



Indiana Association of Student Councils All Divisions

(Thank you to the National Student Council)

Fundraising Guide

There is no better way to improve your leadership skills than to attend an IASC Leadership Conference. You will return reenergized and brimming with new ideas that will positively affect your school and community.

But your first challenge is to figure out how much it will cost to attend and how you will raise the funds you need. This fundraising guide provides a simple, four-step process to help answer these questions and offer assistance in securing funds for this year's conference.

Step 1: Determine Total Estimated Cost

You have two or three major expenses to consider when you attend a conference—registration, transportation, and housing. You may have some additional expenses depending on how many meals are included in the registration package and any personal expenditure associated with travel, such as souvenirs, snacks, personal items, etc. You should always know exactly what is covered by the registration fee to ensure that your cost estimates are accurate and all additional expenses are accounted for in your fundraising totals.

First, consult the Conference Costs and Hotel & Travel pages for the conference you plan to attend. Then use the grid below to determine the total estimated cost for your trip and how much money you will need to raise.

1. Cost of registration	\$
2. Cost of transportation	\$
3. Personal spending money needed for travel and stay	\$
4. Estimated amount needed for trip (total of lines 1 through 3)	\$
5. Amount of money already available	\$
6. Amount that needs to be raised (subtract line 5 from line 4)	\$

Step 2: Identify Potential Funding Sources

Now that you have determined how much money you need to raise to attend an IASC Conference, you must identify individuals and organizations that can help provide those funds. While this may seem difficult, you will be surprised to find that people, businesses, and groups willing to contribute money are not all that hard to find!

Start Close to Home

Always remember to start with family. Parents, grandparents, and other relatives might be disappointed if you didn't ask them first. Next, work with your adviser to see if there is any money available from the school or district that could be given. Your guidance counselor or principal may also know of federal programs that have grant money to be used for at least part of your costs.

Look to the Community

The next step is to approach civic and service groups whose members include community leaders. Use the internet to find out how to contact them. Before contacting any of them, you will need to collect some names of their officers, their titles, addresses, phone numbers, and emails. Don't rule out lesser-known community groups or clubs either. Even the local garden or bridge club could be a good source of support!

Contact Local Businesses

When you are ready to start contacting local businesses and companies, begin with those where your parents, neighbors, or family friends have ties. For a list of others, you will want to contact your local chamber of commerce and/or visit their website. They may also be able to suggest specific businesses or companies that have histories of supporting students and schools.

Community Organizations/Groups	Other Potential Funders
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rotary International• Kiwanis International• Chamber of Commerce• Lions Club• Knights of Columbus• Eagles• Moose Lodge• American Legion• VFW• Carnegie Centers/Foundation• Your County's Community Foundation• City Hall/Town Board• Churches• Women's Auxiliary Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Law offices• Realtors• Banks• Farm Machinery and Implement dealers• Local Restaurants• Funeral Homes• Your school's athletic dept.• Gas stations• Financial services• Book stores• Hardware stores• Clothing stores• Other retail stores• CPA's office• Medical/Dental offices

Step 3: Make a Request

Once you have identified some potential supporters, you must contact them to make a formal request for financial assistance. This section will provide you with some tips on the best ways to make a request and what you will need to consider before approaching possible contributors.

Letters/Emails vs. Person-to-Person Visits

Family, friends, and neighbors are the easiest contributors to contact. Simply call them and arrange a time to sit down and make your pitch. For family members, you may find that an informative phone conversation will be enough to persuade them to contribute.

Contact with civic groups and businesses usually begins with an email that requests a contribution and an explanation of how the money will be used. You should also be prepared for a follow-up phone call or a meeting with possible contributors to answer questions and explain further why you came to them for financial assistance.

Prepare, Prepare, Prepare

In order to write an effective letter of request, it is important that you introduce yourself and express the reasons you want to attend the conference or program in a concise way. This includes an introduction of you, the purpose of the letter, explaining a little about the event, why you want to go, and the specific amount of money you want contributed.

Another key to your letter is to keep it to one page in length. Because of the demands of their jobs, most leaders in the business community consider communications that are short and to the point to be the most effective.

Getting Started

Please see the sample letter that follows.

The questions below will help you gather the information you need for your letter. You should always start with an outline to help you organize your thoughts.

- What school do you attend?
- What student group do you belong to and what is your leadership role?
- What leadership skills, activities, and knowledge do you expect to explore during the event?
- What are some of your leadership goals and how do you think going to the event will help you reach those goals?
- Why is it important for you to have the opportunity to spend time with other student leaders?
- How do you plan to use your experience to help your leadership group?

