CROWDFUNDING:
A NEW FOUNDATION FOR A CONTEMPORARY
ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM

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# Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS ........................................................................................................... 1

OVERVIEW OF THE ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM .................................................................. 2

COLLABORATIVE VS. TACTICAL FUNDRAISING ..................................................................... 3
  COLLABORATIVE .................................................................................................................. 3
  TACTICAL ............................................................................................................................ 3

CROWDFUNDING AS A NEW APPROACH .............................................................................. 4

UT HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS ........................................... 5
  THE CROWDFUNDING DRIVING FORCE ........................................................................... 5
  LIST OF UTHSCSA STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS .............................................................. 6

CROWDFUNDING EXAMPLES AND RESULTS .................................................................... 8
  COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS .................................................................. 8
  PLATFORM VERSATILITY .................................................................................................... 9
  ACADEMIC HEALTH SCIENCE CENTERS ........................................................................ 10

IMPLEMENTATION: UTHSCSA’S PLATFORM ....................................................................... 12
  STEWARDSHIP ................................................................................................................... 12
  PROJECT TIMELINE ........................................................................................................... 15

THE APPLICATION ............................................................................................................... 16
  ........................................................................................................................................... 17

EXPLORING PLATFORM OPTIONS ....................................................................................... 19
  SCALEFUNDER .................................................................................................................... 19
  SAMPLE HOME PAGE ....................................................................................................... 20
  SAMPLE PROJECT PAGE .................................................................................................... 21

MARKETING THE PLATFORM THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA ..................................................... 22
  SHARING ............................................................................................................................ 22
  TWITTER ............................................................................................................................. 22
  FACEBOOK ......................................................................................................................... 23

CROWDFUNDING: THE FUTURE OF ANNUAL GIVING ....................................................... 24
OVERVIEW OF THE ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM

An institution’s ability to generate revenue through individual giving constitutes for as much as 80% of its total accumulation of funds. This is the average for all nonprofit institutions across the United States, the most charitable nation in the world. For the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, income is mostly accrued through foundation and corporation support, a statistic that inversely applies to most other institutions of higher education.

Annual giving functions as the foundation for many development models throughout the nonprofit community. Working with annual giving as a starting point, prospects that may have the capacity and passion to give at a larger scale are able to be identified and moved into the pipeline. This area in development marks the beginning of the donor life cycle by placing them in the position for further cultivation. A donor’s passion for the university can often grow even though they no longer sit in its classrooms, or if they have never set foot on campus, or had never heard of us until an alumnus saved their life. We are known for one concrete dogma: to make lives better. We stand by this ideal by molding students into doctors of the highest caliber, nurses with the utmost compassion and skill, dentists with the greatest poise and kindness, and other health professionals who have joined the race in medical innovation and discovery. Through the efforts of the annual giving program, individuals are pulled from a population of prospective donors, whether it be through large outright gifts or potential bequests, thus cueing the start of a cyclical relationship between institution and person.

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1 This information was acquired from a UT System Center for Enhancing Philanthropy Workshop.
COLLABORATIVE VS. TACTICAL FUNDRAISING

COLLABORATIVE

Collaborative fundraising is a model used by most nonprofits to secure funds in a traditional forward thinking manner. Though a goal is present in any fundraising model across the spectrum, collaborative fundraising calls for a collective effort and a harmonious relationship between all fundraisers involved in the effort. Collaboration is seen as a traditional fundraising method as it pertains to an obvious philanthropic nature in the way it works. In the process of capitol campaigns, collaborative work is needed at its highest capacity, but this doesn’t seem to be the only effort type that calls for the collaboration of individuals.

Collaborative fundraising fits well within the realm of annual giving. Smaller solicitations, whether acquired through direct mail appeals, emails, phone calls, or events take work from all across the institutional advancement team.

TACTICAL

In the fundraising world, another avenue that is often taken is known as the tactical method. Tactical fundraising encompasses the idea that if you place priority for fundraising in the hands of a competitive atmosphere, results will surface even quicker.

