

GYC Fundraising Guide

Greetings from Global Youth Connect!

Gandhi, a very wise man and one of my own personal heroes once said: *“If the cause is right, the means will come.”*

While I wholeheartedly agree with Gandhi, I know it can often feel overwhelming to find all the resources we need to realize our goals. But without the financial support of others, very little social justice work would never get done. At GYC, we know that without your contributions, we wouldn't be able to do the work we do. This is one of the reasons that we ask participants to help contribute financially to our programs. One day in the future we hope we won't need to do so.

There is no question that this financial contribution is probably a stretch on your budget. That's why we encourage all of our participants to ask for assistance from others to help make their participation possible. I hope that the ideas and inspirations shared in this fundraising guide will help you attract the financial means and resources necessary. More importantly, I hope that the journey of fundraising will help you to raise awareness among others as to what they can do to help promote human rights and support youth around the world.

I am personally committed to assisting you in your fundraising efforts and am available to work with you to develop a successful fundraising plan. It is my hope that financial obstacles will not prevent you or anyone else from being able to take part in our work.

Please do not hesitate to ask me for advice. I'm here to help you achieve your fundraising goals. In fact, I look forward to work with you to help make your participation in the program possible. Good luck!

Best wishes,



Jesse Hawkes
Interim Executive Director



First Steps

No matter your personal or family's financial background or what kind of community you come from, many resources already exist to help you raise the money you need. For example, there are many people in your life – family, friends, mentors, colleagues, professors – who want to see you achieve your goals and who would welcome the opportunity to help you in any way that they can. In fact, you may be surprised at how many people are willing to help you. But, to receive their help, you have to be willing to do the work necessary and overcome any fears or discomfort you have about asking people for money. Your cause is important and worthwhile, but if you don't do the tough work of asking, you won't be able to raise the money you need.

As you begin your fundraising, here are some important things to keep in mind:

- ✓ **Get started early.** If you need to raise money to support your participation in the program, there is no time to lose. Please don't wait until the last minute. The sooner you start, the more likely you will meet your fundraising goal.
- ✓ **Reach out to those who know you best first.** You are most likely to gain support from the people who know you personally and from those organizations and groups of which you are a member. You may also decide you want to reach out to people and groups who don't know you, but make sure you do this while you are also talking to the people who know you best.

- ✓ **Anyone can be a successful fundraiser.** Even if you have never raised money for anything before, you can do it! Be confident and believe in what you are doing. A positive attitude and confidence will make all the difference in the world in your fundraising efforts.
- ✓ **Don't be afraid to ask because someone might say no.** Instead, learn how to take a "no" gracefully without letting it stop you from achieving your goals. If you don't ask, you'll never know whether someone is willing to support you. Let them decide for themselves whether they want to help you.
- ✓ **Overcome any personal fears about asking other people for money.** Fear about asking for money is a big challenge for any potential fundraiser. Such fears can lead us to unintentionally self-sabotage our fundraising efforts before they've even started. Instead of giving into these fears, try to understand why you feel that way and think about strategies for overcoming it. If you are really nervous, start by asking people who you know will be responsive to you and slowly move outside of your comfort zone.
- ✓ **Make sure to ask for a donation.** Don't just tell people what you are doing. Make sure they know that you need their financial support and then ask them for their help.

"Money is a difficult subject, apparently. On the one hand, we hear people say that 'Money makes the world go round!' or 'Money is power!' On the other hand, we hear that 'Money is the root of all evil' or 'Money cannot buy happiness.'

Perhaps all of these thoughts are true, in some sense. But our conflicting views about money may hold us back from going out and getting it in order to implement the programs we think are important, as we try to improve the situation of our societies.

We must empower ourselves to gain access to those resources for our noble causes."

**--Advice from the Global Fund for Women
(www.globalfundforwomen.org)**

- ✓ **Remember that, at the end of the day, it is about a cause you believe in, not just about the money.** Money is a means to achieving goals and to achieving social change. Focus on the goals and potential outcomes first and then talk about how people can invest in you, GYC's work and in human rights to help realize those goals.
- ✓ **Use positive and inspirational language that will encourage people to help.** Make sure to tell people how their donation will make a difference, not only to you but to the people you will be working with during the program and to those you hope to work with in the future.
- ✓ **Diversify, diversify, diversify!** Make sure that you are using several different fundraising strategies to achieve your goals. Don't rely on only one source of funding to meet your needs.
- ✓ **Be creative...but use your time well.**

How Do I Get Started?

