

7 BUDGETING AND FUND-RAISING

Nigel Winser

Fund-raising is without doubt the most arduous part of preparing for an expedition. It will inevitably take up a very large proportion of your pre-expedition time and cause great anxiety. Nevertheless, hundreds of teams are successful in raising sufficient funds each year, and there is no reason why you shouldn't be among them. All that is needed to realise success is thoughtful preparation and a firm resolve. Good luck and humour help.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The budget

The first draft of your budget is a cornerstone of your planning, so get it down on paper at the earliest opportunity. Do not be afraid of committing yourself, because it represents your thinking at an early stage and provides a basis from which further changes can be made. You will have to adapt your budget as more information becomes available during your preparations, but nevertheless the initial budget will help to ensure that you have a comprehensive list of all the financial components. In addition it will assist in identifying the inescapable "fixed costs" from those that are "adjustable". By altering your fixed costs (e.g. international flights) you will almost certainly affect the overall plan, which may in turn change the size and length of the project. By altering the adjustable costs (e.g. food costs) you are more likely to limit the scope, comfort, efficiency or degree of safety of the operation. There may come a time when the treasurer has to tell the leader that there will not be enough money for the expedition to take place in its planned form. Such cut-off points should be identified in advance and some thought given to the alternatives such as: choosing a closer/cheaper destination, reducing the research programmes, cutting membership or duration and so on. Be sure to allow for inflation – abroad as well as in the UK.

Most expeditions should be working in conjunction with the host country. In

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many cases there is confusion about the allowances for the host country participants. It is strongly recommended that these expenses be agreed before the expedition leaves.

The budget for an imaginary expedition to the remote Lotogipi Forest is given in Appendix 5, with possible fixed and adjustable costs. The art of the leader is to distinguish between the two and, through consultation and reference to current information, decide which costs belong in which category. In so doing, do keep all the team fully in the picture, so that they understand when their field accommodation gets downgraded!

When drawing up the budget, it is helpful to “guesstimate” a maximum and minimum expenditure for each item and a maximum and minimum income from possible sources. Your budgeting success will be determined by your ability accurately to manage incoming and outgoing funds within continually changing limits. Failure to do this will usually result in team members or their families temporarily having to make up the shortfall, or having to rely on loans or overdraft facilities.

Reducing costs

There are as many ways of reducing costs as of raising the funds to pay for them, limited only by your initiative and the absolute necessity to maintain personal safety in the field. Certain areas relating to safety, particularly flights and insurance, should not be jeopardised by focusing solely on the cheapest available option. This does not mean that you should not investigate the possibilities of reducing prices – just investigate with caution.

A reconnaissance visit to the host country can be extremely beneficial in this respect. You may be able to avoid excess luggage or freight charges by buying food supplies or equipment there, or ordering what you need through the local branch of an international organisation. The reconnaissance will provide detailed field costs of items such as food and accommodation. A host university or institution may be prepared to offer transport, accommodation, loan of equipment or other services in exchange for the opportunity for their students or members to participate in your expedition. Groups within the host country are more likely to be able to provide services than financial assistance, and you are far more likely to get help with logistics through early meetings with local counterparts during a reconnaissance. They are busy people too, so don't expect them to drop everything to run to your aid the moment you arrive. A reconnaissance allows time for them to prepare as well.

International flights, and travel in general, are probably going to be your major costs. Especially in the case of return visits you could investigate the possibility of writing an article for the airline's in-flight magazine (high-quality photographs are essential) in return for concessionary tickets. If you are a large party, you can probably negotiate a group discount.

If you are supported by an organisation, and you ask politely, it may be possible to use its communication services, including postage, telephones, fax, email or photocopying facilities. Schools and university departments will always help if they can, especially if the project has secured official support.

