



# CRUSH FUNDRAISING

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How to Raise Money for  
the Causes You Love.

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# Introduction

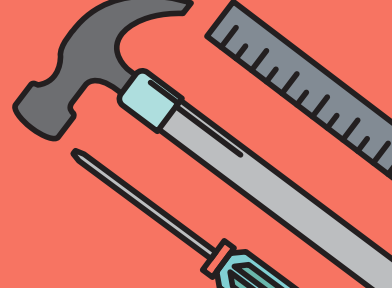
So you've decided to fundraise for your favorite nonprofit organization. Congratulations! You're joining a community of everyday people making a difference for the causes they love. The good news is you don't need to be a fundraising expert to raise a lot of money. This ebook can help you crush your fundraising goals even if you're new to the process.

We'll teach you how to set up your page, ask for donations, and promote your campaign. And there are checklists at the end of each chapter to help you stay on track.

Here we go!

## CHAPTER 1

# Get Started



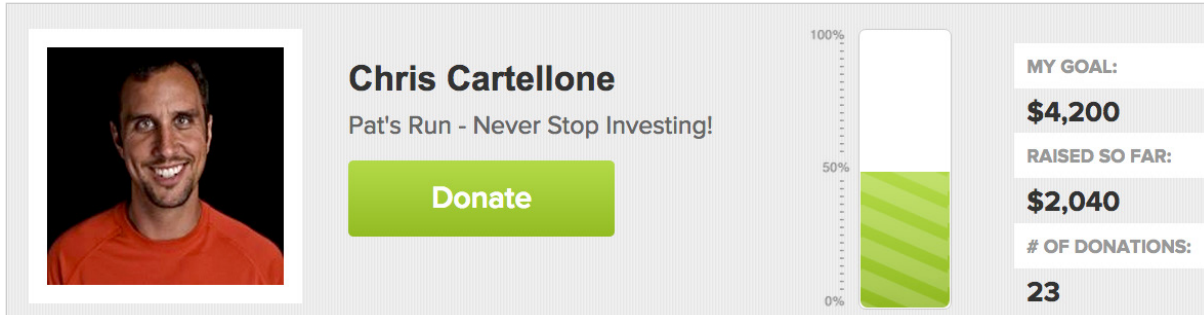
Fundraising is a chance to make a big impact on a cause, even if you can't personally make a big donation. By mobilizing your friends and family, you can help a nonprofit organization reach more people, raise more money, and make a bigger impact.

The first step is an easy one: create your fundraising page. The nonprofit you're supporting should direct you to a registration page that looks something like this:

A screenshot of a web browser window showing a registration page for 'The Bowery Mission'. The page has a light gray header with the organization's logo on the left and a 'LOG IN' button on the right. The main content area has a textured, brownish background. In the center, there is a white box titled 'Create an Account'. Inside this box, there is a blue button with a Facebook 'f' icon and the text 'Sign Up with Facebook'. Below this button is a small line of text: 'By signing up, I agree to the terms and conditions.' Below that is the word 'or'. Underneath is the heading 'Sign Up with Email'. This section contains several input fields: 'Your Name' with sub-fields for 'First Name' and 'Last Name', 'Email Address', 'Create a Password', and 'Date of Birth\*' with dropdown menus for 'Month', 'Day', and 'Year'. At the bottom of this section is a red button with the text 'Sign Up with Email'. Below the red button is another line of text: 'By signing up, I agree to the terms and conditions.'

Your page may come branded with the nonprofit's colors and logo, but you can (and should!) personalize it. You can do this by adding your own pictures or videos to the page. This is your chance to tell everyone why this cause and organization are important to you.

This fundraiser used his page to share his story about why this cause is meaningful to him. This kind of personal touch helps to motivate his readers. Friends, family, and acquaintances will be moved by his story and more likely to give to his page.



