

Fundraising 101

I really want to go on a mission's trip but it is so expensive, I just can't afford it.

You're not alone! A lot of people want to go on a mission's trip but feel that it is too expensive for their budget. What you need is a support plan, If God has stirred your heart for missions, He has already chosen the people that will support you.

Fundraising is a part of your journey and a part of your ministry. You need both the financial support and prayer support from your family, friends, and church. Fundraising is not only about finding and getting financial support to pay for your stay, it is about connecting the Body of Christ; sharing, teaching, telling, proclaiming, loving, and doing. When you fundraise, you build a network of people who are doing ministry with you through their support. Ask for support because you want to invite someone in to be a part of your calling. Support raising is about the body of Christ joining together to see God's Kingdom come.

It's time to begin the journey of support raising!

Step 1 Your Home Church

Always, always, always seek the support of your home church first. By contacting your church first, you recognize the authority that they have over you and seek their approval on fundraising through the church. You need to have your church on board!

What you should be communicating to your church:

- Talk about how God has led you to the decision to make this trip. Show your heart for the mission trip and what you want to accomplish through it.
- Tell them about your financial need for the trip – not just the land fees but also the airfare. Make sure you know where the money is going and how it will be used. The land fees for OSI go towards your hotel room, meals, drinkable water, and in-country transportation for the entire trip.
- Ask what their restrictions are on fundraising in the church. Some churches ask that you not contact the congregation for extra support. The church may have a missionary fund set up that can give you a donation towards your trip.
- Identify if there are any ways to present this opportunity to the congregation – make announcements from the pulpit, take up a special collection, or host fundraisers at the church.

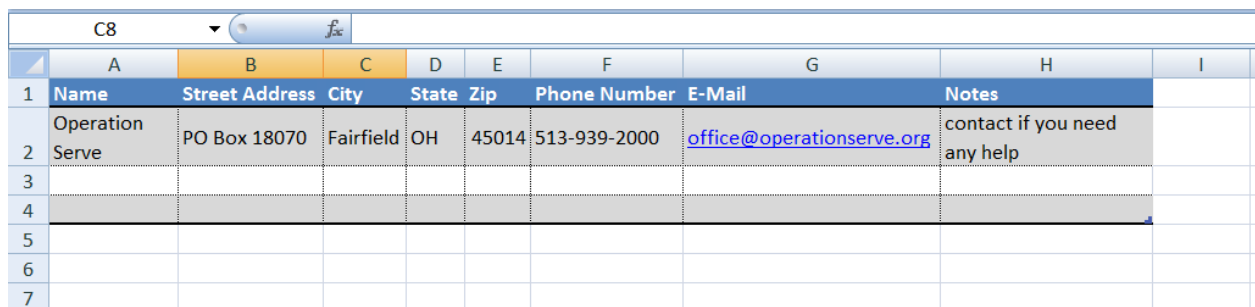
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Step 2 Who should you ask for support

Make a list of everyone you know and then put them into specific categories: Church friends, relatives, neighbors, school contacts, work friends, social media circle, etc. Check with OSI to see if there is a PayPal link available for you to use on your Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn pages.

Gather all the necessary, up-to-date information about each person: mailing address, e-mail, phone number. Create an excel page similar to the one on the next page so you can see everything at a glance. If you don't have access to excel, 4"x 6" cards work just as well.

Sample Excel workbook for Fundraising Contacts:



| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I |
|---|-----------------|----------------|-----------|-------|-------|--------------|--|------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Name | Street Address | City | State | Zip | Phone Number | E-Mail | Notes | |
| 2 | Operation Serve | PO Box 18070 | Fairfield | OH | 45014 | 513-939-2000 | office@operationserve.org | contact if you need any help | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | |

Step 3 Identify what fundraisers will work best for you

After you speak to your church, you will have a better understanding of what you will be able to do. Many people start with a "support letter"; we will take a better look at this in a minute. Here are some other ideas for raising your funds:

- * Set up a bake sale or hot dog sale outside a local market
- * Have a yard sale (get donated items from family and friends)
- * Host an auction, ask local retailers for items that can be auctioned off
- * Create and sell cookbooks
- * Sell items you no longer need/want on EBay

Some churches will let you:

- * Have a spaghetti dinner
- * Host a dance
- * Set up a loose change collection station in the entrance way of the sanctuary
- * Do an envelope collection: have 50 envelopes each one numbered in order (1, 2, 3 ...), see if anyone would like to support you for the dollar amount listed on the envelope. When someone takes an envelope, give them additional information about your trip; let them know what you will be doing, and how you have felt the call of God on your life to do this.

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Writing a support/prayer letter

There are six components you will want to include in your letter:

1. **Keep it short:** don't go over one page. Quality trumps quantity.
2. **Grab their attention:** Most people will skim over a letter and pick out key points. Make your first sentence count or someone may miss the whole point of your letter.
3. **Tell who you are, make it personal:** If people have to go searching for who is sending them a letter then they are now looking at the end of your letter and have missed everything you want to say. Give a brief update on what you have been doing. Something quick like "Wow! I can't believe that **I'm a Senior** already!" tells a lot.
4. **Don't forget the details:** Tell them why you feel called to go on this trip. By sharing your burden for this mission's trip, you make them a part of your team. Reach out and be open about what God is doing in your life. Tell the reader how they can help. You are responsible for raising your own support, let them know exactly how much money you need and give a time limit. Make sure that they know if they can't support you financially, you can use all the prayer you can get!
5. **Be humble, respectful, and Say Thank YOU!** Use language that honors God. Don't use slang; make sure that you are writing for the age of the potential supporter. Use phrases like "serve alongside," "partner with," and "learn from".
6. **Make it Easy:** Include a pre-addressed, stamped envelope and response device* in your letter. A small investment that can yield big rewards.

Keep the letter as short as possible, again many people will just scan the letter to see what you want, to make it easy on them to find the important information try underlining key words or **Bold** where you think you may need it. But don't over do it.

Step 4 Working with your potential supporters

Now that you have mailed out your support letters, you need to follow up. Meet with potential supports for lunch, coffee, or just to hang out. Update them on your life but again be brief, share how God has led you to go on a mission's trip, share your financial need, and ask again for support.

OSI is a 501(c)(3) organization. That means if anyone sends money in to us for your missions trip, they will get a tax receipt at the end of the year. Use this information to help get bigger donors **"You can get tax credit for supporting me!"** ** Checks need to be made out to Operation Serve or OSI for tax credit. If they are made out to you personally, we cannot give them a receipt for the donation. Make sure that your name is not on the check – have them include a post it note or use a response device* to show us where the money is going to.

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*Response Device example:

My Commitment

I will pray. *I want to help send:*

Jane Amelia Doe *Intern Date: June 21, 2020*

Name

Address

City State Zip

Phone

E-mail

Gift Amount: \$ _____

Please send checks* to:

Operation SERVE

PO Box 18070

Fairfield, Ohio 45018

**Please make checks payable to
Operation Serve.*

DO NOT write the name of the
missionary on the memo. Only include
this form with your donation to
credit their account. Thank you.