
BRISTOL CROWDFUNDING GUIDE



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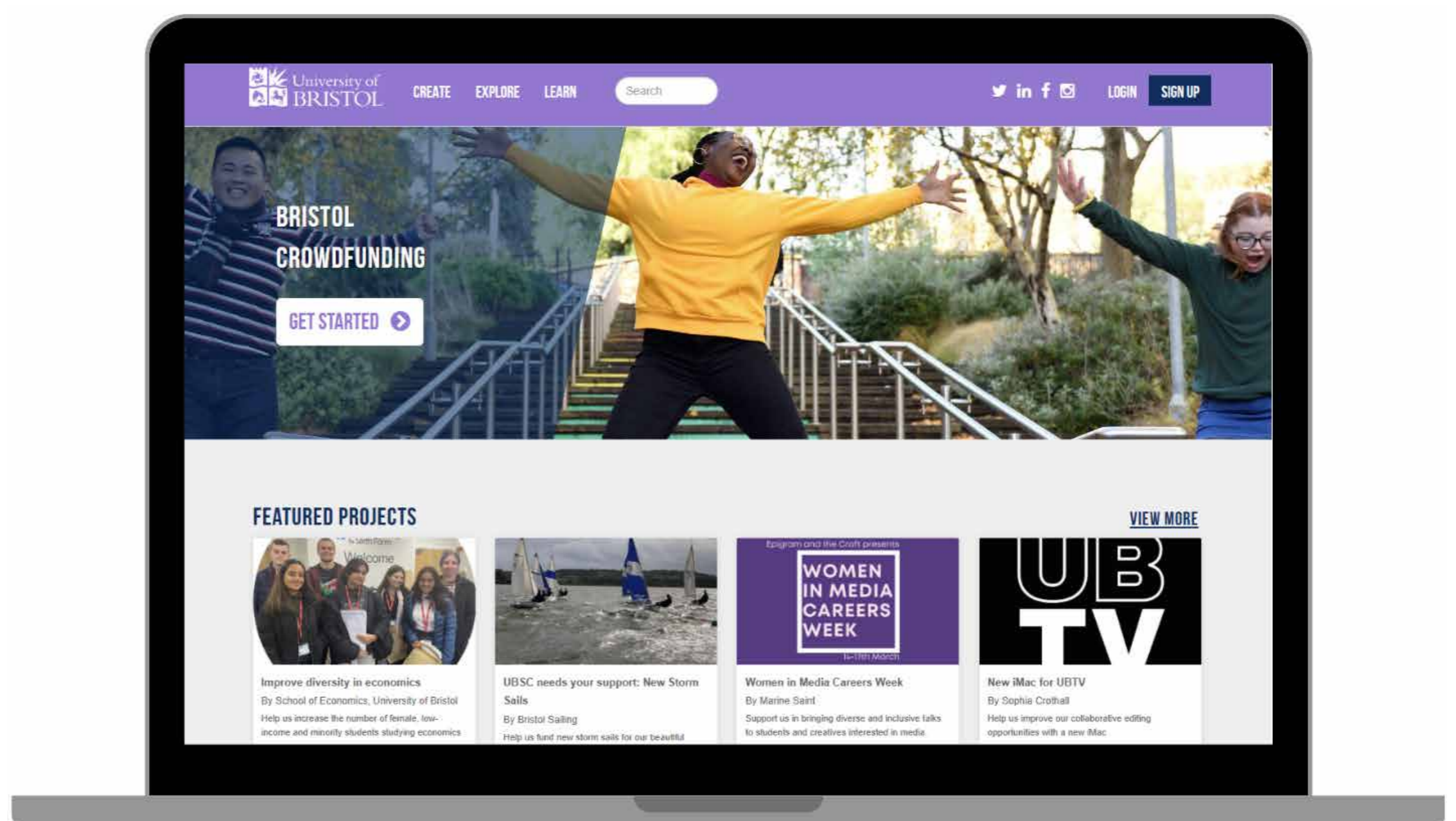
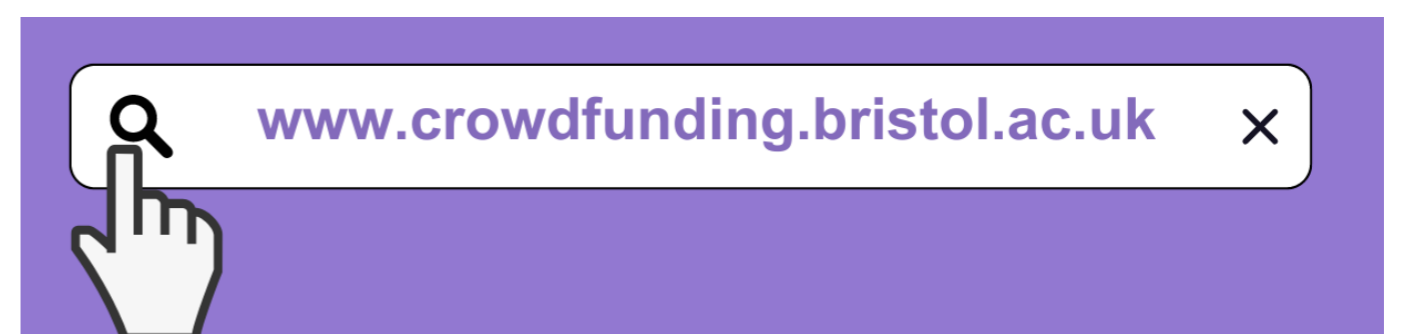
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YOUR CROWDFUNDING JOURNEY STARTS HERE

