky and we recommend seeking advice from a local lawyer or accountant.

(✓) However, if you ensure that your gifts are heart-felt, genuinely relevant to your project and legal, this can be an effective way of engaging new donors.

Is the platform mobile friendly?

A 2016 study from the US identified that nearly 80% of social media activity takes place on mobile devices. This is important because in most cases, social media is where a majority of your campaign marketing will take place. As such, you need to consider: **Does the platform have an intuitive, mobile-friendly design?**

- If an interested donor is linked to an amazing, mobile-friendly crowdfunding homepage, they are far more likely to donate directly from their mobile device.
- If it has a poor mobile layout, or none what so ever, this decreases your chances of receiving a donation from these donors.

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Does the platform cater to your audience?

This is important because different crowdfunding Different crowdfunding platforms will help you target different audiences. You therefore need to consider: **What will your 'average donor' look like and where do they live?**

This is important because different crowdfunding websites are based in different countries, and these platforms will focus their marketing, financial accessibility and language preferences upon these specific geographical locations. For example, Ketto. org focuses upon India, whilst afrikstart.org is based in Africa. These platforms make it easier for people in these countries to donate, using local payment options like bank deposits and mobile transfers.

The crowdfunding platform itself is also more likely to be known and trusted by potential donors who live in the country it is based. By using platforms that your audience is familiar with, you increase the legitimacy of your campaign and the likelihood of receiving donations.

Understanding your target audience is essential to effective crowdfunding and will be explored in more detail in Module 4. For now, the most important factor to consider is what region most of your donors live in and whether your platform will help you engage them.

Do they offer Peer-to-Peer fundraising?

Later in this handbook, we are going to explore peer-to-peer fundraising (Module 8), a unique fundraising model where your organisation`s key supporters are able build their own fundraising pages to support your campaign. Not all crowdfunding platforms offer this feature, so it's important to consider whether you're likely to use it when choosing a platform.

You therefore need to consider: **Does the platform offer peer-to-peer options so that your supporters can build and promote their own fundraising pages in support of your mission?**

Whilst we consider peer-to-peer fundraising to be an important component of most successful crowdfunding campaigns, it is not always essential. If, due to one of the other factors identified here, you want to choose a crowdfunding platform that doesn't offer this feature, don't be too concerned - we will show you how to modify your peer-to-peer strategy to promote sharing rather than fundraising in Module 8. Nonetheless, if peer-to-peer campaigning is something you have your heart set on, this factor can be a deal-breaker for many platforms.

Helpful Hint

If you're not familiar with Peer-to-Peer fundraising, it's a good idea to take a quick look at Module 8 before deciding whether this feature will be important for your campaign.

How much does the platform charge?

One way or another, crowdfunding platforms will be making money out of your campaign. Some take a percentage of the funds you raise, whilst others charge subscriptions or flat fees. It is essential that you take a careful look at the terms and conditions before signing up to a crowdfunding platform. You need to have a clear understanding of how much money you will actually receive and how much they will take. Indeed, you have a responsibility to both donors and beneficiaries to maximise the amount of money that will go directly toward your project.

It is therefore essential to consider: **What percentage of the final amount raised will the crowdfunding platform take as commission?**

Whilst minimising the costs associated with your crowdfunding campaign is important, some social cause platforms are explicit in taking a larger fee from your campaign, justifying this by using the extra money they make to advertise and market your campaign. This means that, in the long run, your organisation may make more money, despite losing a larger percentage of your total funds.

It's therefore essential to think carefully about how much of your hard-earned funds you should invest in choosing a professional and supportive crowdfunding platform. For smaller campaigns, it may well be best to choose the cheapest option. However, for larger campaigns, investing in a crowdfunding platform with robust support, international legitimacy and a capacity to help market your campaign may well be worth the money.

> **Helpful Hint**
>
> Generally, crowdfunding platforms that are specifically targeted to social causes will charge a reduced amount as their way of supporting a good cause like yours.

What support does the platform offer?

This can be difficult to assess without some trial and error. Most platforms will have a 'how-to' guide to building a campaign, however, some will go a step further. **Does the platform offer in-depth training or one-on-one guidance to help you produce the best results possible?**

This criterion may be particularly important for local nonprofits who have limited experience creating online content. A little extra guidance can be a huge help in ensuring that your crowdfunding project succeeds.

- Remember that crowdfunding platforms have a vested interest in your success – they are making money from your campaign. Don't be afraid to take advantage of their service. Ask questions and send emails if you are not sure about anything.

- Make sure that, if online support is important to you, that the crowdfunding platform can offer this support in a language you understand. Remember that there are crowdfunding platforms out there that are based in many languages other than English.

Possible crowdfunding platforms for community nonprofits:

Now that we have explored 8 important criteria to consider when choosing a crowdfunding platform, we want to introduce 4 that we think work best for community nonprofits. The information here is accurate to the best of our knowledge in May 2018.

Chuffed.org	Chuffed was initially founded in Australia, however have now expanded to supporting projects in 22 countries throughout the pacific, Asia, Europe and North America.
	√ They charge a 0% commission fee – that means that you receive every cent that is donated. They do charge donors a transaction fee of around 1.3% (all platforms do), however raise their own funds from corporate sponsors, meaning they don't have to charge you.
	√ They have a strong focus upon social causes.
	√ Their campaign generation tool is easy to use and intuitive.
	x Unfortunately, they only offer tax exemption incentives to Australian donors and organisations.

Global Giving	Global Giving is a UK based crowdfunding platform. They are one of the best options for organisations based in remote parts of the world where finding a platform that will support financial transfers can be challenging. Indeed, Global Giving have supported community organisations in an incredible 170 countries.
	√ Global Giving is an incredibly professional and supportive platform. They support only legitimate nonprofits and take vetting incredibly seriously.
	√ They market projects hosted on their platforms to corporate partners, meaning that your organisation has the chance to secure funding from global brands like google, microsoft and trip-advisor
	x They retain a 5-12% fee on donations. They justify this huge fee by pointing to the advertising and personalised support they provide to help make your campaign a success.

Razoo.com	Razoo is a US based platform that has received over $500M USD since beginning in 2006 and offers a clean, slick design with an intuitive search function for donors.
	√ They are well set-up to share on all the different social media streams.
	√ They offer a great feature which allows you to build a profile for your nonprofit within their site which you can then run multiple campaigns from. This way, you can have separate campaigns running simultaneously for different activities you are running within the community.
	x The downside is that they take 4% commission for hosting your campaign (which is still a competitive rate amongst most crowdfunding platforms).
	x They also only allow organisations with a 501c3 registration in the US to host a non-profit profile. If you are not based in the US you can still raise funds through a personal profile, but these will have to be deposited through a partner organisation or individual with a bank account in the US.

Pozible.com	Pozible is another Australian based platform with a truly global outlook; they support crowdfunding in over 100 different countries. They are aimed at slightly larger community organisations with bigger targets and a more established online presence.
	√ They offer the ability for your campaign to be hosted on their page or embedded directly within your website. This is a great option for organisations that already have a website with high traffic or an existing, active social media campaign.
	√ They have excellent online support and a useful 'crowdfunding academy'.
	x They charge a commission fee of 5% for projects under $100,000AUD.
	x It is best suited to established nonprofits. It is not the choice for beginner crowdfunders.

It is important to note that the crowdfunding platforms we have listed here are all internationally based. Whilst these platforms have a track-record of success, there is a strong case to consider working with a local crowdfunding platform based in your region. These include Ketto.org in India, afrikstart.org in Africa or ideame.org in Latin America. Whilst local platforms might limit your access to international, English-speaking donors, they offer support in local languages and offer much easier local payment options for in-region donations.

Finishing up

The platforms we have listed above are only four of the hundreds of platforms out there. We suggest you do a little more research and find one that works best for you. Now that you know the questions you need to ask, you'll be in a much better position to choose the best platform for your specific needs. In the **next module**, we will profile your target audience and begin to identify the best strategies to engage them in your campaign.

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A 'TDP Legacy Fund' volunteer works in Torres del Paine, Chile.

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MODULE 3

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

Knowing your Audience

Crowdfunding doesn't work without a crowd. It is essential that you know who you will be reaching out to in order to raise funds. This module will explore how to use social media and web analytics to identify your current audience and target your campaign accordingly, as well as highlight easy ways to expand your network and campaign reach.

Download Resources

As you complete this module, refer to **'Resource 3 - Getting to know your audience questionnaire'** on p62. Use this resource as a guide when you are planning your own crowdfunding campaign.

Who is your audience?

