



## AYUSA STUDY ABROAD FUNDRAISING INFORMATION KIT



**Your ticket to see the world...**

**YES YOU CAN!!**

The world is awaiting your discovery!! As an AYUSA exchange student international friendships, adventure, and fun are all within your reach. But what about the costs??

Over the years here at AYUSA we've seen lots of students just like yourself raise 100 % of the funds for their program. That's right, 100 % . You can do it, too. Here's how:

**CREATIVITY IS THE KEY**

### **Raising Funds Yourself**

#### Employment

Most teenagers today have part-time jobs on weekends and/or after school. However, most of their paychecks go to pizza, clothes, and the latest movie. If you already have a job, think about how much more meaningful studying abroad will be than watching a movie or eating a burger. Try setting aside just a little from each paycheck, with your overall goal in mind. Make a realistic goal that you can reach quickly, then extend it from there. Ask your family or a bank

official to set you up a special savings account dedicated to your fundraising effort. After a short time you'll be amazed how quickly it piles up.

If you do not yet have a job, be creative! Incorporate your interest in studying abroad with your job. For example, look for businesses that relate to where you want to study, like a French bakery, a Japanese sushi bar, or a German restaurant. If these aren't available in your community try baby-sitting, lawn-mowing, car-washing, housepainting, or housekeeping.

Think about skills you have learned and things you can do. Use your skills and talents creatively to raise funds from doing special projects.

One AYUSA student organized a bake sale at her church every Sunday for a month. She recruited family and friends to bake goods to donate to the sale.

An AYUSA student going to France conducted three car-washes at a local gas station, eventually earning half of his program fee!

Approach your local or student newspaper. Offer to be their "overseas correspondent" for your time abroad. Agree to send in articles about life in the country to which you are going. They may be willing to sponsor you.

Are you a good shopper?

Collect donations from friends and family in exchange for sending them small souvenirs from your host country.

Organize a bowl-a-thon, basket-a-thon, swim-a-thon, sing-a-thon, dance-a-thon, etc. Recruit friends to sign up donors.

Are you skilled at languages?

Contact your foreign language teacher or guidance counselor and tell them about your upcoming study abroad plans. They may be able to inform you about cash awards available to students of a foreign language.

### Grants & Scholarships

Has your family ever thought about hosting an international student? AYUSA welcomes approximately two thousand international students to the USA each year. We are always looking for warm, secure host families. As a member of an AYUSA host family, you would automatically be eligible for a \$500 discount off your regular program fees! Better yet, you would get to know what it is like to be an exchange student by living with one.

Also, keep in mind that there are lots of organizations out there that would really like to see you succeed. But how do you get started looking for grants and scholarships?

First, ask AYUSA. We have full and partial scholarships available for some of our programs. Give us a call to ask about the current scholarships. Also, check our website for the latest online information.

Second, go to your local library and ask the reference librarian for resources. Explain that you would like to study abroad and are looking for grant and scholarship information. There are many out there waiting for you.

Third, try the Internet. Use search words like "student grants" or "student scholarships". Check out several web sites for links and information. See the back page for more web sites.

## **Asking local businesses and community organizations for assistance**

### Letters Requesting Donations

Local businesses and community organizations really want to see you succeed. It brings pride to the community when one of its own is doing something positive. You will be surprised by the response you will receive from following a few basic guidelines.

First, make a long list of businesses, stores, and companies in your area with which you are familiar. Ask your family, relatives, friends, and the local Chamber of Commerce for ideas on who to contact. Many businesses have a special fund set up for students.

Second, write a letter of introduction, explaining that you are raising funds to participate in a cultural and academic exchange program. AYUSA will be glad to supply you with acceptance letters, validations, and support documents that you can include with your introduction letter. Remember, you can get started on the introduction letter even before you're accepted into the program!

Third, network. Tell everyone you know that you are planning to study abroad and are starting a fundraising campaign. Word-of-mouth travels fast, and you may discover new sources you never had thought of.