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Many outdoor equipment companies are annually besieged by worthy expeditions asking for climbing equipment, rucksacks, compasses, and so on. You may be able to acquire discounts if you are a recognised expedition, but don't expect much to be donated, unless you have something particular to offer, such as publishable quality photographs, or highly experienced members who may be able to field-test new products.

Each expedition is unique, and will have its own set of contacts and ideas. As a rule it should be feasible to cut substantially the actual amount of funds you need to raise by first looking at the options for reducing costs. Having the "best-worst" case budget always to hand (on your laptop) will help you and your team with your planning.

SETTING UP THE FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Administration

Even before your hard-earned grants and sponsorship begin to accrue, the methods for administering the money should be established and a treasurer appointed in charge of financial administration. Relatively large amounts of other people's money will be in the care of your expedition treasurer. The expedition must be accountable to both the team members and the sponsors. It is imperative that the accounts are kept with precision and all transactions assiduously recorded throughout the preparatory, fieldwork and post-expedition stages. Given the overall coordinating role of the leader, it is usually unwise for the leader also to be the treasurer.

Although the treasurer controls the mechanisms of incoming and outgoing cash, expenditure should be continuously monitored and agreed by the whole team, especially if expensive items of equipment are involved. While in the field, keeping accounts is extremely difficult, requiring constant vigilance to keep up with daily expenses and changes in exchange rates. Even obtaining receipts can be notoriously arduous in some countries. It is essential to keep the accounts up to date, and to ensure that all team members are aware of the expedition's financial situation. It should be remembered that, in reality, each member of the team is equally responsible for all aspects of their expedition, even if individuals have been allocated coordinating tasks. This is pertinent to the job of budgeting and coordinating funds. The final accounts should appear in the final report and copies of this should go to all those who have contributed to the expedition fund.

Bank help

Make an early appointment to see your bank manager. The manager will be able to advise the best way of distributing funds between accounts as well as the appropriate international services that will be of assistance to you, once you have explained the what, where, when and why of your proposed project.

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- Explain your reasons for opening an account and ask advice on allocating the funds between a current and a deposit account. Investing hard-won funds in a deposit account or high-yielding investment account can sometimes be surprisingly productive. Long-term deposits will require an accurate estimate of cash flow to be effective.
- Ask what arrangements can be made in the country that you are visiting. Remember that some countries do not permit funds to be exported and so you might not be able to bring surplus cash back. In these circumstances you will not want to send abroad more than you are likely to spend. Local financial sponsorship is more forthcoming and easier to handle if you have a local account. Consider the various forms of taking money overseas: cash, travellers' cheques, credit card, banker's drafts to local bank. Travellers' cheques are often difficult to cash in remote places, particularly if they are in sterling or from a locally unknown bank. On the other hand, credit cards work in most foreign countries through local banks and shops, but be aware that credit cards are charged at official rates of exchange. You may lose out if you use them in a country with high inflation or where there are better exchange rates from local dealers.
- If you are unsure of which bank to approach, find out which bank is best represented in the area that you plan to visit (e.g. Lloyds International for South America, Barclays International for Africa, etc.). For convenience "up-country" it may be best to use the largest clearing bank of the host country, which has a branch in the town nearest to the expedition area.
- Ask about any local sources of funding. Managers are often trustees of charities such as the Round Table or Rotary Club.

Details to be considered at the outset will obviously vary from project to project, but may include standing orders for personal contributions or initiating contracts with overseas banks or branches. You are unlikely to be offered either substantial loans or other credit facilities if you don't have collateral or a guaranteed income to offset against the loan.

Securing the support of your local bank manager will always pay dividends should you need to negotiate any short-term loans. Don't forget that, if you are a young team, the bank manager sees you as long-term business associates and will be keen to secure your custom. An acknowledgement to your bank in the final report is always a good move.

Cash control

The treasurer's juggling act with the team's finances has to be one of the most unenviable jobs on any project. They should always know the current status of the expedition bank account, expected outgoings and promised additions, and all members must keep within any agreed budget plan. There will be some costs that are fixed to

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dates (especially flights), whereas others are flexible and so can be set aside until more cash arrives.

