



Getting Started Fundraising

First Steps Checklist

- Fundraising Plan
 - Create month-by-month fundraising plan using this [Template](#)
 - Check your upcoming fund
 - List 2-4 things you'll focus on each month to reach your fundraising goal
 - **Email to your Regional Director for feedback**
- Fundraising Letter
 - Write your fundraising letter to let friends and family know what you're doing and how they can support
 - Use the example and letterhead provided in your Participant Center resources
 - **Email to your Regional Director for feedback**
- Donor List
 - Begin collecting 150 potential donors in your [Fundraising Contact List](#)
 - The more people you ask, the more you'll fundraise
- Fundraising Page
 - Customize your fundraising page with a photo, personal story, and unique url
 - Find your [Classy fundraising page](#) with a picture and story
- Begin Fundraising
 - Reach out directly to donors - start with close friends and family or even make a donation yourself to get the ball rolling
 - Review The Ability Experience's mission, programs and history to be able to answer questions from potential donors
 - Work on developing your pitch and asking for donations
 - Spread your message through social media aft you've reached 20% of your goal
 - Follow up with donors, thank them and shares updates

Fundraising Methods

- **Face-to-face:** The most overlooked method of fundraising is so important to do. This is where you develop your *pitch*. Phone calls also work great!
- **Letter & email campaign:** This is your #1 tool for fundraising. It will help you reach everyone on your potential donor list and personalize each solicitation.
- **Events & presentations:** This is where you can get creative reach large groups of people.
- **Sponsorships & media:** Take your fundraising to the next level. Reach out to businesses you frequent or local media outlets that would be interested in your story.
- **Social media:** Use this to spread the message to everyone in your network. Get creative with competitions or incentives to entice donations. Share your progress as well!



Tips & Common Mistakes

- Wait until you've hit 20% of your goal before going *public*. We call this the *silent phase*. Talk to your biggest supporters first to set the tone for successful fundraising when you start sharing with your broader network.
- Get comfortable asking for donations. We know it can feel awkward at first, but you'll get better at it the more you do it. Remember, the worst thing anyone can say is, "no."
- Make your solicitations as personal as possible. Donors aren't just supporting our mission, they are also supporting you, so make them feel appreciated.
- Be persistent. Often times, it takes 3 or 4 asks before someone makes a donation. Following up shows your commitment and creates a sense of urgency.
- Read some great [advice from recent successful fundraisers](#).
- Have a friend look over your fundraising letter and page to make sure it answers all the important questions and avoids grammar and spelling mistakes.
- Check out our complete fundraising guide to help make a fundraising plan and reach your goal! You can always reach out to an Ability Experience staff member for support.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I submit donations?

Donations are accepted online through Classy, by phone, or check. [Instructions HERE](#).

Are donations tax-deductible?

Yes, The Ability Experience is a 501(c)3 non-profit, monetary donations made to The Ability Experience on your behalf are tax deductible.

What is The Ability Experience tax-ID # or EIN?

The Ability Experience's tax-id # or EIN is 58-1588777.

What Is Peer-To-Peer Fundraising?

P2P or social fundraising is a type of crowdsourcing that enables participants or supporters to fundraise on behalf of an organization or cause. The key to its success is its ability to expand the network and reach of a campaign through teams, fundraisers, and supporters who all have the ability to share their stories and support. This makes it extremely effective and easy to do!

What Is Classy?

Classy is the largest peer to peer fundraising service for non-profits. It's the "GoFundMe" of charities. It's simple interface, low fees, and adaptable fundraising campaigns make it the fundraising platform of choice for The Ability Experience.