Before you target your campaign, you have to know as much as you can about the people that you want to reach, your audience:

Your Broad Audience:

All the people who have the potential to hear the organisation's message.

Your Target Audience:

The segment of that wider audience that is more likely to be sympathetic to the organisation's cause.

Your Network:

The people who actually engage with an organisation, online and in-person.

When considering where to focus your efforts when running a crowdfunding campaign, it's important not to waste energy and resources. You need to optimise your resources to maximise your donations. For this reason, it is best to focus on the second audience sector we have identified above: your organisations 'target audience'. Those who make up your 'broader audience' will prove difficult to engage unless you invest a huge number of resources, whilst your organisations 'network' will likely already be committed to your organisation.

Identifying your target audience in three simple steps

It's important to approach the process of identifying your audience methodically, putting pre-conceptions aside. Whilst you may think you have a good idea of the people that make up your target audience, you might be surprised when you start looking at the data and talking to your supporters. Indeed, your audience often have a very different understanding of your organisation than you do.

Follow this simple three step process to ensure you undertake a thorough analysis when identifying your target audience. If done methodically, you'll likely discover new subsets of your audience that could become a valuable source of support for your crowdfunding campaign.

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Step 1 | Identify who you believe to be your organisation`s audience

The first step is to sit down as a team and brainstorm the type of people you believe your organisation appeals to. Your job is to try and profile the type of people who are currently engaging in your work, as well as those who would likely do so if they knew about it. Ask yourselves questions like:

- Do your supporters generally come from a specific geographic region?

- Is your audience concentrated in a particular age range or gender?

- Do you think your audience tends to identify a certain way politically?

- What connection do they have with your organisation or one of your projects?

- What aspects of your work do you think people find most appealing?

- What other interests do you think the people engaging with your organisation have?

While you want to avoid generalisations and stereotyping, having a rough idea of who your cause will appeal to can help you focus your energy in the right direction.

Step 2 | Check your analytic data

The next step is to check the basic profile your created in step 1 against raw analytic data. There are three key places you can find this data:

- The host site you use for your email subscription

- Your social media accounts

- Your website`s google analytics page

Through these analytic sources you can access a huge amount of information about the type of people who view, engage and interact with your organisation`s online content.

Helpful Hint

Your email subscriber list is one of the most important resources you have to understand and engage with your key supports. If you don't have an email list yet, this should be a priority– it will be essential to your campaign`s success.

- Put a sign-up button on your website and social media platforms.

- Make sure that your staff are collecting email addresses at events to turn offline-members of your network into online-members.

- Use an email management system like MailChimp or Constant Contact to collect demographic and engagement data, while simplifying the task of sending email updates to your network.

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Using these tools, you can identify:

- Age
- Gender
- Geographic location
- What language they speak
- Interests and beliefs
- What type of content they engage with

Use this information to refine the profile you are creating of your target audience. Hopefully, you will be starting to see a clearer picture of the type of people you can focus your crowdfunding campaign marketing upon

> **Helpful Hint**
>
> You may notice that there are certain people or characteristics who you thought your organisation would appeal to in step 1, but that actually aren't represented in your analytics. Here, you need to consider whether these people are an important part of your audience (e.g. possible donors), and if so, identify ways you can better engage them in your work.

Step 3   Ask your supporters

The final step you can take to refining your target audience profile is the most obvious: ask them. Create a quick and easy survey to send out to your existing email list. Make sure that you are transparent about your motives – everyone is suspicious these days about giving away private information. Outline in the email that you want to better understand who your supporters are and what motivates them to be involved with your mission. Those who have signed up to your email list are likely your most loyal followers, so there is a good chance they will respond. Ask questions like:

- What are your hobbies/ interests?
- What is your current educational and/or employment situation?
- What kind of organisations/ projects do you support? Are you interested in a specific topic e.g. education, human rights, access to water etc.
- Do you donate to any organisation regularly? What amount on average per year do you donate?
- What aspect/past project of our organisation interests you most?
- What do you hope to achieve by supporting our work?
- If you were to tell a friend about us, what three words would you use to describe our organisation?
- What is the best way to reach you? E-Mail, social media, radio, newspaper, television, flyer etc.

The aim of this process is to fill in any of the gaps you may have in the profile you have created so far for your target audience. Make sure you thank your supporters for their information and ensure that you keep it private and confidential.

> **Download Resource**
>
> You can find a template to help you create an email for your supporters in; **'Resource 3 - Questionnaire: Getting to know your audience'** on p62.

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Understanding how your audience engages with you online

Now that you have identified who your target audience is, it is important to understand how they engage with you online and identify ways to track this engagement. This is essential to successful crowdfunding, helping you to create marketing content that resonates with your target audience and allowing you to make real-time adjustments to maximise donations.

Emails and social media posts will likely be your most important marketing methods throughout your crowdfunding campaign. You can use the same analytic tools you used to identify your audience to help track their engagement with your campaign, gauging who is interacting with you content and how.

Places where you can track audience engagement	**Most email hosts and social media platforms provide demographic information about:** • Who has been reached by your posts and emails • Who has interacted with them • How frequently you are receiving these interactions.
	Social media management software, such as Hootsuite, can also help track audience behaviour and increase engagement. • Hootsuite allows you to monitor the accounts for multiple social media platforms in the same place. This allows you to look at how posts related to your crowdfunding campaign are being received as a whole.
	Most crowdfunding platforms will also collect analytics about who is engaging and donating to your cause. • You can use this data to assess conversions – how many people who interact with your social media posts are going on to donate. For example, if on a certain day you see a spike in donations, there is a good chance that the type of social media posts or emails you sent that day were particularly effective.

By comparing the analytics from your social media and email campaigns with the analytics on your crowdfunding platform, patterns should easily become visible. There is no one-size-fits-all method to engaging your audience. Indeed, it's often best to use trial and error in order to craft an outreach strategy based upon the methods of engagement that work best for your organisation.

Finishing up

You should now have a much clearer understanding of who your target audience is and how they will likely interact with your crowdfunding campaign. In the next module, we will explore how to set the right target for your crowdfunding campaign in order to maximise donations.

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A 'Mi Parque' beneficiary takes part in a community workshop in Chile.

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HANDBOOK 2

MODULE 4

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

How to set your Crowdfunding Goal

One of the biggest question on most people's minds when they launch a crowdfunding campaign is how much money they should ask for. Whilst setting a crowdfunding goal is no exact science, there are a few key factors that can help you determine a realistic and achievable goal. This module covers the different points to consider and gives you a framework from which to set your own goal.

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Setting the right goal

Setting a financial goal for your campaign is important. Unfortunately, it's not only about how much you think your project will cost. If you aim too low, you'll miss the opportunity to improve your project or, even worse, you might fail to complete it if something goes wrong. On the other hand, if you aim too high, you may spook donors who think your organisation can't handle such a large sum of money or that your motivations are suspicious.

There are therefore a huge number of factors to consider when choosing a goal for your crowdfunding campaign. We will explore six of the most important factors in detail below.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- your project's scope
- your team's capacity
- the project's cost
- donor capacity to give
- your contingency plan
- resources available for campaign promotion

Helpful Hint

Before setting your financial goal, make sure that you have clearly defined the project goal for which the funds from your crowdfunding campaign will be used. For crowdfunding, it is essential that your project be a single, specific, well-structured project that will realistically lead to tangible outputs. If you need help identifying a clear goal for your project, take a look at Module 3 of our Tools for Project Planning Handbook.

1. What is your project's scope?

The first factor that you must consider when determining your goal is what you are actually trying to accomplish. Remember, It is always easier to scale-up a project that is going really well, than having to scale down a project because you do not have the funding to pull it off.

- Be able to demonstrate that your project creates a meaningful and demonstrable impact for your cause. When you are asking other people to fund your work, the burden of proof is on you.

- Make sure the project has the right size: it must be large enough to require the funding of a crowd and small enough that it can be accomplished by combining the team and resources that you have available with those you will acquire if you reach your goal.

- Be prepared to answer questions about why your nonprofit is the best fit for the job.

- Only ask for as much money as you are reasonably able to justify someone paying a team with your level of skill to complete.

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2. What is your organisations capacity?

The best way to figure out what the scope of the project is that you ask funding for is by looking at your organisation`s or your team`s capacity.

- Ask yourself the following questions to get an idea:
  - How many people do you have on your team?
  - What are their skills?
  - What equipment and facilities does your nonprofit possess?
- Be realistic about your skill set and abilities. You need to be absolutely sure that you will be able to complete your project with the combination of your existing resources and those that you will procure after you meet your crowdfunding goal.
- The key here is researching and planning as much of the project as you can beforehand so that you know what to expect and don't get in over your head.