Passing information from individual members to the treasurer about their own fund-raising responsibilities and expected costs related to their part of the project is essential throughout. Without this continuous feedback the team runs the risk of having insufficient money at critical times.

Ensuring that sufficient but not excessive amounts of cash are available for daily expenses in the preparatory stage and during fieldwork is an awkward problem. Limiting petty cash to a minimum will help to keep accounts orderly through the use of cheques. Assiduous collection of receipts in exchange for repayment of cash to individuals is essential but difficult, especially in the field.

In the host country you may well appear very wealthy to the local people, so be sensitive about having large amounts of conspicuous cash around your base. There is always a risk of theft, so don't encourage it by inadvertently showing your entire field budget to the whole village. This is an avoidable problem!

PREPARING TO FUND-RAISE

Image and marketing

Your corporate image

It is essential to project the right impression – your image – if your fund-raising efforts are to be fruitful. You will often be competing directly with other expeditions for finite funds, so you will want to create an impression of competent professionalism. This can be done in a variety of ways, which might include printed stationery with recognisable identity, demonstrating that you have the support of knowledgeable people, and a general competence in your appearance and activities.

Producing attractive headed notepaper with the expedition's name, logo, contact address and major supporters can be easily and inexpensively achieved using high-street printers and/or desk-top publishing systems. Despite the minimal effort involved, headed paper immediately gives a professional "corporate" image to all expedition correspondence. An eye-catching design will stand out against a mountain of other applications for assistance on a managing director's desk, and could clinch the vital advantage in swaying the decision on sponsorship in your favour.

The brochure

The expedition brochure is probably the key document for successful fund-raising from grant-giving organisations, trusts, and the world of commerce and industry. A concise, informative and attractive brochure provides evidence of competent

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preparation on the part of the team, and will rapidly answer the initial questions that will be asked by all those you approach for assistance: Where? Why? When? Who? and the all-important, How much?

The design of the brochure is very important, and should involve input from all team members. This is the single most important document representing the expedition's intentions until the production of the post-expedition report. The cover design should answer the "where? why? and who?" immediately, with the contents addressing each question in more detail and incorporating the budget. A simple, appropriate, clearly identifiable logo can be a visual cue repeated in the prospectus, headed paper, T-shirts and merchandise, and can contribute to a "professional corporate image" for your team. As with the headed paper, desk-top publishing offers inexpensive high-quality brochure-production opportunities, and is usually freely available within universities and schools.

The contents of the prospectus should be factual and accurate as well as innovative and inspiring. Be creative and use stunning photographs. It should be well designed but not lavish and should be something that all members are proud to distribute whenever they have an opportunity. Some of the following might be appropriate to include:

- Describe the project's aim and objectives, clearly.
- Explain how the project came about and why it is worth supporting.
- Give some background on why this work is relevant and timely now.
- A note about collaboration and who else is involved and/or supporting the project.
- Include a really good map, which shows the location and detailed study area.
- Membership details, with pertinent biographical details of all members, especially your local counterparts and home agent.
- Your income and expenditure budget, with details of how you will raise the funds.
- A section on sponsorship and what you can offer individual and corporate sponsors.
- Contact details in UK and in the field – address, telephone number(s), email, website.

Appendix 6 lists some of the suggested headings for an expedition brochure in more detail.

It can be tempting to over-emphasise a particularly evocative aspect of the proposed work in order to cash in. This tendency, otherwise known as the "sexy species concept", can be advantageous but will be relevant only to a few expeditions. Be careful, because interviews and application forms will rapidly expose inappropriate emphasis.

It is also worth considering the production of different brochures for different

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types of funds, e.g. when applying to scientific establishments, a more detailed prospectus is required, whereas companies may only want a single-page leaflet.

