



WHAT IGNITES YOU?

CSU CROWDFUNDING

CHARGE! Guidelines

WHAT IS CHARGE!?

CHARGE! is Colorado State University's crowdfunding platform. Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project by raising many small gifts from a large number of people, online. Typically projects are marketed through personal networks. Projects are created by faculty, students and CSU staff members for the benefit of CSU. CHARGE! is the only authorized crowdfunding platform for gifts to CSU. All gifts through CHARGE! are designated to gift funds held by the CSU Foundation.

CHARGE! is administered through the Office of Annual Giving.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY TO USE CHARGE!.

All projects posted on CHARGE! must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- ✓ Fundraising on behalf of a recognized CSU program or a student organization registered with SLiCE.
- ✓ Fundraising for an existing CSU Foundation gift fund.
- ✓ Money raised cannot benefit or be designated to a specific student. For example:

NO:

- Raising money for the research of one specific individual.
- Raising money to cover travel costs for one specific student attending a conference.

YES:

- Raising money for a research project being conducted by multiple people or a department.
- Raising money for a group of students to attend a conference.
- ✓ Projects cannot be used to fund endowments. Only expendable accounts may be used.
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- ✓ Cleared through the appropriate Office of Development (college or unit development office).

Once approved by the appropriate Office of Development, they will provide a link to a survey which must be completed to confirm eligibility by the Office of Annual Giving.

Survey Questions:

- Please briefly describe your project:
Is this project fundraising on behalf of a recognized CSU program or a student organization registered with SLICE?
- Is the project using an existing CSU Foundation gift fund?
- Which gift fund? (please provide name and five digit fund number)
- Does your Project fit the Uses and Purposes for the fund listed?
- Is this project cleared through the appropriate Office of Development (college or unit office)?
- Short Project Description.
- Do you have a marketing plan for your project?
- Please provide a description of your marketing plan.
- Anticipated/Requested launch date for the project?
- Anticipated/Requested length of project?
- Anticipated/Requested Fundraising Goal for project?

Once you have been approved by the Office of Annual Giving, you should begin work on your project.

PROJECT CONTENT

All project content must represent CSU in the best light possible. Please be sure that both your video and your copy talk about how this project will benefit the University and/or the general University community. You should also be considerate of people, businesses, or organizations that you mention in your description and/or video. Make sure they know you are mentioning them. If you have previously received grants or donations from a foundation, please get their permission first before mentioning their name and gift in your description and/or video. Many foundations have special publicity clauses which require their review and approval of such material.

Per policy, no gift can be designated for a specific student, so please be sure that your description and video follow this policy.

Videos –All videos must be posted to YouTube (this is our required platform due to music right issues, as well as closed captioning capabilities.) All videos from the CHARGE! platform will also be hosted on the CSU YouTube channel. Videos should also do their best to adhere to CSU graphic standards. Video slates for the open and end of your videos are required and are available for download.

<http://graphicstandards.colostate.edu/>

Project Description Copy – All projects will be reviewed for spelling, grammar and use of CSU style. Adherence to style will ensure a speedier review process (projects with too many errors

will be rejected before going to the reviewer). Campaigns with a word count of 300-500 words raise the most money (GoGetFunding.com).

http://ccs.colostate.edu/style_guide/

PROJECT GOALS

Crowdfunding Projects should set goals that may be a stretch, but ultimately are attainable with a solid marketing plan. Asking for too much or too little can affect your project's chance for success.

Student organization projects will have a cap for their goals at \$1,500, unless they can show that they have a project which has the ability to raise more.

Academic and general University projects initiated by faculty and staff, will have more flexibility, but will need to demonstrate a solid marketing plan for any goal over \$2,500.

The average gift in our beta tests was \$70. Divide your goal by \$70 to determine how many supporters you will need. If you are targeting a student population, your average gift will be closer to \$25, so take that into account when calculating goals and the number of supporters you think you will need.

Remember it is always better to exceed your goal than to fall short.

The Office of Annual Giving may adjust goals that do not seem attainable or do not have a solid marketing plan to back them up. Any changes will be communicated to the project manager before the project launches. CHARGE! will release all funds raised, whether the goal is met or not to all projects

PROJECT TIMEFRAMES

The ideal project will be 20-40 days in duration. This gives people time to get the word out about your campaign, but still instills a sense of urgency, which is an important part of this fundraising tool.

Crowdfunding campaigns should be time intensive, as you post updates and communicate with your project supporters and potential project supporters.

CSU FOUNDATION DISCLAIMERS:

In an effort to ensure that all donors' intentions are met, and to limit confusion for our donors, the CSU Foundation may add a disclaimer to the end of any project description. This disclaimer will typically clarify that the gift being made in support of your project will be deposited to the fund you are raising money for, for the uses stated in your project.

For example, if the project is for the student organization, "RAMS for World Peace" and the gift is made to the Student Organizations fund, the disclaimer may state:

Your gift to Colorado State University will benefit the Student Organizations gift fund held by the CSU Foundation. This fund supports student organizations registered with the SLiCE office. Your gift in support of the RAMS for World Peace student organization will designated to this fund.

PROJECT REVIEW

All projects will be reviewed by University Advancement for the following:

Video and Copy: Will be reviewed for CSU graphic standards and adherence to CSU style, as well as spelling and grammar.

Project Description: Will be reviewed to ensure that the project described fits with the uses and purposes of the fund the project will benefit.

MARKETING PLAN

A successful crowdfunding project has a marketing plan! Before your project launches, identify stakeholders who will give, promote and champion your project. Projects are more likely to succeed once 40% of your goal is in the door, so try hard to identify people who will give before you launch, and get their gifts in within the first week.

Campaigns with a day-to-day marketing plan raise 180% more than those without. (GoGetFunding.com), this includes asks, project updates, thank you messages, etc. Your marketing plan should include personal contacts, phone calls, e-mail, and social media.

In an effort to reduce the number of e-mails received by CSU constituents, University Advancement will not allow use of CDISistributor, our e-mail tool, to promote individual projects. Please use your personal e-mail account to e-mail people you know, as that is the most effective way to utilize e-mail in the crowdfunding arena. CSU will mail our alumni and friends with general e-mails promoting the CHARGE! platform, so some donors will find your project that way.

Need some help with your marketing plan, click below:

<http://help-center.communityfunded.com/articles>

STEWARDSHIP

Crowdfunding offers strong tools for stewarding (thanks and updates) our donors. Project managers will commit to updating their projects a minimum of once a week while the project is live. Additionally, upon completion of the project (whether it meets the goal or not), they will also post a thank you to all of their donors. Ideally, when a project is completed and the funds have been utilized for their intended purpose, project managers will post one last update. All project updates will be reviewed before posting.

For student organization projects, account holders may hold funds until agreed upon stewardship requirements are met.

OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

No international gifts can be accepted at this time.

The minimum gift through CHARGE! is \$10.

QUESTIONS?

Thea M. Rounsaville
Assistant Director of Annual Giving
(970) 491-3496
Thea.Rounsaville@colostate.edu

Jeanetta Bradley
Annual Giving Coordinator
(970) 491-0252
Jeanetta.Bradley@colostate.edu