



## Fundraising 101 Guide



Riding 275 miles is hard work, but raising \$2,750 can seem even tougher. If meeting your fundraising minimum has you concerned, fear not—our riders and crew typically raise above and beyond the minimum! In 2017, Cycle for the Cause Riders raised an average of \$4,715 and Crew members raised an average of \$1,209. Want to exceed your goals? Follow these seven easy steps and you will be on your way to helping us make history and #endAIDS!

### Step 1: Tell Your Story

1. Ask yourself what inspired you to sign up for the Ride and jot down your thoughts
2. Take a tour at The Center!
3. Educate yourself about HIV and AIDS and become comfortable talking about the cause.
4. Write out your personal story—share it on your fundraising page, in emails and on social media.
5. Don't just tell people *what* you're doing, tell them *why* you're doing it.

### Step 2: Prepare To Make the Ask

- Make a list of your networks:
  - Personal: friends, family, neighbors, etc.
  - Professional
  - Social media—every friend or follower you have is a potential donor!
- Create messaging for various means of asking:
  - Social media (see our [Social Media Toolkit](#))
  - Email
  - In-person

### Step 3: The Email

- Send individual emails and address the recipients by name.
- Relay your personal story and request a donation.
- Show the tangibility: tell your supporters what \$50, \$100, \$500 and beyond can do to impact the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS.
- Remember three key strategies:
  - Tap into the *minds* of your donors by presenting compelling information.
  - Pull at their *heartstrings* by making it personal.
  - Create a *path* toward fundraising that is simple and attainable.

### Step 4: Follow Up

- Track individual outreach attempts and don't be afraid to follow up.
  - It takes an average of six reminders before an individual donates to your cause.
  - Use a spreadsheet or Google plug-in to keep track of when you contact someone, who has donated and who has been thanked.
- Update your supporters on your journey.
  - Use social media to document training and fundraising milestones.
  - Use these milestones to send follow-up emails to potential donors.

- Update and publicly thank individuals who have already donated on your progress—they may donate again!

### Step 5: Ask Your Donors to Have Their Gifts Matched

- Many companies match an employee's donation dollar for dollar.
- Ask your donors to inquire about their companies' matching gift policy (refer to HR and/or include matching information in your ask).
- See the step-by-step "Matching Gifts" how-to on our [website](#).

### Step 6: Get Creative

- Once you have asked your network to donate and followed up with them several times, it's time to start having fun!
- Plan an event:
  - Happy hour
  - Spin-a-thon
  - Auction/raffle
  - Drag show
  - Bake sale
- Ask for sponsorships from community and neighborhood establishments you patronize and support.
- Accept donations in lieu of gifts on your birthday (or other life events).

### Step 7: Say Thank You (and say thanks again and again)!

- Send a hard copy letter or card.
- Thank donors publicly by tagging them on social media.
- Get creative:
  - Offer to write donors' names on your jersey or bike bib.
  - Send donors training and fundraising milestone updates.
  - Send donors a picture of yourself at the finish line.
  - Update donors on the total amount of money you raised.
  - Share information with your donors about how their money is being put to work at The Center.



Every dollar you raise for Cycle for the Cause goes to work immediately to help fund The Center's life-saving HIV prevention work. When fundraising starts to feel like a challenge, look at yourself in the mirror and remind yourself of why you are doing this Ride (and visualize yourself in a 5K or 10K Club jersey while you're at it). You've already taken your first steps toward becoming an AIDS activist—we can't wait to see you at the finish line and congratulate you on everything you accomplish!