We're excited for you to start your crowdfunding journey! This guide will take you through the different stages of a crowdfunding campaign, as well as give you tips for success on how to plan your crowdfunding activities and how to maximise your promotion tools.

The Bristol Crowdfunding team within the Global Engagement Division will support you every step of the way through your crowdfunding journey. Not only do we provide a dedicated crowdfunding platform for you to promote your project, you will have the opportunity to work alongside expert fundraisers and communication specialists. We will also check in with you regularly to help you make the most of your ideas and answer all your questions.



WHAT IS CROWDFUNDING?

Crowdfunding is the concept of raising money for a cause through small donations from a large group of people, typically online.

Our platform provides supporters with an easy way to donate and the University of Bristol covers the costs of processing donations, unlike other crowdfunding platforms.

This means your project will receive 100% of all donations made by your supporters.

When it comes to crowdfunding, the more time and effort you dedicate to planning and promoting, the more successful your project will be. You will need to actively encourage your networks, family, friends and colleagues to support you through fun and creative calls to action.



WHAT PROJECTS ARE RIGHT FOR CROWDFUNDING?

There is not one type of project that is best suited to crowdfunding. Our only criteria that your project needs to meet are:

- Your idea should benefit Bristol's staff, students or our University community;
- It should have a tangible financial goal and must be due to take place in the near future;
- The project must fit within one of our themes:

1

Arts, Culture and Community

- Promoting different forms of art as a means of expressing yourself
- Providing others who might not be able to access art the opportunity to
- Encouraging discovery of other cultures and collaboration between different communities

2

Climate and Environment

- Helping us deal with our changing planet
- Finding new solutions to the climate crisis
- Promoting better ways for us to live more sustainably

3

Student Experience

- Improving students' time at Bristol, allowing them to thrive
- Supporting student mental health, job prospects, and enhancing university life
- Supporting students academically and socially

4

Enterprise and Innovation

- Pursuing novel ideas that act in the interest of bettering society
- Applying creative solutions not tried before to real-life solutions
- Developing a business with ethical and civic values

5

Widening Access and Participation

- Ensuring students have equal access to study at Bristol
- Helping students from lower-economic households, underrepresented, and disadvantaged backgrounds to thrive
- Promoting equal opportunities no matter a person's background

Examples of projects that could be suitable for Bristol crowdfunding are:

- supporting performances and theatrical or film productions
- funding a new piece of equipment for a sports team or society
- a programme that promotes equality
- organising an event or attending a conference
- volunteering activity



TO USE BRISTOL CROWDFUNDING YOU WILL NEED TO AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:

- I can commit the time and energy necessary to ensure that my project is successfully funded.
- My project benefits people at Bristol - either Bristol staff or students, or the wider University community. (You cannot use Bristol Crowdfunding to “fund a life”, fundraise for another University/charity or a for-profit project.)
- I will be a current member of the University (student, academic or professional services staff) at the time that my project comes to an end.
- If my minimum fundraising goal is met, I will be able to organise and deliver the promised project rewards to those who supported me.
- I am happy for the Global Engagement Division to moderate the content of my project and promote it to alumni and friends of the University where suitable.