Tactical fundraising can be seen as a process that conjures up expedient results. This has made this method of fundraising a method that a lot of nonprofits are uncomfortable with pursuing. This is because they believe it doesn’t compliment their own mission and goals, or because to them it taints the atmosphere that philanthropy creates by placing importance in something other than teamwork. With these worries regarding tactical fundraising taken into consideration, an enormous advantage is the fact that this method helps generate in results at a faster rate.
CROWDFUNDING AS A NEW APPROACH

Crowdfunding is a new and innovative way to fundraise for individual project needs and institutional needs, by utilizing a culmination of collaborative and tactical methods. Crowdfunding urges student organizations to take charge of their own success through the connections that they have made with friends, families, or colleagues. Crowdfunding allows you to appeal not only to your donors within the realm of their preferred method of giving, but also showcase the university as a whole and convey it as one comprehensive and unified entity. A crowdfunding platform is provided to keep track of each individual project, help promote each project, and offer tools that are needed to share each project.

Professional university fundraisers manage the platform and its contents, while constantly consulting with the students and student advisors who help sculpt a story worthy of the attention necessary to generate interest and income. Storytelling from the student perspective is key in this process and conveying this perspective will prove to be the most useful tool that crowdfunding offers. The collaborative concept of crowdfunding is clear, but the tactical portion is equally important. Each project that is promoted on the platform has a very definitive timeline that helps increase the sense of urgency of the project and its fundraising efforts. The platform also has a thermometer tool that helps prospects see the amount of money raised versus the amount of time remaining. All of this is a tactical approach to fundraising because it pushes the envelope just enough to gain faster results, while still resonating well with all parties involved because collaboration and passion is still clearly shown throughout the crowdfunding process.

"IF YOU WANT TO GO QUICKLY, GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER." –African Proverb
UT HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

THE CROWDFUNDING DRIVING FORCE

92 Student Organizations
10 Students Per Organization
12 Prospects Per Student
10 Dollars Per Donor
6 donors

$600 Potential Organizational Average
$55,200 Potential Institutional Average
LIST OF UTHSCSA STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS
Accelerated Nursing c/o 2016
American Academy of Oral Medicine
American Association of Public Health Dentistry
American Association of Women Dentists
American Medical Association, Texas Medical Association, Bexar County Medical Society
American Medical Women’s Association
American Student Dental Association
Anesthesiology Interest Group
Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association
Association of Women Surgeons
Banyan Project (India Outreach)
Business in Medicine Interest Group
Cardiology Interest Group
Catholic Medical Student Association
Chinese Student and Scholar Association at UTHSCSA
Christian Health Professions Association
Clinical Laboratory Science Student Association
Delta Sigma Delta
Dermatology Interest Group
Discussion in Medical Ethics
Donum Vitae
Ethiopia Outreach (Global Heath)
Emergency Medicine Student Association
ENT Interest Group
Family Medicine Interest Group
Frontera De Salud
Garden and Health Interest Group
Geriatrics and Palliative Care Interest Group
Graduate Student Association
Health Education Literacy Project (HELP For Better Health)
Hispanic Student Dental Association
Hispanic Student Nurses Association
Infectious Disease Interest Group
Internal Medicine Student Interest Group
Interventional Radiology Interest Group
Latino Medical Student Association
Latter-Day Saint Student Organization
Lions Health Screening Organization/Lion’s Club MESU
Masters of Occupational Therapy c/o 2017
Medical c/o 2018
Medical Students for Choice
Meditation Society/Mindfulness Society
Men in Nursing
Military Health Interest Group
Music & Art in Medicine
Muslim Student Organization
National Student Nurses Association
Nursing c/o May 2016
Nursing c/o May 2017
OB/GYN Interest Group
Oncology Student Interest Group
Ophthalmology Interest Group
PA Class of 2016
PA Class of 2017
Pathology Interest Group
Pediatric Dental Society
Pediatric Interest Group
Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Student Interest Group
Physicians for Human Rights
Plastic Reconstructive Surgery Interest Group
PRIDE
Psychiatry Student Interest Group
Radiology Interest Group
Refugee Accompaniment Health Partnership
Respiratory Care
Rockwood Orthopedic Society
Salud al Pasito
San Antonio Student Pharmacists Association
School of Health Professions Student Forum
Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science
Sports Medicine Interest Group
Student American Dental Hygienists’ Association
Student Interest Group in Neurology (Neuroscience Society)
Student National Dental Association
Student National Medical Association
Student Occupational Therapy Association
Student Pathology Association
Student Surgical Society
Students Going Global (Panama)
Students Run Free Clinic
Tiny Patient Project
Urology Interest Group
Vamos Guatemala Summer Group
Vascular Surgery Interest Group
Veteran Medical Student Association
Wilderness Medicine Student Interest Group
Witte Student Organization
Xi Psi Phi (Dental Honor Society)
Yoga & Medicine

And more!
CROWDFUNDING EXAMPLES AND RESULTS

COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS
Universities across the nation, along with other nonprofits, have grown to utilize all the benefits that crowdfunding has to offer. Universities have crowdfunding platforms that are powered by a plethora of different entities due to their individual needs and constraints. An example of a university whose already successful annual giving efforts were improved by crowdfunding is the University of Texas at Austin.