Fourth, follow up, follow up, follow up. After writing wait approximately two weeks and then follow up with a polite telephone call and letter.

### Who do you contact?

\$\$ Service Organizations: Kiwanis International is partnered with AYUSA. Look up the Kiwanis club in your area and contact its president. Ask how you can be sponsored by the club. Call AYUSA for more details. Other service organizations you can approach include Optimists, Lions, Elks, Chambers of Commerce, and the YMCA. You may also want to try local churches, temples, and other religious organizations.

### \$\$ International Companies

We live in a multi-national world. The skills you will learn as an exchange student will help to put you on the cutting edge of the changing world economy. International companies are often happy to help you achieve your goal of studying abroad. Look for companies that have branches or conduct business in the country you wish to explore. Search the Internet or ask your local librarian for information on international companies and make a list of their names, addresses, and telephone numbers. Call and ask for the name of the company president or CEO. Write a letter addressed to that specific person explaining your goal and expressing your need to raise funds. See the request letter example on page 3 for ideas.

\$\$ Special Interest Clubs: What do a Russian chess club, a bonsai tree cutting class, and a German restaurant all have in common? They all attract folks with an interest in another country, or maybe even natives of that country. Take your interest in studying in that country and seek out groups that share your interest. Let them know you need financial help by writing them a request letter or making a presentation at one of their meetings. You'll be surprised how many people are willing to help!

### **Check this out!!**

Last year a fifteen-year-old AYUSA student in New York raised her entire program fee for Denmark herself. She did it by using a variety of methods. She had a part time job at an Italian restaurant where she worked three days per week after school. She tried her hardest to save her tips, with a goal of \$1000 in mind. She wrote request letters for donations to family in Maryland, friends in California, and several companies that have operations in Denmark. Then she contacted her local newspaper with a personal press release, described on the next page. The newspaper wrote an article about her upcoming program and her ongoing donation drive. The article ended with addresses and phone numbers for readers who wanted donate. After reading the article, many readers around the community sent in donations.

### \$\$ Personal Press Release

Let everyone in town know that you are a future world explorer! A 'press release' is a short letter that people or companies send to newspapers in order to "get the word out". Write a letter to your local newspaper explaining your program, your interest in becoming an exchange student, and your fundraising drive. Explain how hard you are working to raise funds for your program and how rewarding it will be to yourself and the local community. Send your press release to the Lifestyles, Community, or Datebook section of your local paper, addressing it to one of the columnists that have regular features or an editor. If a few weeks pass and you have not heard from the newspaper, call them and ask to speak with the person to whom you wrote.

### \$\$ Family and Friends

This seems obvious, but often family and friends don't know that they can make a meaningful donation to your fund. The best way to go about asking friends and family for donations is to put it in writing. Send them a nice letter or card expressing your desire to go abroad and how even a small donation can make a difference.

Although it may seem strange, write a request letter even to family members you are close to and speak with often. Writing a letter shows that family member or friend that you are serious, it also saves you the embarrassment of asking for a donation in person. Set up a special savings account dedicated to your fundraising effort. You can give friends and family the account number for direct deposit.

### **Another success story!!**

An AYUSA fall semester student to Spain wanted to pursue his dream of studying abroad so badly that he contacted everyone he knew, and everyone they knew, until he had so many small donations he had earned his entire program fee.

Finally, AYUSA received over 30 different checks from all of his friends, family community contacts, and businesses. Some were for as little as \$10, and there was even one from his dentist! This students' hard work finally paid off as he went to Spain, and became fluent in Spanish!!!

