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Donation request letter examples

A donation request letter is a formal or semi-formal written appeal designed to solicit financial or in-kind support for a cause, organization, or individual in need. It serves as a bridge between the requester and potential donors, clearly articulating the purpose of the request, the impact of the donation, and how contributions will be utilized. Whether sent via mail, email, or presented in person, these letters are a cornerstone of fundraising efforts for nonprofits, charities, schools, and even individuals facing hardships. Why Are Donation Request Letters Effective? Donation request letters remain one of the most effective fundraising tools due to their personal and direct nature. Unlike mass advertising, they allow for tailored messaging that resonates with the recipient's values. Studies show that personalized letters have a 35% higher response rate than generic requests. Additionally, letters provide space for storytelling, which can emotionally engage donors—letters featuring beneficiary stories raise twice as much as those relying solely on facts. The tangible format (or even a well-crafted email) also lends credibility, making it easier for donors to trust the cause. Common Uses for Donation Request Letters Nonprofits and Charities: Funding programs, events, or operational costs. Schools and Universities: Supporting scholarships, infrastructure, or extracurricular activities. Medical Fundraising: Covering treatment costs for individuals with critical illnesses. Community Projects: Raising money for local initiatives like parks or shelters. Business Sponsorships: Securing corporate support for events or campaigns. Key Components of a Successful Donation Request Letter The Importance of a Clear and Compelling Introduction The opening lines of your donation request letter set the tone. Start with a warm greeting and immediately establish a connection. For example, mention a shared value or prior interaction with the recipient. A strong introduction should also succinctly state the letter's purpose. Avoid vague phrases like "we need your help"—instead, be specific: "We're writing to invite you to support our 2024 Clean Water Initiative, which will bring safe drinking water to 1,000 families in rural Kenya." The body of your letter should answer three key questions: Why is the cause important? How will the donation be used? What impact will it make? Use data and storytelling to create urgency. For instance, "Last year, your $100 donation provided meals for 50 children. This year, with rising food costs, we aim to double that impact." Bullet points can help highlight key achievements or needs, making the letter skimmable for busy readers. Including a Strong Call-to-Action (CTA) A clear CTA is critical. Specify the desired action (e.g., "Donate $75 by June 30th") and make it easy to comply. Include multiple donation methods (online, check, phone) and deadlines if applicable. Research shows CTAs with specific amounts increase donations by 40%. For example: "Your gift of $50 today will plant 10 trees in wildfire-affected areas." Essential Contact and Donation Details Always provide: Your organization's name, logo, and contact information. Tax-deductibility status (if applicable). Payment links, QR codes, or mailing addresses. A deadline (e.g., "Match your gift by December 31st to double your impact!"). Different Types of Donation Request Letters Formal Letter Asking for Donations Formal letters follow traditional business letter formatting and are often used for corporate or high-value donor requests. They include letterhead, a formal salutation (e.g., "Dear Mr. Smith"), and a professional tone. These are ideal for grant applications or partnerships with businesses. Charity Donation Request Letter Charity letters emphasize emotional appeal and often highlight beneficiary stories. They may include photos or testimonials to build trust. For example, a food bank might share a quote from a recipient: "Thanks to your generosity, my children no longer go to bed hungry." Nonprofit Donation Request Letter Sample Nonprofit letters typically focus on mission alignment. They detail how donations further the organization's goals, such as "Your support helps us rescue 200 animals monthly." Including a breakdown of costs (e.g., "$20 = one vaccination") can clarify the donation's value. Business Donation Request Letter Targeted at companies, these letters highlight mutual benefits, like brand visibility or CSR alignment. Example: "By sponsoring our annual gala, your logo will reach 10,000 attendees and be featured in our newsletter." Personal Donation Request Letter Example Used for individual needs (e.g., medical bills), these letters are more intimate. They often include personal updates and gratitude: "After my diagnosis, your kindness gave me hope—any contribution toward my treatment is deeply appreciated." Fundraising Donation Request Letter Common for events like walks or auctions, these letters tie donations to participation: "Join our 5K or sponsor a runner to fight cancer." They may include registration links or pledge forms. Donation Letter Format and Structure Standard Format for a Donation Request Letter A well-structured letter includes: Header: Your organization's name/logo, date, and recipient's address. Salutation: Personalized if possible (e.g., "Dear [Name]"). Body: Introduction, need, impact, and CTA. Closing: Gratitude and contact details. PS: A handwritten PS can boost responses by 50%. Email Donation Request Letter Sample Emails should be concise, with a compelling subject line (e.g., "Join Us in Saving Lives Today"). Use bold text for key points and hyperlinks for donations. A/B test subject lines to optimize open rates. Free Donation Request Letter Template Templates save time and ensure consistency. Look for editable formats (Google Docs, Word) that include placeholders for customization. Many nonprofit websites offer free templates tailored to specific causes. Tips for Writing a Persuasive Donation Request Letter How to Personalize Your Letter for Higher Response Rates Address recipients by name and reference past interactions: "As a longtime supporter, you've already helped 50 students graduate—let's make it 100!" Segment your donor list to tailor messages (e.g., first-time vs. recurring donors). The Power of Storytelling in Donation Letters Stories humanize your cause. Feature a beneficiary's journey: "Maria, a single mother, used our job-training program