Clarify Your Goals and Motivations

As you begin to fundraise, people will ask you why participating in this trip is so important to you and how your involvement will make a difference in both your life and the lives of others. They'll probably want to know more about the issues and the goals of the GYC program. Before you even ask people for any donations, take time to think about and reflect on your goals and motivations. Draw inspiration from the answers to the questions we asked you on your application form. Use some of this language when you are talking to people or writing your fundraising letters.

Here are some questions that you should consider before you start fundraising:

- What do you hope to gain from this experience?
- How will participating in this program make a difference to you in achieving your academic and/or career goals?
- What do you hope to contribute to those you meet while participating in this program?
- How will you share what you learned with others when you return home?

- What is the mission of GYC? Why is the work of GYC important?
- What are the goals of the program?
- How does the program contribute to the promotion of human rights?
- Who else will benefit from this program besides you? In what ways?

Figure Out How Much You Can Personally Contribute

Take some time to think about how much you are realistically able to contribute towards the program and travel costs. When you reach out to other people you should tell people that you are financing as much of the trip yourself as you can, but that you need their help to make up the difference. People are more likely to support something that you are willing to contribute to yourself as well.

Here are some possible sources to consider:

- **Savings**
- **Income from Part- or Full-time Job:** If you are already working, you may want to start setting aside a certain amount of each paycheck. If you are not working and have extra time on your hands, you may want to consider taking on a part-time job or short-term, temporary work to help offset some of the costs of participating.
- **Decrease Your Daily Personal Expenses:** As part of your plan, make a commitment to eliminate one unnecessary expense per week and put the money you saved into a savings account to help pay for your participation in the program.
- **Sell Your Used and Unused Items:** You may have old books, clothes or other items laying around that you are not using. Now is a great time to sell them and use the money you make towards your participation. EBay, Craigslist, Half.com and school notice boards are all great ways to advertise the stuff you want to sell.
- **Loan from Family or Friend:** You may be able to take out a low- or zero-interest loan from a family member or a good friend which will allow you to pay for your expenses over a longer period of time.

- **Credit Cards:** GYC will accept payment of the program tuition by credit card. This option may provide you some flexibility to meet the tuition payment deadlines set out by GYC. However, we don't advocate putting yourself into serious debt in order to participate in the program.
- **Save Money on Taxes:** Part of your program tuition and other expenses may be considered tax-deductible by the IRS. The IRS has provisions to allow you to take deductions for direct expenses related to volunteer activities (but not for your time). If you itemize your taxes, the true cost of participating in the program may be lower than you think. If you have any questions about what is and is not deductible, please contact the IRS directly. For more information: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p526.pdf>
- **Frequent Flyer Miles:** If you have frequent flyer miles, use them! If you don't have any, consider asking others to donate their unused miles to you. However, they will need to donate enough miles to cover a full ticket. Different airlines have different regulations regarding transferring miles so make sure to double-check.

Assess the Total Costs of the Program

Now that you have a good idea of how much money you will be able to personally contribute, it's time to develop a strategy to raise the rest. Make sure that you have realistically evaluated the total cost of the program. Depending on what program you are participating in, you will most likely need money for more than the program tuition (see estimated costs in the program materials). We encourage you to do your own research to confirm the approximate cost of airfare and other travel-related expenses to help you in outlining an accurate budget. Remember to allow yourself some spending and emergency money, and to take into consideration whether you will be traveling before or after the program.

Develop a Fundraising Plan

One key element of successful fundraising is being organized. Set clear fundraising goals for yourself. Consider potential fundraising strategies to reach your goals, such as the ones provided in this packet, as well as any of your own ideas. It may be helpful to develop a detailed plan, including a variety of tactics and a timeline for implementing your ideas. Remember to start early!



Techniques for Fundraising

There are many different approaches to and techniques for raising money but some techniques may work better for different people. It is important to know yourself, be creative, and use your special skills and talents to develop your own strategies. At the same time, there are some fundraising techniques which are generally more effective than others. The following list includes some basic suggestions and potential resources for beginning your fundraising.

Fundraising Letters

Did you know that more than 76% of all funds raised for charitable causes in the United States come from individuals? Therefore, it makes a lot of sense to spend significant time raising money from individuals who might be interested in supporting you.

The most important thing to do is start with people that you know. Make a list of at least 100 people who you think might be interested to know what you are doing and in supporting you. Include your

family members, friends, professors, mentors, teachers, colleagues, neighbors, community members, etc. We know it sounds like a lot of people, but give it a try and see how many you come up with!