[HornRaiser example]
PLATFORM VERSATILITY

The University of Texas at Austin crowdfunding platform, “HornRaisers,” has hosted multiple projects that have raised well over $20,000. The university has also engaged in multiple annual giving campaigns that the platform supports in advertising and expressing throughout the cyber community. This proves the versatility that an official university-wide crowdfunding platform has to offer. An example of a campaign is shown below with the crowdfunding platform for UT San Antonio, LaunchUTSA. The adaptive capability that the platform offers can help promote and track a campaign’s progress.
The next example shown on page 11 showcases results of a crowdfunding platform implemented within a health science institution. The University of California at San Francisco is an institution with a wide donor base and professionals that are fully dedicated to the management and control of its crowdfunding platform. An important consideration when reviewing this example is that a university as robust as UCSF, an institution with a large donor base, is not necessarily comparable to UTHSCSA’s potential success using this platform. This example is reflected as there are many similarities behind program ideals, values, and priorities. It is easy to look at successful crowdfunding programs at a comprehensive academic university that has all of the advantages of mascots, athletics, and a more traditional campus atmosphere. When it comes to health institutions, different avenues must be sought out in order to secure donor attention and ensure retention. The example shows how this avenue can be traveled and just how successful a crowdfunding program can prove to be for this type of institution. One of the most successful project pages is also shown on page 11, perfectly capturing evidence that crowdfunding can truly be impactful. Although UTHSCSA’s platform may not specifically reflect the dollar amounts shown in these examples if crowdfunding is established, it is helpful to see the benefits a crowdfunding program might bring to UTHSCSA.
IMPLEMENTATION: UTHSCSA’S PLATFORM

One of the greatest reasons why crowdfunding is so effective is the fact that the university will provide students and their projects with resources for success such as the university-wide platform.

Fraudulent activity regarding crowdfunding has occurred with platforms such as GoFundMe and FundRazr. The difference between these platforms and official university platforms is that the university platforms are constantly managed not by those who are benefiting directly from the fundraising effort, but by the professionals who represent the university’s interests.

Our platform would be a state-of-the-art reference used to view project descriptions, project videos that are made by the students, information about student organizations, and progress updates for the project. Thermometers are seen throughout the platform home page for each respective project showing how far away they are to reaching a monetary goal in relation to how far they are from reaching the project deadline. All of these tools are very helpful in the fundraising effort for each individual project because it shows a certain transparency that’s craved by donors of any capacity; donors want to know that they are giving to a cause that will directly benefit the individuals involved, the university, and the community, whether it be global or local.

STEWARDSHIP

The UT Health Science Center San Antonio crowdfunding platform, given the sample name “FundHSC,” will also contain information and tools that help in the cultivation and stewardship of donors who give to each project. On the far right hand side of the project page there is a section entitled “Our Way of Thanking You” that helps encompass the concept behind the gratitude that needs to be shown to our donors at all levels. This section of the project page hosts giving levels ranging sometimes
from $10 to $1,000 or more. For each giving level a “Perk” is given to the donor as a way of saying thank you. These Perks are usually personal gifts that have no capital worth such as a signed photograph of the students as opposed to a gift card.

Perks may not have any monetary value. Otherwise, the gift will not qualify as a tax-deductible donation. Professional oversight is key throughout this process to ensure that these Perks are appropriately managed. In addition to Perks, there is a tab that is located near the project description entitled “Donor Wall.” When someone clicks onto the tab, a page populates under it containing a list of all of the donors who have contributed and the amount they donated to the project. Of course, if the donor wishes not to disclose this information, they can choose to be anonymous. An example of the Donor Wall and Perks is shown in the figure above.
Stewarding donors is one of the most important components involved in development. This platform assists in stewardship through the Donor Wall and Perks. In addition to this stewardship process, these new donors are henceforth moved into the pipeline for further cultivation, potential solicitation, and ongoing appreciation from the university.