to secure a stable income. Your gift creates more success stories like hers." Using Data and Statistics to Strengthen Your Appeal Balance emotion with facts: "90% of donations go directly to services," or "Every $1 invested yields $5 in community benefits." Infographics can visualize impact. The Role of Handwritten Notes in Building Trust A brief handwritten PS (e.g., "P.S. Your support last year changed lives—thank you!") adds authenticity. For small donor pools, consider fully handwritten letters. Example of a Sample Letter of Request for Donation Dear [Recipient's Name], I hope this letter finds you well. My name is [Your Name], and I am writing on behalf of [Your Organization's Name], a [brief description of your organization's mission, e.g., "nonprofit dedicated to providing educational resources to underprivileged children in our community"]. We are reaching out to you today to kindly request your support in helping us continue and expand our vital work. At [Your Organization's Name], we are committed to [specific goal or project, e.g., "ensuring every child has access to quality learning materials"]. However, achieving this mission requires the generosity of individuals and organizations like yours. Your donation, no matter the size, will directly impact [specific beneficiaries, e.g., "over 500 children in our local school district"] by [explain how the funds will be used, e.g., "providing textbooks, school supplies, and after-school tutoring programs"]. We understand that there are many worthy causes seeking support, and we deeply appreciate your consideration. To give you an idea of the difference your contribution can make: [include a brief example or statistic, e.g., "$50 can supply a child with books for an entire semester"]. Enclosed with this letter, you will find additional information about our programs and the impact of your donation. Please feel free to contact me directly at [Your Phone Number] or [Your Email Address] if you have any questions or would like to discuss other ways to support our cause. You can also visit our website at [Your Website URL] to learn more or make a secure online donation. Thank you for your time and consideration. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. We look forward to the possibility of partnering with you. Sincerely, [Your Full Name] [Your Title] [Your Organization's Name] [Your Contact Information] Sponsorship Request Letter Template and Best Practices How Sponsorship Letters Differ from Donation Requests Sponsorship letters emphasize mutual benefits, such as brand exposure or networking opportunities, whereas donation requests focus on altruism. For example: "As a sponsor, your company will be featured in our event's promotional materials, reaching 20,000 potential customers." Key Components of a Sponsorship Request Letter Value Proposition: Clearly state what the sponsor gains (e.g., logo placement). Audience Demographics: Share attendee or beneficiary stats to attract aligned brands. Sponsorship Tiers: Offer levels (e.g., Gold: $5,000, Silver: $2,500) with corresponding perks. Sponsorship Request Letter Template Templates should include customizable sections for sponsor benefits, event details, and deadlines. Highlight past sponsors' successes to build credibility. Request for Financial Support Letter: Special Considerations When to Use a Financial Support Request Letter These letters are ideal for urgent or ongoing needs, such as medical emergencies or long-term projects. They often include a timeline: "We must raise $30,000 by August to keep our shelter open." How to Frame Your Financial Need Effectively Be transparent about the situation without guilt-tripping. For example: "Due to unexpected funding cuts, we risk reducing services by 50%. Your gift today ensures no child is turned away." Advanced Strategies for Maximizing Donation Responses The Importance of Follow-Up Emails and Letters A polite follow-up within 2 weeks can increase donations by 15–20%. Reference the original request: "We wanted to remind you about our matching gift opportunity—your $50 becomes $100 if donated by Friday." Leveraging Social Proof in Donation Requests Showcase endorsements: "Local businesses like [X] and [Y] have already joined our cause." Testimonials from respected figures add credibility. Using AI Tools to Generate Tailored Donation Letters AI platforms can personalize letters at scale, analyzing donor history to suggest optimal asks. However, always review outputs to maintain authenticity. Common Mistakes to Avoid in Donation Request Letters Overlooking Personalization Generic letters (e.g., "Dear Friend") feel impersonal. Use CRM tools to auto-insert names and past donation amounts. Being Too Vague About the Ask Avoid phrases like "any amount helps." Instead, suggest specific tiers: "$25 feeds a family for a week; $100 funds a month of tutoring." Neglecting to Proofread and Edit Typos undermine credibility. Use tools like Grammarly and have a colleague review the letter before sending. Even in the digital age, a donation letter is still one of the most direct and effective ways to raise money for your cause. That's because donation letters are such a flexible strategy – whether they're direct mail appeals or email messages, tailored to a specific campaign or event, or asking for more general support. You can't really go wrong with a well-written, concise appeal for donations. We've written before about how to create the perfect donation page, the actual place on your website where you'll accept online donations. But how do you promote it to potential donors? Or, if you're mailing physical messages, how do you let supporters know they can find you online or send a check? Reach out with a letter. Nonprofit fundraising letters are a fantastic way to drum up support and awareness for your cause. And thanks to the plethora of powerful resources available to organizations like yours, you can make the most of this fundraising opportunity while making the most of the time and money put into your own mission. However, you have to make sure your donation letter stands out. Following a foolproof template is the best way to make sure you're hitting all the essentials. Then, you can customize and personalize your letter to really catch your donors' attention. Let's walk through common examples of donation letters, starting with a template of the basic format to follow: Use the list above to jump to a particular letter template, or just follow along with us from the top. We'll wrap up with a few of our pro tips