

YOUR SWE Fundraising Toolkit

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TABLE OF **Contents**

- 01: **Introduction & About SWE**
- 02: **Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Fundraising: An Overview**
- 03: **Your Role & SWE's Role in Supporting Your Fundraising**
- 04: **Best Practices for Fundraising**
- 05: **Publicizing & Promoting Your Fundraiser and Examples of Fundraisers**
- 07: **SWE's Current Fundraising Policies**
- 08: **The Donor Bill of Rights**
- 09: **Final Guidelines: Gifts Not Accepted, Tax Receipts, and Branding Guidelines**

Introduction & About SWE

Thank you for your interest in partnering with the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) to support our mission of advancing and empowering women and allies in engineering and technology. Your collaboration is vital to helping us build a more inclusive, innovative, and equitable future in STEM.

This **Fundraising Toolkit** is designed to help you join us in creating real impact as you raise funds and share our message. Inside, you'll find everything you need to plan, promote, and execute successful fundraising initiatives that align with SWE's core values.

WITH YOUR HELP, WE CAN CONTINUE TO:

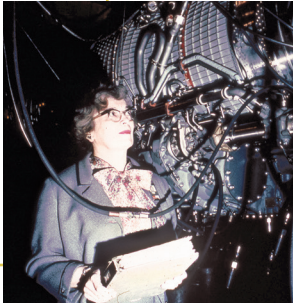
- Provide scholarships to future engineers.
- Deliver outreach to underrepresented youth in STEM.
- Support leadership development and networking.

Together, we're not only raising funds, we are ensuring SWE's enduring legacy - and you and your network will play a direct part in that.

About SWE:

SWE's mission is to empower women to achieve their full potential in careers as engineers and leaders; expand the image of the engineering and technology professions as a positive force in improving the quality of life, and demonstrate the value of diversity and inclusion.

Since its inception in 1950, SWE has given women in engineering and technology a unique place and voice within the industry. Our organization is centered around a passion for our members' successes and continues to evolve with the challenges and opportunities reflected in today's exciting engineering and technology specialties.



Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Fundraising: An Overview

02

What's P2P Fundraising & What's Your Role

Peer-to-peer (P2P) fundraising is a method that empowers individuals like you to raise funds on behalf of a cause, like SWE, by leveraging your personal network. Instead of asking people to donate to an organization, you're inviting them to support a mission that you personally care about.

In the context of SWE, **P2P fundraising** means SWE members, supporters, alumni, and allies raise money by sharing our story, mission, and impact with friends, family, colleagues, and community members. Each participant can create their own fundraising page or share personalized messages online to encourage giving.

WHY IT WORKS:

- **It's personal:** People give because you care.
- **It's powerful:** You multiply your reach by involving others.
- **It's proven:** P2P campaigns often raise significantly more than solo efforts.

What Is Your Role as a Fundraiser?

In P2P fundraising, you're a mission ambassador. You're not only raising money! You're raising awareness, building relationships, and inspiring others to invest in a more inclusive future for engineering and technology.

HERE'S WHAT THAT LOOKS LIKE IN ACTION:

1. Share Your "Why:"

Talk about what SWE means to you. Share your story far and wide, whether it's how SWE helped you find your path, supported your education, or empowered your leadership.

2. Spread the Word:

Use your platforms, such as social media, email, and group chats, to share updates, invite donations, and promote SWE. Consistency builds visibility and momentum.

3. Make the Ask:

It's okay to ask directly! Most people give because someone they know asked. Be clear, confident, and authentic.

4. Say Thanks:

Every donor should feel appreciated. Whether it's a quick message, a social media shoutout, or a handwritten note; gratitude builds long-term support.

5. Be a Collaborator:

Collaborate with your fellow fundraisers. Support SWE section and affiliate events, share ideas, and celebrate progress together.

REMEMBER

You don't need to be a fundraising expert, simply passionate, persistent, and proud to represent SWE (which we know you are). And this toolkit will take you step-by-step through each of these action items.

Your Role and SWE's Role in Fundraising

03

WHAT'S YOUR ROLE?

Depending on the type of fundraising you're doing, there are many things to consider. This is an incomplete list, but it will give you an idea of what your role as a fundraiser could look like:

- Develop an event committee to assist with the planning and logistics of the event.
- Promoting the event (any use of SWE logo and branding must be preapproved before going to print or widely distributed).

View Brand Guidelines.

- Identify and work with vendors to provide support.
- Handle all event participant and volunteer recruitment.
- Solicit individuals, organizations, and companies for sponsorship and support.
- Keep track of and cover all event expenses, as SWE does not financially support external events or reimburse expenses.
- Handle all event day logistics (including décor, event set-up and breakdown).

