



Impact RIT Fundraising Criteria and Guidelines

All projects must meet the following eligibility requirements before applying:

- Projects must support academic coursework, campus initiatives, approved student clubs and organizations, and non-course academic work such as co-ops and extra-curricular academic projects.
- Projects must be approved by a sponsoring department (e.g., College of Science, Student Affairs, Simone Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship). Projects must also include a sponsoring faculty or staff advisor from that department.
- Projects using significant RIT resources for testing and applied research must seek review and/or approval from the Office of Sponsored Research Services.
- Projects cannot benefit or be designated to a specific student or individual. **Teams must have a minimum of three students involved, helping to manage the campaign.** For example:

NO:

- > Raising money for the research conducted by one specific individual.
- > Raising money to cover travel costs for one specific student/individual attending a conference.

YES:

- > Raising money for a research project being conducted by multiple people or a department.
- > Raising money for a group of students to attend a conference.
- Projects cannot be used to fund endowments unless approved through University Advancement and/or the Controller's office.
- Projects must not request fundraising support to create or promote an individual entrepreneurship or business venture, defined as an ongoing revenue-generating operation with overhead costs.
- Projects can request support to conduct approved research, customer discovery, and to develop prototypes for testing. If you meet the above requirements, requestors are asked to submit an online application for review and approval by RIT University Advancement.

What you'll need to develop your project's fundraising campaign

- All teams are required to review a training PowerPoint presentation before accessing the platform which will highlight elements to cover and complete during the campaign. The PowerPoint presentation will be sent via email once your Impact RIT application is received.

Teams are required to develop content, such as messaging, video, and photos, to support the fundraising campaign appeal.

- Use the “Brief Description” section to craft a compelling narrative that supports your campaign’s message and the mission of your project. Consider summarizing the scope of your project providing a clear and concise idea of what is being achieved. Also, discuss any projected outcomes and future research deliverables expected at the end of your project.
- Videos serve as a great visual asset for your campaign. Videos provide campaigns an opportunity to highlight all project participants and demonstrate the importance of their fundraising request. Videos should be posted to YouTube (due to music rights licensing). Videos should adhere to RIT branding as much as possible. Videos are required to be captioned. Be considerate of people, businesses, and organizations you mention, always seek their permission first. Remember no gift can be designated to one specific individual — be mindful not to state this in your video.
- Photos should be appropriate to the project and approved for sharing. Photos should be cropped and edited before use.

Campaign Goals

- Projects should set goals that might be a stretch but ultimately are attainable using a solid marketing plan (see below). Asking for too much or too little can affect your project’s chance of success. **Approved projects should have fundraising goals of no less than \$2,000 and no more than \$10,000.**
- The average gift size for digital fundraising goals between \$2,000 and \$10,000 is \$75. As a point of reference, divide your project fundraising goal by \$75 to help determine how many donors you will need. It is better to exceed and increase your goal, rather than fall short of a lofty goal.
- To leverage additional networks to support your project, approved applicants must include one or more alumni as your team members.

What makes a project more likely to succeed?

Successful projects are ones that integrate our best practice recommendations in outreach, include a 30-day social media and marketing plan, and build a strong team of people to contribute to their fundraising efforts. Every member of the team must be 100% committed to actively engaging their social communities and networks.

Impact RIT campaign duration

- Teams will have 30 - 45 days to market and promote their project. Digital fundraising campaigns are time-sensitive in nature and will require you to increase your efforts as the days of your campaign begin to decrease. Posting updates and communicating with supporters throughout the duration of your campaign will help maintain momentum.

Developing your marketing plan

- Before your project launches its fundraising campaign, identify potential early adopters or those who are inclined to support, promote, and champion your project. Projects are likely to succeed when 30% to 40% of your fundraising goal is achieved during week one. Try targeting this audience during week one of your launch.
- We expect each campaign to develop a marketing plan. This plan should include a profile of your target audiences (segmented by networks), campaign email templates, and social media posts to share with your fundraising team. Within your campaign's marketing plan, be sure to include messaging to support campaign updates (increase your goal), announcements (milestones achieved), and stewardship emails (thank you).
- We encourage teams to utilize their email account to email their contacts, as that is the most effective way of sharing your message. The University Advancement team may create and distribute an email or social media solicitation, on behalf of your campaign, to targeted alumni as an additional resource to promote your project. Should an email be generated, you will be notified to review it before sending it.

Donor Stewardship

It is a requirement of the Impact RIT program to steward donors timely and appropriately. The right kind of donor stewardship can very easily inspire a donor to make another gift. As a part of stewardship, we expect teams to:

- Provide weekly campaign updates
- Daily donor stewardship (or every time a gift is received)
- Final stewardship email in the week after the campaign closes

Projects that do not complete their agreed-upon stewardship requirements may risk delaying receipt of funds until requirements are met.

Using your campaign funds

- After campaign requirements are satisfied, the RIT Gift Office will process the transfer of funds to approved RIT-designated expense accounts.
- Expect funds to be available 7 to 14 business days after the completion of your campaign. Your academic department or club/group advisor should assist you with processing your expenses and reimbursements to the designated special account.

Any Questions?

If you have any questions or would like to meet to discuss your project or idea, feel free to send an email to impact@.rit.edu.