The fundraising page for Chris Cartellone features a profile picture of a smiling man in an orange shirt. To the right of the photo is his name, the event title 'Pat's Run - Never Stop Investing!', and a green 'Donate' button. Further right is a progress bar showing 50% completion towards a goal of \$4,200. To the right of the progress bar is a summary table:

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| MY GOAL:        | \$4,200 |
| RAISED SO FAR:  | \$2,040 |
| # OF DONATIONS: | 23      |

*Welcome to my fundraising page!*

*I am a veteran of the Marine Corps and Army National Guard. In 2004 I deployed to Iraq with a Mortar Platoon. This experience helped me appreciate the great achievements and sacrifices of our uniformed service men and women. In 2011, I was selected to become a Tillman Military Scholar. My journey as a scholar has been both an honor and a privilege.*

*I am a Historian and Archaeologist, specializing in shipwrecks. This May 2015 I will graduate from Texas A&M University with a Ph.D. in Anthropology, focused in Nautical Archaeology. My goal is to become a university professor, continue research, and teach students to think critically about the ideas of citizenship, warfare and society. I also want to advocate for student veterans, and continue to be a positive example for veterans in general.*

*With your help, we can help support the next class of Tillman Military Scholars. The Pat Tillman Foundation has financially helped me achieve my educational goals. More importantly, annual leadership summits and networking with fellow scholars have inspired me to achieve greater career goals. Help me support the Pat Tillman Foundation by making a donation. The process is fast, easy, and secure. I truly appreciate any support you can provide. It will benefit a great cause!*

*If you can't make a donation at this point, help me reach my goal by sharing this page on Facebook and Twitter!*

*Or, even better, send an e-mail to friends you think might be interested in contributing and include a link to my page!*

*Thanks so much for your generosity!*

You can also use your page to explain the significance of your fundraising goal and/or ask people to give a specific amount. For example, if you're fundraising to celebrate your 25th birthday, you might ask your friends and family to donate \$25 each. Or if you want to help send underprivileged children to summer camp, you can explain that your goal of \$1,000 will fund one child's two-week stay at camp.

These personal touches help your potential supporters feel more connected to you and the cause you're supporting. With these elements in place, your page is ready to start accepting donations.

Next we will identify all the people in your personal network you can ask to contribute.

### What Should Your Goal Be?

Your nonprofit of choice may have a preset fundraising goal for you or they may ask you to choose your own.

Don't be afraid to be ambitious. While the average individual fundraiser nets \$568, many people have raised tens of thousands of dollars.

You can always change your goal if you need to.

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## CHAPTER 2

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- Subscribe to your organization's email and follow them on social media.
- Celebrate!

# Outline Your Audience

Your network is bigger than you might think.

The power of fundraising is in mobilizing your own personal network of family and friends. Rather than making one gift by yourself, you can get all the people you love involved. You get to share your passion, and the nonprofit you fundraise for gets much-needed support from a wider community.

Even if you're not a "social butterfly", odds are, you have dozens if not hundreds of contacts who might be willing to help. Some of these friends are closer than others, but you never know who might be moved by your story or feel compelled to support your cause.

## Your Inner Circle



When it comes time to ask people to make donations, it's best to start with the people closest to you. Your inner circle is made up of the people you know will be happy to hear from you and want to support you. People like your family and close friends. You

can brainstorm a list of these people first.

Here's what your list might look like:

### MY INNER CIRCLE

| <b>FAMILY</b>  | <b>CLOSE FRIENDS</b>   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mom &amp; Dad</li><li>• Peter (brother)</li><li>• Zoe (sister)</li><li>• Uncle Mark &amp; Aunt Fiona</li><li>• Uncle Geoff</li><li>• Aunt Corina</li><li>• Grandma &amp; Grandpa</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Zach</li><li>• Phyllis</li><li>• Carmen</li><li>• Patrick</li><li>• Mickey</li></ul> |