WHAT'S SWE'S ROLE?

SWE HQ staff can help support your fundraising in the following ways:

- Provide guidance and advice on best practices for soliciting from your network.
- Promote the event internally to SWE membership.
- Draft a letter of authorization for your event to be used to solicit organizations and companies for sponsorship and support.

Best Practices for Fundraising

04

The truth is, fundraising is not magic. It's making sure people understand what their contribution could do to help SWE continue its work. If you want to ensure your fundraising campaign is successful, here are some things you can implement that are often considered best practices in the field.

Some of these may strike you as obvious; it means you're thinking like a fundraiser already!

1. Start With Your "Why":

People give to people, not causes. Share your personal reason for supporting this campaign for SWE. Whether it's a story, a memory, or a goal, your "why" is what inspires others to care and contribute.

2. Set a Realistic Goal (and Share It!):

Setting a clear fundraising goal gives your campaign focus and helps supporters see the impact they can make. Share your progress along the way; it motivates others to help you reach the finish line.

3. Make the First Gift Yourself (If You Can):

Kick off your campaign by making a donation. It shows your commitment, sets the tone, and makes it easier for others to follow your lead.

4. Use Multiple Channels:

Don't rely on just one platform. Send personalized emails, post on social media, text your close friends, or even call someone you know who would love to help. The more ways you reach out, the better.

5. Ask Clearly and Confidently:

Be direct about what you're asking for. Let people know how much you're trying to raise, and suggest a donation amount if appropriate. Remember, you're offering them a chance to support something meaningful.



6. Personalize Your Outreach:

Mass posts will get your fundraiser out there, but personal messages are powerful. Take a few minutes to tailor your messages and mention past shared experiences or why you thought of that person specifically.

7. Keep Your Network Updated:

Share milestones, shout out donors, and show the impact of the campaign. People want to feel like part of a movement, not just a transaction.

8. Use Photos and Videos:

Visuals boost engagement. Share pictures of yourself participating, videos of the organization in action, or graphics that highlight your goal. It helps people connect emotionally to your message.

9. Follow Up:

Most people don't give the first time they're asked. It's okay to send reminders! Space them out and keep the tone friendly, appreciative, and hopeful.

10. Say Thank You:

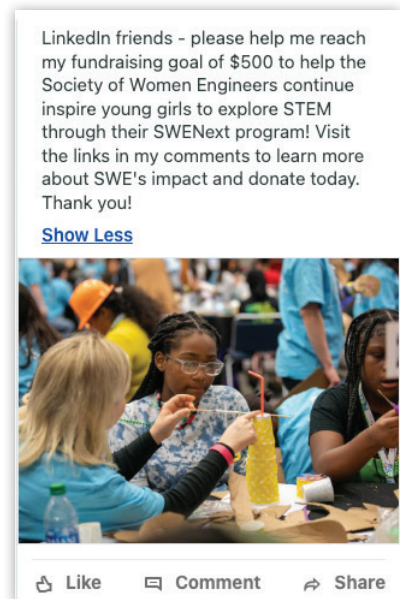
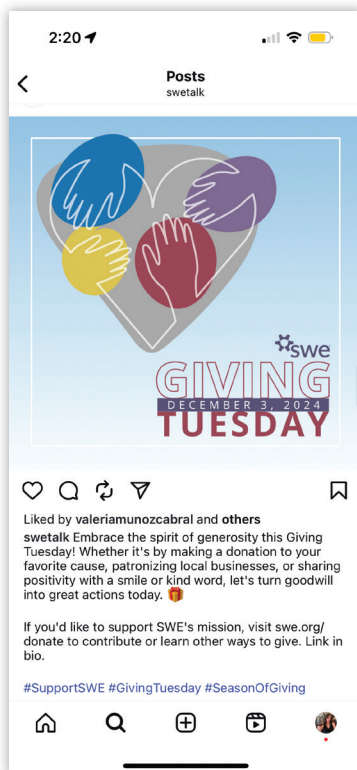
Thank every donor promptly, and consider a second thank you later (like after the campaign ends or when a goal is hit). Gratitude builds trust and keeps supporters engaged for future efforts.

Publicizing & Promoting Your Fundraiser

Social media platforms, email, and text messaging are the primary vehicles through which fundraisers share their campaigns, with social media being the most effective due to its ease of sharing, ability to reach wide audiences, and potential for easy amplification.

