

Your project **DAL** Campaign Toolkit

Dream it, build it, launch it



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

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What is fundraising?

Fundraising is the process of seeking financial support for a charity, cause, or other enterprise (Oxford Languages online). In simple terms, fundraising means asking people to donate to help a charity, cause or project that needs support. Fundraising is a lot of work, and the more organized you can be with your approach, the better. We're here to help set you up for success. While many donors will give online or in-person, you may also want to pursue sponsorships. It is important to understand the difference for Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) tax implications.



Terminology:

Donation: A charitable gift that is given for philanthropic reasons, with no expectation of benefit in return. Donations are eligible for a tax receipt.

Sponsorship: The act of working with a company or organization to provide financial support for your project in exchange for a marketing benefit, such as displaying a logo or including a company name in promotional materials. Because there is a promotion of the sponsor organization, *sponsorships are not eligible for a tax receipt*.

Note: When a company or organization contributes to your project with no expectation of a benefit, their contribution is eligible for a tax receipt.

In-kind donation: Some organizations or businesses may choose to offer you a physical item (e.g., materials for your construction project or free printing of materials) or other form of support (e.g., use of their space or equipment, software subscription, etc.) instead of cash. This is called an in-kind donation or sponsorship.

Note: In-kind donations *are not* automatically eligible for a tax receipt.

Dal's Community Giving team can help if you have questions about the tax-receipt eligibility of a contribution. Contact us at projectdal@dal.ca.

What is projectDAL?

projectDAL is Dal's own peer-to-peer crowdfunding platform. Campaign creators can easily share their fundraising projects with their networks and provide them with a simple and direct way to give.



How does it work?

projectDAL can be used by any member of the Dal community, including students, faculty, staff, and alumni. *For eligibility, the campaign must benefit teaching, learning, and the overall student experience.* This includes scholarships and bursaries, new equipment or technology, and funding for class trips, conferences or events. All campaigns must be endorsed by a Dal faculty member, program manager, or staff advisor. For research projects, they must be vetted through the appropriate graduate studies department and/or receive peer-reviewed status.

There are no fees associated with setting up and running a campaign on projectDAL. Typically, projects aim to raise anywhere from \$2,000 to \$15,000. When the project closes, the funds will be transferred to the Dalhousie department or account associated with the project.

The Office of Advancement manages the projectDAL site and oversees campaigns. We are here to provide support and help you make your goals a reality. Ultimately, **the project and its success are your responsibility**, but we will stay in touch throughout the process.

Questions? Contact Dal's Office of Advancement at projectdal@dal.ca or 902-494-8801.

Why use projectDAL?

Hundreds of initiatives and thousands of dreams have been realized through crowdfunding.

When fundraising through projectDAL, your project will be approved and recognized by Dal, building trust and credibility with your supporters. You will have the support of the Community Giving team, and your supporters can give online easily and receive a charitable tax receipt.

Independent crowdfunding platforms do not provide donors with tax receipts, and many of these platforms charge a service fee, so you receive less funding from each donation than working directly with Dal.



How do you create a campaign?

Once we receive your application, we'll be in touch to schedule a meeting and explore how we can help make your campaign a success! After your application is approved, you'll gain access to helpful fundraising tips and tools to support the creation and promotion of your campaign.

Applying is easy—just complete the online application by answering a few questions. If you're unsure about your project's eligibility, please reach out to us at projectdal@dal.ca before submitting your application.

Your Campaign from Start to Finish

Getting Started

Part 1: Setting up your campaign

Setting the goal

How much money do you need to raise? This is important to think through carefully before embarking on a fundraising project. You need to set a clear measurable goal and break it down to how the money will be used. Rather than saying, “we want to raise money for the sports team” – a measurable goal would be, “we want to raise \$1,000 for the sports team, \$600 dollars for new uniforms for 10 players and \$400 for 4 new pieces of equipment.”



Duration

Decide how long the campaign will run. You should aim to have your project completed within 60 days or less. Make sure you’ve set aside the time required to engage with supporters and promote your campaign.



Telling your story

Ask yourself, why are you fundraising for this project? What about it excites and motivates you? What difference will the funds make? Why should someone support this cause? There are spaces on the project application to answer these questions. Think about what brings your project to life, engages your audience and gives them reason to donate. Don’t forget to proofread and ask for feedback for revisions. A good pitch is clear, concise and engaging.

Illustrate with photos

Include compelling team pictures for the campaign pages. Use the best photo as the main image on your landing page. If there are any other photos which can help illustrate your campaign, use those in posts on social media. Be sure to get consent of anyone (team members and others) in the photo before sharing them.



Create and upload your video

Make a short video (two minutes or less) to introduce yourselves and explain your commitment to the project. Speak directly to supporters in clear, engaging language and encourage them to share the campaign with their friends and networks. Let your personality shine and share your personal connection to the project.



Consider your network

projectDAL gives you the platform, your team has to leverage it. The idea behind crowdfunding is to get smaller donations from a lot of people. The larger your network is the more successful your campaign will be – and the reality is you know more people than you think.



Part 2: Pre-campaign buzz

Once you've set up your crowdfunding page, it's time to promote your campaign.

How will you get the word out?

Consider expanding your ways of communicating to both current and potential supporters to maximize your campaign's potential. Email, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and other social media platforms are all excellent ways to spread the word to your key audiences.

Who will help you?

You'll need campaign champions to support the fundraising effort and get the word out for your project. Build a team to help expand your reach and pool resources. You may want to identify members to lead communications, donor stewardship, and other tasks, for example.



Are there other ways to share your message?

Consider offline events, or student, community, or industry groups who could help. Local (or beyond!) organizations may also be interested in what you're up to.



All set?

Carefully review your campaign content and pages once more to make sure you've covered all angles.