Once you've created a list of people you would like to send your letter to, the next step is drafting a fundraising letter. For some examples and inspiration, see sample fundraising letters written by previous participants in GYC programs at the end of this fundraising packet.

As you draft the letter, here are some important points to keep in mind:

- ✓ **Make sure to tell your story!** People will want to hear why participating in this program is so important to you, what benefits you hope to gain, and also what you hope to give in exchange for the experience.
- ✓ **Talk about the goals of the program.** Be sure to include a description of the program. It may also be helpful to give a brief description of GYC as an organization, as well as the relevant history of the country to which you will be traveling. You could also include a relevant article to further back up what you are saying. At the same time, make sure not to overwhelm the reader with a ton of details and statistics.
- ✓ **Personalize your letter.** Instead of writing "Dear Friend", use people's first names. Another way to personalize a letter is to write a handwritten note saying something like: "I hope you will consider helping out!" or "I hope you are doing well!" In some instances, you may want to take out or add in certain information depending on how much person knows about you.
- ✓ **Keep it short and simple.** Stick to the main points and write concisely. One page is best but try not to write for more than two pages. People will pay the most attention to the beginning and end of your letter, so make those sections the strongest parts of your letter!
- ✓ **Use inspiring and positive language.** A successful fundraising letter conveys a story; it shows passion and commitment for something that others should care about. A fundraising

letter is not a place to talk about your financial problems, be negative or to sound desperate. Focus on the positive and inspire others to get involved.

- ✓ **Ask for a specific amount of money.** This is always helpful to give people a guideline of what amount would be most helpful to you. Consider using the amounts on the attached donation form as a guide.
- ✓ **Make sure to tell people how they can contribute and set a deadline for them to respond.** Include information on how people can make a contribution, where they should send the check and let them know that you need a response by a specific date.
- ✓ **Send a thank you note to those who do contribute and write an update during and after the program.**
- ✓ **You can send the letter by regular mail or by e-mail; both strategies are effective.** In some cases you may want to send a letter first and then follow-up with an e-mail reminder closer to your fundraising deadline.
- ✓ **Get creative and use technology to give a boost to your fundraising efforts!** For example, start a blog, use your MySpace or Facebook account or establish a fundraising page using the free tools available on sites like: www.fundable.com and www.change.org (integrates with Facebook).



Important Reminder: Don't be afraid to send out letters and ask people you know for money. These are the people who know you and care about you and they will probably be very interested in helping you in some way if they can. At the very least, they will be interested in learning what you are doing. If not, don't be discouraged. Not everyone is in a position to support you monetarily and that's OK. Don't decide for others whether or not they will or should support you; let them decide for themselves.

Use Your School as a Resource

If you are still in school, it is likely that your school may be a tremendous resource and you should use it to your fullest advantage. Find out if there are funds or grants available to students to participate in programs like those offered by GYC or if you might be able to get credit for your participation in the program. Make sure to talk to your dean, academic advisor, international studies department, career center, financial aid office and favorite professors about different options. Some schools have great programs available but you need to pro-actively seek them out and apply for them as soon as possible. We strongly recommend that you do your homework about resources available at your school before applying for the program.

Even if there are no programs or funds available, your academic advisors may still have other ideas about where you can look for support. In fact, you might even want to ask them to make a contribution to assist you in your efforts. Find out if there is some way to apply your experience to your academic program (e.g., research for your thesis or receive credit for an internship) which may strengthen your case to get support from your school. The international studies office at most schools also have databases or lists of scholarship and fellowship opportunities offered by other institutions for which you might be eligible to apply.

GYC is available to write letters of support and recommendation to assist you in accessing financial resources available at your school. Please contact us if you need us to speak with school administrators or professors, or let us know if you need a letter of support.

Another idea is to see if you can tap into your school's alumni/ae base. There may be alumni/ae of your school who would be very interested in what you are doing and may be able to help you in some way. It may be helpful to connect with alumni/ae who share something in common with you or who would be interested in the work you are doing rather than alumni/ae that you don't know and don't share any common interests with you.

Even if you are no longer in school, you might want to contact your school's alumni/ae office to see if they might be interested in having you come speak to students on campus after your trip in exchange for a modest honorarium.

Contact Institutions in Your Community

As with fundraising from individuals, the best place to start looking for support in your community is from organizations or groups of which you are already a member. For example, are you a member of your local Rotary Club or does your church, synagogue, temple or mosque willing to help young people work on social projects? Some organizations have special programs that are aimed at benefiting their members and you might not even be aware that those resources exist. You may be able to arrange to have an organization or business host a fundraising event or may make a donation in exchange for a presentation about your experiences upon your return.