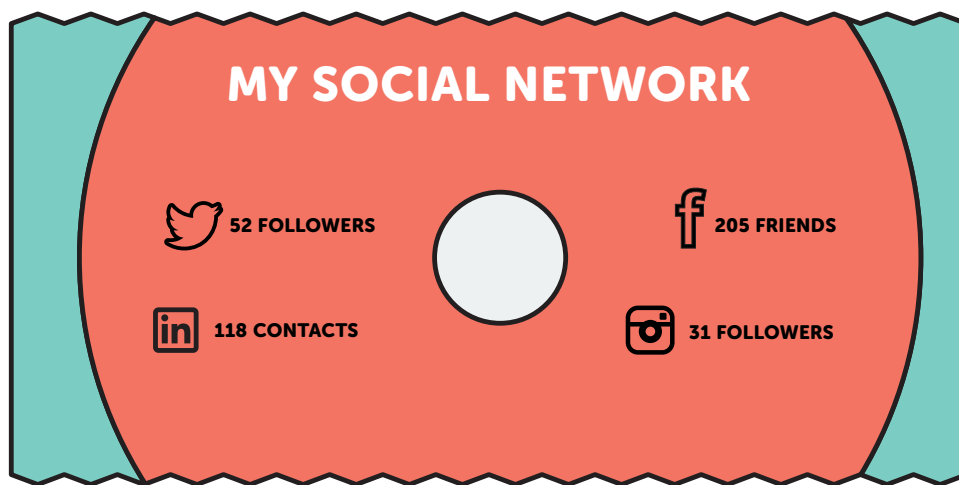
Hold onto this list. In the next chapter we'll cover how to reach out to them.

## Your Social Network



Your broader social network will be much larger than your inner circle. Nowadays, we're connected to hundreds of people through social media. Half of all adults using Facebook have more than 200 friends on the platform.<sup>1</sup> Add Twitter, Instagram, and

LinkedIn and you've got a huge audience for your fundraising campaign.



Some of this group will be reachable by email, but social media will also be very important when appealing to this audience.

By posting personal updates about your fundraising campaign, you can hopefully inspire some people in your networks to visit your page.

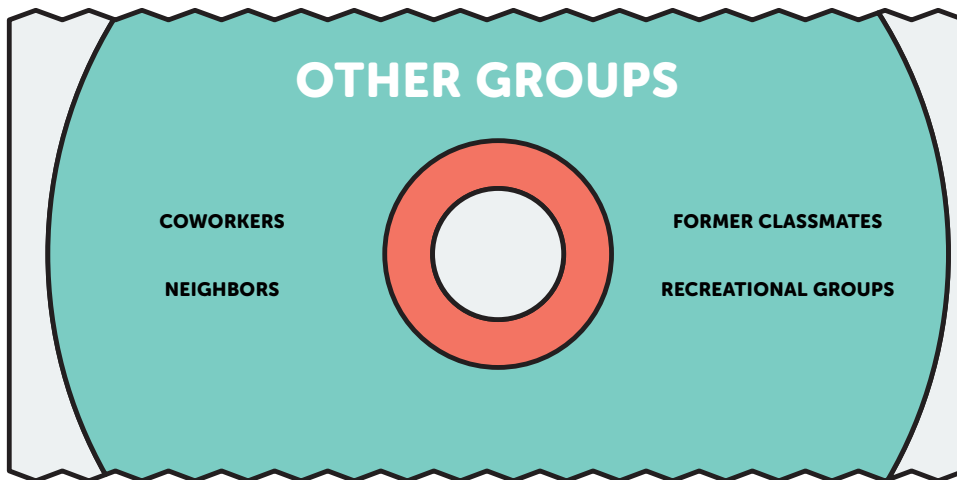
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<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center. "6 New Facts about Facebook." <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/02/03/6-new-facts-about-facebook/>

## Other Groups

The third tier of connections is with groups or organizations that you belong to. Are you on a recreational sports team or do you attend church regularly? When you reach out to these groups you can reference what you all have in common before asking for a donation. For example, if you play in a recreational soccer league, you could reference the upcoming practice in an email and also let everyone know about your fundraising goal. You can also mention it at practice.

Other groups you should appeal to include:



If you're hesitant to ask all these people for help, remember that you share things in conversation and social media all the time. This time, you're doing it for a good cause. You're showing people your passions and giving them the opportunity to make a difference.

You also never know which of your friends or acquaintances have a personal connection to the cause you're fundraising for. This is why it's worth promoting your fundraising page and appealing to all of your various networks, on- and offline.

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# Ask for Donations



Many people are afraid to ask others for help, but research shows that people are more willing to lend a hand than you might expect. In this chapter, you'll learn how to approach the people in your network through email, social media, and more.

Remember that it's not a selfish ask—you're trying to help a good cause.

