

# Crowdfunding for Nonprofits: Setting Up the Campaign



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# Setting up the campaign

Things you will need to include:

1. Who you are
2. What the project is about
3. Video
4. Photos

# Who you are

This is the one thing a nonprofit might think that it is solved from the beginning. “We have it in our statuses” or/and “We have it in our website” some will say.

Nevertheless, these “who we are” can be either misleading or not up-to-date. In any case, they are not customized and targeted.

Careful rewriting might be required.

Be clear and to the point – potential donors will not stay long on your campaign’s page.

# What the project is about

This is the place to be specific and with as much information as possible in a concrete and sharp way.

You need to set specific targets – these must be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound.

A timetable of the execution of the project is always a plus.

## What the project is about (2)

Put some effort in explaining the cause: why is it important to implement this project?

“Why” is your story. The narrative. “Why” is the reason for people to support your vision/campaign.

Usually a nonprofit does not do well on this section: it knows the urgency and the reasons why the project needs to be implemented, but it fails to communicate it to an external audience.

## What the project is about (3)

By being rather descriptive and providing information on how the project will evolve, as well as what its impact will be, you gain points on how organized and effective you are: keep in mind that many of your potential donors do not know your organization – they have been convinced by someone else to check your nonprofit and your campaign!

Earning their trust is goal number 1!

## What the project is about (4)

Go into much detail about the project's impact – this means both quantity and quality!

How many beneficiaries will you have?

What kind of change will the project bring into their life?

Find a balance between a technocratic approach and being sentimental.

# Videos

As it happens with everything in the digital world, visualization is a must!

Creating a specialized video can be crucial in getting the engagement you want and pushing people to (a) donate and (b) disseminate your call for support.

Surveys indicate that a video can increase both the number and the size of donations.

A video is not difficult to produce, it just needs some planning.



## Videos (2)

It can be “amateur style”, or you can use a professional for creating it.

There are a lot of professionals that would love to volunteer or support a nonprofit for a good cause for a small fee.

But it is ok to have a not so professional video, you are a nonprofit, you channel most of your funding to your cause.

# Videos (3)

## Overall tips:

- Try to keep it short – no more than 1:30.
- Try to be creative in order to inspire and engage.
- Having people from the nonprofit talk is positive – utilize “supers” in order to indicate their position within the organization (e.g. Director, Project Manager, etc).
- You can show part of your everyday life (the part related to the project/campaign).
- Do not show faces if you are not granted the necessary permissions (respect the GDPR guidelines).

# Photos

It is highly suggested that the campaign contains photos.

These should be linked to the nonprofit, the campaign and the beneficiaries, bringing a visual story-telling of what the project is about.

As in the case of producing a video, some persons of the project team must be present, ideally working in the field.

## Photos (2)

Most platforms have designated “areas” in the template of each campaign for photos, while some have restrictions on size and number.

Check on these and prepare some photos of good quality – this will help, among others, your projection as a well-organized nonprofit.

Always secure that you have the required permissions to use the pictures you have selected. Especially when children are portrayed, it is better to “blur” their faces.

# An overview of best practices

Contrary to general beliefs, a crowdfunding campaign requires a lot of preparatory work and ex ante, interim and ex post attention!

Furthermore, it requires a well equipped team that can prepare everything required and be ready to focus on the communication of the campaign some days before its official start.

# Target audience

Most nonprofits understand crowdfunding as a way to reach out to larger national audiences. This is why in a lot of campaigns – especially those in national crowdfunding platforms – only local language is used.

This is wrong, even if one decides to focus mainly on the local crowd.

# Target audience

By having the same text in the English language and placing some subtitles in the “must have” video, you expand your potential reach to almost everyone online.

Of course this is very optimistic: in reality, the reach will depend on (a) how many people you have disseminated your campaign to and (b) how many ambassadors you have succeeded in finding.

## Target audience (2)

But there are numerous people with cosmopolitan/global views that could support a nice cause in any given country.

And there is always a **diaspora** that could not be comfortable enough to read and understand the local language – especially 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation people. Nevertheless, they are sensitive towards their previous country or the place of birth of their relatives, so they are receptive to donating for national causes!



## Target audience (3)

Especially if you select an international audience, then keep in mind that these people may be unaware of the overall (or the specifics) of the national context, so when explaining what you will do, avoid wording that is hard to understand without really knowing the context.

A good way to check on this, is to send the text you have already prepared for a campaign to a person you know living outside your country.

# Dissemination

Dissemination takes place mainly electronically: social media, emails, maybe a newsletter.

But you also need to send press statements to various journalists and media – always with the link to the campaign!

Creating a list of such an audience, updating existing databases and trying to get the contact details of key people internationally and nationally is a “must”.

Success of reaching out to some social media “influencers” can also support your campaign.

## Dissemination (2)

A “light” version of dissemination should take place a few days prior to the launch of the campaign.

A “save the date” or some posts indicating “stay tuned” are crucial – in general, preparing your audience for what will happen is a “must”!

## Dissemination (3)

When the campaign is launched, post a “we are live” relevant post.

Keep your audience updated, give the impression that every moment something relevant to the campaign takes place.

Post on the development of the targeted amount (e.g. our team is thrilled that we already reached 1.000 euros!) or the percentage of the target reach (e.g. already at 20% of our goal!)

## Dissemination (4)

- If you do not have a significant change in the amount reached at some point (this is expected) post something relevant to the project itself (e.g. “we booked the X thing for the first implementation day”).
- Do keep track of what you post and cross-check that it is based on real developments.
- For making your life easier schedule some of the posts in advance.
- The idea is that there is always some movement on the campaign updates.

# Donations

All nonprofits have an inner cycle, a “core”, that will probably donate whatever the campaign is about.

As far as your closest potential donors are concerned, contact them and try to coordinate them so to donate at specific points of time during the campaign.

Some of your very inner cycle propose to give you their donation in person and not through the platform for not losing the relevant fee – it is better to go through the platform.

# Donations

This way there will always be some news (which you will also post about!) and the campaign will be and seem rather active – the goal is for others to be aware of it as a goal soon to be reached!

Remember: people want to be with the winners – if there is a high probability that you do not reach your target, some may refrain from donating or disseminating your call.

In general, the first 36-48 hours are crucial for getting the virality and attention you need to reach your funding goal.

# Ex post activity

Never forget to thank your donors – they are the first to ask for their contribution next time, so create or cultivate a relationship!

Be quick in dispatching the declared perks – it will be well perceived.

Stay in touch with your donors, email them your news, invite them to attend some specific events – do not wait to get in touch with them only during the next crowdfunding campaign.

Do not spam!!!

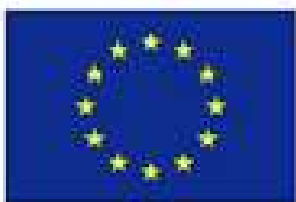


## Additional resources

- <http://www.seerc.org/atsiv/vle/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/trainingNGOs/>
- [www.ngotraining.eu](http://www.ngotraining.eu)

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