Desk-top publishing is very flexible and can be used to add names of sponsoring companies or organisations to the headed paper or prospectus as they come on board. This attempts to generate positive feedback by showing the company being approached which other companies already support your efforts. By regularly updating the budget to show the remaining total required serves to emphasise existing successes and encourages others to come on board.

If your expedition is to have a well-known patron or patrons, try to find someone who will add prestige and credibility to your efforts in both the UK and the host country. Consider having two separate patrons, one at home and one abroad. You are more likely to gain sponsorship from branches or subsidiaries of international companies in your host country if your patron is a well-known national of that country. This may be particularly important when raising money to pay for your counterparts' expenses in the case of a joint team including members from the host country. Ideally your patron(s) should be sufficiently interested in your project to be prepared to assist you by speaking or writing on your behalf. If they are able to offer fund-raising support with information or participation, all the better, although high-profile people are inevitably busy. Having said this, a patron is not a prerequisite. Many projects successfully raise sufficient funds without a patron. It is up to individual teams to decide.

FUND-RAISING

Why should people give you money?

An organisation or individual may decide to give you funds towards your expedition for any one of a number of reasons:

- Research: where the interest is in the acquisition of new knowledge and the training of field scientists.
- Personal development: encouraging you and your team to learn from the experience of planning a project, travelling and working with people from another nation, and broadening the horizons of all concerned.
- Publicity: businesses may see you as a good source of publicity, perhaps because they are keen to encourage host country participation where they have business interests, or to raise the profile of a particular product.

Before you appeal to any organisation for support you need to be clear why they might give you money, and word your approach accordingly. Don't be disheartened by initial failure to get a positive response. The overall success rate is inevitably low as a result of over-subscription of the well-known sources of funds. As your expedition image and

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approach become more professional and finely tuned, so your success rate will increase.

In general, teams that are successful exhibit a number of common factors: belief in the value of the proposed project, clear understanding and belief in the team's ability to realise its objectives, a strong commitment to see the project to fruition, a professional approach in all aspects of the expedition, and ingenuity and persistence in large amounts.

Raising funds

Aside from high-level commercial sponsorship and media interest, which are dealt with in Chapter 8, support for your venture is likely to come in either cash or kind from any of the following sources:

- grant-giving organisations
- charitable trusts
- local authorities
- expedition members
- the public.

To attract help from the above, any number of methods can be used. The suggestions are endless, but outlined below are some of the more conventional methods that have been used by expeditions.

It is often the case that modest requests for assistance at the local level, as opposed to single large amounts of money sought from national or international companies, are the mainstay of fund-raising successes. You are more likely to have personal contacts from school and university (governors, teachers, past students), family or friends, and it is easier for small expeditions to get publicity in the local media than at the national level. It tends to be the more experienced, professional expeditions that are able to tackle national and international companies, although this shouldn't discourage you from approaching relevant businesses irrespective of their size.

For anyone who may give you grants, try to find out what you can give them in return. For most funding organisations this will be a report, and you must make your report suitable for the audience concerned.

The categories below show a range of different sources of income for expeditions. When planning your own fund-raising strategy, look at how similar expeditions have successfully managed to raise their funds by looking through their reports.

Grant-giving organisations

There are a number of grant-giving organisations to which you can apply. Several directories exist which give details of these and the RGS-IBG publishes a *Directory of Grant-Giving Organisations for Expeditions* on its website, which is updated annually, and a selection of these is given in Appendix 8.

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Each organisation will have its own criteria for giving money. Do your homework and identify only those pertinent to your project. In this way you will save time, resources and the unnecessary disappointment caused by a flood of rejections from applications to inappropriate sources. Remember that some will give only to individuals, and others only to groups or teams of researchers.

Most organisations want applications well in advance and in a certain format. Find out what details are required before you send in an application. Many will ask you to provide references, so you must identify someone (well qualified) who will be prepared to speak on your behalf.

