

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL AID'S
FUNDRAISING
GUIDE





PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO FUNDRAISING

Going to Kenya to shadow doctors and learn about healthcare in underserved communities sounds pretty great, doesn't it? But the price tag to get there might make it seem unreachable. A two-week trip to Mombasa, Kenya, costs three grand. And that doesn't include airfare.

But before you click away and look for a cheaper opportunity, we have good news for you. You don't have to pay for your whole trip yourself. There's a secret to getting there. It's known as fundraising. And today, in this definitive guide, we're going to walk you through how to raise funds for your trip.

It will take time and effort to raise the funds you need for your trip, but it will be worth it. If you dedicate yourself to the task, we firmly believe that you can succeed. As you read through this guide, we hope the information we provide is useful. Should you have any questions along the way, don't hesitate to contact us. Our team is here to answer any questions you might have.

Following is a list of strategies that have been proven effective for fundraising. We'll go through each one and provide pointers along the way.

A background image showing several hands of different skin tones reaching upwards towards the center, symbolizing support and unity. The image is faded and serves as a backdrop for the text.

STRATEGIES

- 1. Letters of Support
- 2. Network with Professionals
- 3. Create a Profile & Crowdfund
- 4. Campaign Away
- 5. Apply For Scholarships and Grants
- 6. International Medical Aid Scholarships
- 7. Overseas Scholarships/Travel Grants
- 8. Work Part-Time



STRATEGY #1: **LETTERS FOR SUPPORT**

There are two ways you can go about this. You can type an email that you send to everyone on your contact list. Or you can send letters in the mail. If you opt for stamped envelopes, we recommend writing your letters by hand. The more personalized you are, the better chance you'll have of receiving support. Why? Because you're appealing to the emotions of your friends and loved ones. They'll feel more compelled to help you.

What should I include in my letter?

You can almost treat it like a personal statement, only shorter and at a more personalized level. We recommend taking the following steps.

1. Share your dream of being a doctor. Briefly explain why this is so important to you.
2. Talk about International Medical Aid. Share why our organization is important to you and how we'll help you achieve your goals/reach your dreams.
3. Share your total fundraising goal and state how much you need from each person to reach your total goal.
4. Offer to set up a time to meet in person or talk on the phone if they have any more questions. That way, they won't feel put on the spot or obligated to help.



SAMPLE LETTER

Dear Aunt Victoria,

I hope this letter finds you well. I miss you. I'm looking forward to seeing you at Christmas. I can't wait for your candied yams!

My semester here at Baylor University is almost over, and I'm finding ways to spend my summer. As you know, I'm currently enrolled in the medical program here at Baylor. I'm finishing up my freshman year and looking for more experience in the medical field to prepare myself for internships and residency. Even though residency is a ways off, I know that they'll be looking for unique experiences. And I don't believe it's ever too early to start.

I've found an opportunity to go to Arusha, Tanzania, with an organization called International Medical Aid. They take students like me abroad so that we can experience healthcare on an international level. We get to shadow doctors and physician assistants as they work with people who live in remote areas and who don't get the medical care they need. I'll also get to work in field medical clinics and hygiene education programs. For me, going to Arusha feels like the opportunity of a lifetime.

Unfortunately, the trip is out of my reach. I've been able to save up a little over \$1,500, but I need close to \$4,000 to be able to go on this trip. That \$4,000 will cover all the costs involved in the trip: my flights there and back and everything I'll need while I'm in Arusha. I did the math, and if everyone contributes \$100, I'll have all the funds I need to make the trip. But, if you don't have \$100 to spare, anything helps.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this letter. If you have any questions about International Medical Aid or my (fingers crossed) trip to Arusha, I'd be happy to further discuss it with you. I get out of class at noon on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. And I just do homework all day on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so I'll be free.

I love you, Aunt Victoria! I hope all is well with Uncle Bob and my cousins. I miss you all.

Love,
Sammy

Sammy does everything right in this letter.

- She mentions her aunt's delicious candied yams to show that her letter isn't just about her trip to Arusha. At the same time, she gets right to the point so that she doesn't waste Aunt Victoria's time.
- Sammy explains why she wants to go to Arusha and how International Medical Aid is her means to getting there. She speaks in layman terms, meaning that she's down to earth. She doesn't use confusing medical lingo.
- Sammy explains how much money she needs altogether and how much Aunt Victoria can contribute to her overall fund.
- She welcomes Aunt Victoria to ask more questions and shares her schedule to make it as convenient as possible for her aunt.

Following the same steps that Sammy took will ensure a successfully written letter.





STRATEGY #2:

NETWORK WITH PROFESSIONALS

Your friends and family aren't the only ones who can help you. Established doctors in the medical community are always looking for ways to support students. After all, they were in your shoes.

Start off by writing a note to the doctor. Don't send a whole letter—they won't have time to read it. You'll, at best, have your letter scanned. Instead, write them a brief note. Include the following details.

1. State who you are.
2. Explain your medical school journey thus far.
3. Talk about your upcoming trip with International Medical Aid.
4. Ask them if they have time to get coffee with you.
5. Thank them for their time.

