Student **Impact** Fund

How to crowdfund your idea

Supported by:

Santander
UNIVERSITIES

What is the Student Impact Fund?

The Student Impact Fund provides funding for projects led by student groups and societies that seek to address the challenges, issues and priorities of students across the UK.

Santander Universities has £100,000 to support students who turn to the crowd to make great ideas that they've identified happen.

The fund has been created to build on our support for Higher Education. Since 2007, we've donated over £60m to our UK partner universities and have helped tens of thousands of students and staff from universities to prosper.

If you have a project that the crowd support, we'll provide the final 50% to help you reach your target (up to £2000).

Together, we can address what matters to students in the UK today.

Who are Santander Universities?

Santander, through our Universities programme is committed to supporting higher education as well as local communities across the UK. We believe that universities are the cornerstone of modern civilisation, nurturing and producing the innovators, creatives and leaders of tomorrow. We're excited to see some of the great ways students across the country will use crowdfunding to drive projects that have a meaningful impact to their local communities.

Matt Hutnell, Director
Santander Universities

How the Student Impact Fund works

Is your university on the list of Santander partner universities? (You can check here)

Yes

Great! Here are your next steps:

- Identify the project you want to crowdfund for – some examples include:

  - create or run a student society
  - support a charitable or social cause
  - run a project which addresses a student challenge, priority or issue.

- Follow this guide to create the perfect crowdfunding campaign

- Complete the application form (you can access this from your Crowdfunder project dashboard)

- Request a member of teaching staff at your university to verify your project by email to impact@santander.co.uk

- Get a decision as to whether your application has been successful

- Crowdfund away…

If your application is successful, we'll match fund up to 50% of your crowdfunding target, to a maximum of £2,000. So if your target is £3,000 you can get £1,500 in matched funding, if your target is £6,000 you can get £2,000.

No

Don't worry, you could still crowdfund for your project. You won't be eligible for matched funding from Santander, but you could get matched funding from one of Crowdfunder's many other partners.

Who is Crowdfunder?

Crowdfunder.co.uk is the UK's largest crowdfunding community. We've worked with thousands of people to raise millions of pounds with the power of the crowd.

We know a lot about how to prepare, create and run a successful crowdfunding project and we're excited to be able to share some of our knowledge with you in this guide.

Simon Deverell, **Creative Director & Co-Founder**
Crowdfunder.co.uk

How crowdfunding works

1.

Line up all the pledges and communications based on your network. Create your unique project page on Crowdfunder. co.uk, set a target and how long you need to reach it.

2.

Go live and invite everyone to pledge. Spread the word to friends, professional contacts and others in your community, telling everyone you know about the project.

3.

Get funded! People who like your project will donate or pledge money to help your project succeed.

Benefits of crowdfunding

Crowd validation

Crowdfunding is a fantastic way to test your idea. A successful project proves there is demand for what you're doing, and gives you confidence in your idea.

Marketing boost

Running a project on Crowdfunder can raise your profile in a big way. Think of the funding period as an intensive marketing exercise and an opportunity to try out new ways of promoting yourselves, expanding your experience and expertise at the same time.

Advocates

Crowdfunding is for life, not just for fundraising. The people who support you on Crowdfunder become your customers, volunteers and members. Your supporters take part in the journey, meaning they make incredible ambassadors for you in the future.

Future funding

Having a successful crowdfunding campaign can help to unlock loans and investment or can be a pre-curser to a much bigger equity crowdfunding or community shares campaign in the future. It proves you know what you're doing.

Making a plan

This is your crowdfunding project, so it's up to you to make sure you have everything lined up and ready to go before launching. You might want to use a simple checklist list or dive into the detail with a spreadsheet; it's your call.