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT MATCH FUNDING

WHAT IS MATCH FUNDING?

An individual or organisation can choose to provide funding for a cause that is equal to the amount the project raises, £1 to £1, up to an agreed limit. This means that every donation will be worth double until the match amount is reached.

The Global Engagement Division funding available at Bristol to support current students is only possible due to the generosity of our alumni.

Criteria to receive match funding

Match funding will be provided for crowdfunding projects that:

- Are student-led
- Focus on improving the student community experience

Please note: the criteria is subject to revision on a yearly basis and there is only limited funding available each year.

The Global Engagement Division will match 50% of the minimum project target, up to a total match-fund of **£500**.



GET STARTED

Visit the crowdfunding platform and navigate to ‘CREATE’ at the top of the page. Follow the step by step instructions to complete the creation of your project. Starting with:

1. TITLE OF YOUR PROJECT

You want to showcase what your cause is in a concise and catchy way – what tagline could you use to let your potential supporters know what your crowdfunding aim is at a glance?

2. TARGETS

What is your minimum target to achieve your goals? Using your budget breakdown, you should work out the total cost of all the minimum requirements to run your project. This is your minimum funding target; the amount of money that you will need to raise to receive the funding from your supporters. This goal is crucial – too high and it will likely put people off donating, too low and you will reach your target too soon and miss out on support from latecomers to your project.

If you raise more than your minimum target, what will the money go towards? Including this information in your pitch will assure donors that you have a well thought-out plan of how to use the donations to maximise their benefit towards Bristol students. Remember to be realistic about how much you can raise within your crowdfunding timeline so that you can deliver your project on time.

3. TIMESCALE

A sense of urgency is likely to incentivise supporters to give. We would advise that your campaign is no longer than 8 weeks so as not to lose momentum. Be aware of the fact that your peers who you might want to enlist with helping to promote the project will be busy during exam time, or away around holidays.

Ensure you also consider when you need the funding by; it can take a few weeks for the money to reach you (your Bristol Crowdfunding contact will confirm the likely dates once your project ends). This means, that if you are actively crowdfunding for two to three weeks and it takes you three weeks to put your project pitch together, you would have to wait eight weeks for funding. Bear in mind post-project timelines as well, since you must be able to organise and deliver the promised project rewards.

4. PITCH

Your pitch is your chance to tell your story and let possible supporters know exactly what a difference their gifts might make if you were to reach your target.

- **Be concise** – Can a supporter understand the project from skimming the first couple of paragraphs?
- **Emphasise the benefit** – Supporters are more likely to give if they can see the positive impact that reaching the campaign target will have on you, your peers or the wider community, and are usually less concerned with the technical details.
- **Be visual** – Make sure you include a cover image and create a fun and informative campaign video (more on this below).

TIPS

The first version is not the final version! Ask others to review your work for clarity and typing mistakes before you hit submit.

Bristol Crowdfunding will also moderate your pitch to check it meets the guidelines for success and to provide suggestions for improvement. The more time, detail and thought you put into your project pitch, the better it will be.

For your project pitch you will need to put together the following:

- **Summarise your project aim in one or two sentences** – you want this to grab the reader’s attention so that they read on.
- **Who you are?** Consider what part of the University you or your group belong to, what you do and who your members are.
- **Your story – and why is this important?** This is your chance to explain, in your own words, the difference that your project will have. Don’t forget to demonstrate your passion for your cause and think about all the ways that it will help you and your team (and even the wider community) if you meet your goal and your project is successfully funded.
- **A budget breakdown** - Explain exactly where the money will go and provide a breakdown as to how you propose to spend your funding, as discussed in the Budgets and Target section.
- **Links to your social media page** – So that your supporters can follow your story as your project progresses.



CREATE A VIDEO

Crowdfunding projects with videos are much more likely to reach their fundraising goals – it really allows you to get your passion for your project across to your supporters and make the best possible first impression.

Videos could capture your audience's attention quicker than written text and it's your chance to get your enthusiasm for the project across! It puts a face to the cause and makes the campaign more attractive.