Scaling up a job that you are already excelling at in a small operation is exciting. Taking on massive projects in a sector where you have never performed before is terrifying. Find the balance between dreaming big and being realistic.

3. How many donors can you reach and what can they give?

While the intention of a good crowdfunding campaign is to grow your audience (see Module 3 and Module 8 for information about defining and growing your audience), you also have to be realistic about what you can expect to get out of your existing audience.

- Be realistic, if your organisation only has 2,000 followers on social media, don't set million-dollar goals. Assume that at least half of the people in your audience will not donate and the majority of those that do, will donate between five and twenty dollars.
- People like to be a part of a successful campaign and are more likely to give money to a project that looks like it will be 100% funded. If you set your goal too high, you may scare off potential donors.
- If you can modulate your project and break different components up into different campaigns with smaller goals, this can be a really great way to gauge the size of donations you can expect and revise your goals from there.

Whilst we certainly don't want to scare you off aiming high, and definitely want you to consider the other factors we explore in this module, it's generally best to set a goal slightly below what you expect your donors can give in order to reach and exceed this goal. This helps to guarantee your campaigns success and builds momentum for future campaigns.

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4. What does it actually cost to run your project?

It is vital that you accurately determine what it is going to cost to run your project before you make 'the ask' for your crowdfunding campaign. For this, you need to create a budget!

- Always assume the worst when figuring out your budget: Plan for delays in shipping, plan for volunteers not showing up, plan for spillage, breakage, and any other thing that could go wrong and end up costing more.

- Leave breathing room in the budget to make sure that you will have enough to deliver on what you are promising to both your donors and your beneficiaries.

Scaling up a job that you are already excelling at in a small operation is exciting. Taking on massive projects in a sector where you have never performed before is terrifying. Find the balance between dreaming big and being realistic.

5. What are your contingency plans if something goes wrong?

The only certainty in nonprofit work is that nothing goes according to plan. The aforementioned delays and hidden costs will invariably occur during your project.

- You need to have a plan for what you will do if you do not meet your fundraising goal or something else goes wrong. Spend some time working on a Plan B or alternative options.

- Be prepared to explain these plans, changes in plans and the decisions you make to your donors. The second you have to answer a question with "I'm not sure", you have lost a donor.

6. How much time are you going to dedicate to crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding is a full-time job. You are going to get out of crowdfunding what you put into it.

- Be realistic about the amount of time and the personnel that you have available to spend building and promoting your crowdfunding campaign and scale your ask accordingly.

- Simply setting up a page on a crowdfunding platform and sharing it on Facebook will not be enough to help you reach your goal.

- You need to devote time to developing and executing a comprehensive outreach strategy that combines social media, email marketing, and other forms of outreach such as hybrid campaigning with live events.

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Finishing up

There is no way to know exactly how much your audience is willing to give but by doing some thoughtful and strategic research, you can gain insight into the capability of your team, the financial position of your audience, and the real monetary needs of your project. Once you have educated yourself as much as realistically possible, make the leap and set your goal. There is always an element of faith involved in crowdfunding. Assume you can do it and go for it.

In the next module, we will be exploring the final step of campaign planning before launching your page, creating a communication strategy.

Helpful Hint

This is also a good time to think about how long your campaign should last for. Just because a campaign is longer, doesn't necessarily mean that it will raise more money. Think about the resources you have to dedicate to your campaign and how long you can keep that up. Generally, the most successful campaigns last 30-40 days.

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MODULE 5

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

Building a communication strategy

Essential to the success of your campaign is ensuring that your planning process, crowdfunding page design and all of your marketing material is based upon a coordinated communication strategy. Even from this early stage of your planning and design process, it is essential that you are thinking about the communication strategy that will underpin the way you communicate with donors and supporters throughout your campaign. In this module, we will use a five-step framework to create a communication strategy that will help guide your crowdfunding campaign.

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What are Strategic Communications?

A series of focused and planned messages, crafted with specific goals or intentions that relate to a central strategy

In the following modules, you will be creating a crowdfunding home page (**Module 6**), as well as launching, promoting and closing your campaign (**Module 7, 8, 9 and 10**). Throughout all of these activities, you will be communicating your message directly to potential donors. You will describe your background and the work that you do. You will use images and video to bring your project to life. You will introduce the project that you are proposing, explain why your initiative is necessary, and what resources you need in order to do it. Every element of your promotion must be built from a central message that ties your marketing content together, creating a single, unifying voice that clearly articulates how important your work is. To get your message to donors you will need to use strategic communications.

Creating your communication strategy involves five key steps:

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5
Identify your goals	Consider your audience	Refine your message	Think about content	Create your calendar

---

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5

Identify your organisation`s communication goals

The first step to creating a communication strategy for your crowdfunding campaign is to sit down as a team and carefully consider exactly what you are trying to say. Whilst your organisation's broader communication strategy might be all encompassing, based upon a complex idea like relieving local poverty or helping educate local children, for crowdfunding, it is best to focus upon a clear and specific goal. Because crowdfunding focusses upon raising money for one specific project, your communication strategy should have a specific focus as well.

A. Look at the project you are trying to fund and try to find the simplest, easiest way to describe exactly what it is you are trying to achieve. This will be your objective. You should have a good idea about what this objective might be from the **Module 4**, setting realistic goals.

Example of a clear objective: We want to raise $20,000 to provide 20 bee-hives and bee-keeper training to vulnerable families in rural Ecuador to help them achieve a sustainable form of income.

B. Next, you need to turn the clear objective of your project into a 'communication objective'. Look at your objective through a communication lens and consider, 'What do we need to communicate in order to achieve this objective'. Because crowdfunding is specifically a fundraising exercise, one aspect of this objective should involve raising money.

> **Example of a clear communication objective: We want to create awareness about the importance of supporting vulnerable regions of Ecuador, educating our audience why using bee-hives is a sustainable and efficient solution and inspiring them to make a donation.**

C. Finally, it's time to identify a series of clear and actionable goals for each and every piece of marketing you will publish throughout your campaign. To create goals, you need to break your objective down into the key steps that will help achieve it.

> **Example of a clear communication goals:**
>
> ● **We want to use positive and uplifting stories from our beneficiaries to create awareness about how they currently overcome poverty in their community.**
>
> ● **We want to use infographics, statistics and evidence from our previous bee-hive projects to help educate our audience about why bee-hives is a sustainable and efficient solution to economic vulnerability in the community.**
>
> ● **We want to use colourful and engaging photos and videos hosted on social media to inspire potential donors and convert them into donors.**

The first step to creating a communication strategy for your crowdfunding campaign is to sit down as a team and carefully consider exactly what you are trying to say. Whilst your organisation's broader communication strategy might be all encompassing, based upon a complex idea like relieving local poverty or helping educate local children, for crowdfunding, it is best to focus upon a clear and specific goal. Because crowdfunding focusses upon raising money for one specific project, your communication strategy should have a specific focus as well.

STEP 1 **STEP 2** **STEP 3** **STEP 4** **STEP 5**

Consider your audience

In Module 3, you explored and profiled your target audience in detail. You also identified the ways that your target audience interacts and engages with your organisation. Now it's time to transform that knowledge into a series of basic strategies that will help you engage with your target audience. Some important things to consider:

• the type of media they use and trust, be that social media or mainstream media

• the type of information they may want before they donate, with consideration for their attitudes and beliefs

• the types of content that might resonate with them most, considering the type of media they consume and the ease by which they expect to receive information

• the types of storytelling they are most likely to relate to and engage with, considering whether they want simple and human narratives or cold hard facts in order to donate

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> ### eg: Example: Considering Your Audience
>
> A crowdfunding campaign for our Ecuadorian Beehive nonprofit decides to focus upon donors living in the wealthy capital city of Quito. They know, from their audience profile, that their target audience living in this region has a wide range of ages.
>
> - To target their older target audience, they decide to have an interview featured in the local Quito newspaper to create awareness about the project. In this interview, they consistently refer to statistics and data to outline why their project is important. They do this because they know that their older audience generally donate based upon quantitative evidence of efficacy and consume (and trust) traditional media sources.
>
> - To target their younger audience, they post an inspiring and engaging video on Facebook that explores how the project is supporting a local beneficiary. They know that their younger audience donate based upon emotive narratives and engage heavily in social media.
>
> In this way, the Beehive nonprofit has identified ways that they can phrase their communication goals that they identified in step one for their specific audience. They've also identified different mediums they can use to communicate these messages, specific to their target audience.