You may also want to reach out to groups, organizations and local businesses that do not know you, but this strategy may not be as effective as asking for support from those who know you. Local businesses, such as cafes or clubs, may be willing to work with you if you want to host a party or fundraiser by either donating food or space for the event. Alternatively, they may be willing to donate items for an auction with the proceeds going to help you raise money for your participation in the program. Maybe they would be willing to donate toys, clothes or supplies for you to take with you when traveling and in return you could help the business get local media attention to help draw in business. If they make a monetary donation through GYC, they can receive a tax deduction, something that may be a motivating factor for some people.



Utilize the Local Media

The local media may be very interested in helping you and they are always looking for new and interesting stories. Ask if they will run an article about you and your participation in the program. You can supplement the story by providing information about past GYC programs and the work that participants have done. It is a great opportunity to publicize how people can make contributions to help you but also educates people about some of the human rights issues associated with your program. Other people have hosted parties or other events as a way of raising money and the local media can help you get the word out about your event to a wider audience.

Also, you might think about approaching a local newspaper or a magazine to pitch a story based on your participation in the program. If they are interested in the story you pitch, it is very likely that they will offer you payment in exchange for your story.

Employer Matching Gift Programs

An increasing number of business and corporations offer this opportunity for collaboration with their employees in charitable giving. It is possible that your friends or family members are eligible to participate in this program through their occupation and if you start early enough, you may be able to double their donation! If one of your donors is eligible, he/she should contact his/her employer to obtain the standard application form. After completing one part of the form, he/she should send it to GYC along with a donation on your behalf. Once we receive the donation we will complete the second part of the application and return it to the corporation. Within a period of three months to one year, upon approval, the corporation will match or double match your donor's gift. Don't know if your donor's place of employment offers this program? www.matchinggifts.com/demo.cfm

Scholarships, Fellowships and Grants

Aside from the resources available at your school and in your community, some private foundations (especially those based in the local community where you live or come from) offer small stipends or grants to offset the cost of international travel. Available resources will vary greatly from community to community; many are specific to regional or local areas or have other restrictive qualifications.

Here are a few specific resources we've found that may be helpful to you. We recommend that you supplement this list with additional research. Please make sure to read the guidelines and requirements very carefully before applying.

Sara's Wish Scholarship Fund

Awarded to extraordinary young women committed to making the world a better place by fully participating in it. <http://www.saraswish.org>

Rotary Foundation of Rotary International

Grants are available to subsidize the expenses of Rotarians and Rotaractors who volunteer their services in another country. <http://www.rotary.org>

Community Foundations

Some local community foundations offer scholarships or funds to individuals in the community that are involved in social justice projects. We recommend that you do some research to find out if there is a community foundation that might be able to assist you. You will need to search the foundation database in the above link for your city, town or county. This is a free resource. <http://lnpfdncenter.org/finder.html>

Foundation Grants to Individuals

This is a searchable database offered by the Foundation Center and presents a comprehensive list of grants available to individuals. We recommend that you search by key words, locations, etc. as there might be a resource available to you based on some specific skill or interest that you have. Many of these resources are limited to individuals from specific backgrounds or areas of the U.S. This is NOT a free resource-\$9.95 subscription for one month access. <http://gtionline.fdncenter.org/>

You may want to check the following websites to see if there is a library in your city or town where you can search the database for free. <http://www.fdncenter.org/collections>

Institute of International Education (IIE)

IIE publishes excellent directories of scholarships for overseas opportunities, which can be found at most college libraries. Their databases are also accessible on their website, but only with an IIE member organization's password. Most colleges and universities are likely to make this resource available to students so check with the international studies office and/or the library. <http://www.iie.org>

Reference Service Press

They publish information on financial aid for study and training abroad for research and creative activities abroad. They also have databases available to America Online subscribers (keyword: RSP) or through some university libraries. <http://www.rspfunding.com>

“How to Live Your Dream of Volunteering Overseas”

This is a great book that has resources on fundraising for international volunteer programs as well as a wealth of other resources that may help you in preparing for your participation. Check out a copy at your local library!

“Creative Funding for International Health Electives”

The *American Medical Student Association* offers this online guide to fundraising on their website that may provide useful ideas. <http://www.amsa.org>



Advice from Past Program Participants

“Do not be afraid to approach people for financial help or to be personal. My most successful mode of fundraising was through letter writing. I drafted a letter explaining my motivations for wanting to go to Guatemala and through this I was able to raise enough to cover my entire program fee and airfare.”