Every letter should provide basic information about the conference, including some of the skills taught and who sponsors it, to help the contributors understand the importance and value of their investment. You can make the process simpler by using the same format for all of your letters, but if you are very familiar with an organization you can personalize the letter to make a stronger case for their giving you financial support.

Be sure to make a list of all the people you send letters and keep a copy of each letter. This is important if you need to refer to the date a letter was sent or any specific information you included in it.

Think About Timing

Timing is everything with your letters. Civic groups may only meet once or twice a month. To increase the odds of getting a timely response, you should find out when groups meet and time your communication to arrive within five working days before their meetings. This will help ensure your request makes it onto their meeting agenda. Remember that similar timing is true for businesses as well. Depending on the time of year, businesses may be hectic, making it hard for management to act on your letter.

Step 4: Follow Up

It is very important to get your letters/emails out on a schedule that provides sufficient time for the recipients to consider your request and respond. Make follow-up calls to your letters/emails approximately one week later.

The purpose of the call is to confirm that your letter/email was received and to draw attention to your request, not to get an answer regarding a contribution. Introduce yourself, and ask to speak with the person to whom you sent your letter, and state why you are calling. In your conversation, ask if they need any more information pertaining to your letter. Keep your calls brief.

Everyone Deserves a Thank You

Immediately after you receive notice that your request was approved or turned down, you should send a letter/email thanking the organization for making a contribution or for taking the time to consider your request. Be specific and brief in thanking them for each part of the process—considering your letter, speaking with you on the phone, contributing ‘X’ dollars, and for providing you with a response to your letter/email. Sincere thank you letters demonstrate your character and leave the organizations with a positive impression of you.

Please see the sample Thank You letters for both those who are able to help you and those who are not.

After the Conference

Following your return from the conference, you will want to send each of your contributors a letter briefly telling them about your experience and thank them again for making it possible for you to go. This will confirm that they made the right decision in making a financial investment in you and may increase the odds that they will contribute to future requests from student leaders.

The sample letter that follows is specific to the IASC’s summer camp. It can be adapted and used for ALL IASC events and conferences.

Sample Request Letter

Date

Dear (Name of potential donor),

(Introduction of who you are.)

I have the opportunity to attend the 2018 Indiana Association of Student Councils Summer Leadership Camp/Workshop during the week of June 12-17. This summer camp/workshop is held each year at Manchester University in North Manchester, Indiana. At the workshop I will be able to expand my leadership skills by building upon skills I already possess and by the addition of new ones. I am confident these new and improved skills will enable me to better serve my school and community now; but perhaps more importantly, later during my life's journey. The camp will focus on the following skills - team building, goal setting, communication, problem solving, organization, being inclusive, tolerance & diversity, group process, democratic ideals, and much, much more. I will also have the opportunity to share project ideas and network with my contemporaries from all over Indiana. In the end, I'm hopeful the skills I learn will make me more confident in myself and more impactful in the community I live.

I am writing to you to ask if you would support my attending the SLI Summer Workshop by granting me a scholarship. The amount of funds I need to raise is \$400. This amount includes room, board, and the workshop registration. Any contribution you could make would be greatly appreciated. It would be my pleasure to talk to you about all that I have learned after the workshop.

Know that I am grateful for any contribution you can make to help me afford this leadership experience at a workshop that is considered one of the best in the state for leadership. If you have any questions or want to hear more, please feel free to contact me at the address below or at (Phone Number)

Sincerely,

(Name of Student/Adviser)

Yes! I would love to help you!

Amount of contribution: \$ _____

Please send your contribution to my address listed below. Please make sure you include your name and address so that I may thank you for your contribution!

Checks should be made out and mailed to:

Student/Adviser Name

Your Address

Your City, Your State, Your Zip Code

Sample Thank You Letter/email to a contributor

Dear _____,

Thank you for [your/the organization's] contribution of \$_____ to help me attend the 2018 Indiana Association of Student Councils Summer Leadership Camp/Workshop on June 12-17 at Manchester University in North Manchester, IN.

I am looking forward to using my conference experience to help me in my current leadership position and to improve my abilities to serve others. After my return, I would love to share my experience with [you/the organization]. Please let me know how we can make that happen.

Thank you again for your contribution and for making it possible for me to have this valuable learning opportunity.

Sincerely,

Student/Adviser Name

Your Address

Your City, Your State, Your Zip Code

Sample letter/email to a declined request

Dear _____,

Although [you/your organization] [is/are] unable to provide financial assistance for me to attend the 2018 Indiana Association of Student Councils Summer Leadership Camp/Workshop, I want to thank you very much for your time and consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Student/Adviser Name

Your Address

Your City, Your State, Your Zip Code