### Checklist: Writing a Letter Requesting Donations

1. Introduce yourself. State your name, school, and age. Identify AYUSA as your exchange organization, the country to which you are going, and the duration of the program.
2. Tell them why you'd like to become an exchange student and what you'd like to do in the future.
3. Announce the cost of the program. Explain the contributions of yourself and your parents, other organizations/businesses, and the remainder you require. Let them know you're working at a part time job for your contribution. Be sure to explain that any contribution, however small will make a big difference to you.
4. Break down your expenses in the letter by summarizing the cost of your program. Explain that you plan to contribute from your own savings, in addition to receiving contributions from your family /friends or other organizations.
5. Be sure your spelling and grammar are correct. Use complete sentences. Go over your sample letter with an English teacher at school.
6. Once accepted to the AYUSA program you will receive a 'proof of participation' letter confirming your acceptance. Enclose a clean copy of this letter with your own. Include the toll-free 1-800 number of AYUSA if the potential donor would like to call us.
7. If you haven't heard anything from the potential donor in about two weeks follow up by telephone.

**See next page for a sample letter!**

1451 Pine Street  
Alamo, CA 94507

Mr. Jack Johnson, President  
Sir Arnold Tiffrey Motors  
Monument, CA 95546

Dear Mr. Johnson,

My name is Regina Foster and I am a senior at Monte Video High School. This coming fall I plan to spend one semester living with a family in Italy through the AYUSA International Exchange program. In the future I would like to study International Business, with a focus on European Affairs, so this experience will be crucial to my success in that field.

The total program fee for this program is \$ 6,045. The program fee includes international airfare, placement with a screened host family and high school, assistance with passport and visa, and 24-hour support services both in the U.S. and abroad. Upon my completion of this program I will be able to make a valuable contribution to our community. If you would be able to contribute any amount possible to help me reach my goals, it would greatly appreciated.

The following is my current financial situation:

Program Fee to Italy	\$6045
Application and Deposit Paid	\$600
Parents' Contribution	\$1500
Approximate Earnings at Part-time Job	\$1500
Contributions from Local Sources	
Mikes Pizza	\$100
Mamas Italian Kitchen	\$150
Deen Valley Business Association	\$200
<b>REMAINING NEEDED:</b>	<b>\$1995</b>

I would be happy to meet with you at any time regarding, my academic achievements, extracurricular activities, or A YUSA International. If you wish, I would be happy to keep you informed of my progress throughout the year with updates from Italy. I hope you will consider my request and I look forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,

Regina Foster

## **Yes You Can!**

Studying abroad can give you so much. Maturity, self-reliance, and stronger sense of self-esteem. Add to that the pride that comes from doing it yourself, earning your own program fees through hard work and determination. By raising your own fees you will appreciate your experience so much more!

The best thing you can do is to combine all the different kinds of fundraising mentioned earlier: a part-time job, special projects, and writing donation requests. Keep as many pots on the boil as possible. Remember that all along your journey AYUSA Study Abroad is here to help! Feel free to call us at 1-800-727-4540 for more fundraising tips, strategies, and most importantly, encouragement. We love success stories! Good Luck!

### Internet Fundraising Resource List

The Financial Aid Information Page [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)  
For book lists at this site go to: /finaid/bibliography / study-abroad.html

International Education Finance Corporation [www.iefc.com](http://www.iefc.com)  
Contains many scholarship links and book lists

The Scholarship Page [www.iwc.pair.com/scholarshippage/links.html](http://www.iwc.pair.com/scholarshippage/links.html)  
Another multi-link page

Educational Travel Page [www.educationtravel.com](http://www.educationtravel.com)  
Information regarding youth oriented international education

Government Education Page [www.ed.gov/prog-info/SFA/studentguide/](http://www.ed.gov/prog-info/SFA/studentguide/)  
Educational scholarship guide

Home School Education Page [www.homeschoolzone.com/college.html](http://www.homeschoolzone.com/college.html)  
Helpful tips for high school students interested in scholarships

### Resource Guides

- The International Scholarship Book: The Complete Guide to Financial Aid for Study Abroad
- Financial Resources for International Study: A Guide for US Nationals Interested in Study Abroad

**Use search engines to find many, many more resources.**