Most grant-giving bodies like to see healthy “personal contributions” from expedition members. This should be in the region of £500 to £800 for UK members and £100 to £300 for local members.

You may be called for interview. If so, you will be thoroughly questioned on your project and it would be useful if the interviewees include people expert in both the scientific aims and logistics. Trying to disguise insufficient background research is unwise. It is better to admit neglect than to try bluffing! Talk to others who have been interviewed before to learn how to perform well at interview.

Support from organisations such as the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers), Mount Everest Foundation, British Canoe Union, British Cave Research Association, British Ecological Society, Birdlife International, Flora and Fauna International, Scientific Exploration Society or Young Explorers’ Trust will give others confidence to follow suit.

Charitable trusts

There are hundreds of charitable trust funds in the UK and some of them support such activities as environmental conservation and medical research or development, which may be relevant to your expedition. A few are concerned with particular regions. Names of the trusts are found in the *Directory of Grant-Making Trusts*, which classifies them by areas of interest. A letter mentioning why your proposal is relevant to the charity is usually sufficient, together with the expedition prospectus. It obviously helps greatly if you know one of the charity’s trustees. Enquiries can also be made through your library for details of locally based charities.

Local authorities

The Lothian Exploration Group has found a selection of the following approaches to local authorities successful for school expeditions both in the UK and abroad.

Grants

- From regional council, often given to individuals or for specific schemes and also available to groups.
- From local education department, usually small amounts for specific expeditions

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to support in-service training for staff or to assist with staff expenses.

- Sports awards, from departments of leisure and recreation, available to individuals or groups.
- School councils or community associations.

Indirect support

- By loan of equipment from outdoor education centres or schools. This may include buying specialist equipment for the expedition that will later be used by the centre.
- Items that can come out of a special vote, which are at the discretion of the local authorities or their advisers, e.g. stationery, first aid or transport. Inspection of the relevant administrative memoranda will reveal this.

Local government names and addresses can be found in *The Municipal Year Book*, or contact your local education authority (LEA) outdoor education adviser.

From expedition members (personal contributions)

There is a tendency to keep members' contributions too low. Fix them as high as possible to cover at least 50 per cent of the expected expenditure. Do not be afraid of doing this – if people really want to go they will raise the money and, despite the apparently high costs, an expedition is usually excellent value compared with a holiday. Do not under-rate this aspect of the expedition finances; many expeditions are financed entirely in this way. If you manage to accumulate large funds, the contributions can be reduced by refunding money later.

Get this personal income into the expedition account as soon as you can. It will probably be needed to pay some of the early bills, or it can be put on deposit to earn interest. The size of the personal contribution is an important factor when approaching grant-giving organisations – the bigger the better.

Personal contributions should ideally cover: (1) a substantial portion of the air fare; (2) a joining fee towards general expedition overheads; and (3) a per diem to cover food and subsistence for each day in the field. You will need to agree a per diem well in advance, because it is needed for applications to some grant-giving organisations. Remember that it does not cover just the cost of food consumed by an individual, but represents a share of all administration, base camp and local transport costs.

From the public through fund-raising activities

This is the most diverse way of fund-raising and is especially popular with those who have a large volunteer workforce with time on their hands. Some methods have legal restrictions, and some can cost more to run than you expect, but the opportunities before, during and after the expedition are many. Examples include:

