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# How to Raise Money if You Aren't a Fundraiser



If I can  
do it...

Fundraising is the gentle  
art of teaching the joy of  
giving.



*please support our*  
**fundraiser**  
*thank*

# *Fundraising is* **Partnership**

Turn your shared vision into a reality

**The strongest fundraising programs**

Listen before asking

Understand donor motivations

Create authentic, ongoing engagement

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Why do I HAVE  
to raise money?



# Impact.

Nearly two out of three academic libraries fundraise, and 95.7% of research libraries do it.



63.4% cite rising technology costs as a primary reason

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51.2% - 51.8% cite insufficient institutional funding

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51.2% cite increasing cost of materials (journals databases, books)


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41.7% fundraise for special projects (renovations, digitization, innovation)

Why do  
we **NEED**  
to raise money?

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The background of the slide is a dark, semi-transparent image of several US dollar bills, including \$100 and \$20 bills, scattered across the frame. The bills are slightly out of focus, creating a textured, financial backdrop.

Academic library  
fundraising efforts are  
successful nearly 70%  
of the time!



# Personal

# Observations



Have a development person with you.

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Be prepared to answer the “Whys?”

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# Reframe *the Library*

Not books— but student success

Not space— but an innovation hub

Not a cost center— but an impact engine

Not a quiet place to study— but the engine that powers everything



# The BEST

# asks are:



Specific

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Aligned with the donor's interests

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Connected to tangible outcomes



*Make it clear that part of the  
is about celebrating the  
success of the donor.*



People  
always go  
after  
people  
when they  
are on top.

Find out their experiences with the university before making an ask.

Keep it student focused.

Is there a win-win?

Offer options.





Don't just think about money.  
What else might you need?

Ask advice of others before  
approaching someone you don't  
know.

Don't shut down the gift if the  
donor is interested in another part  
of the university.

Don't assume big names are going  
to rush to support you.

Keep friends in the loop.

# General Tips

Start with a clear, compelling case for support.

Why should someone care?

- Tie the fundraising priorities to a mission + outcomes.
- Focus on specific tangible goals.
- Use real student and faculty stories.
- Show urgency.

Segment and know your donors.

Not all donors are the same. Treat them differently.

- Alumni
- Major donors
- Corporations/industry partners
- Foundations
- Parents and families
- Community leaders



# Best Practices

Personalize outreach based on interest and past giving.

Build donor personas to guide messaging.

Universities have a unique value to offer industry.

Align proposals with workforce development and research.

Offer mutual benefits such as internships, branding, and research collaboration.

Build long-term partnerships not one-off gifts.

# Thank and recognize the donor.



Thank donors quickly and personally.

Show impact.

Recognize donors publicly (when appropriate).

Maintain ongoing communication, not just when asking.

*A well-stewarded donor becomes a repeat and often larger donor.*

