PROJECT TRAVEL
from here to there

Guide to Online Fundraising

2014

Introduction

Our story begins with travel.

Jennifer couldn't afford to study abroad, so she went to Portugal for a few days instead. Several years later, she exited a career in finance to help others have an international experience. Samantha traveled the world, worked in international education, and landed on Jen's doorstep in Chicago (via a website introduction) while on a cross-country road trip.

Together, we decided to help put more people on a plane (okay...or a bus!).

In 2013, Project Travel launched a public fundraising site for educational travel. In 2014, we are building a talented and well-traveled team of international educators, tech geeks, and entrepreneurs to expand our fundraising tool and technology platform

We aren't doing this alone! We are working with respected youth travel organizations to support them in sending more world citizens on educational travel programs. Will you join us?

Warm Regards,

Jen & Sam

Founders, Project Travel
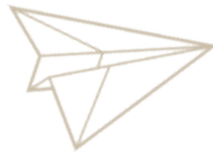
Getting Started

from
here

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there

Before we get started, let's quick check-in! If this is how you feel...

- ‣ I'm nervous! I've never raised money before.
- ‣ Will this work?
- ‣ How do I do it?

...you are totally normal! Remember the following:

- ‣ We are often nervous when we don't know what to expect. You are not alone!
  Your community cares about you and you have help every step of the way.
- ‣ What you put into fundraising, you will get out of it. It works if *you* work.
- ‣ Follow the steps in this guide, talk to your Project Advisor, and get started!

5 Steps to Online Fundraising

Start your funding Project online.
Visit projecttravel.com/go/whittier. You'll know what to do!

Complete your Project profile.
Add photos, tell your story, setup WePay & request to open your Project.

Launch your Project & receive support!
Start small with close friends & family, then go out to your wider community!

Engage your community.
Send updates, reminders, & interesting content to your community.

Say thanks.
Your community helped you travel. Show them your gratitude!

Plan & Launch!

Launching your Project means more than posting a status on Facebook or sending an email out to your family. Kick off your Project with a splash but remember-- what you do after the launch is what gets you to 100% !

1

Plan how you will reach out to your community (see tips on next page!).

- ▸ Do you have a birthday coming up? A gift-giving holiday? Perfect!
- ▸ Research blog.projecttravel.com for ideas! Plan out what you will do.
- ▸ Set your Project length. Our recommendation: 45 days! (120 is the limit)

2

Soft Launch your Project with close family & friends. Ask for three things:

- ▸ Feedback on your Project (your story, spelling, grammar, quality of photos)
- ▸ Advice on how to reach out to your community.
- ▸ Initial support & commitment to share your Project on public launch day!

3

Launch your Project public!

- ▸ Your community is supporting you, not strangers. It's up to you to tell them your story!
- ▸ Stay active for your entire Project. Do something every day.
- ▸ Use *you*r unique voice, talents, & skills!

Getting to 100%

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Create a CLEAR CALL TO ACTION!

A call to action in your peer-funding Project is a way to tell people exactly what steps they can take to support you. A call to action can be made via email, social media, or in person. Example: Wo-hoo! My Project's big debut is today! Find out about one of the most exciting decisions I've ever made in my life at [your Project link]. If you want, you can support me with a gift, feedback, and/or sharing it with a friend. Can't wait to hear from you!

Use Social Media (but not *just* social media!).

People want and need to know what you are up to and what is new, but avoid multiple posts per day or the same post over and over again. What gets your attention on social media? Imitate what others are already doing successfully! BONUS: Thank supporters on social media and tag them! It's a win for them & your Project.

Craft personal emails to individuals and groups.

Email works best for more personal messages to closer contacts as well as individual follow-up. If you are sending to a large group of people, put YOUR email in the 'To' line and everyone else's in the 'BCC' line.

Include Photos & Video in your Project.

Projects with photos and video are more likely to be successful. Our brains actually respond differently to photos & video than to plain text. Share photos & video links in emails, social media, & your Project updates.

Talk to people... in person!

Online fundraising doesn't replace personal interactions. Host an event and share your Project link in the invitation with a suggested donation. Give a presentation on your host country. Speak to local businesses & personal contacts in person!

Life is busy. Send reminders!

Nobody wants to be a pest...but successful Project Starters will tell you that reminders are key to reaching 100% of your goal! Think about it, everyone is busy and maybe when your friend, uncle, or boss first saw your Project link, s/he was busy and thought, "Cool! I'm in the middle of something but I'll come back and give later." People want to give to your Project but they may need a reminder or two. A good rule of thumb is general outreach + 1-2 personal reminders.

