Introduction

You’ve got exciting goals for the year, a strong Local Committee membership, and a passion to change the world…but what about money? If your Local Committee is going to be successful, it’s important that you consider your financial needs. Fundraising is one way of engaging the public in international development issues. There are many ways to take action to change the world, and making a financial contribution is one of them.

Fundraising Basics

Identify Your Goals
Early in the semester, identify your Local Committee’s goals. Do your “must-haves” for the year include:

- Bike for AIDS?
- Sending delegates to the WUSC Annual Assembly?
- Organizing a Symposium?
- Sponsoring a student refugee?
- Supporting an International Seminar participant?
- Creating a Local Committee emergency fund?

Your goals will determine your fundraising strategies. Do you need cash to contribute to Bike for AIDS? Or do you need to cover a refugee student’s tuition, which could be addressed through an institutional in-kind donation?

Be strategic in how you use your time and energy. Determine if you should pursue a one-time fundraiser or if it would be more effective to seek renewable funding (like a student levy for the SRP).

Develop a Strategy
This is where your creativity comes in. While fundraising ideas are endless, tried and true strategies include:

- **Holding a referendum** to establish a student levy for WUSC’s Student Refugee Program;
- **Seeking donations**, either cash or in-kind, from university/college administrations, faculty associations, student unions, local businesses, friends, family, etc.;
- **Hosting events** such as silent auctions, bike-a-thons, bingo nights, Feast or Famine dinners, movie nights, pub crawls, etc. (For tips on organizing events, see Module 7: Event Planning.)
Consider your rate of return when developing your strategy! **Fundraising is about making a PROFIT**, and some initiatives may require an initial investment of funds. How much money is needed to pull off your initiative? How can you reduce the initial cost of implementing your plan? If profit is your measure of success, what strategies will be most effective and require the least amount of Local Committee time and energy? Be strategic about your use of resources, both human and monetary.

**Fundraising Activities**

Fundraising activities involve many people and, although they may require much time and energy on the part of the organizers, they have the advantage of strengthening civic spirit and publicizing your issue to a wide audience, while raising money and awareness! Keep in mind that good fundraising provides an opportunity to gain more than just funds. In fact, if money is all you raise, your efforts may not truly be a success in the long term.

**Referendums**

WUSC encourages each sponsoring Local Committees to establish a student and/or faculty levy in support of the Student Refugee Program on their campus. To either establish or increase a student levy, you will have to organize a referendum to get approval from the student body. Holding a referendum requires some time and organization, but the resulting levy will provide predictable support for the SRP, allowing your Local Committee to sponsor a student on a regular basis.

WUSC has a number of tools available for Local Committees that want to hold a referendum either to start or increase the levy on their campus. More information is available in the [SRP Guide to Planning a Winning Referendum](#), and your Liaison Office can provide you with support and guidance during the process.

**Donations**

People often respond generously when asked to give to a good cause. There are many different ways your Local Committee can seek donations:

- Ask family, friends, and fellow students;
- Collect pledges for your activities;
- Have a donations box at your Local Committee’s events;
- Use the online fundraising system for Bike for AIDS;
- Encourage donors to give directly to WUSC and credit your Local Committee;
- Ask your university/college administration or faculty association to donate a bursary for a sponsored student on your campus;
- Submit proposals to service clubs (e.g. Rotary) and other local grantmakers.

If you have the opportunity to apply for local grants, please notify and work with the WUSC Donations Office to verify the details and **always** have a WUSC permanent staff member listed as the contact person. We need to ensure WUSC adheres to the rules dictated by the Canada Revenue Agency. Keeping WUSC’s Donations Office informed allows us to track the status of grant applications and provide ideas to other Local Committees.

Local Committees should not approach national foundations and national offices of corporations. Since these organizations are national in scope, they may be approached by the WUSC Donations Office throughout the year. They generally do not give to groups operating in a small geographic area and do not provide funds for individuals or for groups that cannot issue a charitable tax receipt. Moreover, they may already be supporting WUSC, in which case receiving additional submissions from Local Committees could cause unwelcome confusion.

However, should you have a special contact, idea, or request, please contact the WUSC Donations Office to discuss the opportunity.
In addition to money, in-kind donations are often an integral part of the fundraising strategy for sponsoring committees. This includes all donations that aren’t money – for example, tuition and residence waivers, and physical items such as computers or clothes. Since the cost of purchasing items to support the SRP is often very high, your committee should try to secure as much in-kind support as possible.

In-kind donations are not just for sponsoring committees, however – any Local Committee can make use of donated items such as office space and supplies. You can also ask local businesses to donate items or gift certificates to be used as prizes at events, and food vendors will sometimes donate coffee or snacks for an event.

Monetary donations (not cash) can be sent to the WUSC office in Ottawa, accompanied by a Giving to WUSC form. Alternatively, you can direct donors to WUSC’s online donations page. If donors wish to give to the Student Refugee Program, the online giving format allows them to specify which Local Committee should be credited with the donation.

Remember: There are strict guidelines regarding whether or not a donor can receive a tax receipt for their donation! Read up on these rules in Charitable Receipting: Local Committees’ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

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**Raising Money Online for Bike for AIDS**

The Bike for AIDS campaign has a unique online fundraising component for Local Committees. Through the interactive on-line tool, you can send e-mails to your friends and family encouraging them to visit your personal fundraising page and make a donation! Once you sign up to the Bike for AIDS campaign, you will be able to manage your donations, solicit sponsors, and personalize your donation page. For more information, see the Online Donations tip sheet on the WUSC website.