TIPS

- **Plan** - You should map out your video and what you want to say in advance of filming. Use your project pitch to form the basis of your video.
- **The filming doesn't need to be professional** - When it comes to filming, a good camera phone or computer will work well. Just make sure there is plenty of light, good quality sound and the video isn't too shaky.
- **Length** - Aim to explain your cause in 1 – 2 minutes.
- **Be authentic** - Just be yourself! Imagine you are pitching your project to your family and friends. Bullet point rather than script everything you want to say and use lots of "you" statements to directly address your audience. Your excitement will get others enthusiastic about your goals. Humour is also a valuable tool!
- **Choose an interesting video still** – or image (possibly with overlaid text) – this will be the first visual they see when clicking on your crowdfunding page which will incentivise your donors to click play and read on.
- **For those people who feature in any videos** you create, please ensure you communicate exactly which platforms the footage will be posted on and when. It's also important to gain their written consent that they are happy to be included in the video.

HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR VIDEO

- **Capture the viewers' attention immediately** – The first 10 seconds need to grab your audience's attention. Be humorous and/or intriguing!
- **Who you are?** Explain who you and your team are and what part of the University you belong to.
- **What are you crowdfunding for?** What is your project called and what exactly will you use the funds for?
- **Why is it important that you reach your project goal?** Make sure you really emphasise the benefit of your project on you, your group and the wider community.
- **Timescale** - When will your project take place if it is successfully funded?
- **Finally, make the ask!** Conclude your video with an ask for a donation. Make sure you reference your rewards and express how grateful you are to anyone who decides to support your project or share it on social media.

YouTube is the best place to upload your video as everyone is familiar with it. You will then be able to embed the link within your crowdfunding page.

USEFUL TOOLS FOR CREATING GREAT VIDEOS

As well as using Windows' Movie Maker or iMovie, the following free online tools may also prove useful:

- **Loom** – Useful for capturing your computer screen, recording with a webcam or narrating over a video clip.
- **Clip Champ** – Edit and enhance video clips, record using your webcam or access stock images and sounds.
- **Adobe Spark** – Easy to add photos, videos or your own voice, as well as providing soundtracks.

! Don't forget, if you include any music, you might need permission to use it in your video so always check first. Alternatively, you can use any music from <http://freemusicarchive.org/> with artist permission.



Here is a great [video example](#) from a previous Bristol crowdfunding campaign.



REWARDS

Rewards are central to any successful crowdfunding project. They encourage as many different people to support your project.

ARE THERE ANY RULES?

- **The more specific a reward is to a project, the better** - If possible, offer something that is created as part of the project so that it is truly one of a kind.
- **Rewards should be offered at their high-street value** - You shouldn't be offering rewards which are worth significantly less or more than the donation amount they are assigned to.
- **Consider the type of rewards you offer** - Rewards must not offer future discounts, alcohol, investments, vouchers or raffles/lotteries.
- **Consider the cost of your rewards** - According to UK Gift Aid laws, items offered cannot cost more than 25% of that donation amount to produce. For example, if a t-shirt costs £5 to produce, it cannot be awarded to someone who donated less than £20.
- **All or nothing funding** - Your Supporters will only be sent rewards when your minimum funding goal is met.

The value of the rewards should also increase with the donation amount that the supporter gives, but value does not necessarily mean expensive to produce. A valuable reward is something that is exclusive and relates specifically to your project idea.

EXAMPLE REWARDS

£10 A personal shout out on social media, your name added to list of supporters on theatre programme/CD/Newsletter...

£20 A handwritten thank you postcard, signed by all members of the team, email a personal thank you video, a poster/print/CD/ticket/item of merchandise...

£50 Early bird tickets, backstage passes, meet the team, guided tours...

£100 Naming/corporate sponsorship rights, commission of artwork, personal song, character in a book, an extra in a film...

£500 Anyone giving this much is seriously committed to helping you reach your goal and should be offered an extremely personalised reward...



Please refer to this [Rewards Guide](#) when creating your rewards for more information and guidance.



PROMOTION AND UPDATES

Once you have created your project pitch, video and rewards and you have submitted this for moderation, you will need to put together your plan to promote your project throughout its duration.