The worst they can do is say “no.”

## Email

When it comes to asking people for help, the more personal you can get, the better. If you ask a big disconnected group of people all at once, you can fall victim to the bystander effect. When you make a very general ask, people are less likely to act because they assume someone else will take care of it. This is why we targeted more specific groups of people in the previous chapter.

Start your fundraising campaign by approaching the people closest to you first. These are the people who are most likely to donate. By asking them to give first, you can start moving the bar on your fundraising page before you appeal to your entire social network.

If you regularly talk on the phone with some people in your inner circle, tell them about your campaign directly. They may even ask you to send them the link. Email, however, is the easiest way to reach out to the whole group. Plus you can include a link to your page.

Consider writing a few personalized emails for the people in your inner circle. For example, you might compose one message for family and another for close friends.

Be sure to include the following information in your email:

- **The organization** you are fundraising for
- **Why** you are fundraising
- **The fact that you're starting with your closest family and friends** before opening up to your larger network
- **What you want them to do:** "Will you help me reach my goal by making a donation?"
- **A link to your fundraising page**

## EMAILS TO THE FAMILY

Here is an example of what an email to your family might look like.

*Hi Martin family,*

*I'm writing to let you know that this month I'm fundraising for the New Jersey Multiple Sclerosis Foundation. As some of you know, my best friend Anne-Marie is living with MS, so it's a cause close to my heart.*

*NJMSF provides support groups and transportation to treatment for patients and their families. I'll be asking pretty much everyone I know to check out my page and donate if they can, but I wanted to ask my family first. Will you help me reach my goal of raising \$1,000 by making a donation?*

*You can check out my fundraising page by clicking [this link!](#)*

*Any support you can give will mean so much to me. Thanks for reading and helping me fundraise for New Jersey families living with MS.*

*Love,*

*Jessica*

## EMAILS TO OTHER GROUPS

Email is also a great way to ask your coworkers or classmates to donate. Here is an example email for the workplace. Emails like these allow you to tell people why you're fundraising and how they can help.

*Dear colleagues,*

*I'm fundraising for my favorite nonprofit organization, the River City Animal Society. If you know me or have seen the many pictures on my desk, you know I love my dogs, Andy and Ollie. I adopted both of them from RCAS and I want to help the organization continue their adoption and spay/neuter programs.*

*To see some really cute pictures from their no-kill shelter, go to [my fundraising page](#). And if you can, please make a donation to help me reach my goal. Since the fourth anniversary of when I adopted Andy is coming up, I want raise \$400 by then. Anything you can give will help!*

*\$25 provides a full round of vaccinations for a young rescue like Ollie.*



*Thanks for helping and have a good day!*

*Shaun*

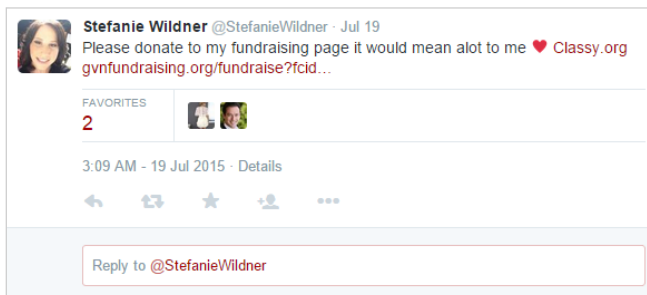
Remember to include a link to your fundraising page, so people can donate right away.

Take a few minutes to email your inner circle first, and then move on to your office, your softball team, or your church congregation.

## Social Media

Posting to your social media profiles is an important step to reaching as many people as possible. After you've reached out to your inner circle and are ready to open your campaign up to everybody, announce that you're fundraising by posting links to your campaign page. While most people use social media regularly, they don't all check the same platforms. This is why you should post to Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and any other networks you have.

A social media appeal won't be as long and detailed as an email, but you can start by simply telling people about your campaign.



Some tips for social media posts:

- **Posts with images** tend to get more engagement, so include a screenshot or favorite picture from the organization
- **Include the link to your fundraising page**
- **Ask people to share and retweet**
- **Use related hashtags** to make your post searchable

Don't worry about coming off as annoying or bothersome. Social media moves so fast that a single post can easily get lost or ignored. This is why you should post multiple times to each

platform. To keep your appeal fresh, you can change up each post with slightly different information. You can reference how much progress you've made toward your goal or include details about why the cause matters to you.