You'll build your plan as you work through this pack, adding other tasks that are specific to your Crowdfunder campaign. To get you started, here's our checklist with all the essentials:

Checklist

☐ Assign roles

☐ Draw your network map

☐ List influencers

☐ Identify super-backers

☐ Nurture crowd

☐ Bullet point key messages

☐ Choose project name

☐ Add project image

☐ Write description

☐ Add visual content

☐ Plan your video

☐ Shoot the footage

☐ Edit your video

☐ Brainstorm rewards

☐ Refine rewards list

☐ Set your target

☐ Plan project timeline

☐ Marketing preparation

☐ Warm up your crowd

☐ Plan launch

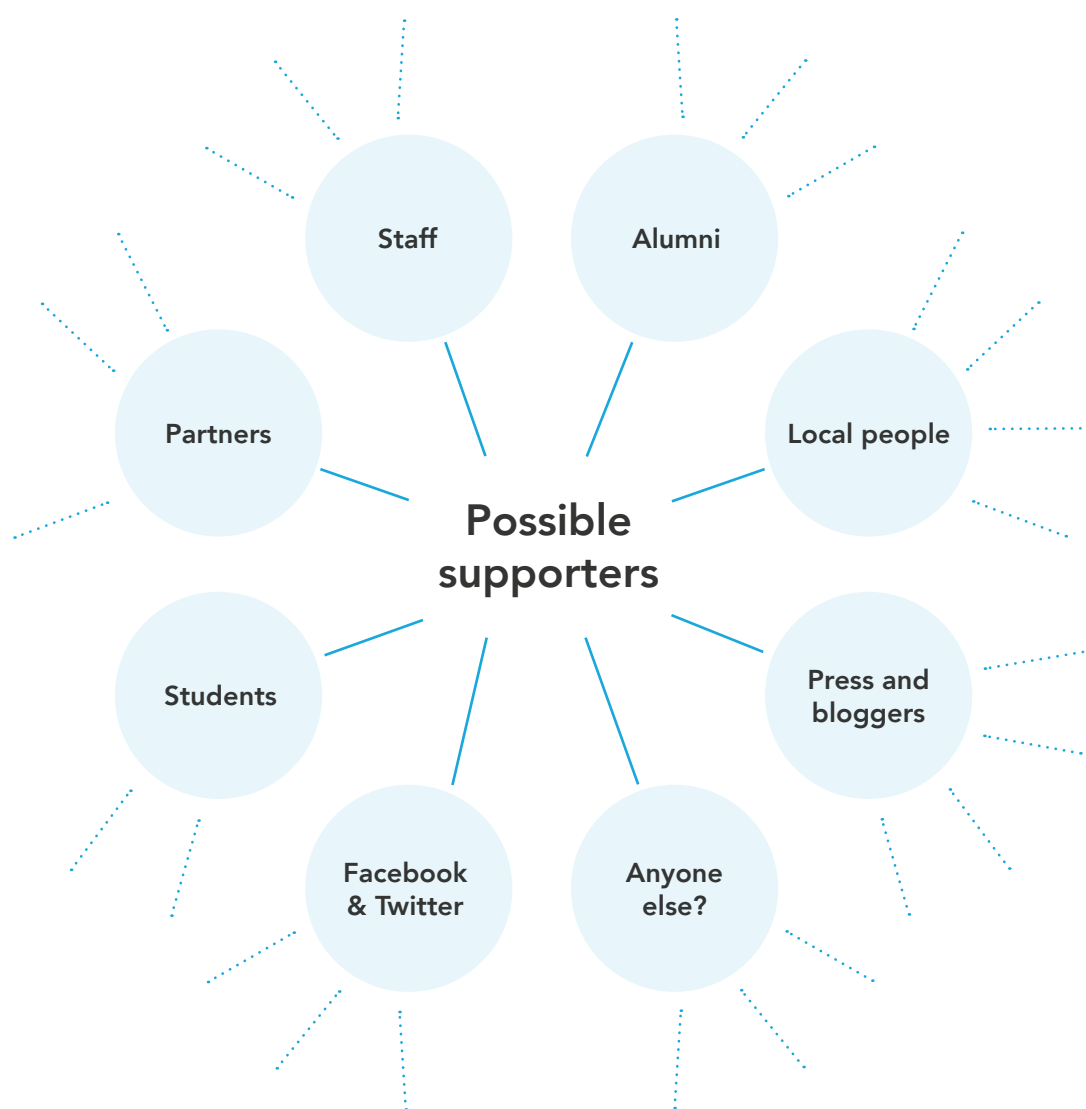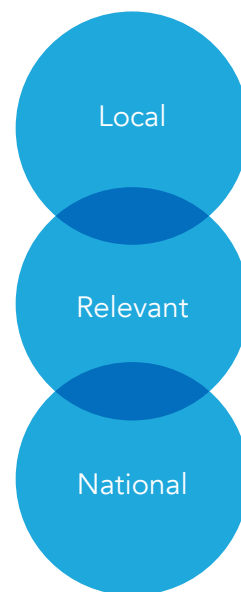☐ Line up university and big donor pledges

