

# How Can I Pay For My Exchange?



## HOW TO ASK BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS FOR DONATIONS

Contacting local businesses and organizations has been a very successful strategy for many of our students. It is easy to write letters to local shops and businesses to ask for contributions. Make a list of shops and businesses you want to contact in your town, suburb or surrounding areas. Use the local phone directory or contact the local Chamber of Commerce or ask your family or friends for suggestions as to shops, businesses or organizations to contact.

Here are some suggestions to get you started.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

Service clubs like Lions, APEX, Soroptimists, View, Probus. Country Women's Association

Licensed clubs like RSL Clubs, Leagues Clubs, Golf clubs

Churches, ethnic or cultural clubs

Sporting clubs or associations

### LOCAL BUSINESSES

Consider shops or businesses that you or your family use often. Also try businesses that have an international association such as travel agencies, car dealerships, ethnic restaurants (particularly those associated with a country to which you are looking at going on exchange).

### INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES

Look for companies that either specialize in a field you may be interested in as a career or that conduct business with a country you would like to go to. You can get the names of such companies from business magazines, trade journals or magazines, the business section of newspapers or your local Chamber of Commerce. Once you have a list of companies that you wish to contact, decide who should receive the letter. We recommend either the CEO or the Public Relations or Public Affairs Director. A quick phone call to the company will give you the name and title of the best contact person. A letter addressed to a specific person is much more effective.

### ***IT REALLY WORKS!!!***

One of our students wanted to go to Japan so she went to her local library and chamber of Commerce to find names of import/export companies trading with Japan. She sent her letters of request along with a letter from Youth for Understanding (YFU) National Office and information about YFU and its programs. She received enough money to finance her trip to Japan. She proved that the more letters you send to carefully chosen groups the more likely you are to get a positive response.

When you receive a donation, be sure to send a thank you letter straight away. When on exchange be sure to send a post card from your exchange country.

## HOW TO WRITE AN EFFECTIVE LETTER REQUESTING DONATIONS

- It is always best to address a letter to a specific person. However, if you cannot get this information, you could begin the letter with "Dear Sir or Madam" or "Good Morning" or perhaps a salutation in the language of your exchange country.
- Briefly explain who you are, where you would like to go on exchange and that Youth for Understanding is a not for profit volunteer based organisation which provides home-stay exchange programs for high school students.
- Summarize the cost of the program. Tell them that ANY donation would be appreciated and give a choice (i.e \$50, \$100, \$150, etc). Explain what you and your family hope to contribute from savings and other fundraising efforts. Sponsors will be impressed that you are working hard to make your exchange happen.
- Tell them that they can gain something by donating. Offer to write letters to publish in the company newsletter. Offer to give a presentation when you return about the culture or language of your host country.
- Once you are accepted to the program, ask the Outbound Coordinator to write a support letter on your behalf. This is a letter confirming your participation on the program.
- If you haven't had a response from your prospective donor, follow up with a phone call in about 2 weeks.

## How to capitalize on your talents and skills

- One student that wanted to go to Switzerland made Swiss chalet style gingerbread houses at Christmas and sold them to her neighbours
- A YFU student who went to Austria for a semester made an agreement with her local newspaper to be a "foreign correspondent". She wrote articles about life in Austria in exchange for a significant contribution to her program fees.
- Many students sell chocolate covered almonds or chocolate bars to neighbours or schoolmates. By doing this, you earn a certain percentage on the sale that you can use towards your program fee. One student earned \$1000 in eight weeks of hard work!

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- A student going to Finland made holiday greeting cards and sold them to family and friends
- A student to Japan bought coffee mugs at a 2 dollar shop, filled them with lollies and wrapped them with cellophane paper which made a nice gift. She sold them for \$5.00 each. She also approached local retailers and asked if they could give her merchandise at a discount or free to help her fundraise. She then sold those items in gift baskets that she put together. Offer to use the store business card as a part of the basket which identifies the donation they have in each basket.
- A student going to Mexico asked the members of his church to give him unused and unwanted items such as clothing, furniture, toys, books and dvd's. He used his entrepreneurial skills to sell the items at a garage sale.
- A student going to Belgium made an Easter basket for a complete dinner for 6. He went to a local grocery store and received most of the donations (the things in the basket) for free. He sold raffle tickets at \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00 and earned almost \$500!
- Another student collected donations towards her program fee from her neighbours by promising to send them each a small souvenir or postcard from Sweden.
- If you are active in sport, you and your friends or team could sign up sponsors to give you money for every kilometer you run, lap you swim, basket you make, strike you bowl, etc.
- If you are artistic, hold an exhibit of your paintings, sketches, cartoons, ceramics, photography or crafts and sell them, take orders, charge admission or put out a collection jar
- Coordinate a car wash and ask your friends to help out.
- Organize a bake sale at your church or in your school to sell items that you make from home.

## How much do I cost my Parents?

One student who wanted to go on an exchange for a year to Brazil asked her parents to list all of the things that her parents spent money on just for her. When they added up all of the costs and saw how much money they really spent on her per year, they agreed to let her go on exchange. She also saved her birthday and holiday money to use as spending money while on her exchange. This is what her parents list for one year looked like:

Electricity usage	\$480/year
Water usage	\$540/year
Food and eating out	\$5,400/year
Petrol costs	\$1,560/year
Public transport	\$540/year
Spending allowance (25\$/wk)	\$1,560/year
Clothing	\$1,200/year
School books/uniform/ consumeables	\$1,200/year
Foxtel/entertainment	\$300/year
Internet/telephone	\$960/year
Extra Curr. Activities (Dancing)	\$1,545/year

**Total (not including school tuition)      \$15,285/year**

## Spare Change?

One student saving for her exchange set an empty jar on a table in the living room. Whenever guests came over, she would ask them to contribute any spare change they had in their pockets (or left in between the cushions of the couch) and put it in the jar. The student collected over **\$200 in a few months**.

## Proper Etiquette for Fundraising

A positive attitude and high level of enthusiasm will take you far. It will also spread to the people around you and they will be more receptive to helping you if you are full of excitement. Be familiar with the YFU organization so that you can answer people's questions and be a YFU ambassador. If you don't know the answer, write them down and contact the national office or a volunteer to find it out. You should also do some research about your country of destination and be able to answer a few simple questions about it. A face to face approach to requesting donations is the most effective, second being the use of the telephone.

Be sure to either call or send a thank you note to all major contributors to your exchange when you receive the donation. It is important that people know that you are grateful for their help.