**STORYTELLING THROUGH VIDEO**

For each project page, a video of student representatives from their respective organization are featured. There, they discuss the upcoming opportunity that they are fundraising for. It is encouraged that this video is grassroots quality as an attempt to look more authentically made from the students themselves. This video has proven to be one of the most crucial parts in the crowdfunding process because it sheds light on the project from the student perspective which is what resonates most with prospective donors.

The video that is provided by the organization is the best way for them to tell their story beyond just the project description. Videos offer an avenue to showcase the transparent characteristic that crowdfunding aims to convey. These videos give the project a face and it gives the project humanity. All too often, a frequent complaint from donors is that they do not know exactly what their hard-earned money is specifically benefiting. Donors are stewarted directly from the students, enhancing the donor experience.
**Project Timeline**

As for the logistics regarding the project process, there is a timeline. For each project there are usually two options that the student organization and the institutional advancement team have to decide on based on the specific project needs. The two options are a thirty day timeline, or a fifteen day timeline. This means that you can only have a project up and running on the platform for either a month, or for half of a month. There are no in between options to choose from. The idea behind this suggestion is that donors are more interested in giving when there is a sense of urgency. Also, it gives students a sense of urgency, compelling them to work harder for the results they desire. For each of these two options, there are a total of three email pushes. Every student from the organization must provide their own personal network by providing UTHSCSA with email addresses of potential prospects for each push, then Web Relations emails them at the beginning, middle, and end of the project timeline. A visual representation of the project timeline is shown below.

![Project Timeline Diagram]

During the Prelaunch Preparation phase, Institutional Advancement professionals should take about one month to review over the content and information provided in the application in order to elaborate on the project goals and definition. During this time, it’s crucial to nail down the project description and hone in on how the project will specifically impact the students involved, the university, and the community whether it be global or local. During this phase, students are then asked to compose and provide the video previously discussed, as well as decide on the Donor Perks with the platform manager.
The application

The screening process is very important in ensuring that the crowdfunding platform reflects UTHSCSA’s mission and goals appropriately. This means that a process must be in place in order to assess projects that student organizations propose in applications. Applications to be admitted onto an official university crowdfunding platform must be used in order to properly screen projects to ensure that they are appropriate.

Usually, there are five criteria required for the project to meet proper qualifications, although criteria can be arranged according to the respective university and its needs. The five criteria are listed below. An example of an application UTHSCSA would have is drafted in pages 17 and 18. All information seen was acquired through platform research.

Must reflect mission and goals of the university and university system

Students and Advisors must be affiliated directly with the University

Must be an organization consisting of 10 or more people who are willing to participate

Each organization member must provide 12 emails of potential donor prospects

Members and advisors need to follow policies and procedures set forth by the platform and the platform manager
FUNDHSC

FOR A PROJECT TO BE CONSIDERED, THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA MUST BE MET:

Must reflect mission and goals of the university and university system

Students and Advisors must be affiliated directly with the University

Must be an organization consisting of 10 or more people who are willing to participate

Each organization member must provide 12 emails of potential donor prospects

Members and advisors need to follow policies and procedures set forth by the platform and the platform manager

CROWDFUNDING APPLICATION

First Name

Last Name

Email

Phone Number

Phone Type

Organization/Department Name

Organization/Department Website or Blog

Organization/Department Facebook Page

Organization/Department Twitter Page

Applicant’s Role/Title

Number of Active Members

Required field

- Home
- Work
- Mobile
Please provide goals, objectives, and a brief description of how funds will be used. Successful crowdfunding projects have scalable goals and demonstrate how gifts at various goals make a difference.