For now, it's only necessary to have a general idea of the types of marketing and messaging that is most appropriate for your audience by answering generalised questions like the ones above. We will explore this further in **Module 7**.

STEP 1 **STEP 2** **STEP 3** **STEP 4** **STEP 5**

Refine your key messages

Once you have identified your communication goals and thought about ways you can phrase these to meet the expectations of your specific audiences, it is essential to look at how you present the information. Here, the aim is to create templates of the key messages you will use throughout all your communications. These will form the basis of your crowdfunding home page text, social media posts and interviews with newspapers. Try not to get too specific with crafting posts – you need to create posts dynamically throughout the campaign. We will explore this further in **Module 8**. Instead, your job here is to create a 'bank' of brief messages that you can drop in to your communications when your start promoting it. Make sure that all these messages are grounded in your goals that we identified in step 1.

There are three key messages that you should be focussing on for any crowdfunding campaign:

Needs statement	Program Strategy	Call to Action
What need is your NGO, program, or project addressing? Why is this important?	How is your NGO, program, or project filling that need? What is the program?	What do you want your audience to do? Donate, share, like, attend event?

eg: Example: Beehive project in Ecuador

Needs Statement: Our NGO is helping to provide sustainable forms of economic relief for vulnerable communities in rural Ecuador.

Program Strategy: We use the production of honey to help local community members access a new and environmentally friendly source of income. We provide the infrastructure, training and business know-how to help local community members become financially self-sufficient.

Call to Action: We want our audience to donate to our crowdfunding campaign directly. If they are unable to do so, we want them to share our marketing material on their social media accounts to help promote our cause through peer-to-peer marketing.

Some important things to consider when creating messages are:

- The information you present must be clear and **easy to understand**. If people do not understand your organisation or project, they will not support it.

- Whatever you say, you need to **say it concisely**. Attention spans are short these days and brevity is appreciated. Try to identify the quickest and clearest way to get your message across using the fewest words possible. Consider substituting words for photos or videos wherever appropriate.

- Use **appropriate language**. Successful crowdfunding campaigns tell stories that feel personal. They use language that is motivational and accessible to donors. To get ideas about terminology that works well, browse the campaigns on Classy or Crowdrise.

- Ensure **political correctness**. You must think about any potential ways that a statement, photo, video, etc. could be misunderstood or misconstrued by your audience. When in doubt, always err on the side of caution. Failure to do so could jeopardise your relationship with donors, partners, and beneficiary communities.

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STEP 1 › STEP 2 › STEP 3 › **STEP 4** › STEP 5

Exploring the type of content you will produce and where you will distribute it

It is important that you have a rough understanding of the types of content that your organisation is capable of producing and the methods of distribution that you have at your disposal.

Types of content you should consider:

Photos – Every social media post, blog or news article should include a photo. Dependent upon the capacity of your organisation, these might be carefully edited hi-res images or personable, behind-the-scenes images captured on a mobile phone. You do NOT have to have an expensive camera or be an experienced photographer to take photos that can connect with donors.

Text – Brief written stories are great ways to help donors empathise with and understand your work. The length and detail will depend upon where the text is located, but it is important to have an idea of the stories and key statistics you will use to educate your audience and inspire donations.

Video – This is a valuable part of any crowdfunding campaign, however, if you don't have the tools or experience, creating a video can be an extremely time-consuming and frustrating endeavour. Think about ways you might involve friends or local businesses who could donate their time and skills to helping create a short video about your amazing project.

At this stage, you don't need to have a bank of photos, text and videos ready to go, but you should have an idea of what you can reasonably produce and the types of messages they will communicate.

You also need to consider where you are going to distribute this content. It's great to use both online and off-line forms of distribution, combining mainstream and social media forms. We will explore ways to promote your campaign in detail in **Module 7**. For now, it is best to simply have an idea of the different forms of distribution you have in order to create your communication calendar in the next step.

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STEP 1 ❯ STEP 2 ❯ STEP 3 ❯ STEP 4 ❯ **STEP 5**

Create your Communication Calendar

Now that you have a thorough understanding of your goals, audience, key messages and types of content you can use, it is time to turn that strategy into an organised and actionable plan. Whilst driving a communication strategy is a day-to-day activity that often needs to be handled in real-time, it is essential that you have a rough plan or guide that will help focus your work, build momentum and keep you on track. This is why it's important to create a communication calendar.

A communication calendar is a day-by-day timeline of all the communication activities you will undertake throughout the campaign. It doesn't have to have specific photos, text or videos included yet, but it should have a detailed explanation of the type of communication you will use each day. If there are gaps in your calendar or you don't know the specific media sources you might approach, that's ok. We will cover promoting your campaign in more detail in **Module 7.**

What is a Communication Calendar?

This is a living document that helps you plan the content which your organisation will post on your crowdfunding platform, social media and through mainstream media.

You can make an editorial calendar using an actual calendar, an excel spreadsheet, or any number of apps.

For each day, the calendar should include information about:

- The goal of each communication

- The audience it is targeted at

- The key message it is promoting

- The type of content (photo, video, text, blog) and the location that it will be posted or distributed to

- Who in your team is responsible for organising this communication

Helpful Hint

Hootsuite can be a great place to build your communication calendar. This online app allows you to schedule various posts across social media platforms and help you collaborate with team members remotely. You will still need to have a hardcopy or excel version of your communication calendar though to coordinate off-line marketing.

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Finishing up

By following the above guide to strategic communications (and with some practice), you will be able to deliver a strong and consistent message which will attract more funding and support for your crowdfunding campaign. Now that we have completed the campaign planning phase, we will start putting these plans into action, beginning by creating your campaigns crowdfunding home page in the next module.

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A 'Mi Parque' team-member works in their office in Santiago, Chile.

HANDBOOK 2

MODULE 6

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

Creating the perfect crowdfunding page

Now that you have chosen a crowdfunding platform, defined your target audience, set a realistic goal and crafted your communication strategy, it's finally time to create your crowdfunding page. This will be the heart of your crowdfunding campaign. All roads in your marketing campaign will lead here. It is where interested audience members will be converted into active donors, punching in their credit card details to support your mission. It is therefore essential that this page is perfect! It has to be professional, yet creative; inspiring, yet grounded in realism and specifics. In this module, we will take you through the process of building your campaign page.

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Creating your crowdfunding page in 4 steps

Whilst every crowdfunding platform is slightly different, these rules will be generally applicable to all non-profit crowdfunding pages. Follow these steps sequentially to ensure that your page is inspiring, engaging and integrated into your broader marketing strategy.

Step 1
Create a killer tagline

Step 2
Write captivating stories

Step 3
Add fun and inspiring photos

Step 4
Include a video

Helpful Hint

Consult your marketing goals and messages that you crafted in the previous module when creating your crowdfunding page. Use this information to help guide what you write here, ensuring that everything on your crowdfunding page is directly related to your communication strategy.

#1 Creating a Killer Tagline

Having a concise, descriptive and inspiring title for your crowdfunding campaign is essential. This will appear on EVERY link you advertise through social media and will dictate whether people click and learn more about your amazing idea or continue on with their busy day.

- Crafting an amazing title takes time. Don't try to rush it.

- Crowdfunding sites generally also allow you to place a roughly 100-character tag-line or 'pitch' under your title. Here you can offer a little more information about the project. Make sure you describe the benefits of the work, rather than the features or details of it.

- The whole point of a title is to get people interested enough that they click onto your campaign, don't try and over complicate it.

Helpful Hint

Unless you are a world-renowned charity with global credibility, don't waste valuable characters in your title and tagline on your organisation`s name. At this stage, nobody cares. What they want to know is how you are making a difference and why they should support your work.

Writing great Taglines

The Do's

- Keep your title simple and try to foster curiosity

- Use keywords relevant to your project in the tagline to help people search for your campaign

- Be clear about what you are doing

eg: Good Examples:

1 in 10 people lack access to clean water. We're on a mission to change that. Here's how!

Who Doesn't Love Cheese? We help people like Jorge from Peru make it, sell it and send his kids to school!

The Dont's

- Repeat the campaign title in the tagline

- Use complicated or technical terms

- Make a ridiculously long title

eg: Bad Examples:

We are a registered charity and our mission is to help vulnerable communities in east Africa access safe drinking water.

We are raising funds to support vulnerable dairy farmers in the rural community of Andagua in Peru.

#2 Write a captivating story

The body text of your campaign is where potential donors will learn to love and trust your organisation.

- Clearly and quickly outline the problem in your community, demonstrate that you have a clear plan to fix it and inspire them to support your work.

- Use the messages you created in the previous module to help write your story, specifically drawing upon the Needs Statement, Program Strategy and Call to action.

Helpful Hint

Your story needs to be readable. On average, Razoo.com say that people spend 58seconds on a crowdfunding page before deciding to donate or close the window. This is not a lot of time to capture a donor`s attention. Ensuring that your story is easy to read and understand is essential. And please, triple check grammar and spelling – there is no quicker way to break the attention of a reader.

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The best Crowdfunding Pages have only 4 paragraphs

Begin with Background Info	This is where you introduce your story. • Tell potential donors about the problem you are trying to fix using narratives rather than numbers. • Try telling the reader the story of a local beneficiary, describing the story of how the problem impacts upon their life.
Outline what you are doing	This is where you need to inspire the reader with your incredible solution. • Describe your project in practical detail. Make sure that you specify who you will help, where you will operate, when you will undertake the project, what you will offer and, most importantly, why you are doing it.
Clearly highlight what you will do with donations	This is where you need to provide the most detail about how you will use the funding specifically. • This is the paragraph where you have to convince the reader that you are trustworthy about the way you will handle their money. You have to earn legitimacy. • Consider putting key information in bold.
Give some information about who you are	This is where you give readers a little more information about you to confirm their newfound trust in your work. • Remember that people want to give to people so make it personal. Introduce your team and briefly highlight why they are passionate about the project. • You can also give details about how you have used funding previously on similar projects so that the reader trusts that you can do it again. • Consider using quotes from beneficiaries or previous donors about how amazing your organisation is.

#3 Add fun and inspiring images

For non-profit crowdfunding, having the right images can have a huge impact upon your success. As we highlighted earlier, people want to support people – you need to give your project a face, and a happy smiling one is best! Please don't fall into the trap of thinking that shocking negative imagery is best at motivating donations. Potential donors are far more motivated to give by inspiring photos of locals overcoming challenges than shots of poverty that only inspire guilt. They didn't come to your crowdfunding page to feel sad, they came to be inspired by your amazing solution.

• Make sure that you have photos saved in the correct formats and sizes and try to ensure that the file sizes are not too large or it will slow down the loading time of your page.

• Most crowdfunding platforms will allow you to upload a 'banner image'. This will be the image that appears whenever your crowdfunding link is shared and will become the face of your campaign. It is your most important photo so make sure it is your best shot.

• Generally, using close up photos of people or places, as well as lots of colour works best.

• If you don't have a fancy dslr camera, don't worry. You can still use your phone to take photos for your campaign. If you are worried about the quality of your images, focus upon the stories they tell. Capture authentic local stories to inspire your donors.

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#4

Include a video

The best crowdfunding campaigns usually include a 2-3minute video about the project. Videos can be difficult and time consuming to produce, however they are well worth the effort if you have access to the basic skills and tools you need. They don't need to be expensive or have a high production value – they simply need to transport the viewer to your community through honest and raw story telling.

- **People love seeing faces.** Make sure you include as many people from the local community as possible in the video. It's also worth having the narrator talk directly at the camera at some point to give your organisation a face.

- **Keep it short.** People get bored easily, so unless you've got an incredible storyline, don't have a video longer than 3 minutes.

- **Be crazy enthusiastic.** Not only do viewers feed off your enthusiasm, video has a weird way of taking normal speech and making it look like you're bored. You might feel embarrassed or stupid but trust us, if you are crazily enthusiastic, it looks completely normal on video.

- **Use narratives over facts**. People share stories, not facts. An easy way of doing this is to follow one person's story. This can be the story of your organisation or the story of a specific beneficiary.

- **Modern phone cameras take excellent quality videos.** If you can pair that with a free editing software like iMovie on Mac or Movie Maker on Windows, you can create fairly professional looking video for free. Some newer apps will even let you edit your video entirely on your phone.

Finishing up

Now that you have crafted the perfect homepage, it's time to click launch and strap in for the campaign phase. In the next module, we will create a strategic marketing plan to help you drive your campaign and maximise donations.

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'BECA' beneficiaries campaign in Asunción, Paraguay.

HANDBOOK 2

MODULE 7

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

Promoting your campaign

Once you have created a crowdfunding campaign, you need to promote it. Whilst promoting your campaign online might seem like the most obvious place to begin, there are a wide range of other news sources you can use to boost your campaign`s promotion. In this module, we will begin with the fundamental aspects of campaign promotion and then explore how you can use both social and mainstream media to drive donations. By promoting your campaign both online and through traditional TV, newspaper and radio sources, you can help increase engagement, target a broader audience and foster legitimacy around your work.

Principles of campaign promotion

Foster legitimacy

By now you know that legitimacy is a pivotal factor when trying to encourage donations to your crowdfunding campaign. Potential donors want to see evidence that your organisation is serious about your work and capable of delivering meaningful support before they will consider funding you. It is essential to highlight in as much detail as possible what exactly they will be supporting – what the problem is, how you formulated your project idea, how you are going to implement it and who is going to benefit from it. The best way to foster legitimacy is to tell the stories of the beneficiaries you support. Use honest narratives, accompanied by photos or videos that tell the story of beneficiaries who endorse your initiative. If a potential donor sees evidence that the local people you support believe in your work, they will be far more likely to believe in your mission and donate to your cause.

Inform and entertain

The truth is, you know what you want from your audience: their money. You want their money in order to use it to make the world a better place and you have a plan about how you are going to make that happen. If you are asking your audience to give you their hard-earned money, based on an instantaneous decision from seeing a social media post or news article, you need to be giving them something in return and that exchange should begin immediately. Your posts, interviews and blogs should educate them, visually stimulate them, make them feel like they are a part of something greater than themselves, or all of the above. Use a mixture of quantitative facts and qualitative personal stories to show the big picture of the need for your work and the impact that you are having.
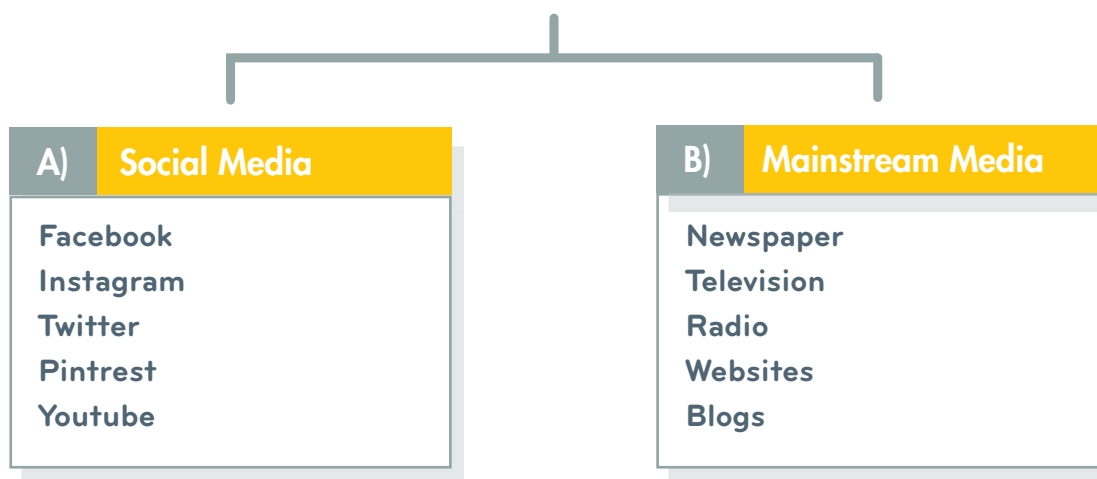
Whilst everyone has heard stories of those random crowdfunding campaigns that go viral and raise thousands of dollars overnight, unfortunately, those campaigns are not the norm. As a general rule, you can expect to get as much out of your crowdfunding campaign as you put into promoting it. However, whilst hard work is inevitable, there are some basic principles you can use to help guide your promotion across all media formats, making your efforts more efficient and effective.

Helpful Hint

Throughout this module, it will be helpful to refer to the communication strategy you created in **Module 5**. Use this to craft specific posts and refine your communication calendar.

You can promote you campaign through two distinct communication channels

A) Social Media

Facebook
Instagram
Twitter
Pintrest
Youtube

B) Mainstream Media

Newspaper
Television
Radio
Websites
Blogs

A) Social Media

Crowdfunding and social media have a symbiotic relationship. Organisations can use social media to drive their audience to a crowdfunding platform where they will hopefully make a donation or become a peer-to-peer fundraiser (more in **Module 8**). A crowdfunding campaign can also be a good way to bring new life into your social media presence and get existing followers active. By using fun and engaging content, you can make your Facebook, Instagram or twitter feeds a place where people come to be entertained and inspired.