to make your donation letters as impactful as possible. Let's get started! Bonus resource! Once you've used these templates to write your fundraising letter, head to GivingMail to use their direct mailing services to get your letters in supporters' hands! This allows your team to send appeals to the largest number of recipients in the most efficient way possible, allowing you to put your time and money into what matters: your mission. Donation Letter Templates: 10 Common Examples Let's start with the basics. Here's a template of the essential elements that any effective donation letter will include: Salutation. Greet your potential donor with a friendly opening, and personalize it with their name whenever possible. You might need to do this manually, or you can use nonprofit software and marketing tools to automatically populate names into your letters and emails. By including supporters' names and addresses on your letters, case studies show that you can increase your response rate by 14%, average gift size by 19%, and overall revenue by an astonishing 31.5%! Explanation of your mission. If your recipient isn't very familiar with your organization, a concise explanation of your mission and purpose is important. This is the "hook," the first place to encourage readers to emotionally connect with your work. If your recipients have engaged with your nonprofit before (whether as current or lapsed donors, volunteers, etc.), this is also the place to acknowledge that. Your project, event, or needs. Next, briefly explain what you're fundraising for. Why are you sending the letter? It might be a specific project or event that needs funding, or you might be conducting a fundraising campaign to raise support for your organization more generally, or you might be sending letters to matching-gift eligible donors to encourage them to submit their match. Whatever the reason, be exact and transparent about it. Compelling details. In the middle section, add some compelling details to help illustrate your needs. Describe your project or event and the impact it will have on your community. Provide examples of your past work, or share a story about a particular constituent or campaign. This is where you should focus on engaging your reader emotionally to motivate them to take action. A specific request. Next, clearly state your specific request. Your reader won't feel as compelled to donate if your request is too generic. Ask for a specific amount, but make it clear that any support will be appreciated. If possible, tie your request to a specific impact it will have. For example: "Your donation of $25 will help provide a backpack full of school supplies for a local student in need." A call-to-action. Wrap up your letter with the concrete next steps that you want the reader to take. This will depend on the exact purpose of the letter. For an email, include a direct link to your donation page. For a physical letter, provide clear instructions for readers to send you a check or find your online donation page. The main idea is to focus your letter around one key goal. Depending on your exact goal for the letter, you may choose to promote your main donation page, recurring gift options, event registration page, or volunteer sign-up form. Never overwhelm your reader with multiple or vague requests. You just need to ensure you've got easy-to-use online fundraising tools set up to direct your readers to. Create a Snowball account to cover your bases with a free online donation page. By sticking to the essentials outlined in this basic template, you'll already be ahead of the game and boost your chances of success. Now, you're ready to adjust your letter a bit more based on your specific goals, community, or project. Let's walk through some common examples. 2. Donation Letter Template: Donation Request Dear [name], We here at [your organization] are so proud of our recent work to [provide a few details about your past initiatives], and we'd like to thank you for being a part of our community. However, our mission to [short description of your organization's mission] is a 24/7 undertaking! We need your help to continue our work. [Provide illustrative details about your needs. Why are you sending them the letter?] Past campaigns have enabled us to [provide an example or two of your organization's impact]. As a nonprofit organization, though, we completely rely on community support. None of our efforts would be possible without the help of donors, volunteers, and supportive community members like you. Would you please consider making a donation of [a specific amount] to help us [refer back to your organization's needs or next project]? If you'd like to make a gift, please visit our donation page here: [if an email, include a direct link] [if a physical letter, provide basic instructions for finding your website or sending a check] Any and all support is greatly appreciated. We're just excited to get to work! Thank you for being a part of our community and our story. Sincerely, [Your name and title, not simply the name of your organization] This fairly general donation letter template covers all the bases. It describes your purpose for fundraising, highlights your organization's impact, and has a clear call-to-action. Customize this template with your own specifics, and you're good to go! 3. Donation Letter Template: Events Dear [name], We here at [organization name] are excited to announce our upcoming event, [event name/title], coming up on [date]. [In a few sentences, describe the purpose, nature, and impact of the event, including specific activities or special opportunities.] As a member of our community, we'd love to invite you to join us! However, we need some extra help to make sure everything goes off without a hitch. Would you please consider chipping in a donation of [a specific amount of money, or a specific in-kind good/service]? With this help, we can ensure that [explain the specific impact of the requested donation]. If you'd like to make a gift, please visit our donation page here: [if an email, include a direct link] [if a physical letter, provide basic instructions for finding your website or sending a check]. Or, contact us at [email address or phone number] to discuss our upcoming event and how you can get involved. Thank you so much for your support, and we hope to see you soon! Sincerely, [Your name and title] Depending on the specifics of your event, you might send this letter to individuals or to local businesses, and you might promote one of several different