Here's an example:

Dear Dr. Lukis,

My name is Hannah O'Brien. I'm currently a freshman at UT Southwestern, where I'm earning my medical degree. To prepare for my future in medicine, I'm hoping to go on a medical trip to Arusha, Tanzania, where I'll get to observe medicine on an international level.

As a respected doctor in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, I wanted to see if you could spare 30 minutes to 1 hour of your day to meet with me. I know you've gone on several medical mission trips, and I'd like to learn from your experiences.

I've included my phone number and email address.

*Sincerely,
Hannah O'Brien*

This note works well because Hannah keeps it short and sweet. She quickly states who she is, what she's preparing for, and what she wants from Dr. Lukis. While she's having a conversation with him, she can casually mention raising funds for her trip. Dr. Lukis will have the opportunity to contribute if he decides to.





STRATEGY #3:

CREATE A PROFILE AND CROWDFUND

The internet is a magnificent tool. It can be used to raise money for a trip with International Medical Aid. You can do something as simple as posting your letter to loved ones in a condensed version for all your social media friends. Post it to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, etc. For more photo-friendly platforms like Instagram and Snapchat, we recommend creating a graphic instead.

The next step is to crowdfund. GoFundMe.com, Razzoo and FundmyTravel are all good resources to use for this. The great thing about these websites is that your donors can contribute any amount. You can post the link(s) to social media or include it in the personal letters you write. This will conveniently allow your donors to help out.

Additionally, International Medical Aid supports students who are raising funds. Tell us about your fundraising goals, and we'll support you!



STRATEGY #4:

CAMPAIGN AWAY

Create a campaign or fundraiser that people can participate in. Host a game night and charge \$5 per person to come. Host a bake sale. No one can turn away a yummy chocolate chip cookie! Clearly advertise that all proceeds from your sales will go toward your trip with International Medical Aid.

If COVID-19 is still a problem when you raise funds, consider a virtual campaign. Here are some ideas.

1. Host a live stream where you share your medical school journey and explain what you'll do on your trip with International Medical Aid. Viewers can donate while they watch.
2. Create a hashtag and offer incentives for people to use your hashtag. For example, offer a \$10 Target gift card as a prize for posting with your hashtag. Every post counts as an entry.
3. Offer a cookie for every \$1 bill that's donated. If 50 people can donate \$1, you'll rake in \$50. (In reality, you'll make \$40 with the cost of the cookie ingredients. Keep that in mind with a fundraiser like this.)

Simply put, there are a dozen ways to fundraise. Good luck with whatever you decide!

International Medical Aid is a federally-registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit. This means that your costs toward your trip with us are tax-deductible. We can provide you and your donors with receipts for your taxes. Consult a tax professional for more details on how to report a 501(c)(3) nonprofit trip on your taxes.





STRATEGY #5:

APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

This might seem like a no-brainer, but did you know that scholarships and grants aren't just for books and tuition? That's right. You can use scholarship funds and grant money to help pay for a medical trip.

Check out websites like Scholarships.com, Scholarship America, and StudentAid.gov to find scholarships to apply for. Go to Grants.gov to see government grants that you might be eligible for.

Also, consult with your university's study abroad office. Many offer scholarships to students. We can also help you. International Medical Aid works with universities on a regular basis, so we understand the process. Reach out to us if you need help navigating university scholarships.



STRATEGY #6:

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL AID SCHOLARSHIPS

International Medical Aid offers a limited number of internal, merit-based scholarships. These scholarships are for college juniors who maintain a 3.8/4.0 GPA. They'll help cover part of the Program Fee (up to \$3000). These scholarships are very selective. Only the most competitive students are invited to apply for them. If your GPA is over 3.8, ask about our internal scholarships.



STRATEGY #7:

OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIPS / TRAVEL GRANTS

In addition to government grants, websites like Go Overseas can help you score the funds you need. Go Overseas funds \$175,000 in scholarships every year. Gilman Scholarship is another valuable resource through which past students have funded their trips. Check out these website to see if they have opportunities that could help you.





STRATEGY #8:

WORK PART-TIME

Finally, if all else fails, get a part-time job to pay for your trip. While this might not be your first choice, you can earn money quickly this way. Plus, you don't have to keep the job once you've reached your goal. It's a good solution if all else fails.


If you're too much of an introvert to ask for help, or if COVID-19 has put everyone in a tough spot, there are a couple more options.


1. Payment plan: You don't have to pay for your trip all at once. If you start early enough, you can pay for your trip in six different payments. If your trip costs \$3,000, that's \$500 for each payment. Just make sure you've made your final payment 30 days before your trip begins.
2. Interest-free financing: This works similarly to the payment plan, only it's subject to credit approval. If you're approved, you can continue paying off your trip after you've returned home.

GOING ABROAD WITH INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL AID

We're excited for you to go abroad on a trip with us! Our interns go with us to gain experience and leave with priceless memories that will last a lifetime. Whether you're going somewhere to Kenya, Tanzania, or another remote location, there's an experience waiting for you.

GET IN TOUCH

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