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**Events**

Organizing fundraising events on campus has the advantage of raising your Local Committee’s profile and publicizing your activities. Events can also be a great way to inform people about issues. In fact, no event should be strictly about money – it should also be about educating and advocating.

If you decide to raise money through events, you must budget carefully to ensure the event is profitable. If you’re selling items or services (e.g. garage sale, car wash, auction, etc.), make sure the price is high enough to cover the cost of the goods/services, as well as turn a profit. While this sounds obvious, it can be tricky. Events sometimes have hidden costs that don’t get factored into the budget. If you produce the item or service yourself – bake sales are a good example – make sure you account for the cost of ingredients. Even better: get the ingredients donated in kind!
Examples of Fundraising Events

Below are some examples of fundraising initiatives that might work for your Local Committee. For more information – and lots of ideas – on planning events, read through Module 7: Event Planning.

Raffle
- Have local businesses donate prizes or items for a gift basket.
- Have people write their names and phone numbers on the tickets.
- Sell tickets at a discount when they’re purchased in large quantities.
- Ensure volunteers are ready and tickets have been printed in advance of ticket sales.
- Set up booths to sell tickets on campus, at shopping centres, or at events (including your own).
- Try holding a 50/50 raffle at one of your events. Participants pay to enter their names in the draw, and the winner receives half the draw’s revenue. The Local Committee receives the other half.
- Make the final draw public to ensure transparency.
- NOTE: To hold a lottery, you may require a license. Check with the gaming commission in your province before you organize this activity.

Change Drive
- Do it often – spare change can really add up over time.
- Arrange to collect change at all your Local Committee events, through a donations box;
- Pass a donations can in a large class.
- Raise awareness for large events by rolling the coins at a booth in a public place.
- Find finding creative ways to collect the change (e.g. sticking it to a wall of double-sided tape, throwing it into a can from a distance, passing an actual hat).

Bottle Drive
- Collect bottles that you can return for a deposit (check the recycling rules for your municipality to find out which bottles are eligible).
- Ask student residences, cafeterias, or businesses with existing garbage-separating programs if you can take their bottles.
- Drive through your neighbourhood on a Saturday or Sunday morning to collect bottles. Distribute flyers to homes in advance, so people can put out their bottles for you.
- Educate people about the specific cause you’re supporting, as well as the general importance of recycling.

Worker for the Day
- Have Local Committee members babysit, mow lawns, clean garages or basements, etc. in return for a donation.
- Operate on a semi-permanent basis or as a one-weekend fundraising project.
- Advertize through public service announcements in local media.

Bingo
- Seek in-kind donations of items or gift certificates from local businesses to offer as prizes.
- Arrange to have a share in a bingo organization’s profit in exchange for voluntary work…it’s worth a try!

Round Up Campaign
The premise of Round Up is simple: every time a customer makes a purchase, the cashier at the participating business invites the customer to “round up” his/her purchase to the nearest dollar for charity. While increasing a bill from $24.59 to $25.00 may only be “small change” to a customer, over time the total money donated can be substantial. On some campuses, Round Up campaigns take place at the bookstore at the beginning of the year.

Round Up can be very lucrative for your Local Committee, but implementing it requires a lot of organization. If you are interested in starting a Round Up campaign on your campus, contact your Liaison Officer for more detailed information.
Points to Remember

- **Fundraising isn't only about money, it's also about people.** People give to people. If more emphasis is placed on building relationships, the chance for a successful outcome is greater and that means a higher degree of support.

- **Don’t be scared of rejection.** If you don’t ask, you won’t get. And don’t take rejections personally: people have limited resources, and choosing which cause to support can be challenging. When someone turns you down, thank them for their time and keep them on the list for next year.

- **Stay accountable.** Make sure your Local Committee has a bank account, an identified treasurer, and three designated individuals with signing authority. Donors need to know that their money is being spent properly, and they won’t contribute to your cause if they see the Local Committee mismanaging or squandering its existing funds.

- **Understand WUSC’s policy on charitable receipting** if you want your donors to get tax receipts. These can only be issued in certain circumstances, and only if the Local Committee provides the correct information to WUSC. Talk to your Liaison Officer for more information.

- **Value your volunteers.** By emphasizing relationships with people, your chances of a successful outcome are greater. Make sure that people feel involved in a meaningful, rewarding way. Delegate responsibilities, incorporate fun into your activities, and thank people for their hard work!

- **Show appreciation to your existing donors.** It’s much easier to keep an existing donor than to find a new one. When you have received a donation, your chances of receiving a subsequent one are much higher if you show appropriate recognition. Thank your donors in person, by telephone, or in a letter. Let them know how successful your campaign was and how their donation made a difference. Doing so keeps donors engaged and makes them feel happy about giving you support.

Onwards...

By now, you should be on your way to an effective fundraising campaign for your Local Committee. Remember to be responsible when dealing with the funds you raise – look back at Module 5: Managing Money for more details. We mentioned fundraising events briefly in this module...for more information on planning events (as well as ideas for events), read Module 7: Event Planning.

Toolbox

- Charitable Donations: Local Committees’ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Donation form
- Online donations page
- Budgeting and Fundraising 101 (PowerPoint)
- Fundraising Success Stories
- SRP Fundraising Strategies
- Soliciting donations by letter
- Round Up campaign (tip sheet)
- Round Up presentation