giving methods (like online donations, text-to-give, in-kind contributions, or volunteering). Adapt the essential components to your particular needs for the event. However, keep the content of the letter itself focused on one main request. Short and sweet will always be more compelling! Just be sure to tell readers where to learn more or get involved if they want to. ">"><Take a Personalized Tour Schedule a demo with one of our fundraising consultants. We'll show you how the Snowball platform has benefited other nonprofit organizations, and how it can help you. See How It Works 4. Donation Letter Template: Online Fundraising Dear [name], We here at [your organization] would like to thank you for being a part of our community. With the support of our friends and neighbors like you, we've been able to accomplish so much over the past year. [Include a few specific details about your recent projects and their impacts.] We're happy to announce that we're launching a new online fundraising initiative! This campaign is raising funds for [purpose of the campaign], and will be essential for us to continue our work into the coming season. Would you please consider making a donation of [specific amount] to help us kick off our campaign? Please visit our donation page [include a direct link] to get started. [Add a button that says "Donate Here," if possible.] For helping us kick off our online fundraising campaign, we'd love to offer you a special thank you. [Offer some kind of incentive for online donors, like a social media shout out, merchandise coupon, event or raffle ticket, etc.] Stay tuned for more updates on our campaign! Thanks so much for your support, and we hope to hear from you soon. Sincerely, [Your name and title] While the other templates in this post can be adapted for both email and physical donation letters, this one is intended to be sent as an email. For an online fundraising campaign, your recipients will most likely all have donated to your organization (or at least engaged with it) via online channels in the past. This means your letter should start off by acknowledging that existing relationship. Express excitement about your newest online fundraising push, and use a clear CTA, like a button, to funnel readers directly to your donation page. Get creative to incentivize early-bird donors, too! If you know that some of your donors are matching-gift eligible, include information on how to access a matching gift database and complete their match for your nonprofit. These kinds of extra steps can go a long way to boost engagement and help your online fundraising campaign stand out to busy supporters. 5. Donation Letter Template: Pledge Campaigns Hi [name], We need your help to reach our pledge goal of [total financial goal for the campaign] by [a specific time and date]! We've launched this rapid-fire campaign to [purpose of the campaign – disaster relief, social or political advocacy, annual fundraising, etc.], and we know we can count on our community to help us get there. At [your organization], we work hard every day to pursue our mission of [your mission], and our last major campaign resulted in [examples of your impact]. We could never have done it without the support of our friends and neighbors like you. Pledge your support of [one or a few specific dollar amounts] now with our quick pledge tool: [provide a direct link to your pledge tool] Please note: [Explain the unique pledge conditions of your campaign, like triggers or matching periods]. Together we can make a huge difference in our community! Thanks in advance for your support! Be sure to share our fundraising challenge with your friends and family, and feel free to get in touch if you have any questions. Sincerely, [Your name and title] Pledge fundraising campaigns are a unique way to raise support around a specific goal quickly. Check out our complete guide to pledge campaigns here for more information, including explanations of the pledge conditions mentioned in the template. No matter the specifics of your pledge campaign, the main idea is to be short and to-the-point. These campaigns are all about speed and quick emotional connection. Remind readers of why the work you do is important, and then challenge them to get involved. You can collect the pledges later, but your goal right now should simply be to mobilize support. 6. Donation Letter Template: P2P Fundraising Campaigns Hi! I'm raising money on behalf of [your organization]'s ongoing campaign to [support/fight/raise awareness for your mission]. For [your organization's age] years, this organization has pursued its mission and enriched our community. Now, I'm excited to be lending my own support to their cause, and I hope you'll join me! To reach my own personal goal for this campaign, I need to raise [the volunteer's fundraising goal]. Would you consider making a donation of [a specific amount] or helping me to spread the word online? Check out my donation page here [include a link to the volunteer's P2P donation page] to make a contribution or to learn more about [your organization]. [Include any information here if your P2P campaign involves events, like festivals, 5Ks, etc., and how donors can register to get involved.] This cause means a lot to me, so thank you for your support! [The volunteer's name] Peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns involve your supporters raising money on your organization's behalf by setting up their own basic donation pages and then promoting them online to friends and family. You'll need to provide supporters and volunteers with a template like this one to make it easy for them to hit all the essentials in their donation requests, social media posts, and emails. Make sure your template mentions a specific fundraising goal and includes links back to the volunteer's donation page, not just your organization's website. The main idea is to empower and engage your supporters. After all, these campaigns are effective because the audience will feel compelled to support their loved one's passions, not necessarily to support your organization that they may not have heard of before. 