Creating engaging content

The first, and most important aspect to social media marketing is creating engaging content. The modern mantra of 'Content is King' is certainly true. Try to use a variety of different types of content (photos, video, text) and take the time to make sure that every post is directly relevant to your Communication goals and messages identified in **Module 5**. Make sure that you celebrate, thank and directly link any news articles or blogs about your cause that are hosted off social media – this will demonstrate to potential donors that there is interest in your work and will help foster legitimacy about your work.

Some ideas to help create great engaging content:

- Let those who benefit from your organisation's work tell the story of how it is impacting their life. Use videos or quotes from locals who will benefit from the project or have benefitted from your work in the past.

- Use bright, colourful infographics to hit heavy with numbers that show the effectiveness of your work. It's important to quantify the impact a donor's money will have. Free online infographic tools like canva.com or piktochart.com are great places to check out.

- Focus on the amount of difference that can be made with a certain donation. For example, a campaign to fund a local sewing training program might advertise that a $50 donation will cover the costs of training for one woman for a week.

Putting the 'social' back in social media

The key to effectively using social media to promote a crowdfunding campaign is to ensure that your communication is a two-way street. Ask you followers questions and ALWAYS respond to any query quickly and honestly. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that your social media feed is a megaphone where you simply tell your followers how awesome you are and ask them for money. There is no easier way to alienate an engaged audience. Try to use interesting content that isn't directly related to your campaign, but still promotes your work and makes people want to support it. Of course, you occasionally should make a direct ask for money (no more than once or twice a week), but your main focus should be upon creating exchange with your audience. Resist the urge to make your crowdfunding promotion all about your work and instead try to foster conversation about the issues that you and your followers care about.

Engaging with relevant social media influencers

A great way to increase your reach is to piggyback onto the audiences of online 'influencers'. Influencers are individuals or groups that have large followings on social media. The idea is that you can approach them, by email or in person, and ask them to help promote your campaign to their audience. When choosing an influencer to partner with, it is important to ensure that both the individual and their audience believe in your work. This way, you will maximise the chance of donations, by having the online influencer appeal on your behalf to potential donors who fit your target audience profile.

A great place to start looking for influencers is locally – it's unlikely that David Beckham is going to support your school football program unless there is a significant amount of interest in your work locally. Reach out to local athletes, artists or musicians. Slowly work your way up the social media 'food-chain', targeting influencers that will likely have a direct interest in your work.

Recognising your follower's efforts

A great way to directly promote your campaign without making it all about you is to recognise the contribution your followers make. You need to make your organisation`s social media heroes feel special, recognising their engagement and dedication to promoting your cause. If someone shares your post, be sure to like their post and comment a "thanks for your support" type sentiment. If somebody asks a question, pays you a compliment, or leaves negative feedback, make sure you respond as soon as possible. Importantly, if you receive a big donation from a group of followers or another organisation make a post saying thank you for their support. This gives you the opportunity to promote your campaign directly whilst making the subject matter of the post about others. Recognise what your followers are doing to help your cause, be generous with feedback and "thank you`s".

> **Helpful Hint**
>
> Make sure you use a broad variety of online content to promote your campaign. Keep things interesting by switching between mediums, such as photos, videos, written stories and infographics. Also, try to host some of your marketing on other platforms and then link between them. Long-form blog posts, podcasts and news articles can help lend legitimacy to your campaign but shouldn't be 'hosted' on your social media stream, but instead should be linked to.

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B) Mainstream Media

Newspapers, television, radio shows, websites, and blogs can all be great sources of promotion for your crowdfunding campaign. These outlets will generally have much larger audiences than your organisation and, if they are a trusted news source, can provide an extra level of legitimacy to your campaign simply by featuring it.

Local newspapers and radio stations in your region are a great place to begin promoting your campaign. Local sources tend to favour locally relevant stories so there is a good chance they will help promote a local organisation`s work. Once you've spread the word amongst local news sources, you can start approaching larger media sources or online publishers to help reach a bigger audience. When pursuing these larger media sources, make sure you are strategic about choosing the right ones. Take the time to identify the types of audiences each newspaper, online blog or tv station has and choose the ones that have the audience most similar to your target audience - don't waste time pursuing irrelevant audiences that are unlikely to translate into donors.

Identifying and connecting with the right mainstream media sources

A great way to find (online) media outlets that might help promote your campaign is to use Reverse Google Image Search. You can use this unique search system to identify news sources that have previously promoted campaigns or nonprofits similar to yours. Begin by finding a news article that promotes a non-profit or crowdfunding campaign similar to yours. Download the photo attached to that article and save it on your computer. Then, re-upload this image to Googles 'Reverse Image Search'. This will find all of the websites, blogs, newspapers and other media sources that have used this image in an article or blog. You can then target these media outlets when trying to promote your campaign. Because they have promoted similar campaigns previously, there is a good chance they will support yours. This is a much easier and more efficient way to find media outlets that will support your work than using the usual word-based google search.

Once you have identified the media sources that will likely find your organisation's cause newsworthy, reach out to them with a pre-packaged media kit that explains your story. This should be filled with colourful photos and videos about your work. Remember, the more attractive you make your story, the more likely it is to get published. You need to make the journalists job as easy as possible. When presenting your crowdfunding campaign to news outlets, it is important to focus on stories of individuals participating in or benefiting from your work. This human element is what readers and viewers will connect with and will help make it much easier for the journalist to craft a meaningful article.

Another way to get news outlets to take interest in your work is by writing a press release. Press releases are communications which organisations can use to announce something that is ostensibly newsworthy to the media. A press release contains the who, what, when, where, and why of your crowdfunding campaign, as well as boilerplate information about your organisation. Press releases are generally distributed by a newswire to a targeted list of media outlets and publications based on your preferences, though they can be sent out individually as well. Press releases often cost money to distribute and will only be effective in promoting your campaign if the media outlets they are sent to pick them up. Smaller NGOs will want to consider cost-effectiveness of this strategy.

Helpful Hint

Remember, developing relationships with writers, editors, and other media professionals is an important part of this strategy. Be polite, courteous, and flexible when reaching out. Invite reporters to come visit your project or offer them ready-made content. Making their job easier will make them keener to cover your story.

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Finishing up

By putting some care and effort into promoting your crowdfunding campaign through both mainstream and social media, you can maximise your organisation's ability to raise funds for your cause. The above techniques offer a good starting point to promote your crowdfunding campaign, but you might think of other ways. Get creative and think of new ways to reach your unique audience.

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'TDP Legacy Fund' volunteers work in Torres del Paine, Chile.

HANDBOOK 2

MODULE 8

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

Peer-to-Peer fundraising for community nonprofits

Why should I use crowdfunding when I already have a website that accepts donations? One of the distinct advantages of crowdfunding is peer-to-peer fundraising. Peer-to-peer fundraising allows nonprofits to minimise their output on fundraising while capitalising on the donating power of their extended networks. When implemented correctly, peer-to-peer fundraising allows organisations to expand the size of their audience exponentially. This module provides an in-depth look at how peer-to-peer fundraising works and how you can use it to support your campaign.

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The Holy Grail of Fundraising

Peer-to-peer fundraising works in a similar fashion to a for-profit pyramid scheme, except in this case all of the money goes to a good cause.

Your Organisation

- Creates the campaign
- Provides the content
- Will receive the funds from the campaign for your project

People Close to Your Organisation

- employees, long-time volunteers, and regular donors
- will create their own personalised fundraising pages which connect back to the organisation's initial page
- share their personalised fundraising page on their social media profiles
- encourage the people in their network to participate by donating and creating their own page

Your Supporter's Network

The more people that participate and the more layers are added to the pyramid, the more money the organisation raises with their crowdfunding campaign.

Peer-to-peer is considered one of the most effective tools for crowdfunding because:

1. It conserves valuable organisational time and resources by putting the ability to fundraise directly into the hands of your supporters.

2. It allows your organisation to monetise the viral ability of social media.

3. It incentivises your audience to donate by taking advantage of social pressure and legitimising your organisation through word-of-mouth.