“I street perform as a hobby and I put out a sign that said ‘I want to volunteer in Cambodia’ and people were very sympathetic. I dress up and then freeze and when people give me money I either start playing my saxophone or dance. I got maybe \$200 doing this at one weekend festival.”

“Asking for free miles is a terrific way to at least get the plane tickets paid for, especially because a lot of people are concerned about expiring or void miles because of bankrupt airlines. Start early!”

Get Creative!

The following list includes a variety of activities and events that you can organize in order to help meet your goals. This list is by no means exhaustive so use your imagination. Remember to be creative and have fun!

- **Art Sale:** Use your talents to help raise money. Many people enjoy purchasing locally made pottery, paintings, etc as presents for family or friends. If you are exceptionally artistically inclined, you could hire out your services to sketch portraits for people or take their photographs.
- **Bake Sale**
- **Benefit Performance:** Concerts are often used to raise money to support specific causes, why not organize a benefit performance to raise money for your participation in the program? This also provides a unique opportunity to educate people on the human rights issues in your program country.
- **House Party or Fundraising Dinner:** Invite friends and family over for a house party or fundraising. Cook a traditional dish from the program country, show an educational film and use it as an opportunity to get people to support you.
- **Part-time Work: Silent Auction:** Ask local businesses to donate items or buy some items from the program country and do a post-program fundraiser. Or, buy handicrafts or T-shirts while you are traveling and sell them when you get home. Maybe you can even take bids or orders for certain items you can buy during your trip before you even go.
- **Slide show:** Give an educational presentation and ask for donations
- **Street Performance**

What HAS worked well for past participants

- Fundraising letters
- Asking friends, family, professors for help and for donations
- Applying for grants and scholarships at school and in the community
- Using personal talents (music, dance, theater)

- Working extra hours
- Saving personal money from special occasions (holidays, graduations, birthdays)
- Starting early
- An optimistic attitude

What HAS NOT worked

- E-mailing or writing letters to large corporations, organizations, law firms with whom you have no personal connection
- Large monetary investments in fundraising
- Relying only on one source of funding (e.g., a large grant from your school)
- A defeatist attitude
- Procrastination and waiting until the last minute

GYC Procedures and Policies

GYC can directly accept donations in your honor to offset your program tuition. Many participants and donors prefer this option as it connects the donation with a legitimate organization and provides accountability for how the money is spent. Contributions that are made through GYC in honor of our program participants are also tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law (except for immediate family members).

We are able to accept donations towards your program tuition only, not for other expenses that you will incur such as airfare and other travel-related costs, etc. If you wish to raise money to cover these costs, you must do that separate from GYC and donors should send checks and money to you directly. If you plan to have your donors send money through GYC, please contact us before you begin fundraising to clarify details and procedures to make the process a smooth one.

Important Note: Please be advised that all donations made in your honor must be received by GYC before the final deadline for the program tuition payment. All donations received after this date will not be returned to you or your donors, but will be used to offset program costs, provide future participants with scholarships and support GYC's work. Plan accordingly and give your donors a deadline to respond.

How to Send Your Donations through GYC

Checks

Checks should be made payable to **GLOBAL YOUTH CONNECT** and should clearly include your name.

Mail to: Global Youth Connect, Treasurer
13422 NE 47th Street
Bellevue, WA 98005

Please ask all donors to fill out a donation form and enclose it with their check. You can make copies of the donation forms included at the end of this packet and enclose them with your fundraising letter.

Credit Cards

We will also accept donations on your behalf via an on-line and secure credit card processing link on the GYC website. Please direct anyone interested in making a donation by credit card to:

www.globalyouthconnect.org/donate

Thank You Letters

We will inform you when a donation comes in. We will also keep track of all money received and send thank you letters to donors.

Please note that GYC reserves the right to change any of these procedures and policies at any time. If you have any questions please contact us and we will be happy to explain to you our policies.

What GYC Can and Cannot Do to Help

We Can...

- Set up a time to talk with you about your fundraising strategy and give you advice on how to raise money
- Review draft fundraising letters to confirm that information is correct and give you tips on how to improve and strengthen your letter
- Write letters of support and recommendation to your school or other institutions to which you are applying for funding
- Send you newsletters and GYC brochures, etc. to use for your fundraising activities
- Accept contributions for your program tuition from donors who prefer to give money to an organization instead of an individual
- Provide you with advice on how to make the most out of your fundraising efforts
- Encourage you to keep going!