7. Donation Letter Template: Sponsorship Requests Dear [name], My name is [your name], and I work for the local nonprofit organization, [your organization], as a development and fundraising professional. If you haven't heard of our organization, we work to [short description of your mission], and we've [brief examples of your impact over recent years]. In fact, last year we raised upwards of [fundraising total] in support of our cause. I'm reaching out today because I believe the values and priorities of our two organizations align very well. A partnership could greatly benefit both of us, with more stable support for our work and extremely positive promotions of your brand to our loyal audience of supporters. Please feel free to explore our organization's history and work here [include a link to your website], and don't hesitate to get in touch at [your email address or phone number]. We can discuss arranging a structured partnership, a one-time donation, or anything else! We're always excited to work with new partners in the community, and we hope you'll join us! Best wishes, [Your name and title] This donation letter template is a bit more formal because requesting a sponsorship from a business (of any size) is really like arranging a partnership. You need to offer the business something in return, usually positive publicity at your events or online, for them to consider making a sizable gift. Here's a pro tip for identifying potential sponsors: Implement a matching gift search tool into your donation process, and look out for local businesses that have corporate philanthropy programs and employ a ton of your donors. Check out the Mercy Corps matching gifts page for an idea of what this looks like in action. 8. Donation Letter Template: New Nonprofits Dear [name], We're [your organization], a brand new nonprofit organization in your community. We were founded just [your organization's age] ago to help support and lead [your mission] in [your city, town, or state]. We're reaching out to you as a neighbor with a vested interest in seeing our community thrive. [Be more specific if you're writing to a particular audience.] But getting a foothold as a new nonprofit is a huge challenge. Raising awareness for our cause and our work is crucial if we're going to make any kind of long-term impact! Would you consider making a donation of [specific amount] to get us one step closer to our fundraising goal of [total]? If we reach this target goal before [date], we'll be able to [the specific goal of this campaign, like renting an office space or hosting your first event], and you can help us get there! Please visit our donation page here to get started: [include a direct link] Also, please explore our website [include a direct link] or follow us on social media [include a direct link] to learn more about our mission and the partners who have already joined our cause. Together we can make a difference in our community! Please reach out to me at [email address or phone number] if you have any questions about our organization or how you can get involved. Thanks, and we hope to hear from you soon! [Your name and title] Brand new nonprofits have a few major challenges ahead of them – securing initial funding, setting up key partnerships, and establishing an original base of support. Larger grants for startup organizations (learn more about grant writing here) will most likely make up the bulk of your initial funding, but using letters like this one to find actual communities of supporters is essential in your early days. It's usually not a good idea to include too many calls-to-action in a single letter, but giving your readers the option to donate, follow you on social media, or just learn more about your organization will cover your bases. Every little bit of engagement and attention counts! Make sure you've got a donation tool set up and a way to track the donations you receive. You'll want to immediately focus on building relationships with those first donors. Snowball's all-in-one fundraising software makes it easy to raise more for your nonprofit. Get Started Today 9. Donation Letter Template: Schools Dear [name], [Your school's name] needs your support! My name is [your name], and I'm part of the [your role – the school's PTA, administrative team, teacher, etc.]. Every year, we work hard to provide the best possible educational and extracurricular activities for our students, but we can't do it alone. Our tight budget has recently forced us to [provide a specific example or two – cut down on afterschool programs, etc.]. But we know we can count on our community to help us close the gap. Would you consider making a donation of [specific amount] to contribute to our fund for [describe your campaign's purpose or goal]? A gift of [amount] will allow us to [the specific impact of a donation, tied to the campaign's main purpose]. Please visit our donation page here if you'd like to get started: [provide a direct link]. Or, reach out to us at [email address or phone number] to talk about our school's needs and how you can get involved. Don't forget! Our [your school's next event, like a fall festival] is coming up soon, and we'd love to see you there! Get your tickets now: [provide a direct link]. Together we can continue making our school an environment of excellence for our kids. Thank you! [Your name and title] School fundraising is a round-the-clock undertaking! Thankfully, schools are also fairly tight-knit communities, and every parent wants the best for their child's school. Tap into that shared desire by clearly emphasizing your needs and making it easy for them to get involved. Quickly mention any upcoming opportunities or events, as well. Use this template to make sure you're including all the essentials in your next email blast or mailed letter to your community of parents. Then, adapt it to your particular goals, projects, and fundraising ideas. 10. Donation Letter Template: Churches Dear [name], [Begin with a story focused on your church's recent successes, such as growth in membership or your positive impact on the surrounding community. Connect with the individual member by thanking them for being a supportive part of your community.] While we feel blessed to have been able to [refer to successful project mentioned above], we need your help to [continue the project or pursue a new one]. With your support, we can [your next project or campaign]. Would you consider contributing [specific amount] to help us work toward our mission? Together, we can reach our community's goals. On behalf of our church community at [your church's name], I thank you in advance for your support. Your contribution will go toward [specific elements of your project that need funding]. You can give online here: [include a direct link]. Or, you can use our text-to-tithe tool to give on the go: [include text-to-tithe instructions]. Feel free to reach out to me at [email address or phone