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LAUNCH LSU

PROJECT TOOLKIT

Thoughtful preparation is key to your project's overall success. The pre-launch phase begins four to six weeks before your project's launch date and is focused on outreach strategies and exploring networks to promote your project. You should finalize all components of your project page, including your description and campaign video, no less than one week prior to its launch.

PRE-LAUNCH

Assemble your team. Each Launch LSU project should have a leadership team of at least three people with an assigned project leader. This devoted group will help to create and promote your project; the more people on your team the more successful you will be!

Launch LSU project leaders will help to develop and manage the project page and communications. Project leaders will work directly with the LSU Foundation's online giving coordinator through scheduled weekly check-ins. The online giving coordinator will guide project leaders on how to continue, or increase, engagement throughout the campaign.

Consider your network. Before setting your project's fundraising goal, you need to consider your team's networks' size and giving potential.

1. How many people are in my network?

Look at each team member's connections on all social media platforms, including LinkedIn or a personal blog, as well as contacts through email. Most of your support will likely come from core networks: friends, family and colleagues.

2. What is the average amount you could raise per person?

Team members should carefully consider their how much their networks are likely to contribute. For example, students may donate smaller amounts, while family members or professionals may give more. On average, Launch LSU donations range from \$20 to \$100.

Set a realistic goal. Set your target goal based on your answers to the questions above. Your team should also set two stretch goals, or amounts that exceed your target goal, and determine what you would accomplish with those additional funds. For example, "Our target goal is to raise \$2,000 to X. If we reach our stretch goal of \$3,500, we can also Y. If we reach our stretch goal of \$5,000, we can Z."

Determine your timeline. Successful campaigns are active for 30 days. A short timeline leverages urgency and motivates donors. When selecting your campaign dates, consider important holiday or events that may conflict with your project.

Draft your messaging. Messaging, to be used within your project page's description and throughout communications, should express your team's passion for and help your audience connect emotionally to your project. Start by defining your project's mission:

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- Why are you creating this project?
- Why is it important for someone to donate?
- What will the money support?
- Who will be impacted by this project?
- What real-life stories can you share that illustrate your project's impact?

Create your project page's look. An assigned team member, preferably a team member with graphic design experience, will develop header and banner images, per the guidance of the project leader. All images are subject to approval by LSU's Divisions of Strategic Communications. You are encouraged to include high-quality photographs that bring your project to life, showcasing your team and the project's potential impacts, throughout the project page's description.

Make a promotional video. A short (less than two minutes) video is a great way to *show* your audience who you are and why your project matters. Once your project is approved, our online giving coordinator will reach out to share more details about creating your project's video.

Build a communications calendar. Strategically plan when you will send emails and post on social media. You should schedule at least five emails in total, and at least four social media posts per week.

Here are some key dates to consider while scheduling:

- Launch
 - End-of-week updates
 - Goal milestones
 - Three-day countdown
 - Last Day
 - End of campaign and thanks to supporters
- **Email** will be your most effective tool in driving traffic and donations. The more emails your team sends, the more likely you will reach your project's goals.
 - Consider grouping your networks into audiences and identifying messaging approaches that will appeal to each. Each audience may have a different connection to your project or motivation for donating. You may also need to alter the style and tone of your writing to suit each audience. For example, your approach to students may be more casual than to professionals.
 - Keep your emails between 150-200 words.
 - Each email should include new graphics, photos or videos to keep your audiences interested.
 - Make your "ask" clear and personal by using personal pronouns such as *us*, *we* and *you*.
 - **Social Media:** While you are encouraged to utilize any social media platform that you feel will enhance outreach and increase sharing, Facebook may be the most effective.

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- To maintain efficiency and organization, schedule posts ahead of time through tools such as Hootsuite.
- Create a Facebook event for your project's launch day.
- Team members should set the project page's banner image as their cover photos with a direct link to the project page in the caption.
- Each post should be brief and include an image, photo or video; your project's unique hashtag; and a direct link to the project page.
- Encourage sharing—it's just as important as donating!

Reach out to your core community. Remember that you are doing more than just raising money; you are *building a community* of Tigers who care about your project. One of the best ways to promote your project is to build a base of supporters prior to the launch. Each team member should start by compiling a list of 15-20 people who are likely to donate to your project. Send them an email or direct message with information on the project and how they can support it once it is live. Securing donations early on can help build your project's momentum. Reference the attached sample when drafting your message.

LAUNCH

Execute. Project leaders are responsible for ensuring the project page is managed and all communication materials, including the communications calendar and digital media plan, are executed effectively throughout the campaign. The online giving coordinator will provide you with a checklist.

Stay active. Project leaders should be readily available to answer any questions from and engage donors and potential donors daily. Leverage social media to communicate directly through responding to comments and sharing posts. Regular updates keep donors informed on your progress, and to provide additional information to those who are considering donating to your project.

