



WHAT IS CROWDFUNDING?

Crowdfunding is a way to raise money online over a short period of time from individuals whose contributions are combined to reach a set target for a specific project. In return for support, you can offer 'rewards' as an incentive. When it works, it really works, particularly if your campaign goes viral. However, there is more to crowdfunding than setting up a crowdfunding page and sitting back to watch the money roll in.

+PROS

- Low cost
- Quick to develop and deliver
- Potential of reaching new donors
- Can raise profile of your organisation
- Possibility of campaign going viral

-CONS

- Time (particularly during the campaign)
- Social media skills required (and ideally an existing social media presence)
- Crowdfunding platform fees
- 'All or nothing': Some platforms only pay out if you reach your target or 'tipping point'
- Not good for general fundraising

EXAMPLE: Legs4Africa

Legs4Africa recycles prosthetic limbs from the UK to help amputees in Africa. Its [crowdfunder](#) on [Crowdfunder.co.uk](#) raised £5,500 from 120 supporters in 35 days. The funds were used to send over 200 prosthetic limbs from the UK to The Gambia. The money was also used to make a short film to document the project's impact. Rewards included thanks on social media, a Legs4Africa t-shirt and credit in its film.

GET READY – PLAN & PREPARE

Things to consider

- **The project:** Do you have a specific project that you need support for? Is it something that will appeal to your supporters and others to back?
- **The team:** Do you have the time, skills and experience on your team?
- **The timing:** What else is happening that could affect your campaign's success? Other projects? Christmas? Summer holidays?

- **The platform:** Which platform is best for you? [Kickstarter](#), [Indiegogo](#), [Crowdfunder](#) and others have different benefits with different fee structures, online support etc.
- **The target:** How much do you need? What is achievable and realistic in the timescale? Most campaigns run for around 30 days. Remember crowdfunding platform fees.
- **The rewards:** What can you offer? Rewards typically focus around thanks (e.g. thank you tweets, honour walls), experiences (e.g. meet the founder, dinner with your patron) and physical items (e.g. t-shirts, posters, a sample of the product you're raising funds to produce, if a product).

Your crowdfunding page

- **Things to include:** Eye-catching headline. Images. Video. Target and rewards. Contact details. Updates. Integrate social media to encourage sharing with hashtags, links etc.
- **Video:** Tell your story. Talk directly to the camera to engage supporters. Try to answer who, what, why, where, when and how. Tell people what you'd like them to do and mention your rewards. Keep it short (1-2 minutes). If you don't have video equipment, don't worry! Many successful campaigns have been filmed using a smartphone.
- **Text:** Be clear and concise. What will you do with the money? Why is it needed? Write as if you're writing to one person to avoid general statements. Avoid jargon and acronyms and use sub-headings and bullet points to break up the text.

Communications

- **Plan:** Create a plan, including how often you're going to post/send updates, who is responsible for what and what social media outlets you're going to use.
- **Research** press contacts, high-profile supporters and others in your network with large social media followings who could help promote your campaign. Contact them in advance to make them aware of your plans and to ask for their support.
- **Prepare** communications in advance, including press releases, website copy, emails, social media posts, images etc. Create a media enquiries page with contact details.

THE CAMPAIGN

- **First donations:** Ask friends and family to give on day 1 to encourage others.
- **Ask contacts to share:** Make it easy for them with shareable posts/template messages.
- **Media:** Send press release and follow-up with media contacts.
- **Ask, ask and ask again:** Build excitement and momentum by posting updates regularly and engaging with supporters.
- **Final week/days:** Most donations often come in the final days. Create a sense of urgency as the deadline nears: “[number] days left to support [project]. We need your help!”

BEYOND THE CAMPAIGN: THANK YOU & UPDATES

- **Final update:** Include the total raised, your plans and where people can follow progress.
- **Continue to fundraise:** “If you missed the deadline, you can still support [name] here.”
- **Rewards & thanks:** Thank supporters and send rewards. Check they are happy to receive further contact from you. Provide regular project updates.

GOOD LUCK!