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Harnessing the power of your network's network

The key to understanding the power of peer-to-peer fundraising is recognising that people are more likely to support their friend's campaign than that of a stranger or an NGO that they have never heard of. Indeed, you could invest $1000's of dollars into creating the most professional marketing campaign in the world, but nothing will compare to the power of a friend telling another friend that they think your organisation is doing a great job and they want to actively support it. If someone builds their own peer-to-peer campaign page to support your cause, then to their social network, your campaign is now their campaign. Their friends and family will now be supporting the individual, not your organisation. Whilst it might seem counter-intuitive, making the individual the centre of their campaign rather than your organisation is a far more efficient way to translate passive interest into a steady stream of donations. The ultimate aim of Peer-to-Peer fundraising is to have your organisation represented by an ambassador who, as they raise funds on your behalf, will reach out to their own social network with a unique form of legitimacy that you would never be able to achieve alone.

> ### ⊙ Helpful Hint
>
> Whilst most international crowdfunding platforms will allow you to use peer-to-peer fundraising, some might not. Make sure the platform you've chosen supports this feature before you get too involved in planning your peer-to-peer strategy. However, even if your platform doesn't support this kind of fundraising, the principles in this module can still be applied when asking your hero's and influencers to share and promote your campaign and marketing content with their networks rather than building their own Peer-to-Peer fundraising page.

Encouraging engagement in two simple steps

In order to fully take advantage of peer-to-peer fundraising, you need to encourage people to engage with your campaign. This process has two distinct steps to getting your organisation's supporters involved and making sure they take full advantage of their networks to promote your campaign.

Step 1: Activate your heroes!

This step involves reaching out to your key supporters and encouraging them to build their own peer-to-peer campaign pages. When approaching potential heroes, try to make the process of getting involved in your campaign as easy as possible and always make sure that your language is upbeat and enthusiastic. You want to inspire these heroes that your cause is a worthwhile one and that you will give them all the support they need.

Where to find your Heroes

Again, the best place to start here is your email list. Send out a newsletter alerting your most loyal supporters that you are soon to begin a crowdfunding campaign and you need their help. Create a clear and succinct step-by-step 'How-to' guide to help them set up their own peer-to-peer page. You should be able to find instructions to help you do this on your crowdfunding platform's 'FAQ' page. Make sure you include the link to your crowdfunding page in the email so that your heroes can get started straight away.

Another great place to look for key supporters is on social media. If you've noticed that there are individuals who regularly engage with your content or posts, send them a message with the same details that were in your email. The key is identifying the people who already think your work is awesome and turning them into ambassadors for your cause.

A final important source of support for crowdfunding is influencers. We discussed influencers in detail in the previous module, but peer-to-peer fundraising is a great way to involve them in a more structured way. By building their own campaign page for your Crowdfunder, they can appeal to their own following easily and transparently. It also offers an opportunity for a little bit of 'reverse marketing', where you can advertise the fact that a specific influencer is advertising you. This will not only help promote your campaign, but will also let other people see that important, influential people believe in your work enough to partner with you.

> ### Helpful Hint
>
> As always, when working with influencers and key supporters, make sure you thank them publicly and regularly. They are doing you a huge favour by promoting your cause and are more likely to continue doing so if they feel valued and appreciated.

Step 2: Give them amazing content

Now that you have captured the interest of your hero's and helped them build their own Peer-to-Peer crowdfunding page, you need to support them in their mission to be part of your campaign. Everyone wants to support a great cause, but not everybody has the time or energy to devote to creating and driving a crowdfunding campaign. To make their job easier, you need to identify some clever ways to engage their networks, providing your heroes with content and fundraising ideas that they can share with the click of a button.

You should already have strategic written content on your organisation's fundraising page, clearly and concisely outlining who you are, what you are trying to do, how you will do it, how much money you need to do it, and why you are the best people for the job.

Now translate this information into a series of simple, one or two sentence social media posts that you can publish over the first week of your campaign.

It's also essential that you are:

- Adding beautiful and meaningful images and videos to this text, capturing the attention of your audience. Make sure that you never post text alone. Always accompany social media text with a visual.

- Updating both your social media and your organisation's crowdfunding page regularly with project updates and ways that people can get involved.

- Encouraging your supporters to share your content on their social media pages.

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Consider using an activity

Another great method for engaging your audience is coming up with an activity that supporters can film themselves doing and post on social media. Keeping things personal really makes a difference here because people are much more likely to engage in content that features a person they know.

eg: Example: ALS Ice Bucket Challenge

The ALS Ice Bucket challenge is a great example of a viral peer-to-peer campaign which was focused around an activity. The ALS Association raised over $100 million to fight Lou Gehrig's disease by encouraging people to post videos of themselves dumping a bucket of ice water over their head or donate to the organisation if they refused to do so within 24 hours. Participants nominated other people in their network to do the same and the result was a hugely effective viral campaign.

Managing your network of active heroes

Now that you have activated your heroes and given them the best content you can produce, it's time to consider how to ensure that this support continues long into the future. It is vital to remember that the people your organisation comes in contact with during peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns have the potential to be the future stewards of your organisation if they are treated right.

- Make sure before you end your campaign to get the email addresses of every person who contributed to or fundraised for your organisation and add them to your mailing list.

- Encourage people to follow your organisation on social media. Provide regular updates to your supporters through both channels.

- If a particular influencer made a great effort to promote your cause, make sure that you give them credit publicly and reciprocate if you are asked to do the same for them.

- Provide all donors with access to information about financial transparency so that they can see how you spent their money. If any issues arise with your project, communicate them with honesty to your donors and fundraisers.

- Send out testimonials from those who benefitted from your work to build legitimacy and show that you delivered on your promises.

Finishing up

Peer-to-peer fundraising is one of the most compelling aspects of crowdfunding because it maximizes reach while minimizing effort. Strong peer-to-peer campaigns utilize skills and tools from a variety of different areas to build momentum and drive donations from a far broader network of potential donors than you had ever imagined. In our next module, we will explore ways to incorporate other fundraising mechanisms like galas, fun-runs and film festivals to help promote your crowdfunding campaign.

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A 'Life and Hope Association' beneficiary rides to school in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

HANDBOOK 2

MODULE 9

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

Hybrid fundraising for community nonprofits

One of the most effective ways for local nonprofits to ensure fundraising success is by utilising several different fundraising strategies simultaneously. Diversifying your fundraising strategy will greatly increase the effectiveness in reaching your organisation's funding goal. In this module, we will explore how crowdfunding can work symbiotically with other fundraising methods to drive campaign growth.

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What is a Hybrid Campaign?

A fundraising campaign which incorporates multiple different strategies simultaneously in order to optimise results

Different strategies for hybrid campaigns include: crowdfunding, events, partnerships, and high donor and venture capitalist solicitation.

By approaching fundraising from many different angles, you can tailor your organisation's approach to meet the needs of specific segments of your audience.

Using events to bring your crowdfunding to life

Whilst there are many different types of fundraising you can use to compliment your crowdfunding efforts, few are as powerful as the synergistic effect of using live events in conjunction with your campaign.

- Live events are extremely effective when executed properly for a number of reasons:
  - ⊕ The donor sees an immediate return on their donation in the form of a good time, which they are having by attending the event.
  - ⊕ Peer pressure can be an influential tool in increasing donations as people are more likely to give, and give larger amounts, when they feel that others are watching.
  - ⊕ Attaching the organisation to real-life people breeds credibility and legitimacy with donors.

- Live Fundraising events can include anything from concerts to triathlons, pancake breakfasts or costume galas. Get creative and keep your audience in mind. Try to identify types of events that compliment your mission or allow you to show off your work.

- Utilise the crowdfunding platform and your social media presence to increase the hype surrounding a live fundraising event.

- Partner with local businesses to help minimise the costs of the event and involve the local community.

- Make sure to clearly define in advance how the organisation will get the funds from the event when it is over.

- In the digital age we live in, these "live events" need not exclusively be things that people attend in-person. Have your supporters make appeals for your organisation on "Facebook live" or ask them to get their CrossFit gym to participate in a session to raise funds. Whatever your crowd is into, there is a way to turn it in to a fundraising opportunity.

What you need to know about hybrid campaigning

Keep it Organised	+	Follow it Up
Hybrid Campaigning will increase the amount of work involved with running the campaign. **So:** • Go back to the comprehensive strategic communications plan that you made for your campaign and prepare yourself by anticipating questions that may arise about your organisation or cause. • Have all the information about your organisation and the project you are raising money for ready to go in advance. • Ask people to volunteer to help your organisation run an event or even taking over the entire responsibility of hosting an event to benefit your organisation.		**Communication with donors and supporters is important at all stages of your campaign, but especially during a hybrid campaign.** **So:** • Make sure that you communicate regularly with peer-to-peer funders. • Thank every person individually who donates to yours or a funder's campaign. • Recognise and thank people that help you out with hybrid campaigning. • If a person offers to host a live event, do whatever you can to make sure that your organisation has at least one representative in attendance. • Provide guidance throughout the process. • Make sure to provide written materials, photos, and videos to the person organising the event. • Don't forget to provide email sign-up sheets to add every person who attends a live event to your organisation's network.