We Cannot...

- Give you names or contacts of individuals that have contributed to GYC in the past
- Accept contributions from your donors that will go to your airplane ticket or any other expenses other than the program fee
- Do the work of fundraising for you
- Extend or postpone payment deadlines because you are fundraising



Frequently Asked Questions

What if I pay the tuition and then find a way to raise the money I need? Can I get a refund of the program tuition?

If you are successful in raising funds after you've made one or more program tuition payments, we will refund to you only any tuition payments made directly by you. Generally speaking, any such refunds will be made after the final program tuition deadline.

However, all donations made in your honor must be received by GYC before the deadline of your final program tuition payment. Please be aware that all donations received after this date will be allocated to the general GYC program budget and will not be refunded to you or your donors. Plan accordingly and give your donors a deadline.

What if there is a tuition payment deadline but I know that a check from a donor is in the mail? Do I still have to make the payment?

Yes. If we have not received the donation by the deadline the program tuition is due, then you must still personally contribute the amount due. We will refund the money to you once the donation has been received and after the final program tuition deadline has passed.

What happens if I raise more money than the program tuition?

Any money you raise that is processed through GYC and received in your honor will be applied to the program tuition. If you raise more money than the program tuition, these donations will be allocated to GYC's general program budget. There will be no refunds for personal expenses, as participants are expected to raise these funds and pay those costs independent of GYC.

Can I keep fundraising after the final program tuition deadline?

All donations made in your honor must be received by GYC before the deadline of your final program tuition payment. Please be aware that all donations received after this date will be allocated to the general GYC program fund and will not be

refunded to you or your donors. Plan accordingly and give your donors a deadline.

Why can't I ask donors to make contributions through GYC for my airfare and other expenses?

The primary reason that we have established this policy is because donations made to GYC and then returned to the participant to buy tickets, etc. would not be considered tax-deductible by the IRS. We also would have no accountability for how the money is spent by the participant. We still encourage participants to raise money for these expenses, but unfortunately we cannot accept these donations on your behalf.

If I have to drop out of the program after I already raised money towards the program tuition, what happens to those donations?

In this situation GYC would allocate these donations to offset the total costs of the program for which you were supposed to participate in, help offset other program costs, and/or to support the overall work of GYC. This money will not be returned to the donors if you choose to withdraw from the program for any reason

Where does the money for the program tuition go?

The money paid by participants in the program tuition goes to defray the costs of conducting the program. A more specific breakdown of how program tuition is spent is available from GYC upon request.

What if I am unable to raise all of the money I need before final program tuition deadline?

We recognize that this is a fundamental concern and many of you would not be able to participate without financial assistance from others. But, we also know that raising enough money is possible. We have had participants in the past raise sufficient funds to their programs tuition and even their airfare and personal expenses as well! Fundraising is a challenge, but with careful planning and dedication we know that you can do it.

However, if you are unable to raise the money you need to participate and you are unable to pay the

program tuition from your own pocket, you should contact the program director as soon as possible as you will not be able to participate in the program. Furthermore, the payments made by you to GYC will not be refunded.

An important word of advice: If you don't have the personal funds necessary to participate and you are unsure whether you have the time, energy or confidence to fundraise then you should think very hard about taking on the financial commitment of participating. In this case, it may be wiser to save money for a year and apply when you are in a stronger financial position.

Conclusion

Now that you've read some general guidelines to fundraising, seen what's worked and what hasn't for past program participants, and viewed sample fundraising letters, its time to get started! Remember to be organized, use the contacts that you already have, and to be mindful of GYC deadlines, procedures and policies.

Also, make sure to send a note of thanks to everyone who agrees to make a donation. This is very important and will demonstrate your gratitude for the gift. You may also want to send them a postcard and/or a note with highlights or pictures upon your return. For people who make large donations, you may want to bring them back a token gift of thanks. People will want to know that their donation is appreciated.

GYC is committed to aiding you with your fundraising plans, so don't be afraid to ask if you need assistance. We understand that many people will have financial difficulties and we have experience helping past participants raise funds. GYC staff are willing to work with each participant on ideas, strategies, budgets, and letters. Fundraising is a time-consuming process, but one that almost always yields results.

Best wishes in your fundraising endeavors!