- UTHSCSA Employee
- Representative of a group with a UTHSCSA Employee as an advisor

Keep in mind that the project timeline has to fit within 15 or 30 days.
EXPLORING PLATFORM OPTIONS

SCALEFUNDER

Scalefunder is a crowdfunding resource that is used by multiple UT System comprehensive academic universities. Scalefunder is a good resource for most of these universities because they have a Phonathon program in place that is powered by the same entity, RuffaloNoelLevittz (RNL), previously known as RuffaloCODY. All the necessary work needed in order to streamline donors and prospects into the university donor database is already in place through the Phonathon program, so the Scalefunder streamlines the crowdfunding option to the already existing account with RNL. To add to the universities such as UT Austin and UT San Antonio, RNL represents other clients such as Cornell University, Duquesne University, Northwestern, UC San Francisco, University of Maryland, University of Mississippi, and many more. Scalefunder has helped universities launch projects that can generate six figures within one month, which proves the capability a high caliber crowdfunding effort. UTHSCSA, however, does not currently have a Phonathon program in place, making the process needed in order to streamline prospects and donors acquired through crowdfunding more complicated. Scalefunder, unlike most other crowdfunding resources, charges the university five percent of the funds raised for each individual project instead of charging a flat fee. This makes it easy to include the charge in the project goal in order to budget for the project. The following examples represent a crowdfunding platform powered by Scalefunder.

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2 This is in no way an endorsement for Scalefunder or RuffaloNL, but an exploration of an option that the institution has when discussing crowdfunding platforms avenues.
SAGE UTHSCSA Chapter Needs Help to Help!
Help UTHSCSA student provide healthcare to the people of Guatemala.

Help Support the Dental Clinic
Continue in your support for UTHSCSA by donating to help the upbringing of our state-of-the-art Dental Clinic.

Providing Opportunities for Aspiring Researchers
Dr. Brenner Leads research in glioblastoma. Help build a foundation for students.

Building Dentists
Donate to the construction of a simulation lab that will help further exceptionalism in the field of dentistry and our students.

Enhancing UTHSCSA Voices
Donate to the cultivation of philanthropic minds of Voices and help them go to a conference in Dallas that will better the community!

Venezuelan Mission Trip
Give to a group of student whose mindset is to help the community of Venezuela live healthy and long lives.
Thank you for donating at the first level! To properly show our gratitude our team will send you a signed picture of us at the conference!

Thank you for donating at the second level! To properly show our gratitude our team will invite you to have dinner with us so we can tell stories of the time we had!

For the past 13 years, SAGE has taken teams of as many as 135 volunteers into the mountains of rural Guatemala to provide healthcare and community development to those in need. This includes medical professionals, med and nursing students, the construction team, plus a kitchen team and translators.

Many Guatemalans never have the opportunity to receive healthcare, and their illnesses often go untreated for years.

Through the course of 5 Days, an interdisciplinary group consisting of all students throughout UTHSCSA come together to provide the treatment that the community needs.

In order to properly serve the people of Guatemala, we need your help! Whether you give, $20, or $1,000, together, every single dollar counts and will be accepted with enormous gratitude.
MARKETING THE PLATFORM THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media plays a quintessential role in today’s development community by providing real time updates and broad range marketing with one click of a button. Annual giving is a constantly changing subset of development and must quickly adapt to and endure changing trends. Utilizing social media benefits annual giving efforts. The following are some brief examples of social media posts that may help in the promotion of UTHSCSA’s crowdfunding platform and any potential projects hosted.

SHARING
The platform provides ways to share a project located underneath the video provided on the project page.

TWITTER
Twitter reaches over 304 million active users and can act as an effective avenue to spread project information or information on the official university crowdfunding platform. Keep in mind that verbiage must be kept under 140 characters. This forces one to make sure that proper text and descriptions are well refined. The following is an example twitter post.
FACEBOOK
This form of social media is the most robust, reaching up to 1.65 billion users. The following is an example of a posting from our Alumni Relations Facebook page.
Crowdfunding has served as a new resource to fundraise globally for so many different causes, and crowdfunding is one of the only sources that is available to not only an individual within a three mile radius of the institution, but also acts as a connector between the university and the rest of the world. The world is vast, but deserves to know about all of the amazing discoveries, innovations, and cutting-edge healthcare that is taking place in our little South Texan corner. As for all of the amazing opportunities that crowdfunding would bring to UTHSCSA and its students, faculty, and staff, they extend well beyond monetary and tangible benefits. The most important value that crowdfunding would bring to the Health Science Center is the sense of unity and harmony amongst our population. When a medical student checks to see the progress of their organization’s crowdfunding efforts on the project home page, they see right next to them a project hosted by nursing students who seem to share the same passion they may have. We make lives better. This tagline conveys that making lives better is a passion that resides in the hearts of every single person affiliated with the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.