Here are some guidelines for how often to post.

- **Twitter:** Once or twice per day
- **Facebook:** At least once every two or three days
- **LinkedIn:** Twice per week
- **Instagram:** Twice per week



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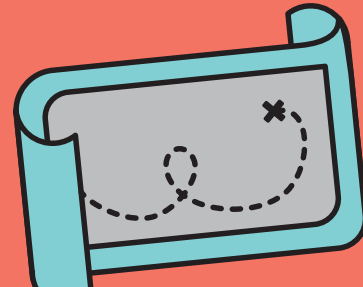
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# Go the Distance



Hopefully, sending out emails and posting to social media will get you well on your way to hitting your fundraising goal. But after the initial interest and excitement, you may find that your campaign slows down. Fortunately, there are some ways to keep people engaged and motivated to help throughout your campaign.

## Weekly Goals

To reach your overall fundraising goal, it helps to break up the amount over however many days or weeks you're fundraising. For example, if your goal was to raise \$1,000 in four weeks, you could try to raise \$250 each week. This means there's always an upcoming goal that your friends and family can help you reach.

### WHICH OF THESE TWO APPEALS SOUNDS MORE COMPELLING?

*“ Please help me reach my goal of \$1,000 by the end of the month!*

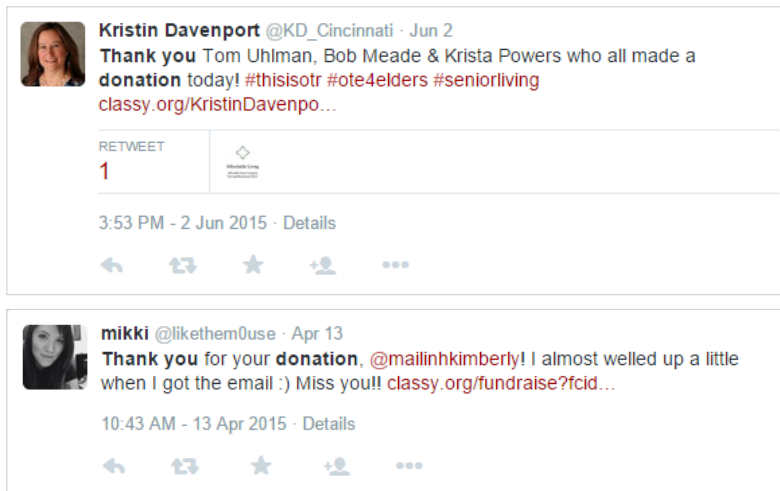
*“ I’m only \$35 away from reaching my goal of raising \$250 this week. Who wants to put me over the top?”*

The first appeal has a big goal and a far-off deadline. Someone reading might think, “I’ve got plenty of time. I’ll do it later” or “My small donation wouldn’t make a difference.”

In the second appeal, there’s a sense of urgency and the goal is within reach. Breaking up your fundraising goal can help encourage people to take the plunge and make a donation to your page.

## Highlight Your Donors

Another way to maintain energy and excitement around your campaign is to publicly thank donors to your page. This shows your gratitude and celebrates the donor while also promoting your campaign and keeping it top of mind.