number] if you have questions about our new project. Gratefully yours, [Name of a leader in your church]While they can't always fundraise the same way as 501(c)(3) nonprofits, churches are community-focused organizations that nonetheless rely on their members, supporters, and neighbors for support. Fundraising letters have always been a powerful tool for church fundraising teams to accomplish a wide range of tasks. Reach out to your community with a concise, heartfelt letter explaining why you need support. Many churches have found great success with text giving tools in recent years, so be sure to promote that outlet, as well. This is a fairly basic example, so check out our complete guide to writing church fundraising letters for even more templates. Writing Donation Letters: Our Pro Tips At Snowball Fundraising, we help organizations of all sizes get set up quickly with powerful but easy-to-use fundraising tools. Having those outlets ready to actually accept and process donations is essential, but how will you let potential donors know when and how to use them? Here are a few of our own pro tips for maximizing your success with donation letters: Tell a story. The templates above cover the essentials, but you have to emotionally connect with your readers to motivate them to give. Do that by telling a story about your organization, your mission, your constituents, and your needs. Check out this guide to nonprofit storytelling techniques for more examples. Include visuals or extra materials. If you're sending an email, include a picture or two in your message to illustrate your work and community. For physical letters, including a pamphlet, card, or one-pager (especially when you're promoting a specific project or trying to secure a sponsorship) can be a good idea. Think about your audience. Don't just write a single letter or email to send to everyone on your mailing list. Segment your mailing list into discrete groups, and then tailor your letters to those audiences. For instance, you should write different letters to your recurring donors and to your lapsed donors to really maximize their engagement with your messages. Be specific. Throughout the templates above, we mentioned asking for a specific amount of money in each letter. Vague requests are much less compelling for donors. However, this also applies to the type of donation; if you're looking to increase your number of recurring donors, specifically ask readers to consider setting up recurring donations! Be conversational. Again, these letters are all about connecting emotionally, reminding readers of their relationship to your cause, and quickly making a donation request. Avoid using internal fundraising lingo and focus on being personable and warm with your wording. The one exception might be a corporate sponsorship letter, depending on the nature and scope of the partnership you're hoping to form. Track data. This step is critical to ensure your donation letters are constantly improving. Always collect and track some form of engagement data when you send a donation letter. This could be as simple as recording how many donations your physical letter campaign generated. For email and social media posts, it's a little easier to track a wider variety of data points. Use Google Analytics or a tool like MailChimp to track engagement with your message, and make sure your donation tools make it easy to report data back to your CRM or central data center. Partner with a direct mail fundraising company. You might assume that working with a direct mail fundraising platform to send out donation letters is more costly, and therefore detract from your mission. Not so fast! With a powerful and low-cost partner like GivingMail, you can raise more for your campaign for less than it would cost for paper, ink, envelope, and stamps on your own! That way, your own fundraising team can save time and effort for other important tasks. The Snowball Formula for Successful Modern Fundraising Before we close out this guide, let's walk through the Snowball formula for successful fundraising in the digital age. This philosophy guides the development of all of our donation tools: Don't kill the donor's buzz. Donating should be fast and easy, and donors should feel great while they're doing it. Never slow them down with complicated steps, or you'll risk distracting them from the spirit of generosity that inspired them to give in the first place. Secure a card to streamline the process. Once you've built a relationship with a donor, encourage them to save their card information on file with you. Not having to enter in payment information the next time they want to donate can play a major role in ensuring that they actually will. Promote recurring donations. Recurring donations are the ultimate goal because they represent a strong, sustaining relationship between that donor and your organization. Once you've secured their recurring support, you can focus on growing your emotional and philanthropic connections with them. With these core steps, any organization, large or small, can start building a rock-solid base of support. Be sure to continue your research with a few additional fundraising resources, too: If you're a new nonprofit, getting started with a free Snowball donation page will ensure you've covered all the essentials and are ready to start sending those letters! When it comes to nonprofit organizations and charitable efforts, the art of crafting an effective letter of request for donations is paramount. These letters not only serve as a bridge connecting the aspirations of an organization with the generosity of the public but also embody the voice and mission of the organization. A well-written donation request letter can inspire potential donors to contribute to your cause, making it a critical tool in fundraising efforts. The key to a successful donation request letter lies in its ability to communicate the organization's needs, goals, and the impact that the donation can have. It's about creating a connection with the reader, making them feel part of something larger than themselves. Sample Letters of Request for Donation Below are 15 sample letters of request for donation, each tailored to different scenarios and audiences. By exploring these samples, you'll gain insights into how to craft letters that not only request support but also inspire action and foster a sense of community. Sample Letter 1: General Donation Request General Donation Request to Local Businesses Dear [Business Owner/Manager Name], We are reaching out to you as a pillar of the [Community/City Name] community with a heartfelt request. [Organization Name], a nonprofit dedicated to [briefly describe mission or project], is seeking the support of local businesses to further our efforts. Your contribution can make a significant difference in [describe the impact or outcome expected]. As a business that is deeply embedded in our community, your donation will not only help us achieve our goals but also strengthen the bonds within our community. We are looking for contributions in the form of [specify the type of donations you're seeking], and any support you can provide would be immensely appreciated. Thank you for considering our request. We are eager to discuss any questions you may have and explore how your support can be recognized within our organization and community. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 2: Event-Specific Donation Request Request for Silent Auction Items Dear [Donor Name], As we prepare for our upcoming [Event Name], we are reaching out to friends and supporters of [Organization Name] to ask for your help. This year, we aim to make our silent auction a cornerstone of our fundraising efforts, and we would be honored to feature your [business/products/services] among our auction items. Your donation will directly support [specific project or cause], enabling us to [describe the impact of the donation]. In appreciation of your generosity, we will [describe how the donation will be acknowledged, e.g., featured in event materials, social media recognition]. We are looking for items such as [list specific item types or services], but we welcome any contributions that reflect the spirit of our cause. If you are interested in contributing or have any questions, please feel free to contact us. Thank you for considering our request and for your continued support. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 3: Corporate Sponsorship Request Corporate Sponsorship for Annual Gala Dear [Company Name or Representative's Name], It is with great enthusiasm that we invite [Company Name] to be a part of [Organization Name]'s Annual Gala as a corporate sponsor. This event is not only a celebration of our achievements but also a crucial fundraiser to support [specific goal or project]. We offer various sponsorship levels, each with its own set of benefits, including [list some benefits like branding opportunities, VIP tickets, etc.]. Your support would not only help us reach our fundraising goals but also showcase your commitment to [describe the cause or community]. [Briefly describe the event and the expected outcome or impact]. We believe that [Company Name]'s involvement would significantly enhance the success of our event. We are excited about the possibility of partnering with you and would be happy to discuss the sponsorship opportunities in detail. Please feel free to reach out to us at your earliest convenience. Thank you for considering this opportunity to make a meaningful difference in [describe the cause or community]. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 4: In-Kind Donation Request In-Kind Donation Request for Community Event Dear [Name or Company], We are reaching out to ask for your support for our upcoming community event, [Event Name], organized by [Organization Name]. Our goal is to [briefly describe the purpose of the event and whom it benefits], and we believe that in-kind donations from our community can play a significant role in achieving this. We are specifically looking for [list the types of in-kind donations you are seeking], which we believe will [describe how the donations will be used or the impact they will have]. Your contribution will be acknowledged [explain how the donor will be recognized, e.g., signage at the event, mention in promotional materials]. Your support will not only help make our event a success but also demonstrate your commitment to making a positive impact in our community. If you are able to contribute or have any questions, please contact us. Thank you for considering our request. We look forward to the possibility of your support. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 5: Personalized Request to Previous Donors Thank You and Follow-Up Request to Past Donors Dear [Donor's Name], First and foremost, we want to extend our deepest gratitude for your previous support of [Organization Name]. Your generosity has been instrumental in [briefly describe the impact of past donations]. As we embark on our next project, [describe the project], we find ourselves reaching out to our most valued supporters. We are currently seeking donations to [describe the specific goal or need]. Given your past support, we thought you might be interested in contributing to this new initiative. Your donation will [describe the impact of the donation on the project]. To express our appreciation, we plan to [describe any recognition or benefits for the donor]. We understand the importance of every contribution and want to ensure our donors feel valued and informed about the difference they are making. Thank you once again for your past support. We hope you will consider contributing to our cause once more. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss your potential involvement further, please do not hesitate to contact us. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 6: Matching Gift Request Matching Gift Request to Employees Dear [Employee's Name], Did you know that [Company Name] offers a matching gift program that can double the impact of your donation? We are reaching out to encourage you to take advantage of this fantastic opportunity to support [Organization Name] and our mission to [describe mission or project]. By donating to our cause, not only will you be making a direct impact, but your generosity will be matched dollar for dollar by [Company Name], amplifying your contribution. The process is simple [briefly explain how to participate in the matching gift program]. Your support can make a significant difference in [describe the impact or outcome]. We hope you will consider making a donation today and leveraging [Company Name]'s matching gift program to double your impact. Thank you for your consideration and for being a part of our community's effort to make a difference. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 7: Grant Application Cover Letter Cover Letter for Grant Application Dear [Grantmaker's Name or Foundation], We are submitting this application for the [Grant Name], offered by [Grantmaker or Foundation Name], with the hope of securing funding for [describe the project or program]. [Organization Name] has been dedicated to [describe mission or purpose] and believes that with the support of the [Grantmaker or Foundation], we can achieve remarkable results. [Briefly describe the project or program, its goals, and how it aligns with the grantmaker's objectives]. We have attached a detailed proposal outlining the project scope, expected outcomes, budget, and how it contributes to our mission. Your consideration of our application would greatly support our efforts to [describe the expected impact of the project]. We are excited about the potential to collaborate with [Grantmaker or Foundation Name] and are available to provide any further information or discuss our proposal in more detail. Thank you for the opportunity to apply for this grant and for your commitment to [describe the cause or area of interest]. We look forward to the possibility of working together to make a meaningful impact. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 8: Volunteer Recruitment for Fundraising Event Call for Volunteers for Fundraising Event Dear [Community Members/Supporters], We are excited to announce our upcoming [Event Name], a key fundraiser for [Organization Name] aimed at [describe the goal or cause]. To make this event a success, we are calling on the support of our community to volunteer their time and skills. There are various ways to get involved, from [list a few volunteer roles or tasks]. Whether you can offer a couple of hours or are interested in taking on a larger role, your contribution will be invaluable. Volunteering at [Event Name] is not only a chance to support a worthy cause but also an opportunity to meet like-minded individuals and be part of a community effort. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact us at [contact information]. Thank you for considering this opportunity to make a difference. Together, we can achieve something extraordinary. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 9: Request for Media Sponsorship Media Sponsorship Request for Charity Event Dear [Media Outlet Name], With [Event Name] approaching, [Organization Name] seeks a media partner to help amplify our message and increase community involvement. This event supports [describe the cause or goal], and we believe that with your help, we can reach a wider audience and maximize our impact. As a media sponsor, [describe the benefits for the media outlet, such as exposure to a new audience, content opportunities, etc.]. We are looking for coverage in the form of [list specific requests, e.g., pre-event articles, day-of event coverage, social media mentions]. Your partnership would be instrumental in raising awareness and driving participation for [Event Name]. We are excited about the potential to collaborate with [Media Outlet Name] and would be happy to discuss the details further. Thank you for considering our request. We look forward to the opportunity to work together for a great cause. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 10: Urgent Appeal for Disaster Relief Donations Urgent Appeal for Disaster Relief Donations Dear [Donor Name/Community Members], In the wake of the recent [type of disaster], the need for immediate support and relief efforts in [affected area] is critical. [Organization Name] is on the ground, providing [describe services and support being offered], but we urgently need your help to continue our work. Your donation can provide [list specific items or services donations will fund], making a tangible difference in the lives of those affected. The situation is urgent, and every contribution, no matter the size, can help us respond more effectively. We are counting on the generosity and compassion of our community to support these vital relief efforts. Please consider making a donation today to help us provide essential services to those in need. Thank you for your immediate attention to this urgent appeal. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of those impacted by this disaster. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 11: Request for Educational Program Support Support Request for Educational Program Dear [Donor Name/Company Name], As we strive to expand our educational programs at [Organization Name], we turn to our community for support. Our goal is to [describe the goal of the educational program], and with your help, we can make this vision a reality. Your donation will directly support [specific aspects of the program, such as materials, scholarships, etc.], making a significant difference in the lives of [describe beneficiaries]. We are committed to [describe the impact of the program], and your support is crucial to our success. We would be honored to count you among our supporters and are happy to discuss any questions you may have about our program and its impact. Please consider making a contribution to help us [describe the outcome or benefit]. Thank you for considering our request. Your support can change lives and shape the future of our community. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 12: Request for Food Bank Donations Food Bank Donation Request to Local Businesses Dear [Business Owner/Manager], The demand for food assistance in our community has never been greater. [Organization Name], which operates the local food bank, is reaching out to local businesses for support. Your donation of [specify types of food or resources needed] can help us provide for families facing food insecurity. We rely on the generosity of businesses like yours to stock our shelves and ensure that no one in our community goes hungry. Whether it's a one-time donation or a regular contribution, every bit helps. We would be happy to arrange a pick-up of your donation or discuss other ways you can contribute. Your support not only helps feed those in need but also strengthens our community. Thank you for considering our request. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of those who need it most. Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Organization Name] [Contact Information] Sample Letter 13: Request for Technology Donations for Schools Technology Donation Request for School Dear [Donor Name or Company], In today's fast-paced world, access to technology is essential for education. [School Name/Organization Name] is seeking donations of [specify technology needs, such as computers, tablets, software] to ensure our students have the t