

The Marshall University Foundation

Crowdfunding Guidelines & Policies

Before crowdfunding, it is the project lead's responsibility to review and understand the following Marshall University Foundation crowdfunding guidelines and policies. The MU Foundation reserves the right to revise these guidelines and policies at any time.

The Marshall University Foundation, in its sole discretion, will determine the eligibility of participating projects on the Crowdfunding platform at www.give.marshall.edu. The MU Foundation may discontinue an active fundraiser at any time because of a project's failure to comply with these guidelines. Crowdfunding projects are to help ensure philanthropy and raising funds for the greatest needs on campus.

To ensure compliance with the MU Foundation guidelines, all projects must have an approved philanthropic gift fund set up through the MU Foundation to which donations can be accepted and then distributed to the corresponding fund. Groups may use a gift fund associated with a sponsoring unit, such as a department, program or center, with the approval of the fund manager in that area. If an appropriate sponsoring unit gift fund isn't available, the MU Foundation will determine whether or not the project qualifies for its own gift fund as long as there is a fund manager available to manage the account. Gift funds and accounts must be approved before the project can begin fundraising.

All monies must be used for the project's stated purpose. Individuals are strictly prohibited from keeping any portion of the funds raised as a profit or compensation. All projects must be non-profit in nature. All expenditures must comply with the [MU Foundation's Use of Funds Policy](#).

Projects must support the universities programs and initiatives. Funds cannot be redirected to a third-party, external charity or other non-profit. The MU Foundation cannot act as a "pass-through" entity to provide funding to other charities.

There is a 5% gift processing fee per transaction through the MU Advancement Office. Funds deposited into project accounts will already have these fees removed from their totals; however, project totals online will display the full amount.

When applying for the crowdfunding, project leads agree to provide the following:

- Signed Crowdfunding Application (must be signed and approved before fundraising)
- A Faculty or Staff member must sign off on the application, no monies will be distributed to a student.
- Project description and case for support
- Images for description, social sharing and crowdfunding home page
- Project leader bios and photos
- Project updates throughout the campaign

- Ongoing outreach to promote the project after launch
- Personal thank you messages after the campaign concludes to thank donors and let them know their project progress
- Video (if they want, it will be the project leads responsibility to create, film and edit)

All content on project pages will be approved by the MU Foundation, which has the right to edit, or require project content edits, at any point in the campaign.

Projects should have specific goals and be driven by tangible accomplishments- for example, purchasing new equipment, funding travel fees, or providing student workshop opportunities. Projects without a specific goal are generally less successful and may not qualify for their own page.

It is up to the project teams to market their campaign and provide outreach. The larger the crowdfunding project group, the more likely they will succeed. Groups should consist of at least 3 people that will focus on marketing and outreach.

Project leads are responsible for promoting their campaigns via social media, email, phone calls and on-campus, they will also be responsible for preparing personal thank you messages to donors; and submitting regular updates on their projects. All correspondence must be approved the Foundation.

The MU Foundation will request a list from you of potential donors prior to the project's approval or launch date. This may be used to determine project eligibility and goal capacity.

The MU Foundation does not provide any contact data on alumni, parents, friends or students. It is up to the project lead's to contact their personal connections and contact lists.

The MU Foundation will provide an official tax receipt to all donors.

Most gifts will be raised online through give.marshall.edu. Gifts received offline will be counted towards the campaign goal if it comes in during the allotted campaign duration. Offline funds may be used toward the project's goal. This includes, but is not limited to, cash, checks, and other funds awarded or received during the crowdfunding campaign. Crowdfunding projects cannot count gifts from pledges, bequests, gifts already allocated to another fund, or money raised through sales, such as bake-sales, car washes, or other "give-to-get" fundraising. All gifts must be collected prior to the project's deadline.

There is a \$5 minimum donation amount through the Crowdfunding platform.

All funds raised from outside of the MU Foundation Crowdfunding platform must be delivered to the MU Foundation for deposit. This is to ensure that the donor receives proper credit and receipts. If this occurs, contact the annual giving director for instructions.

Projects will be hosted on the crowdfunding platform for a pre-determined amount of time, typically a month-long period. Some exceptions may apply. Shorter campaigns tend to drive urgency and perform strongly. The same group may not fundraise in consecutive campaigns, but may be eligible for future Crowdfunding efforts.

If the project is not fully funded within the allotted timeframe, any monies raised will still be allocated to the project. All funds, even without meeting the goal, must be spent to offset the cost of the promoted project or utilized to the group's best ability. Projects should notify their donors and inform them how their donations will be spent.

All projects must comply with the institution's mission. Projects cannot violate any laws. The MU Foundation reserves the right to decline any project based on content or discontinue an active campaign at any time due to changes in the group's eligibility status.

For questions regarding these guidelines, please contact Griffin Talbott, Director of Annual Giving, at talbottw@marshall.edu or (304) 696-6214.