Once live, you need to continually promote it and show your family, friends and peers the progress you are making towards your goal. Whilst your project is being moderated, you should put together your promotional plan using the below guidance. Once you have created this and sent it to us, your project page can go live on Bristol Crowdfunding, and you are good to go!

WHO ARE YOUR AUDIENCE?

- **Friends and family**

These groups are usually best reached via personal message or in person and will often be some of the first people to donate – if they do, make sure you show them the love that they deserve!

TIP

Personally ask these individuals for support first – donations from this group will help encourage gifts later down the line from others.

- **Distant relatives and acquaintances**

This group will be more likely to support you where they are also passionate about your project.

TIP

Use group messages and chats to reach old acquaintances and your own personal social media pages to reach those family members that you are less often in touch with.

- **The wider public**

You probably won't know this group of people personally, but they will choose to support you because they believe in your project. This might include businesses, groups or individuals with similar objectives to your project, or even alumni and friends of the University.

Approach local press platforms or celebrities who might be sympathetic with your cause and ask them to promote your project to their audience.

TIP

Use Google, Facebook and LinkedIn to find these people. Send them direct messages and tell them why you think they might be interested in your project (i.e. don't just post in social media groups).



WHAT CHANNELS WILL YOU USE TO REACH THEM, AND WHEN?



Email

Sending multiple emails (at least one a week) is the best way to drive visitors to your project page. You will need to send at least one email a week during the promotional phase of your project to keep up momentum.

TIPS

- **Create a short, snappy subject line** – Make sure that it is an intriguing one which encourages the reader to open your email and find out more.
- **Make sure you include an ask** – Put simply, in fundraising if you don't ask, you don't get. Helpful phrases include "Please would you consider making a gift" or "We would be very grateful if you were able to support our project by making a donation".
- **Highlight rewards on offer** – Include details on what your supporters will receive if they give to your project.
- **Include a small, realistic goal in your email** – People are more likely to give if they know that their gift will have a bigger impact. Use your budget breakdown to create a collective goal which is realistically achievable if ten people give. For example, "If you and nine others give £X we will be able to achieve Y".
- **Personalise your emails** - Instead of addressing everyone as "Dear All", take the time to write their name and a personalised message.
- **Send polite chase emails** – Sometimes asking once isn't enough! Many people will need prompting a couple of times to remind them to donate.
- **Give advance warning that you will be sending an increased number of emails** - Since you'll be sending more emails than you usually do, consider letting your connections know this in your first email to them, and that they can expect things to return to normal in a few weeks, once your project has drawn to a close.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

The names, contact details and other personal data related to supporters or potential supporters of your project fall under the remit of the **GDPR**. If your project team are sharing these details with each other, you will need to ensure that the individual has given permission for you to share it. If in doubt, it is better to be cautious; ask for permission to share the details or ask the person with an existing relationship with the individual to contact them instead.

You will also have access to personal information about your project supporters via the Bristol Crowdfunding site. Anyone who visits or donated via the Bristol Crowdfunding site agrees to our Privacy Notice: <https://crowdfunding.bristol.ac.uk/privacy/>. All data you have access to must be stored securely, must only be used for activities in line with the Privacy Notice, and must not be shared with parties outside of your project creators team.





Social Media

Social media works best when you engage and interact with others, rather than just posting a link on your social media and asking for donations. Each post needs to show something different to the last; this could be a progress update, a “meet and greet” with the team, a thank you video or a poll/Q&A session.

Hashtags - Use Facebook groups and Instagram/Twitter hashtags to find those who might be interested in your project.

Stand out - Always use images/videos and hashtags when you post an update to help capture attention.

Engage, then ask - When asking someone you don't know for a donation via social media, make sure that you have interacted with them first. E.g. Send your project video as a direct message with an explanation as to why you are so passionate about your project and a few days later follow up with an ask for support.

Vary your messages – Alternate between directly asking for money and indirectly asking by posting interesting content about your project and team.

Ask for a retweet - Try including a specific person's Twitter handle and a message that is likely to appeal to their followers.

Follow people who might be interested in your project - And tweet about other topics that relate to your project too.

Use social media more frequently than email – Aim for two to four posts a week.



Helpful Tools

Canva – Edit and resize photos for email and social media and access templates.

