



World Camp Fundraising Tips

The cost of traveling/volunteering abroad can seem daunting at times. Rest assured, your fundraising efforts are well worth it, however, we understand that it can be overwhelming to begin the process. So, with the help of former volunteers who successfully fundraised their entire trips with World Camp, we've detailed some of our best tips on fundraising for you. Check out their ideas and stories below, and feel free to contact the office if you have any questions, or would like to get in touch with a former volunteer/fundraiser.

Program Fee & Fundraising Logistics

The program fee is determined by what it costs for each volunteer to contribute to our work. Most volunteers cover the program cost through fundraising. Volunteers can solicit tax-deductible (in the US) donations to meet the goal of their program fee. Volunteers can also meet the cost of their participation through events, grants or scholarships. Fundraising may begin at any time after acceptance to the program is granted. The fundraising period will end a few weeks before program start (see acceptance letter for exact dates) at which time all program costs are due. Any donations that come in after that date will not be credited to individual accounts, but will go into World Camp's general funds account.

Due to the nature of the funding sources, World Camp cannot give refunds. No exceptions are allowed. World Camp offers many effective fundraising resources. The letter campaign is often the most efficient way to raise funds. Sample materials and brochures are available on the website. Grants and scholarships are also great ways to raise money. Fundraising events with proper planning and publicity can also be very successful.

Fundraising 101 or "How To's"

- Start early. Be creative. Keep a positive attitude and momentum!
- Talk, talk, talk. The more people that hear, or even *overhear*, about your trip the more ideas that will arise and the more support you'll have in your fundraising efforts.
- Use the resources you have-information/facts/brochures off our website, access you have to space for possible events, skills or talents you could use in your efforts.
- Keep a record of all incoming funds, who they are from, how much they donated, and addresses- so that you can send out a thank-you.
- If you know someone else on the trip or even on a similar program, do some group fundraising so strengthen your efforts and expand your reach. Then, split the profits.
- Make sure potential donors know their donations are tax-deductible if donated through the World Camp website, or if they donate by check made payable to World Camp.

Fundraising Ideas

Grants/Scholarships

Many colleges/universities offer grants to students taking part in summer projects or service interns that will often subsidize a large portion of your expenses. Talk to students who have done similar programs and see if they've gotten funding through the university before. Visit the international or service learning department, study abroad office, or student community action groups. Ask around, find out what they know. Apply for grants or scholarships you find; make them fit your work with World Camp. Listed below are ones former volunteers have secured in the past. If your school/community is not listed, though, it certainly does not mean there isn't one out there!



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- Middlebury College-PSLA
- Santa Clara University-Jean Donovan Fellowship
- Rotary Scholars
- Elks Club

Additionally, you may be able to find scholarships online. Many scholarship sites exist online that may help you find money. Some will ask for a fee to allow you access, others may ask for the fee to apply. One example of a site with a free application is Go Overseas. You can receive \$1000 towards your volunteer experience, but you must apply by September for the following year. Follow this [link](#) to Go Overseas to learn more about their Volunteer Abroad Scholarship.

Letter-Writing Campaigns

- One of the most effective ways to fundraise. You'll be surprised how many people want to help out, and how small donations here and there really add up!
- Write to former teachers, parents' friends, extended family members, old employers, co-workers, all the people that have known you since you were little. Tell them about World Camp, why you want to be a part of it, and what about it moves you.
- Have all checks made directly to World Camp. This assures donors that the money is in fact going to World Camp and their donation is utilized appropriately.
- Keep track of everyone who donated, send them a thank you card/email. Send them a picture/description of your travels via email from Malawi.

A letter-writing campaign is one of the simplest and most effective fundraising methods you can use. Send letters to friends and family, employers and co-workers, clubs, churches or temples, local banks, foundations and charitable organizations in your area. The Rotary, Lions and Elks Clubs, Junior League, Junior Chamber and The United Way are some larger charitable organizations that may be interested in donating funds. Donations toward the program fee are U.S. tax-deductible for your donor.

A sample letter is at the end of this guide, and a fundraising brochure is available for download on the website. It is a good idea to enclose a personal letter in the brochures and to handwrite addresses. Use the World Camp address as the return address, but make sure your name is listed above World Camp title. For example:

Victor Volunteer
World Camp
157 S. Lexington Ave.
Suite B1
Asheville, NC 28801

Research has shown that the most successful letter campaigns are ones in which the donor has been contacted five times. It would be very beneficial for you to call, email, or visit the potential donor and tell him/her to expect the brochure and letter and then follow up after the brochure has been sent to see if the person received it and has any questions. Give clear instructions in your letter for the donor to write your name on the donation or the brochure form to assure correct allocation. World Camp provides weekly updates of any new donations via your individual Google account spreadsheet. World Camp provides tax receipts for all donations and it is your responsibility to send a thank you note.



Here are some additional tips on letter campaigns:

1. Start by making a list of everyone you know. Don't leave anyone off. You never know who might be willing to help you achieve your goal. The more contributions, the better, so consider expanding beyond your inner circle of close friends and immediate family members. The cardinal rule of fundraising is that if you don't ask, you won't get anything. Who do you know? Ask anyone and everyone you know and even those you don't know to contribute to your cause.
2. Write out your goals and reasons for volunteering. When writing your fundraising letter, explain how their donation will make an impact. You may want to include our 501(c)(3) status or reference our annual report, available on the website, for potential donors to peruse. Be sure to clearly explain that you will be working 8-9 hours a day - donors want to know that you are doing your part.
3. Keep your letters to one page. Too much information can alienate a potential donor. Many of your donors will not be familiar with the intricacies of international volunteering or international development; they will be more interested in contributing to a good cause (education, public health, caring for children, training teachers).
4. Identify your support system. Some people will be extremely supportive and share your enthusiasm and excitement. Talking to people and listening to their reactions will help you gauge the level of interest and support they will have for your endeavor.
5. Ask for a specific amount of money. When you say "contribution", some people are thinking \$5, while others are thinking \$500. Tell people how much you want. Let them know the total amount that you are hoping to fundraise. You may even want to outline the cost per day of your program (divide your total program fee by the number of days you will be overseas). Established, professional people often can contribute more money than those who are students. Don't be afraid to ask your more established contacts for \$100, \$200 or even \$500. Don't forget to ask your donors if their company has a matching gift program that would match their donation.
6. Convey a sense of urgency. This limits their time to forget about giving you a contribution. Mention the donation deadline specified in your acceptance letter.
7. Make it convenient for them to give you money and get a commitment for payment rather than a promise. Say, "If you don't have the money now, why don't you post-date a check?" or ask them to fill out a sponsorship form and then get back to them at a designated time. You can also have them make their contributions online via the World Camp website.
8. Give incentives. Many people who contribute money simply want recognition and praise. Write a thank you letter and include a printed list of your supporters' names. Host a small open house before you leave to publicly recognize and thank your supporters. List their names on your blog or Facebook page.
9. Explain that donation money going towards the program fee is tax-deductible. They will receive a receipt from World Camp for their contribution. In the event that you cancel your program, any donations you receive are non-refundable. They will be transferred to our general fund, which will be used to subsidize the program costs.



10. Promise a presentation upon your return. Offering to give a slide show upon your return home is a great way to secure funding from religious organizations, civic groups, alumni associations, and educational institutions. Tangible evidence of your actions abroad helps people understand where their dollars have gone. Pictures of you working overseas can be good reminders of how their money made an impact.
11. Set up a blog and send the address out in your thank you letters. Keep the blog updated while you are volunteering, and your donors will be able to see their money in action.
12. Always follow up. You have to get on the phone with a small business, a civic or religious group, and your friends and relatives to let them know that you really do need their support. One follow-up call can make the difference between their sending a check or pushing the request to the back burner and never getting to it.

Businesses

You might be surprised to learn that many companies in the U.S. have a certain amount of “charity” money set aside each year that can only be used as a donation to a cause or organization. Local businesses are far more likely than large corporations to make a contribution to your cause. Explore businesses in your neighborhood, that your parents or friends’ parents work for, or research online ones that may have a fund like this or be interested in supporting HIV/AIDS or environmental work. The key is to make a link between the owner and you or someone close to you. You may want to approach the business with a letter first, enclosing all relevant materials and a pledge form, and then follow up with a phone call. One past volunteer’s program was funded through a grocery store. In turn, the store was pleased to have the publicity. Other volunteers have received donations from marketing companies, health care corporations, even dentist offices!

Service Clubs/Places of Worship

Service clubs such as Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, and Optimists, fraternal organizations such as Elk and Moose clubs, and religious groups such as churches and temples are excellent sources for fundraising. Follow the "Who Do You Know" principle; is someone you know a member or a friend of a member? The best course of action is to contact as many clubs in your area as possible and to ask if you can give a presentation to their club. Many clubs have breakfast, lunch or dinner meetings where you can ask to speak for 15–20 minutes to present your request and explain what you will be doing. This is your chance to sell your volunteer program. Remember, you are not asking for money for a vacation. You are asking for a donation to do service work overseas and to make a difference in the lives of others. Also, let them know that you are willing to come back and show them slides or a video of the program when you return. After the meeting, write a follow-up letter thanking them for letting you speak and reiterating your request for money. Be specific about how much money you are requesting and how it will be used. Be realistic about the amount you are requesting. A total of \$200 - \$400 is probably reasonable.

Media

Perhaps one of the best ways to promote awareness and to raise funds for your upcoming international adventure is through the local media. You can circulate a press announcement to publications with which you may be affiliated, such as your hometown newspaper, the paper from the town where you presently reside, alumni magazines, church bulletins, etc. Having a short piece published anywhere can go a long way in your quest for funds.



Donation Drives

Let people know what you are up to, what World Camp is all about, and create some momentum for your fundraising. Take a day and establish a donation drive, challenge yourself and your supporters to see how much of your costs you can cover in one day!

- Create a “Send Me to World Camp Malawi” [Blog Page](#). Include pictures, facts about HIV/AIDS and the environment, a section on why you want to go, a donation goal, and a link to the World Camp online donation site with instructions on how to support you.
- Create a Facebook cause and recruit people to join.
- Talk to your work or your parents’ and see if they’ll put up a [Donation Jar](#) for your trip at the cash register, reception desk, front office, or waiting room.
- Get a class at your former elementary or high school to support your volunteer service as a class project. Give a presentation on World Camp and what you’ll be doing. Have them set up a “Pennies for Patty” or “Dollars for Debbie” drive at the school where parents and community members can donate. It may seem small, but one of our former volunteers was able to raise \$900 this way!

Ebay

People may be more willing to part with goods than money. If you are eBay savvy, have them donate items to you to sell on eBay. Unfortunately this avenue is not tax deductible for them, but could be a simple way to add to your fundraising efforts.

Events

Fundraiser events are a great way to raise money, even large organizations do this. But you don’t have to get fancy or spend a lot of initial “seed money” to hold an effective event. Get a local bar or restaurant to sponsor your event and put 50% of their profits towards your World Camp experience

When planning an event, be sure the expected amount of income is worth the amount of time and money put into the event. Find creative ways to get goods or entertainment donated, then use proceeds as your fundraising. Do you know someone who is a great baker, an artist, or a published writer? Ask them if they might donate their creations to you so that you may allocate the sale towards your program.

Raffles – This works better for groups raising funds. Often groups can get items donated to them from local stores, companies, and restaurants, which they can raffle off, usually at a larger event such as a dance. Use the "Who Do You Know" principle. If there are no large items to raffle off, sometimes groups buy something like a television. That is fine as long as the proceeds are well over the purchase price.

Parties, Dances, Music - These can range from black tie affairs to simple pizza parties. Again, use the "Who Do You Know" principle. Do you have a friend in a band? Do you know the owner of a bar or a restaurant? Some simple events include having a band play at a club where you get the cover charge or a percentage of the drink sales. Or perhaps a restaurant will allow you a sponsored evening where you get 50% of the proceeds. You can even throw your own party and ask that your guests pay a cover charge, provided the cover is well over the cost of the party.