Private preview - once live

Consider letting your close friends, family and campaign champions know that your campaign is coming before you start to promote it to the broader public. Make sure you can count on them for the initial donations that give your campaign momentum right from the start. Campaigns that bring in 20-30% of their goal within the first two weeks are most likely to succeed.



Public launch

Next, you should launch publicly and start to reach out to friends of friends, influencers, and any other audiences you think may be interested in your project.

During the Campaign

Promoting your project - share your campaign

Word of mouth

Talk about your project in your own circles and with others to get people excited about the campaign. Think about how you would describe your campaign to a friend in less than a minute.



Send emails

Describe the project to your own contacts, ask people to contribute or share it with their friend groups, include the link to your campaign page and be vocal that every little contribution helps. Use the templates we provided for guidance, but personalize your emails before sending. Then be sure to follow up with thank you emails and keep supporters updated on your progress.



Social media

This is where the power of the crowd really comes into play. Engage with your contacts to promote your campaign, ask for donations, share updates, and have some fun!

- Share your campaign (include the direct link).
- Ask your friends to share it.
- Post updates about your campaign – acknowledge new donors, count down the days, share relevant news and pictures.
- Follow trends.
- Thank your donors – double-check they approved the sharing of their name first!
- Follow people who are interested in your campaign.
- Use different apps to create interesting and appropriate content.
- Find new followers.

Use your email signature

Insert a direct link to the campaign site in your email signature. This way you build attention around our campaign every time you send an email.



Events

Attend relevant events where you can spread the word about your campaign and find people who would contribute.

Don't forget the link! In all written communication, ensure that you have included the link so donors can easily access the project's page. For in-person communication, have a QR code for donors to scan and link directly to your campaign site.



After Your Campaign

Share your success!

- Follow up with your donors and supporters – what are your next steps now that you've secured funding?
- Continue to take pictures to show progress or celebrate events and milestones on your page.
- Send emails and say thank you to donors.
- Use social media to share the success of your campaign.
- Send a follow-up email one to three months post campaign to share what your team was able to accomplish thanks to donor support!

6 Tips for Crowdfunding Success

1

Create a strong description of your campaign

People need to easily understand what you're trying to accomplish. The more you specify what you need and how it will benefit students, the more likely you are to get the response you want.

2

Set a realistic goal

In order to meet your goal, set reasonable expectations. People want to be part of something successful, so set a goal that meets your needs but feels achievable to potential donors.

3

Use your network

People in your network are both potential donors and campaign ambassadors. Consider how your family, friends, professors and community organizations can help support your campaign.

4

Create clear and compelling communications

Think about how you can effectively share your campaign and what channels will reach your network (social media, direct emails, etc.) Strong visuals like photos and videos can make your communications more engaging.

5

Share updates about your campaign

Once a person makes a gift or helps share your campaign's message, your connection to them doesn't end. It's important to keep your supporters updated about the campaign's progression, so consider updating them when milestones are reached.

6

Thank your donors

Thank your supporters thoroughly and multiple times. Not only because your campaign's success depends on them, but also because you may want to enlist their support in the future.



Email Template Examples

Preview for Family and Friends Email Sample

Subject Line: Launching [Campaign Title] on projectDAL

Hi [First Name]!

We are so excited to announce the launch of our projectDAL campaign, [Campaign Title]. This is a sneak peek – just for you as a close [friend/family member] – before we go public!

[Summary of pitch from projectDAL site]

We're asking you to support our project either by spreading the word or by donating. Your support will help to create momentum early on, which is important to the overall success of the campaign.

We encourage you to please check out our projectDAL site [link] and to follow us on [choice of social media]. We'll be sure to keep you updated with our progress!

Thank you for taking the time to read this email, learn a little more about us, and hopefully provide some support. Every little bit helps.

Sincerely,

[Your name] and the [Campaign Title] team

Introductory Thank You Email Sample

Subject line: Thank you for supporting our projectDAL campaign

Hello [First Name],

We wanted to send you a note to thank you for your support. Your decision to give a gift to our projectDAL campaign, [Campaign Title], is a powerful endorsement of our project's value and importance.

Your gift is creating opportunities for the success of our campaign and implementation of our project.

We would love to keep you updated on our progress – please check our projectDAL site [link] and follow along on our social media pages. Also, keep an eye out for a mid-campaign email from us updating our supporters on project news and fundraising milestones.

Thank you again for your support!

Sincerely,

[Campaign Title] Team

Mid-Campaign Email Sample

Subject line: [Campaign Title] is picking up steam - thanks to folks like you!

Hello all!

We're at [milestone] in our campaign and still going strong towards our goal! [insert exciting update connected to milestone, or news clip or somewhere else your project has been advertised].

We're excited about the possibilities this increased exposure will bring to our campaign.

Please share our campaign with your networks, letting them know that you've already made your donation. Here's the link [insert link].

We really appreciate your support and look forward to sending news of our next milestone!

Sincerely,

[Campaign Title] Team

Campaign Conclusion Email Samples

Subject line: EXCITING UPDATE: [Campaign Title] goal has been reached!

Hey there,

We have some exciting news to share as our campaign wraps up – [Campaign Title] has reached/surpasses its fundraising goal of [fundraising goal/fundraising goal including additional amount and the total amount]! Wow! Our team is excited by this result and astounded by the care and generosity of our supporters. We cannot wait to begin our important work on [campaign initiative(s)].

Of course, this would not have been possible without your support and sharing – so thank you, so very much!

To keep updated on how we are progressing, news items and what's next for [campaign title], please check out our website [website url] and social media pages.

Thank you again for all your help in making our project a success – we can't wait to show you what we can do!

Sincerely,

[Campaign Title] Team