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- *Sponsored events* such as walks, swims, canoe rolls, parachute jumps, etc. are often profitable. However, there is sometimes a tendency to complete “gimmicky” sponsored events for the press novelty value. This seems to be of limited value. It would seem more appropriate if sponsored events could be useful, so that your local community benefit from your efforts. Litter collecting, tree planting and community service activities offer a wide range of possibilities. This is more likely to predispose people to sponsor you than subjecting yourself to some ridiculous ordeal. Make it clear from the start how much of the proceeds will go to the expedition central fund as opposed to reducing the fees of the person doing the event; 50:50 is probably right in most cases.
- *Raffles* can be especially profitable if local firms donate good prizes, and you have plenty of friends to help sell tickets. However, you must be aware of legal implications of formally organised raffles, which involve paying for a licence from your district council. Work out a rough cost–benefit analysis before you start, to make sure that it is worth the effort and time.
- *Trading activities* can be highly profitable, sufficient to fund an entire expedition, or they can involve serious financial misadventure. Items bought wholesale in bulk, and inscribed with the project name or logo, can be relatively inexpensive to buy, but you have to analyse your market first to see whether there is an existing demand or an opening to create one of your own. Many projects have their own T-shirts printed as part of the team image, as well as to present to counterparts or sponsors. With a particularly eye-catching design, there are always possibilities of selling to interested family and friends, members of pertinent specialist societies and organisations, and possibly the wider general public. Certainly, with the last, the level of organisation required is extensive, with advertisements, marketing and predictive ordering of merchandise. This must be viewed with caution and, because capital outlay is required, it is possible to lose a great deal of money. This type of venture is ideally suited to ongoing projects of several years.
- *Fêtes, jumble sales and bazaars* can be fun and profitable. Try to recruit someone who has experience; otherwise start with caution. There is plenty of scope here for ideas from enthusiastic supporters.
- *Philatelists* sometimes pay for first-day covers which entails franking the envelopes when you are in the field and carrying them the length of the expedition without getting them dirty. This can be profitable if a relevant stamp is issued near the time of the expedition departure. But, be careful, because this sort of project involves a lot of risk capital. Stamps have no post office value once postmarked and it is thus essential to get prepayment from philatelists before buying and postmarking the stamps.

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When lecturing to clubs, schools and universities, make sure that you are aware of the travel costs and the fees that you will be paid, otherwise you may end up out of pocket. Do not rely on this method of fund-raising after the expedition is over – it should really be considered only as a last resort. Normally, only famous names command high fees for lecturing. If you want to have your name added to the RGS–IBG's List of Lecturers on Geography and Exploration, to help try to raise some money this way, contact the Expedition Advisory Centre on your return.

CONCLUSION

There are a number of funding sources available for expeditions but competition is fierce. Your fund-raising success will be dependent on your professionalism, individual ingenuity, persistence, confidence and belief in the value of your work. You will be rejected by some of those whom you approach for sponsorship, but use those rejections to encourage your team to find alternative sources of funds. Don't be disheartened; there are almost unlimited ways of securing your funds, and when you have succeeded you will look down from your mountain, look out across the forest, or look up from your microscope and be certain that it was well worth the effort. Good luck!

FURTHER INFORMATION

Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), 25 Kingston Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA. Tel: +44 1732 520 000, fax: +44 1732 520 001, email: enquiries@caf.charitynet.org, website: www.CAFonline.org
CAF is an international non-governmental organisation that provides specialist financial services to other charities and their supporters.

Directory of Social Change, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2DP. Tel: +44 20 7391 4800, fax: +44 20 7391 4808, email: info@dsc.org.uk, website: www.dsc.org.uk
A registered charity providing information and support to voluntary and community organisations worldwide. They run training courses and publish a number of excellent books on fund-raising and a wide range of directories of grant-giving organisations including the CAF's *Directory of Grant-Making Trusts*.

Institute of Charity Fund-Raising Managers, Market Towers, 1 Nine Elms Lane, London SW8 5NQ. Tel: +44 20 7627 3436, fax: +44 20 7627 3508, email: enquiries@institute-of-fundraising.org.uk, website: www.icfm.org.uk
Publish lists of fund-raising consultants and the Code of Conduct for them, and some useful model contracts.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations, Regents Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL. Tel: +44 20 7713 6161, fax: +44 20 7713 6300, email: ncvo@ncvo-vol.org.uk, website: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk