

UCEAPTM

**UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
EDUCATION
ABROAD
PROGRAM**

GUIDE TO STUDY ABROAD CROWDFUNDING

Running a Successful Campaign

Congratulations on starting your crowdfunding campaign! You are part of a growing community of students and entrepreneurs who are benefiting from the crowdfunding revolution. Running a successful campaign takes significant planning and preparation. It is important to know that almost half of all campaigns do not meet their goals. Crowdfunding is not a magic pill to solve your financial needs. However, if you follow these simple steps, you will maximize your chances of success.

Although you can use any crowdfunding platform, UCEAP has selected Indiegogo as our official crowdfunding partner. Being a part of our Indiegogo partner page will give you more opportunities to extend your network and attract potential contributors. UCEAP will be promoting our campaigns on the Indiegogo partner page in social media, newsletters and on the alumni website.



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PREPARING FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

There are some things you should do before you logon to Indiegogo. Preparation, research and planning will help make your crowdfunding campaign a positive experience.

Write your Story

Make it clear and concise. What are you raising money for? Where will the money go? How can others support you? Make it personal. Tell a compelling story of why you are passionate about studying abroad. Make it visual—include 2–3 images (with you in the photo). Include a brief summary of your budget (do not include your detailed UCEAP budget) Have someone else proofread your story and ask your EAP advisor to review your campaign. They are happy to help! Remember, keep it short and upbeat.

Here is a basic model to follow:

Introduction: Explain why you are asking for help.

Tell your Story: Write a short paragraph on your history and what lead you to study abroad. Include any unique identifiers or challenges that have impacted your path to university. Are you a transfer student, first generation, veteran, or part of an underrepresented group? You want to make your story compelling, but do not overwhelm readers with sad stories.

Describe your Goals: What is the outcome. Be specific. Talk about potential research projects, internships or opportunities that you will benefit from by participating in this specific study abroad program. How will your study abroad experience impact your future career and personal goals?

Call to Action: Include a brief breakdown of budget and why every donation will help you meet your goals. Explain how you will use their contributions –and how it will impact your study abroad experience. Make sure to thank everyone for their consideration and make it clear that you are motivated, hardworking and determined to get abroad.

Make a Video

Campaigns with personal videos increase their success odds by more than two times! Make it short 1-3 minutes. Clearly express your goals and intentions. Make sure the video includes a clear call to action. Remember your asking people to help you reach your goal of becoming a global citizen. Don't be afraid to show your excitement. Enthusiasm is key! Save your video on YouTube, Vimeo or as an iPhone file.

Start Building Excitement

A few weeks before you launch your campaign, consider sending out an email to your network of friends and family or posting on Facebook your upcoming plans. Hold events and remind your attendees when you are launching. Use social media to build intrigue. Create a travel blog or use other social media sites to promote your upcoming trip. A soft launch can be a very effective way of gaining support and building your network. The first time someone hears about your study abroad campaign might not be the best time to include a request for money.

CREATE YOUR CAMPAIGN

You have written your pitch, gathered a few images, made a video and informed your network of potential supporters of your upcoming campaign. Now it is time to build your campaign.

Create your campaign on [Indiegogo](#). Click [here](#) to create a campaign linked to our partner page. If you go directly to Indiegogo without using our unique URL, you will need to have your campaign linked to our page by contacting alumni@eap.ucop.edu

Set your Goal

Indiegogo offers different funding options. Flexible Funding allows you to keep your contributions whether or not you hit your goal. Fixed Funding means you only keep your contributions if you hit your goal. We strongly suggest you select Flexible Funding.

Make sure your goal is realistic. Your goal should reflect the size of your network. Expect to raise at least 30% of your goal from within your own network. You will not be able to change your goal once you launch, but you can continue to receive gifts once your goal has been reached. We recommend that you set a reasonable goal for a specific project or expense. Examples include: \$1,250 to cover airfare, \$500 to cover a specific travel excursion, \$2,000 to cover books or program fees not covered by scholarships or financial aid, \$1,000 to cover the cost of meals for a semester. Unless you have thousands of followers on social media, be prepared to set a reasonable and attainable goal.

Set your Campaign Stop Date

Campaigns that are six weeks or 40 days are the most successful. Make sure to leave about two weeks between the end of your campaign and the date you need your funds. Consider ending your campaign on a Sunday. Many supporters will make their donations on a weekend.

Creating your Perks

Perks or rewards are a key part of crowdfunding. Keep your perks simple and inexpensive. We recommend offering a limited amount of perks. Remember that every contributor should receive an immediate and personal thank you letter or email from you.

Good examples of perks include:

For \$25 you will send a postcard

For \$50 you will send a written letter

For \$100 you will offer a Skype Session or create a video to share via Facebook or email

Most importantly, always follow through with your promises. Do not offer anything you are unable to distribute. For additional rules on acceptable perks, go to Indiegogo [Terms of Use](#).

Set up to Receive Funds

You can have funds distributed to a Bank Account or PayPal account by following the online instructions. The bank information depends upon what country your bank account is located in. You will be prompted to provide your bank account information only once your campaign has received its first contribution by credit card. Learn more about how to set up your bank account to receive contributions.

Contributions given via PayPal to Flexible Funding campaigns can be accessed immediately by campaign owners. Contributions given via PayPal to Fixed Funding campaigns can be accessed by campaign owners once the campaign goal has been met. Learn how to prep your PayPal account to receive funds.

SPREAD THE WORD

Email

Get people excited about your campaign. Email is a great way to directly reach out to people in your network. Make sure to explain your campaign clearly, make a personal ask for their contribution and include a link to your online campaign. If they are unable to give, ask them to help by spreading the word. Avoid spamming your network. Sending out individual one-on-one requests will take longer, but will likely result in more contributions. Most people are very busy, so you will need to send reminders. A message every couple of weeks will be welcomed. Say thank you, and ask your friends and family to share your campaign with their networks. You never know who will be interested in your campaign until you ask!

Social Media

Engaging audiences online is crucial to gaining awareness. Connect with your preexisting network and also connect with individuals and organizations that you don't know – but who might be interested in your campaign. The ability to post and share pictures, video and more will makes social media a very dynamic medium on which to share your campaign. Use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest. Link to your campaign in as many places as possible and ask your friends to like or forward your campaign as well. Celebrate milestones on social media – when you reach 50% funded or your 20th donor. Make an announcement when your campaign is about to end. Build last minute momentum to complete your campaign.

Updates

During your campaign, use the “Update” feature on Indiegogo often – at least weekly. Let them know what you are doing to prepare for your trip. Use images. Updates are posted to your campaign and sent to everyone who has contributed to your campaign. Updates will help build momentum and create a sense of urgency. Make sure to always thank everyone for their consideration and support!

AFTER YOUR CAMPAIGN ENDS

Show Appreciation

You can do this in an update but it is important to send a personalized email too. As part of your thank you, let your contributors know when they can expect to receive their perks.

Follow up on Perks

Continue relationships and communication with your contributors and followers through your social media website/blog. If you are going to be delivering awards upon return to the U.S., make sure to communicate that to your donors. Also be sure to let everyone know the best way to follow you while you are abroad.

Think Ahead

Take a moment to think about your campaign. Was it a success? What went well and what could be improved? If you need additional funds, consider launching a follow up campaign. Make sure to update your old campaign with a link to your new campaign.

Cultivate Relationships and Build a Network of Support

Don't miss out on a great opportunity to build a network of supporters that can be useful for your future academic and career goals. When you return home, continue to steward your contributors, friends and family who supported your campaign and your study abroad experience. Always keep your network updated with your accomplishments, internships, research projects and academic successes.

For questions, contact your UCEAP office on campus or advisor directly. In addition, some campuses have assigned a staff member to help with crowdfunding campaigns:

UC Berkeley – Scott McElhinney scottmc@berkeley.edu

UCLA – Danilo Bonilla Bonilla@ieo.ucla.edu or Vito Grillo Grillo@ieo.ucla.edu

UC Merced – Jennifer Heinrich jheinrich@ucmerced.edu

UC Santa Barbara – Ryan Riffenburgh ryan.riffenburgh@ucsb.edu

UC Santa Cruz – Christopher Hanson cjhanson@ucsc.edu

UC San Diego – Kelly O'Sullivan kosullivan@ucsd.edu