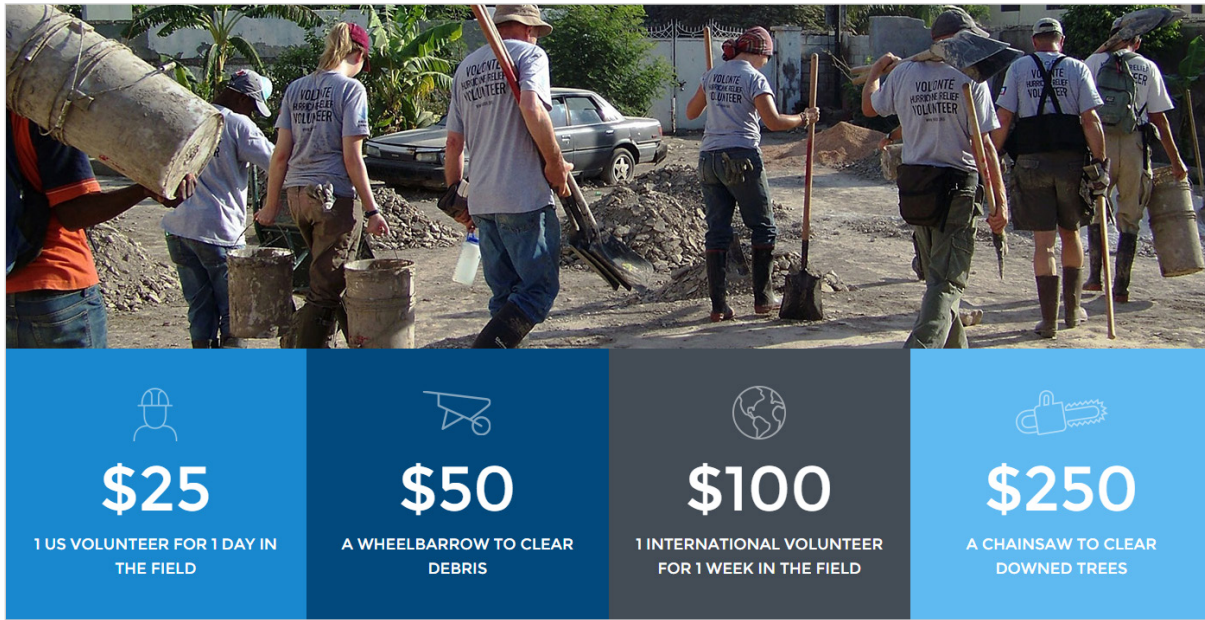


## Promote the Organization

Educate your audience about the cause and organization you're fundraising for. You can also talk about the purpose of this particular fundraising campaign, if you're fundraising as part of a team or for an event. Show your friends and family why this nonprofit deserves their attention.

One way to do this is to share a great blog post or some awesome pictures from the organization's website.

You can also look for information on the organization’s website about what certain donation amounts help them to accomplish. This is interesting information to share on social media or in emails because it shows specific ways in which donations really do make a difference.



This image from [All Hands Volunteers](#) shows what an individual donation can provide.

## Countdown to the Deadline

A countdown of the final days of your fundraising campaign can help get people’s attention. When you point out that time is running out, your appeal becomes more urgent and compelling.



You can even take a selfie or post a new image to count down the days of your campaign.



In the final days of your campaign, be sure to emphasize how close you are to your goal. People are especially willing to give when you're just shy of your goal because it feels like their gift is especially meaningful. It's kind of like scoring the game-winning goal. It has the same impact on the score as any other goal, but it feels special to clinch the victory.

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Reaching the end of your fundraising campaign is like crossing the finish line of a marathon.

Even if you didn't hit your overall fundraising goal, you've done more for your cause than you would have if you'd just sent a one-time donation. You've surpassed the amount you could have donated on your own and you've helped spread the word about an important cause.

## Say "Thank You" to Your Supporters

Your donors will be receiving thank you messages from the nonprofit you fundraised for, but take the time to tell them that you appreciate their help in reaching your goal.



Whether it's through social media, email, a phone call, or in-person, anyone who donated to your fundraising campaign will be happy to hear from you.

When the campaign is over, email your donors to update them on the final results. Showing them how their gift contributed to a larger purpose will strengthen the connection to your cause. Add a link to the nonprofit's website or blog so they can learn more on their own.

## Keep in Touch for Next Time

Now that your campaign is over, you can pat yourself on the back. By taking the time to reach out to your friends and family, you've not only raised money for the cause you love, you've helped the people you love connect with an awesome social impact organization.

To see how the money you raised makes a difference, stay on your nonprofit's email list, follow them on social media, or become a monthly donor. This way, you'll continue to see the impact your work made possible. You can even update your donors with new success stories over time.

Now that you're a seasoned fundraiser, consider lending your talents to your chosen nonprofit's next campaign. Or even branch out and fundraise for a new organization.



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YOU  
GOT  
THIS.

