

University of Leeds Crowdfunding

The University of Leeds Crowdfunding platform is helping current students to make the most of their time at Leeds.

We have partnered with the educational crowdfunding experts at Hubbub.net to launch Leeds' very own crowdfunding platform. Through this platform as a current student you will be able to seek support for your own projects and activities – helping you and other students make the most of your time at Leeds.

Think you have an idea for a project? Keep reading to find out more about how crowdfunding works, see if your project idea meets the guidelines and how you can get involved.

What is Crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding allows you to raise money in support of a project or activity from a crowd of many donors, typically from your own personal networks. Each supporter makes an individual, small donation in return for a small reward.

How does Crowdfunding work?

Crowdfunding uses the power of social networks to share your project to a potentially huge audience and gives anyone interested an easy way to donate.

It's an all or nothing approach. You set a target for how much you'd ideally want to raise, and then a minimum target which would still allow you to complete some of the project. You **must** meet your minimum target to receive any funding for the project.

It's important that if you decide to use crowdfunding that you commit to the project throughout its planning, promotion and once it's completed to make sure you deliver your rewards and secure all your funding. Not forgetting saying thank you and reporting on the impact of donors support!

So what is a reward?

To encourage support for your project, crowdfunding lets you offer rewards to supporters once a project has completed. It's important that your rewards relate to your project and they are tangible and non-monetary, such as a team photo, thank you e-video or tickets to your show. The more creative they are, the more you will encourage support for your project.

Our recommendation: Think of rewards you can email – this won't cost you anything to send!

Who can use the Crowdfunding platform?

You must be a current student at the University of Leeds to set up a University related project or activity that requires additional funding.

What kinds of projects are suitable for Crowdfunding?

Projects must meet our core value of supporting current students to make the most of their time at Leeds. University of Leeds students must be the main beneficiary of the project or activity.

Projects will be judged on the suitability of their goals, their creative or innovative merits, the impact on Leeds students and the level of organisation and commitment demonstrated by you and your team.

Examples of project suitable for crowdfunding include:

- Funding a new piece of equipment for a sports team or society
- Supporting performances and theatrical productions
- Hiring equipment or specialists to increase skills and standards
- Showcasing Leeds students through Competition entry
- Helping Leeds students get out into the community

Crowdfunding aims to be as flexible as possible, but some projects are unsuitable:

- that aim to generate financial profits for the funders and/or project owner
- that should be supported by existing or 'core' funding
- where funding is required for international travel
- that include funding for social activities (including transport)
- that include funding for food and/or drink
- which raise funds or donations for charity
- that do not benefit current students at the University of Leeds

Match Funding

Generously enabled by the support of alumni and supporters of the University of Leeds, up to £500 Leeds Alumni match funding is available for eligible crowdfunding projects.

Projects will be eligible for match funding if their project minimum target is £500 or more. Projects must meet some of the following criteria to be eligible:

- Projects which aim to encourage underrepresented groups (e.g. International, BAME, Postgraduate or WP students) to take part in a Club or Society
 - E.g. Taster sessions, reducing membership costs
- Projects which improve safety for students
 - E.g. equipment, wellbeing support
- Projects which aim to allow students to make a positive impact on the Leeds Community
 - E.g. a volunteering project where Leeds students are the main beneficiary of the funding
- Projects which aim to develop students' employability skills through opportunities outside of standard activity
 - E.g. Conferences, specialist training, competitions. Student groups must make it clear how the project idea falls outside of 'business as usual' activity

Match funding allocation will be determined by how many of these criteria your project meets and funds available in the match funding pot.

Why should I use the University of Leeds Crowdfunding platform?

Crowdfunding can help you raise money for your project, allowing supporters to connect with your campaign and make your project a reality. Before your project goes live the Crowdfunding team is here to help you get it just right.

- Specialist support available online and personal support from the Crowdfunding team in the form of training, workshops and top tips
- A platform branded as the University of Leeds, so supporters will be reassured your project has the backing of the University
- The Alumni & Development team will provide administrative support to get your project live and process gifts and payments
- The Alumni & Development team cover all transactions and other administrative fees on your behalf, so that you can receive 100% of your pledges
- The Alumni & Development team will be able to discuss potential match funding opportunities with you including matching funds from Leeds alumni and friends

Guidelines

By submitting a project application, you confirm the following:

I am a current student at the University of Leeds

Applicants need to be a current student at the University of Leeds. To set up a profile you must use your university email address. In case of projects undertaken by or on behalf of Leeds University Union clubs or societies, the applicant must be a current student, and if a final year student, should complete or hand-over the project before graduating. Handing over the project also includes the delivery of rewards.

I will deliver projects and the rewards that I promise

Crowdfunding is a community built on trust, and success of a project relies upon it. Please make sure you are serious about delivering the appropriate rewards you promise and completing your projects as described.

Supporters are donating their money in support of you and your project, make sure you keep them updated with the project and say thank you.