Miscellaneous Events - . Gather your friends and hold a group baby-sitting on a Saturday to give parents in your community a day off for a hike, shopping, whatever. Let them know where their money will go. Host a dinner at your apartment or house, cook, invite your friends and parent’s friends and have it be a fundraiser. Throw a party, ask a musician friend to play, and ask for a \$5 donation at the entrance. Guitar



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player? Yoga instructor? Chef? Use whatever skills you have and host an event where the \$20 instruction fee goes entirely towards your trip-give a yoga class, group guitar lesson, Thai cooking day, etc. Set up a table at a festival or farmer's market and hand out brochures.

How have past volunteers done it?

Sylvia Mendez secured grants and held an event.

(India volunteer, Summer 2008; Malawi volunteer, January 2008)

Upon acceptance to the World Camp program, I began researching scholarships and grants at school and online. I found a grant through my university that I had never even heard of. Most of the former grant recipients hadn't done a project like World Camp before, but I applied anyway. The grant covered half of my program fee.

Jay Brollier wrote letters and got his flight donated.

(Malawi volunteer, January 2009)

I remember feeling, how am I ever going to raise enough money to cover the cost of this trip? What's surprising is that with very limited resources I was able to actually over-fundraise the amount needed in just two months, and donate the additional amount to a scholarship fund for students wishing to attend high school in Malawi.

Most of my funds came from sending letters. I sent out approximately 200 letters to literally everyone, you name it – I sent them a letter. I mailed each letter in the mail (not email) and included in it a stamped self-addressed return envelope. This way no one would have to search for an envelope, find a stamp, look for my address, etc. In essence, I gave them no excuse not to know how to get the funds to me. Once I got a copy of the check, I recorded the amount, bundled the checks together, and forwarded them onto World Camp.

For the flight I solicited various airlines and travel agencies until I found someone to donate my flight. You can go on airlines' websites and search for their giving/donations section and usually they have a contact email for a special department. From there I wrote a letter (similar to my donation letter) explaining my intent. Only one airline replied but my entire flight was donated. Travel agencies may also be willing to underwrite your flight and donate that in lieu of cash. If you cannot get the flight donated, you can also ask that people "gift" you airline miles. If you have enough friends donate miles to you, you can often get your flight paid for via miles.

Katy Lackey was awarded a grant, tapped into businesses and had a story in the local newspaper.

(Malawi volunteer, Summer 2005)

When I was first accepted to World Camp, someone told me, "there's lots of money out there, you just have to show people why some of it should go to this." One of my parent's friends mentioned that his business had a "charity fund" each year from which they donated money to a "worthy cause." So I sent their company one of my fundraising letters and he brought it up at their monthly Board Meeting. I didn't specify an amount I was looking for, just noted the entire cost of my trip (program fee and plane ticket),

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talked about ways I was fundraising, and said that any amount greatly helped. The company sent me a check for over half the volunteer fee and a card with their support and wishing they could have provided funds for the entire cost.

I wasn't pulling in a lot of money from writing personal letters, because I had previously done this for other events/causes, sort of already exhausted that resource. So I began writing to companies. My local newspaper responded that they can only donate to organizations not individuals. However they wanted to run a story on my desire to go to Africa. Two weeks later, a picture, my interview, and World Camp's daily camp schedule appeared in the paper. Donations and letters wishing me luck poured in from people I had never heard of, and before I knew it, I had my flight covered!

Sample Letter

Dear (insert name),

I wanted to write you and let you know about an exciting volunteer project I have undertaken. In a few months I will be traveling to Malawi to participate as a volunteer with World Camp.

World Camp is a non-profit organization committed to empowering children in impoverished communities around the world through education. World Camp teaches HIV/AIDS prevention, nutrition, gender equality, environmental awareness and human rights in Malawi, Africa. What's even more amazing is the program started over ten years ago by a group of college student looking to make a difference in the world.

Part of the volunteer experience is fundraising the amount necessary to get me overseas and pay for my housing, food, and program supplies while I am teaching abroad. This is where you hopefully come in. I am asking my friends to help me with this project by donating to World Camp in my name, thus covering the volunteer fee.

I have included a stamped, self-addressed return envelope. If you are interested in helping, you can enclose a check payable to World Camp, and in the memo section, put my name. No donation is too small and any amount will help.

Thanks in advance for your consideration – I look forward to sharing this experience with you through pictures and email as I work in Malawi.

Best regards,
Your Name Here