

Top tips for Gap Year fundraising

There are a hundred and one different ways to earn and raise money for your gap year. The key to effective fundraising is to start early, organise your time, spread your efforts over as many areas as is possible and leave no stone unturned. Remember, this is only a guide and not to be stuck to religiously... you will form your own ideas either from experience or a flash of inspiration. Don't be afraid to use them; they may give you more success than you originally imagine!

Before you start: You need to have a clear idea of exactly **HOW MUCH** money you need to raise, **WHEN** you need to raise it by, and exactly **WHAT** you are raising money for. The latter may seem obvious but you need to make sure you are not caught out by questions from people you are asking for donations.

Donations:

FROM COMPANIES: Target those which will have a direct interest in what you are doing and in sponsoring you will reach their target market. Let them know exactly how they can help you and how you can help them, i.e. through advertising and promotion on a website or at an event etc.

FROM CHARITABLE & GRANT MAKING TRUSTS: Applications to these are very competitive and most trusts are very specific about who they can and cannot give money to. You need to research in detail whether you fit their criteria and then highlight as much as possible where their objectives and yours combine. Local charities are likely to be more accessible to you. Take a look at The Association of Charitable Funds "[Applying to a charitable trust or foundation](#)" leaflet. Charitable bodies such as the Lions Clubs or Rotary Clubs may also be willing to help you.

When applying for grants specify which part of your year they will be going towards. For example, highlight voluntary work when applying to Charitable Trusts and any expeditions when applying to places such as the [Royal Geographical Society](#) or other travel bursaries.

Copies of [The Directory of Grant Making Trusts](#), The Directory of Scottish Grant Making Trusts, [The Directory of Social Change](#) and The Charities Digest 2009 should all be available for reference in your local library.

SCHOOL & UNIVERSITIES: Many schools, universities and other organizations have travel bursaries to which you may be able to apply. These are generally not well advertised and it is up to students to ask if they exist. Some will have deadlines for applications and most will require you to write a report or similar on your return.

FAMILY & FRIENDS: Although it may be embarrassing to ask, few family and friends would say no to sponsoring you to do a parachute jump or similar! They may also be willing to help out in other ways, i.e. selling tickets for events, baking cakes or attending car boot sales.

If raising money for a charity, www.justgiving.com or Virgin Money Giving provide an excellent way of spreading the word amongst your friends and family and is an easy way for them to donate to what you are doing.

Entrepreneurial Ventures

ORGANISING AN EVENT: In local bars, village halls, clubs etc. Make the point that all proceeds will be going towards your gap year and maybe even include a brief presentation about what you will be doing during the event. Remember people will be unwilling to pay for you to experience the nightlife of Asia!

SPONSORED EVENTS: Generally the more bizarre the idea, the more publicity you should be able to get. However, any real challenge should inspire a good few people to sponsor you. Write to local newspapers to raise the profile of your event.

Other ideas could include **RAFFLES** (there are certain conditions which by law you have to adhere to), **CAR BOOT & JUMBLE SALES, BUSKING** (make sure you have permission from the local council), **USE YOUR TALENTS** – make cards, print t-shirts etc.

Paid Work:

Most effective and reliable form of fundraising and potentially a good way of gaining useful work experience. In general bars, pubs, shops and restaurants are on the lookout for additional staff in the run up to Christmas and other holidays.

Sign up with **RECRUITMENT** and **TEMPING AGENCIES** You can join more than one and badger them for work. Another idea is to join **CATERING COMPANIES** and do some waiter/waitressing in the evenings or weekends that you can fit around other obligations. **PROMOTIONS COMPANIES** offer high paid opportunities for the more extrovert, however it is normally on an ad hoc basis.

Beware of **COMMISSION ONLY** jobs – you rarely earn as much as they promise.

Raise awareness of your efforts through local **NEWSPAPERS, RADIO STATIONS, LEAFLETS** or creating your own **WEBPAGE**. This way you can also advertise companies or organisations that have sponsored you.

Finally remember to always **THANK** those who have helped you!