Any data I receive in order to deliver my reward will not be held, stored or used for any other purpose. Please make sure your rewards do not contravene the Gift Aid guidelines outlined in the Terms and Conditions (these can also be found on the HMRC website).

I will not offer securities in return for donations

Securities are financial instruments (e.g. shares, bonds, etc). If you're unsure about certain rewards, send us a message.

I understand that my project submission will be moderated for content and suitability

Before any project is made 'live' on the platform it will be reviewed for suitability of content, goals, creative or innovative merits, the impact on Leeds students and the level of organisation and commitment demonstrated by you and your team.

I will not use the platform to fund life, make a profit or fundraise for other charities

For example, projects seeking to raise funds to pay rent, tuition fees or raise funds for other charities. We reclaim Gift Aid on behalf of the University for all projects, and HMRC regulations mean that we are unable to support fundraising for other charities.

It is my responsibility to ensure the success of my project

By submitting a project you agree that the sole responsibility of maintaining and carrying the project, including the regular promotion of the project and the fundraising from your networks, once the project is posted until its completion is yours. If you are part of a Club or Society you agree to be the Project Leader, and take charge of ensuring the maintenance and carrying out the project sits with the members of your Club or Society. The Crowdfunding team will provide advice and training workshops to help you.

You agree that the project will be conducted with the best interests of the University of Leeds, Leeds University Union (where relevant) and the Alumni & Development team at all times.

I will report on the project's success to the Crowdfunding team

Upon completion of the project you agree to submit a report detailing your experience using the crowdfunding platform, the impact donations will have and a detailed log of how funds will be spent.

Funds raised for your project must be used solely for the purposes of fulfilling the project and you are responsible for maintaining a detailed, accurate and evidenced record of the funds spent.

The Crowdfunding team may get in touch for further information. Reports you provide may be used in marketing and promotional communications.

I agree to return all funds via the Alumni & Development Team if my project is funded but cannot go ahead in the way I promised

If for any reason you cannot deliver your project in the way you communicated on the platform, you should let the Crowdfunding team know as soon as possible. Supporters have donated to your specific project and if you cannot deliver this all donations need to be reimbursed.

Things to consider before submitting your application

- **Project:** Do you have a project that will benefit University of Leeds students and needs further investment? Does it meet the above requirements?
- **Financial Need:** What is the minimum amount of funding that you need for your project or activity to be successful? E.g. your sports team needs new training equipment. 5 pieces of this equipment would mean training sessions would be improved, but 20 pieces of equipment would help the whole team. Your minimum target would be enough to buy the 5 pieces of equipment, your total project target would be enough to buy 20.
- **Time:** When do you need your funding in order for the project to be a success? Projects can last from 2 weeks to 3 months. However a longer project isn't necessarily better. It takes a lot of work so you might not want it to go on for an entire term! A shorter project can create a sense of urgency for Supporters. 30 days is our suggested maximum.
- **Community:** Do you have a community of individuals to promote the project to? Think about your current networks as well as other networks that might find your project interesting and would be willing to support e.g. society members, alumni networks, University communications, and the real world! But, don't spam, this won't reflect well on your project, or the University.
- **Promotion:** How are you going to promote your project? Crowdfunding is most effective when a project creates a buzz and you have interesting things to share.
- **Rewards:** How are you going to reward your supporters once you have reached your minimum target?
- **Updates:** How will you keep your supporters up to date with the progress of your project both during and after the project has finished? Updating your supporters as to what's happening with the project will help it to be successful and create a buzz around what you are trying to achieve.

I've got my idea, what happens next?

1. You will need to discuss your idea with the relevant department representative to check the project is right for crowdfunding:
 - LUU Club or Society: Fill in the [Google Form](#) and answer the questions to identify whether this is the right funding approach for your project. If you have any questions prior to/as you complete the form please speak to Shona Henley, s.henley@leeds.ac.uk
 - Other student led project/activity: Crowdfunding Team, crowdfunding@leeds.ac.uk
2. Once approved you will sign up to the crowdfunding platform (<https://crowdfunding.leeds.ac.uk/>) with your university email address and start working on your project. If there's a training session or workshop we recommend you attend.
3. We will let you know if your project is eligible for match funding.
4. Once you're happy you will submit your project for review by the Crowdfunding team. This may take a few attempts to get right – we want you to do the best you can!
5. When you've got the ok you will be given a date your project will go live. Make sure you have your communication/promotional plan nailed and ready to go.
6. Your project is live! It is your responsibility to promote your project to your networks and fundraise.
7. When you reach your target all donations are taken and held in a University account. Shortly afterwards the Crowdfunding team will be in touch about getting your funds to you. If you are a LUU Club or Society all funds will be distributed through your society account.
8. The project is complete – it's really important you deliver the rewards that you promised supporters within the agreed timescale. You will also write a report to the Crowdfunding team.