Finishing up

Hybrid campaigning involves a lot of moving parts, all of which need to be carefully planned and executed, but there is no denying that it is a great way to maximise the potential of your crowdfunding campaign. Now that we have explored the ins-and-outs of campaign promotion, peer-to-peer fundraising and hybrid campaigning, it's time to learn how to close your campaign with a bang and help solidify your organisation's support for the long term in our final module.

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'The Beehive' kindergarten students on their way to school in Sucre, Bolivia.

HANDBOOK 2

MODULE 10

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

Finish Strong: Closing Your Crowdfunding Campaign

Good crowdfunding campaigns are short-termed and focused. They are used by non-profits to achieve distinct and measurable goals and ended or expanded once those goals are reached. While maintaining and promoting a crowdfunding campaign is a lot of work, you mustn't just let it peter out. It is essential to finish strong! The network of people touched by your crowdfunding campaign can play an important role in the outcome of future campaigns, as well as the growth of your organisation. This module explores forward-thinking strategies for tying-up the loose-ends of your campaign, converting campaign supporters into ongoing donors, and presenting your campaign as a success story on your nonprofit's website.

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Four critical steps to closing your campaign

Once you reach your goal, the adrenaline will be running high and you may feel the urge to get started on the project that you worked so hard to fund. Resist this urge. Instead, follow our tips to close your successful crowdfunding campaign. By giving just a little extra burst of effort at the end of your campaign, you can make a big impact towards the overall sustainability of your organisation.

stay in touch

be accountable

CLOSING YOUR CAMPAIGN

say 'thank you'

present your success

1. Be accountable

A golden rule in both crowdfunding and life is "don't mess around with people's money". If donors are gracious enough to support your cause, you have an obligation to let them know how you've spent their money.

- Financial transparency is an essential part of building credibility as a nonprofit.

- If your organisation has been around for a year or longer, we recommend making relevant tax documents public on your website.

- If you cannot or prefer not to make a financial audit public, get creative with ways to show your donors that their money is going where you said it would.

eg: Example: Accountability

- **Infographics which show how your organisation is spending money**

- **Cell phone photos of receipts from the purchases made with donor money posted on Facebook**

2. Present your success

People supported your campaign because they wanted to see it succeed so it is essential that you give them the satisfaction of seeing what that looks like.

- Use emails, direct-mail, main-stream media and social media to demonstrate your progress.

- Include photos and video testimonials from beneficiaries or team members on the ground to illustrate your work.

Showing donors what you have done with their money is essential to maintaining their support into the future, promoting a trusting and mutually respectful relationship.

3. Say 'Thank You'

Donating to charity is supposed to be an altruistic act where people give with no expectation of getting anything in return. But, let's be honest, it is nice to be appreciated when you do something kind for others. Your donors are real people with feelings, not nameless, faceless sources of revenue.

Show them that you care by sending a **personalised "Thank you"-email** or making a quick post on social media. It won't cost more than a minute or two of time from someone in your organisation and it will go a really long way in terms of showing your donors that they are appreciated.

If a particular peer-to-peer hero or influencer has made an amazing effort, **share their story in your newsletter** or create a social media post about their work. This is not only an extra special way to thank a key supporter, but also helps promote your legitimacy by demonstrating the lengths someone will go to in supporting your work.

With the proper relationship management, supporters from your crowdfunding campaign have the potential to become **long-term stewards of your organisation**. Take the time to nurture these relationships.

4. Stay in touch

Your donors are the lifeblood of your organisation. In order to keep your relationship with your donors healthy, you need to know what is going on with them and they need to know what is going on with you.

- Keep track of your donors' emails and correspond regularly with a comprehensive email marketing campaign.

- Send your donors updates of important project milestones. Make sure to include photos and use subject lines which will grab your donors' attention. There are a variety of free or low-cost programs, like **MailChimp** and **Constant Contact**, which make email marketing easy.

- Remember that you are trying to build relationships here. While an outright request for donations is considered acceptable on occasion, don't include an ask in every email!

Crowdfunding campaigns can seem like short-term solutions designed to provide cash infusions to organisations strapped for project funding. However, crowdfunding can be a vital component in a non-profit's long-term fundraising strategy.

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Finishing up

Now that you have completed this handbook, you should have a clear and thorough understanding of how to create, manage and promote a crowdfunding campaign for your community non-profit. To learn how you can turn your crowdfunding efforts into a long-term strategy to engage your audience and donors, take a look at our '**Marketing for Nonprofits**' course that can be found on our website.

If you have any questions about crowdfunding or want to learn more about how we at Grassroots Collective can support your mission, please leave a comment on the Grassroots Hub home page on our website, or email us directly.

This handbook was produced by Grassroots Collective.

Find more useful resources for community development organisations at: www.thegrassrootscollective.org/grassroots-hub

Have a question about crowdfunding for social causes or want to learn about how we can support your organisation on its mission?

Contact us at: info@thegrassrootscollective.org

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Resource 1   Checklist: Are you ready for crowdfunding?

This checklist will help you assess if your organisation has all the prerequisites necessary to start a successful crowdfunding campaign.

	What do you need?	Why?	Tick it off ☑	Notes
Do you have a website or social media presence?	• A website • Social media accounts, such as facebook, Instagram, twitter	• To introduce yourself • To prove your legitimacy • To showcase your past successes		
Can you receive funds?	• A bank account in your organisation's name • Alternative: an intermediary to receive and transfer funds	• To have a methodical, transparent and legal mechanism to receive funds		
Can you market your campaign?	• An active social media presence • Contacts to news outlets, influencers and other NGOs • A long list of newsletter subscribers • The ability to hold live events • A motivated and committed team	• To be tell as many people as possible about your campaign • Show how everyone can support your mission		

Resource 2   Choosing a Crowdfunding Platform

The following framework will help you evaluate different crowdfunding platforms and choose the right one for your project according to our 8 simple criteria. Make sure you know how important every criterion is to your project before you start.

Criterion: Crowdfunding platforms:	What crowdfunding model do they offer? All-or-nothing or flexible or both?	Do they allow you to offer incentives? What kind?	Do they specialise in social causes?	Where are they based in relation to your audience? (financial accessibility? language?)	Do they have a mobile-friendly design?	Do they offer peer-to-peer fundraising pages?	Do they provide training, guidance, on-going support?	What fee do they ask or what percentage of the amount raised do they take?

Resource 3   Getting to know your audience: Questionnaire

Use the following questions to design your own questionnaire to learn more about your target audience. You may want to add or leave out questions according to the needs of your organisation or project.

Below the questionnaire we have included a sample email asking your newsletter subscribers to complete the survey.

1. What are your hobbies/interests?

2. What is your highest level of education? What did you study? Are you currently studying?

3. What kind of organisations/projects do you support? Are you interested in a specific topic e.g. education, human rights, access to water etc.

4. Do you donate to any organisation regularly? What amount on average per year do you donate?

5. What aspect/past project of our organisation interests you most?

Resource 3   Getting to know your audience: Questionaire

6. What do you hope to achieve by supporting our work?

7. If you were to tell a friend about us, what three words would you use to describe our organisation?

8. What is the best way to reach you? E-Mail, social media, radio, newspaper, television, flyer etc.

The questions above could be incorporated in a web-survey, sent off in an email or whatever communication you think is best.

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Resource 3   Getting to know your audience: Questionaire

The following email could be a way for you to reach out to your newsletter subscribers to learn more about them. This draft email is meant only as a guide. It is essential that you customise it to your needs.

Dear (name),

We want to take a moment to say thank you for your incredible support. Thanks to you, we are continuing to grow our programs in …(location)… **, caring for** …(your beneficiaries)… **and building stronger …**(Your mission eg. Communities, farms, livelihoods etc.).

Here at …(your organisation)… **we seek to create a community of supporters where everyone has a voice in creating a better future for** …(your beneficiaries). **That means getting to know you better.**

We want to learn how we can best serve your needs as a supporter so that we can continue to serve the local community in …(location).

We have created a quick survey to help us better understand our supporters and why our work is important to you. All of this information will be used solely by our team, to help us improve our local programs. Your information will be kept 100% private and confidential.

Insert your survey, or link to survey, here. (if link, include sentence telling the user to follow the link)

Thank you for taking the time to complete our short survey. We are incredibly thankful to have your support as we continue to …(your mission)… **in** …(location).

Kind regards,

The …(your organisation)…**team**