

Precollege Programs Fundraising Guide



Figure 1: Collage of pictures of students engaged in Precollege Programs

Congratulations on the opportunity to attend a Precollege Program at Brandeis University! Financial aid for our programs is limited, and we understand that many participants need additional support in raising the funds necessary to experience life at Brandeis this summer.

Earning and raising the money for tuition is a leadership development opportunity and the traits and characteristics for running a fundraising campaign are valuable life skills. Setting goals, identifying audiences, developing messages, creating and executing a plan and building relationships are all skills that will help you throughout your life.

Many of the participants who attend our programs will invest their time to raise enough funds for tuition. Fundraising is all about being resourceful. This guide has been prepared to help you develop leadership skills, raise the necessary funds to attend the program of your choice and ultimately lead to a greater sense of satisfaction and accomplishment in the end. Don't forget that planning ahead and starting early are your keys to success!

Have fun and good luck!

-Precollege Programs

www.brandeis.edu/precollege

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Step 1 – Set Your Goal

Before you can begin to raise funds, you need to determine how much money you must raise. The best way to do this is create a budget. Think about the contributions that you and your family can make and what financial assistance may come from your extended family, your church, your community, and others.

Use the worksheet below to help you determine exactly how much you need to raise from your campaign.

Conference Costs		Amount
Program Fee		\$
Estimated Travel to/from Boston	+	\$
Spending Money	+	\$
Total Conference Costs	=	\$
Family Contribution		Amount
Your Savings		\$
Family Contribution	+	\$
Available Funds	=	\$
Amount to Fundraise		Total Amounts
Total Conference Costs		\$
Family Contribution	-	\$
Required Funds to Raise	=	\$

Step 2 – Identify Potential Sponsors

Great! Now you know exactly how much you need and you can start making a plan to raise those funds. To get started, make a list of all the people and organizations that you think may be willing to support you. Remember to think big – this list may include people such as coaches, teachers, community groups, extended family members, local businesses, church/synagogue members – the list goes on! Don't forget your parents – they have friends, co-workers, doctors and neighbors who may want to support you in this endeavor.

Use the form below to list all the individuals, companies and organizations you plan to contact.

And don't forget to gather information about your desired Precollege Program. Prepare talking points to share with potential sponsors about the amazing opportunities you will have while at Brandeis.

Be prepared to answer questions about yourself and why you want to attend your desired Precollege Program. Make a plan to present this information in a way that will make people want to make an investment – in YOU!

Get the Message Out:

Social Media – Do you have a Facebook or Twitter account? Do you write a blog? Do you use YouTube or Instagram? All of these are a great way to get out the message that you are excited to attend a Precollege Program at Brandeis University! You can quickly let all the people in your life know that you have received the honor of being accepted to attend and you need their help. Make posts announcing your acceptance, updating your fundraising progress and thanking anyone who has made a financial contribution along the way – “shout-outs” can be a powerful tool.

Crowdsourcing Sites - Have you ever heard of GoFundMe or Kickstarter? These are creative fundraising platforms used by individuals and companies to raise funds for innovative business projects or unexpected personal needs! You can use these platforms to share with your friends and family that you have received the honor of being accepted to attend a Precollege Program and that you need their help. Make sure to do your research and look out for potential fees and costs. Below are a few fundraising websites to help you get started:

- Fundly - www.fundly.com
- Generosity - www.generosity.com
- GoFundMe - www.gofundme.com
- Plumfund - www.plumfund.com

Letters to Friends and Family – When asking for support from your friends and family you want to send them a letter in the mail, send a message through email or even pick up the phone and call them. They will likely already be proud of your accomplishments and excited to support you as you work to achieve your goal. Let them know that it is an honor to be accepted to a precollege program and share your excitement about attending. Perhaps you already receive gifts from family and friends for birthdays and other special events – consider suggesting that these be sent as an “early gift” to support your fundraising efforts.

Letters to Businesses and Organizations – When writing to businesses and organization, you will want to address them in a professional manner. Be sure your message is clear, concise and thoughtful. Consider delivering the letter in person. You may have an opportunity to speak directly to a potential sponsor and even build future networking contacts. Dress professionally, remain poised and be prepared to answer any questions they may have about you or the program. Some information you may want to prepare in advance includes:

- Details about the Precollege Program you hope to attend
- Why you were selected to attend
- Your academic background, including achievements and awards
- How much money you need to attend

Step 4 – Follow Up

After making initial contact with potential sponsors, be sure to follow up with a phone call or email in a few days. Refer to the materials you dropped off, deliver or mailed and ask if they have additional questions. Remember that all donations, big or small, are greatly appreciated.

Make sure all potential sponsors know that all checks should be made payable to you, the individual, to support your Conference tuition and travel. **Your final program registration and tuition is due in full by May 15th, 2018.**

Step 5 – Say “Thank You!”

As soon as you receive a donation from a sponsor, send a thank you letter. If you can, give them an update on your fundraising progress, and of course, thank them for their generous contribution, regardless of the amount. Don’t forget to send “shout-outs” via social media as well.

Another time to say “Thank You!” is after you have returned from the program. Be sure to share your experience with friends, family AND your sponsors. Send another thank you note sharing what you learned and the wonderful activities you experienced. Consider including a picture of you at the program. Also think about uploading your pictures from the Conference to social media sites so that your friends and family can see how their contributions impacted your life and made a difference towards you achieving your goal!

Keys to Success:

- ✓ Do your research. Seek out sponsors that you know have made financial contributions to educational endeavors before.
- ✓ Start with the places you and your family go most often – Where do you go out to dinner? Who is your family doctor? Where do you take your dry cleaning? Where do you go for haircuts?
- ✓ Always dress professionally – you are asking people to invest in you, so you want to present a quality product!
- ✓ PRACTICE! Recruit your friends or family to let you practice introducing yourself and sharing information that you have prepared for potential sponsors.
- ✓ Make copies of your invitation and acceptance materials to take with you. Be prepared to leave copies along with a letter at each company you visit.
- ✓ Don't hesitate to accept any contributions – even small ones. In today's economy, even people who really want to support you may only be able to make a small contribution. But don't worry, these small contributions will quickly add up to a large amount.
- ✓ NEVER GIVE UP! Fundraising is not easy, and some people will say "no." Don't be discouraged by rejection – keep your head up, be persistent and you will be successful on your journey!

*Keep in mind that contributions you receive are not tax-deductible and should **not** be represented as a tax-deductible gift. Contributions made for a specific person do not qualify as tax deductible according to the International Revenue Service (IRS).*

Best of luck in your fundraising efforts!

We wish you great success and look forward to seeing you in the summer!

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