Here are some tips from us at SWE HQ to get you thinking about how to promote and publicize your fundraiser:

- Keep your messaging authentic, heartfelt, and focused on impact.
- Share progress updates to encourage continued engagement.
- Add personal photos, videos, or graphics to your fundraiser page — posts with visuals get significantly more shares and engagement.
- Share updates 2–3 times a week across platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
- Use short, punchy messages on Twitter/X and Instagram, while using longer, more personal updates on Facebook and email.
- Use clear calls to action like “Will you help me reach \$1,000 for SWE?”
- Try sending short, personal texts with your fundraising link, which is great for loved ones or contacts who haven’t responded to social posts.
- Tie your campaign to your birthday, awareness days, anniversaries, or SWE events.
- Use deadlines to create urgency (“Only 3 days left to help me hit my goal!”).



Publicizing & Promoting Your Fundraiser (cont'd)

Examples of Fundraisers & Organizing One:

Not sure where to start? Here are some creative and effective fundraising ideas you can personalize to support the Society. Whether you're an alum, professional, student, or retired member, or a SWE ally, these events help raise visibility and funds for women in engineering and technology.



■ Walkathon or Fitness Challenge:

Host a step or fitness challenge and ask friends to sponsor your daily goals. Use a fitness tracker to log progress and share updates on social media.

■ Birthday Fundraiser:

Celebrate your birthday by asking for donations instead of gifts. It's an easy way to bring your network together in support of SWE.



■ Saving Challenge:

Pledge to give up coffee, takeout, or another daily indulgence for a week and donate the savings to SWE. Challenge others to match your contribution.

SWE's Current Fundraising Policies

SWE's mission is supported by our members and sustained by the financial support from organizations and individuals who endorse SWE's mission and goals. Individual donors may choose to designate their contribution to support a particular programmatic area or designate the contribution as unrestricted. This Gift Acceptance Policy serves as a guideline for accepting gifts into the accounts of the Society.

Ethical Gift Acceptance

When considering whether to solicit or accept gifts, SWE will consider the following ethical factors:

- **Alignment With Values** — the gift shall not compromise any of the core values of SWE.
- **Agreement** — the gift is aligned with both the intent of the donor and SWE's use of the gift.
- **Public Relationships** — the gift shall not damage or disparage the name or reputation of SWE.
- **Primary Benefit** — the gift shall firstly benefit SWE versus solely the donor.
- **Consistency With Donor Practices** — the gift shall be consistent with prior policies and best practices.
- **Form of Gift** — the gift shall be in a form that SWE can use without incurring substantial expense or difficulty. See page 9 for details.
- **Future Giving Impact** — the gift shall not discourage future gift giving or compromise SWE's fundraising efforts.



The Donor Bill of Rights

08

Philanthropy is based on voluntary action for the common good. It is a tradition of giving and sharing that is primary to the quality of life. To assure that both philanthropy merits the respect and trust of the general public and that donors and prospective donors have full confidence in the not-for-profit organizations and causes they are asked to support, we declare that all donors have these rights:

1. **To be informed** of the organization's mission, the way the organization intends to use donated resources, and its capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes.
2. **To be informed** of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities.
3. **To have access** to the organization's most recent financial statements.
4. **To be assured** their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given.
5. **To receive** appropriate acknowledgment and recognition.
6. **To be assured** that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.
7. **To expect** that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature.
8. **To be informed** whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization, or hired solicitors.
9. **To have the opportunity** for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share.
10. **To feel free** to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful, and forthright answers.

DEVELOPED BY: American Association of Fundraising Counsel (AAFRC), Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP), Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), and the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP).

Questions

If you have any questions regarding fundraising, please email funddevelopment@swe.org.

Final Guidelines: Gifts Not Accepted, Tax Receipts, and Branding Guidelines

In closing, here are some additional things to keep in mind as you start your fundraising journey!

Gifts Not Accepted

Currently, SWE does not accept the following gifts:

- **Real Estate:** gifts of real estate and timeshares are not accepted.
- **Tangible Personal Property:** gifts of personal property (such as artwork, collections, vehicles, antiques, etc.)
- **Privately Held Securities:** gifts of stock in privately held companies are not accepted unless they are readily marketable.
- **Any in-kind gifts**

Tax Receipts

Please be aware that SWE can only issue a donation tax receipt if your donation was made through SWE's donation page, SWE's approved P2P fundraising platform, or a check mailed to SWE HQ:

Society of Women Engineers
130 E Randolph St, Suite 3500 | Chicago, IL 60601

Marketing, Branding, & Logo Guidelines

For information on SWE's logo and branding and to ensure you're in compliance, visit our **brand guidelines**.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding fundraising, please email funddevelopment@swe.org.