POST-PROJECT

When your project ends, supporters should receive information about your project's outcomes and the impact of their support. When drafting post-project communications, ask yourself how you want a supporter to feel after making a gift to your project.

Follow up. Communications should be centered around thanking supporters, emphasizing the outcome of their support and informing them on how to stay engaged. This is also your opportunity to influence supporters to participate in future Launch LSU projects.

Continue social media updates. Posts should continue for at least 60 days to send additional updates to donors. Suggested dates include:

- Project-end date to announce total raised
- 15 days post-project to convey impact
- 30 days post-project to express thanks and encourage support of future Launch LSU projects

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Recognize your donors. Donors who made larger gifts should be given special attention. For example, those listed as Campaign Heroes should be sent a handwritten, personal thank you note signed by every team member.

NEXT STEPS

The online giving coordinator will schedule a meeting with the project leader to discuss successes and opportunities of the project. All team members will also receive a brief survey to evaluate Launch LSU strengths and weaknesses.

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SAMPLE: Digital Media Plan



Lagniappe for Tigers Crowdfunding Initial Digital Media Plan

Goal: Inform and engage the community about the Lagniappe for Tigers program, ultimately encouraging them to donate to the program.

Timeline: July 9 –July 13

Media Outlets:

- LSU CoA Website

CoA Website Messaging:

- Feature a “Donate” button that links to the crowd funding page.

Social Media Outlets: LSU CoA Facebook

Additional organizations to share posts on Facebook pages:

- LSU College of Agriculture Student Association
- Les Voyagers for the College of Agriculture

Social Media Messaging:

- Lagniappe for Tigers is a campaign meant to provide our future tigers the opportunity to experience the LSU AgCenter Dairy Store while on campus. Give back and be a part of the first experience a future Tiger has as part of the LSU College of Agriculture family!
[Insert Crowdfunding Link]
- Facts about the Dairy Store and the ice cream made there
- My first Dairy Store experience
- Personal story from a student who visited campus while in high school
- My favorite flavor is...

Email Audiences:

- LSU CoA Faculty
- LSU CoA Staff
- LSU CoA Alumni

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SAMPLE: Communications Calendar

2018

CALENDAR YEAR

FEBRUARY

CALENDAR MONTH

SUNDAY

FIRST DAY OF WEEK

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
04	05	06	07 Campaign Launch: February 8	08 Email sent to CoA faculty, students, staff, and alumni for Ag Week promo	09 Social media launch for Ag Week including Day of Service activity	10
11	12	13	14 CoA Social Media Post	15 Social media post with video feature	16 Goal Update	17 LSU Foundation Social Media Post (video)
18	19 Monday Matters: Agriculture Food Insecurity Fact	20 Student/Staff: I gave because...	21 E-mail specific on project to CoA faculty, staff, students and alumni of CoA	22 CoA Social Media Post	23 Goal Update	24 Student/Staff: I gave because...
25	26 Monday Matters: Agriculture Food Insecurity Fact	27 Student/Staff: I gave because...	28 Email sent to CoA faculty, students, staff, and alumni for Ag Week promo	01 LSU Foundation post on project	02 Goal Update	03 Student/Staff: I gave because...
04	05 Monday Matters: Agriculture Food Insecurity Fact	06 Student/Staff: I gave because...	07 CoA Social Media Post	08 Volunteer update post and project update	09 Goal Update	10 Campaign countdown: five days left.
11	12	13	14 E-mail specific on project to CoA faculty, staff, students and alumni of CoA	15	16	17
Campaign countdown: four days left.	Campaign countdown: three days left.	Campaign countdown: two days left	Campaign countdown: one day left	Last day of the Campaign		

Color Codes:

	Ag Student Association Posts
	College of Ag Posts
	Written communication (emails)
	Anticipated Posts from Campus Partners

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SAMPLE: Pre-launch Email to Core Community

Friends,

As many of you know, I have been involved with LSU Service Breaks for the past three years. Service Breaks gives LSU students like me experiences learning and volunteering around the globe. We create dialogues, build relationships and spark positive change.

On Friday, Aug. 10, we will launch a crowdfunding campaign to [support Service Breaks](#). I know that community service is dear to your heart, so I am inviting you to be one of our first supporters.

This year, Service Breaks will host three domestic service experiences and three international service experiences. We will travel over 20,000 miles and complete more than 2,000 hours of service focusing on issues such as low-income housing, wildlife conservation and human trafficking. **Your [gifts](#) will help defer the travel, housing and food costs of these trips.**

Through Service Breaks, I have learned more about who I am and my purpose in life. I hope you will help me continue my journey and offer this invaluable experience to more Tigers. Please **spread the word** by sharing my [Facebook](#) posts, or by creating your own with the campaign [link](#) and #LSUServiceBreaks.

Thank you!

Jennie