☐ **Get funded**

Key action

Use a calendar to prioritise and map out deadlines for each task, showing what needs to be done by when. Try your best to stick to those dates to stay on track.

Identifying your Crowd

You'll need to engage with all your contacts to make your project a success. Let's look at the big picture first.

The best way to start is to gather your team together and start drawing a map of your network. Using this network map template will give you a much fuller picture of the shape and size of your Crowd. Your unique network map will be the basis for all the key elements you'll be creating next, so leave nothing out.

Local

Relevant

National

Staff

Alumni

Partners

Local people

Possible supporters

Students

Press and bloggers

Facebook & Twitter

Anyone else?

The perfect page

EUTCo presents 'A Clockwork Orange'

Clear, memorable title

Regular updates, to keep the Crowd connected

...ect home   Updates 5   Comments 18   Supporters 34   Contact project

EUTCo Presents 'A Clockwork Orange' Crowdfunding Campaign
from EUTCo

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE
by Anthony Burgess

01:20   vimeo

Engaging shareable video (approx. 2 mins)

Help EUTCo take their production of Anthony Burgess's 'A Clockwork Orange' to the Exeter Northcott Theatre this January!

Clear concise project aim

£2,846 raised of **£3,000 stretch target**   95 %

34 supporters   **2 days left**

Support us

Realistic target

This project is using Flexible funding and will receive all pledges made by 6:00pm 7th January 2018

📍 Exeter, Devon   🏷 University

Project by Exeter University Theatre Comp...   Share or follow f t ♡

Encouraging people to share

Video directed by Stan Glendinning

Words in italics are written in Nadsat, the original fictional idiolect from Anthony Burgess's novel. The Nadsat glossary can be found at the bottom of this page

Our *Horrorshow* Production of *A Clockwork Orange*:

Our version of Burgess's dystopian story is set within the confines of an abandoned warehouse, where Alex De Large and his *droogs* wreak havoc and mayhem come the night. It is in this warehouse that Alex's violent personality comes to life, heightened by a love of classical music that evokes within him an urge to destroy.

Our production contains dynamic physical sequences and live music to bring Burgess's iconic story to life. Unlike other productions of the show, we have decided to focus on the

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Just donate

£ 20

£10   £20   £30   £50

Donate

Good choice of rewards at varying costs

Or choose a reward

Pledge **£5**
Stick It Droogies
We will send a pack of horrorshow stickers.

5 claimed so far
Estimated delivery: January 2018

Select reward

Pledge **£20**
Rainbows For Your Glazzies

Writing your description

When visitors land on your project, you need make a connection quickly and get them excited about your project. To do this well you'll need make sure your description is structured, concise and engaging. Add some images and testimonials to give it a professional-looking finish.

Structure

Opening
Briefly summarise your key points in two or three sentences. Keep it simple.

What are you trying to achieve?
Explain the problem that your project solves and why it's important. Does it address social exclusion? Does it give people training or skills? Does it build a sense of community?

What makes your project great?
Introduce your project and all the key facts. Focus on what makes it unique. Why is it different? Why should people support it? Why is it important?

Who are you and what's your experience?
This is your chance to show off your expertise and build credibility. Demonstrate clearly that you are the right people to make this idea happen.

Tell your story
Explain how your idea was started and why you decided to make this project happen. Talk about your journey and inspiration. Don't forget that your story is still unfolding – what does the future hold, where are you going?

How is the money being spent?
Outline what the money raised will enable you to do. Create a pie chart to show that you're making smart decisions with your spending.

Rewards
If you have chosen to give rewards, use this section to highlight the strongest rewards and draw more attention to them. Give any extra information that will make them more attractive to potential backers.