Group Funding

Fund for a common goal with your classmates, teachers & pals.
Group Fundraising Mantra: Equal participation for equal benefit!

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Establish the reason for your goal and how the funds will be applied.

Will reaching your goal bring down the overall cost of a program? Require fewer participants on a program for the program to run? It is often helpful to tell program participants what their involvement in the funding Project means for the entire group so that they can feel excited and motivated to reap the benefits.

Link the group funding goal to a specific portion of the program.

This approach gives supporters something concrete to support rather than a general (and more difficult to understand) goal. E.g. excursions tied to an academic course, service-learning, or work observation.

Assign roles for the duration of the Project.

The teacher or administrator may or may not play a central role, although their participation is recommended. Who will set up the Project account? Who will organize communication between the group? Will the group come up with an outreach strategy and execution plan together?

Have a strategy and remain active for the duration of the Project.

Supporters feel inspired when it is obvious people are coming together around a common goal. Active engagement with the community in person, email, and social media is key to success.

Leverage the special talents and purpose of the group.

Is this a theater program going to London? History group going to Morocco? Spanish language students going to Santiago? How can the faculty and students offer something valuable, inspiring, meaningful, or humorous to the community and ask for support?

Make it fun.

Add some game elements to the Project by adding 'Best of' categories and at the end of the Project, recognize those who brought in the Most Supporters, Most Creative Outreach, Social Media Maven, etc.

Keep supporters informed.

Update the Project regularly (in the updates tab!) and share photos, video, and stories throughout the Project in person, in the Project updates tab, and/or online channels.

Say Thanks. Often.

Write 'Thank you' with supporters names on a poster and take photos of them or film a short video with all participants saying thank you on site. Whatever the method, have fun with it and view it as an opportunity to truly highlight the support of the community.

FAQ'S

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Who can start a funding Project with Project Travel?

Anyone raising money and support for a domestic or international educational travel experience through a school or organization can be a Project Starter. Educational travel includes study abroad, volunteer, intern, teach, service-learning, language and cultural exchanges, missions, au pair, WOOFing, and many more. Our focus is students, but Project Travel is appropriate for program participants of all ages.

Why do I need to submit a program application before my Project is open for funding?

Vacation is great but Project Travel the youth travel organizations we work with are committed to sending more people on educational travel programs. Submitting a program application shows your supporters you are serious about your educational travel experience.

Do I need to be accepted to my program before my Project is open to funding?

Nope! As long as we can verify that you have submitted a program application, your Project page will open for funding.

I've never raise money before. How do I do it?

Start a Project and complete your profile and account information. Setup your WePay account. Get creative on how to engage your community! Your Project Advisor, this guide, and free resources in your Project and our blog will help you.

What happens if I don't reach my goal?

When you reach 15% of your Project goal, you get to keep whatever money you raise and apply it towards your program related expenses. If you do not reach the 15% 'tipping point', your supporter's credit cards will not be charged.

Does it cost anything?

It is free to start a Project. Project Travel takes a 5.5% fee on every donation made and WePay charges a 2.9% fee + $0.30 per transaction. For example, on a $100 donation, WePay retains $3.20 and Project Travel retains $5.50.

Who should I tell about my Project?

Your community! Everyone defines their community differently but it may include friends, family, co-workers, peers, networks and associations, student clubs and organizations, local businesses, and many others!

The Chatter

Check out what youth travel organizations and program participants are saying!

Lee Frankel, President of Academic Studies Abroad

"Project Travel is a great way for our students to raise money for their once-in-a-lifetime experience studying abroad."

Emily Bratton, Int'l Studies Coordinator, Kansas City Art Institute

"Project Travel is leaps and bounds above other crowdfunding platforms."

Dennis Evashenk, Depaul University, Chicago to Mexico City

"Project Travel has helped me afford my study abroad program in Mexico!"

Kelli Koehler, Sacred Heart University , Connecticut to Guatemala

"It's great that I raised as much as I did but the biggest thing for me was realizing how much love and support I have in my life."

Contact

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Social

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Pinterest: /projecttravel

About the Project Travel Team

The founding & advising team at Project Travel has 21 years of combined experience in international and higher education. Samantha began her career in international education in 2006 advising on education abroad and scholarships. Her experiences as a Gilman Scholar (Cyprus), Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar (Northern Ireland), language study in Colombia, and other travels inspire her to increase access to international opportunities. Jennifer Thomas came up with the idea for an online fundraising site for educational travel out of her own struggle to afford a study abroad program. She exited a career in finance with a passion to solve the problems preventing young people from traveling.

Our Beliefs & Values

Travel is an education.

Technology can enhance human interaction.

Care about your impact.

Learning is a lifestyle.

Celebrate together.