Snappa – Create graphics for email and social media.

Grammarly – Writing assistant to eliminate grammar and spelling errors, correct writing mistakes and advice on tone.

Hemmingway App – Helps to make your writing clearer and more direct.



Other Channels of Promotion

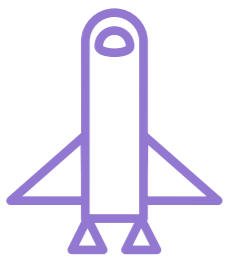
Create posters and flyers to hand out with key details on your project on how to donate. Consider talking to local press organisations by giving them a quick phone call to see if they would be interested in covering your story. Local companies might even be interested in sponsorship opportunities as well.

- **Phone is always better than email** - Make sure you know exactly who you are trying to contact. When you get through, make sure you let them know exactly what you're doing, who you are and how it can help them if they get involved.
- **Host a launch event on campus** - Hand out flyers and raise awareness of your cause. Live stream this to your followers too.
- **Identify helpers for your project** - A helper is someone who will share your project and ask for donations towards it in their own networks. For example, other members on your project team or those who might benefit from the project if it is successful. Better yet, persuade someone with a large social media following to share your project!



WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOUR PROJECT GOES LIVE?

Once your project page has been moderated and finalised, you've made your campaign video and you have finalised your promotional schedule with the guidance of the Bristol Crowdfunding team, you are ready to go live!



Launch Week

On go live day you should email and post on social media to all your identified audiences letting them know that the project is now live, and that they can watch your campaign video to find out more.

After the immediate launch of your project, you should approach family and friends and personally ask them to be the first donors. Before you approach acquaintances and strangers, you need to be able to demonstrate that your project is already on its way to success.

Use "Stretch Goals" to encourage the first gifts. It might be that your overall target originally seems overwhelming, but if you break it down using your budget, it could be that the first 10% of your funding target will help you to achieve something meaningful – let your audience know this and set this as your first milestone target.



Mid-Campaign

It is perfectly normal for the number of donations to slow after the initial excitement of your project launch. The challenge is keeping some momentum going until you near the end of your project's funding deadline, where you can rely on urgency to encourage donations.

During the second week, you should post interesting content using the hints and tips from previous sections. Switch between "meet and greets" or "Q&A's" with your project team, milestone updates and fun images and videos. Thank everyone who has supported your project so far and make sure to share links to anything which is interesting and relates to your project as well.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE END OF YOUR PROJECT?



Final Push

As you approach your deadline for funding, make sure you let your network know that there is only a short time left to help you reach your goal. If you haven't reached your target, make sure you let your audience know the exact difference that reaching your goal will mean to you and your team, and if you have already reached your goal, be sure let them know what the additional funds will be spent on.

Reach out to those who have already donated to your project, thank them for their support and ask them to share your project pages online. Do not be afraid to make your target fun either; as well as offering rewards, think of fun and creative things you and your team could pledge to do once you reach your target!



Thank your Supporters

Finally, don't forget to continually thank your supporters. Make sure you message or tweet them to say thanks and you keep them updated with progress towards your goal whilst your project is live. Even better, record a video message and share it with them.

If you have reached your minimum funding target as the project deadline passes you will receive all the funds made towards your project. You will need to create the rewards as soon as you can and contact your supporters to arrange them.



APPENDIX – EXAMPLE PROMOTIONAL PLAN

	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
Type of Update?	Launch	Ask – help us reach our first milestone and achieve...	First milestone reached	Get to know the team (post more info about a team member)	Second milestone reached!	Share topical news story which relates to project	Set new goal	Final push	Final final push!
Who/ Audience?	Everyone	Close friends and family	Colleagues, peers and wider public	Everyone	Everyone	Wider public	Everyone	Everyone	Everyone
What?	Project video	Photo	Photo	Blog/Vlog	Thank you video	Link	Photo	Photo	Video
Which Channels?	Email, social media, personal message, launch event	Email, personal message, face to face	Social media	Social media	Social media	Email, press release	Email, social media	Social media	Email, social media

USEFUL CONTACTS



General queries: uob-crowdfunding@bristol.ac.uk

Bristol Crowdfunding: <https://crowdfunding.bristol.ac.uk>