Sample Fundraising Letter #1

Dear Friends and Family,

This summer I have an opportunity to visit and work with non-governmental organizations for five-weeks in Phnom Penh, Cambodia through Global Youth Connect, as part of a ten member delegation exploring genocide, post-conflict and development issues. In particular, I plan to examine the root causes of state-sponsored genocide and its repercussions in a post-conflict context. I also intend to study the potential capacities of educational development as a fundamental instrument towards poverty reduction in Cambodia. While abroad in Cambodia, moreover, I hope to further develop my thesis and explore the prospects of implementing the aforementioned scholarship fund.

I am writing to you to seek your financial support to assist me in translating my academic and personal interests into reality. I need your support to reach my goal of \$3800 in order to participate in the program. Part of the money will help fund my program fees, but the majority of the money will help pay for transportation costs and room and board in Phnom Penh. Every contribution counts, no matter the size.

There are myriad issues still plaguing Cambodia, including landmine, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS, and governance issues. Through my participation, however, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of, and consequently the solution to, the Cambodian plight. I encourage you to visit the Global Youth Connect website at www.globalyouthconnect.org for more information about Cambodia and the Cambodia Project.

If you are interested in making a financial contribution or would like to donate frequent flyer miles please contact me as soon as possible to make arrangements for the tax deductible donation. Additionally, if you would like a copy of my thesis or would like to join my personal email list to follow my progress in Cambodia, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Sample Fundraising Letter #2

Dear Friends:

My greatest aspiration is to help ensure human rights and promote social justice internationally. It is through this that I can best be of service to the world and utilize my passions and skills. I have just been offered an amazing opportunity to contribute in this manner; however I need your help to make this dream a reality. I am writing to you to tell you more about my participation this summer in a human rights delegation to Guatemala. I hope that you can help me in any way possible to realize this opportunity and allow me to contribute to the best of my ability.

I have been selected as a participant in a human rights delegation to Guatemala in August through Global Youth Connect, a non-profit organization dedicated to action for compassion, human rights, and global responsibility. This program is designed for young leaders committed to the promotion of human rights and social justice, and the twelve participants are chosen based on a competitive application process.

The Guatemalan people have suffered through a 36-year civil war between the military and guerilla forces that has resulted in more than 200,000 casualties, 50,000 people disappeared, one million displaced, and 250,000 refugees in Mexico and other countries. This war especially targeted the rural Mayan peoples, as approximately 83% of those killed were from indigenous communities. A peace accord was finally signed on December 29, 1996, officially ending the war. However, the peace process has been slow and complicated and root issues, such as poverty and racial discrimination, remain. More than 6.4 million Guatemalans (about 50% of the population) exist in poverty. Corruption is rampant and human rights defenders and advocates for social justice are still targets of politically motivated killings.

During the three weeks of this program, we will travel to at least three different areas, including Quiche, one of the indigenous areas most affected during the armed conflict. We will attend workshops and seminars with guest speakers from leading human rights and social justice NGOs, as well as Guatemalan and U.S. officials and representatives of international organizations. We will also work closely with Nuestros Derechos, a Guatemalan organization currently protecting the rights of street children in Guatemala City. All sessions will be conducted in Spanish and we will have the opportunity to engage in short term service projects and a three-day intensive workshop with Guatemalan youth who are dedicated to building a better future in their country. This program is designed to facilitate cross-cultural communication and understanding, increase knowledge concerning specific human rights issues and the impacts of violent conflict on a society and culture, and ultimately empower and equip youth to make a profound positive difference in the world.

I am so excited that I have this opportunity to study Guatemala's situation first hand, as well as receive human rights training, and contribute through discussion and service with the Guatemalan people. This delegation will be an amazing experience through which I can help make a positive difference in the world and increase my knowledge in order to hopefully contribute further in the future. Upon my return, I plan to share what I have learned in order to demonstrate how people like you and I can make a difference in the lives of Guatemalans. However, as this program provides a wealth of benefits and opportunities, it is costly. The cost of participation in the program itself is \$1,250. Even though I have some personal savings, this is more than I am able to afford on my own. I invite you to learn more about this program, its specific goals, and affiliates in Guatemala at www.globalyouthconnect.org. Please send any contributions to the above address and make the check out to Global Youth Connect or to myself. No donation is too small and I am grateful for whatever level of support you feel you can afford -- whether its \$20, \$50, or \$100. Knowing that you support me in my journey is what really matters. I am truly grateful for any support that you could give and for your commitment to global understanding and making the world a better place for us all.

Sample Fundraising Letter #3

Dear Friends and Family,

I am writing to speak about an exciting opportunity this summer in Bosnia. Recently I have been accepted to, and plan to participate in a human rights delegation to Bosnia for three weeks of June and July. The annual program is run by an organization named Global Youth Connect which, through trips to Bosnia, Rwanda, and several Central American countries, hopes to develop cross-cultural communication between youths of all ages, nationalities, and religions. Not only do I want to inform everyone of this amazing experience I will have, but to also ask for your help in getting there. The program tuition totals \$2,750 – going towards my housing and in-country transportation. This amount, my fundraising goal, will hopefully be reached through contributions that friends and family make. I hope that you will consider making a donation to help make this opportunity a reality – any amount will help greatly!

The theme of the Bosnia program is reconciliation and transitional justice – something innately important for the stability of the recovering community from the 1992-1995 war and genocide. The program aims at teaching participants about the historical and political nature of genocide and civil conflict using Bosnia as a case study. We will be participating in “mini-internships” and research opportunities with grassroots organizations working towards community development as well as attending the anniversary memorial service at Srebrenica, where 8,000 Muslims were murdered – the largest act of genocide in Europe since the Holocaust. Despite all these daunting but exciting activities, I am *most* excited about my participation in a conflict mediation training workshop for three days. This experience with American participants and local Bosnian youths will give me the rudimentary tools to begin hands-on mediation between individual conflicting parties.

I feel that program will play an important moment in my life as I begin to consider career paths. My focus has changed and developed throughout the years, but the values which my mother and father instilled in me have guided me towards this path of social justice and activism. I have become increasingly passionate about working in the field of peace and conflict – partly inspired by my knowledge and interest of the Northern Irish troubles which my dad was so distraught by. This program is my first opportunity to take what I’ve learned, all the theories and background, and see it played out on the ground. Clearly, with the developments of a newly-independent Kosovo, there has never been a more relevant time to explore conflict studies in the Balkans than now.

If you are interested in learning more about Global Youth Connect and their programs, please visit their website at www.globalyouthconnect.org. Attached is a donation sheet which can be filled out and sent to Global Youth Connect’s offices if you would like to contribute to my fundraising goal. All contributions are tax-deductible, can be made by credit card or check, and should be received by May 15th. Thank you so much for considering to help me out. If you have any questions or would simply like to talk about the program, you should contact me. Thanks again, I hope everyone is well, and I look forward to hearing from you!



YES! I would like to make a contribution to **Global Youth Connect!**

Donation Amount _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ Other

In honor of _____ (program participant)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please make checks payable to GLOBAL YOUTH CONNECT and mail to *GYC Treasurer, 13422 NE 47th Street, Bellevue, WA 98005*

On-line donations can be made at www.globalyouthconnect.org/donate.

Contributions are tax-deductible (in the U.S.) to the fullest extent of the law.



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About Global Youth Connect

Although people may support you because they care about you and your interests, many may still be interested in the mission and activities of Global Youth Connect and what kind of work we do. Below is a quick guide of information to help explain.

Who is GYC?

Global Youth Connect is dedicated to empowering youth to advance human rights and create a more just world. We envision a world where the human rights of all people are equally respected, fully protected and universally realized. We also envision a world where all young people – irregardless of nationality, ethnicity, religion, class, gender or other differences – are encouraged and empowered to non-violently claim their own rights and serve as advocates for the rights of others.

What is a Human Rights Delegation?

GYC human rights delegations are a unique first-hand experience to cross cultural boundaries and learn about the daily reality of human rights as experienced in a complex and increasingly globalized world. Participants meet with local human rights organizations, government representatives, youth and local communities to put human rights concerns into context and explore effective practical strategies to achieve change, engage in service projects and connect with young leaders from the project country in an interactive human rights workshop called a “Learning Community.”

What is a Learning Community?

A “Learning Community” is an experiential process. Participants work together to develop common frameworks of understanding, enhance their substantive knowledge of human rights, strengthen their leadership skills, build supportive relationships, and develop collaborative projects to address issues of peace, justice, and human rights. The term “Learning Community” comes from the popular education movement and refers to a groups of learners who work together to create knowledge through shared dialogue, reflection, and action.

Where Does GYC Work?

We have current programs in Bosnia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nepal, Rwanda, Venezuela and the United States.

Please encourage people to visit our website to learn more information about who we are, what we are doing and the program that you will be participating in -- www.globalyouthconnect.org.

For More Information

Global Youth Connect

Tel: (845) 657 - 3273

E-mail: contact@globalyouthconnect.org

Website: www.globalyouthconnect.org