FAQs
Anticipate common questions that people might have about your idea, organisation or crowdfund.

Writing your description

Visual content

Project images
Use images that show everyone what your project involves.

Infographics
Can you show dreary data in a more visual way?

Testimonials
Add in some real quotes from people who like your project to build credibility.

Team photos
People fund people. Show that you are a real person and make sure your page shows off your personality.

Headings
Use snappy subheading these to separate each section.

Maps
Use diagrams or maps to add context to your project.

"Good images of the project were key. It made creating flyers, posters and social media posts much easier and more successful. We would definitely suggest getting good photographers on board to help promote your campaign."

Real Junk Food Project Brighton

"You can embed videos into your description to showcase other aspects of your project."

Si Walker, Coach
Crowdfunder.co.uk

Creating your video

It's becoming more and more important for organisations, charities and businesses to use video to connect with their Crowd. Stay ahead of the curve and create something bespoke for your Crowdfunder project. It doesn't have to be professionally made, shooting it with your phone or camera is fine!

Short and sweet

Less is more when it comes to video. Keep it short, 2-3 minutes maximum. Make sure you get the key information into the first 30 seconds - who, what, why, how?

Script

If you're struggling to think of what to say, write a rough script but let people ad-lib and speak from the heart, honesty will always win people over.

Avoid using animation video makers or image montages

They often come out tacky and won't get across your unique personality.

Get personal

Getting in front of the camera will help you to build a rapport. Don't be afraid to include others too.

Setting

Choose a place where your voice can be clearly heard on record - wind, traffic and crowds will drown you out.

Watch the The Big Finish video

"Ask people in your network for feedback on your video at every stage. Script, storyboard, shots and the final cut."

Georgie Barr, Customer Support
Crowdfunder.co.uk

"Include your campaign's URL at the end of your video to direct external traffic onto your project page."

Sami Mauger, Coach
Crowdfunder.co.uk

Giving rewards

On Crowdfunder you can offer rewards in return for pledges, as well as simply collecting donations. Rewards are a great way of increasing the amount of money a supporter will pledge as well as a great way for generating excitement around your project. Think about the kind of people who will be making the pledges and offer rewards that you yourself would want to get. Consider the four main types of reward that you can offer:

Products and services	Experiences and events	Sponsorship	Thank you

7 top tips for rewards

1 Rewards should be good value for money. If one of your rewards is available elsewhere, ensuring you offer a further 20-30% discount it a great way of making it attractive to your crowd.

2 Offer exclusive 'behind the scenes' experiences, tickets to events, masterclasses or special editions – things that aren't available elsewhere.

3 Limited rewards are a fantastic way of securing early support. Having just a small number available is a good way to get your Crowd motivated.

4 Have a few rewards priced at around £20 – this is where a good chunk of pledges are made.

5 Include something attractive at the top end for support from local businesses or high net-worth individuals.

6 Don't just stick to numbers that end in zeros – odd numbers imply that your rewards have been thoughtfully costed.

Example rewards

Some great reward examples from Growhampton

Pledge £10

Souper Sandwich – A wonderful Growhampton drink of your choice and a sandwich or soup.... And as a special thank you from us, your name will appear on our Growhampton Hall of Fame.

Pledge £40

Eggcellent tour – Come and meet our newest addition – the growhampton Chooks! Our chickens can't wait to meet you and provide you a set of half a dozen Growhampton eggs.

Pledge £500

Come dine with us – Host your very own private dinner party for up to 10 people. Includes three course dinner, drinks and coffee. Including dinner entertainment from our very own 'Live At The Hive' artists.

Marketing basics

Now that your project page is looking good, you need to build a plan to connect with your Crowd.

Take another look at your network map. Now think about which communication tools are best for each group. For example, who do you usually reach via email, who's best to reach by phone or on Facebook? Add these notes to your network map.

When spreading the word about your Crowdfunder project, always start with the people closest to the university, and those most likely to pledge, before engaging with others. People who already know you are more likely to support your project than those who don't.

As your project starts to gain momentum, it'll begin to look more attractive to people outside of your own network. Be patient – get some pledges before posting publicly on social media.

Start from the middle and work your way out
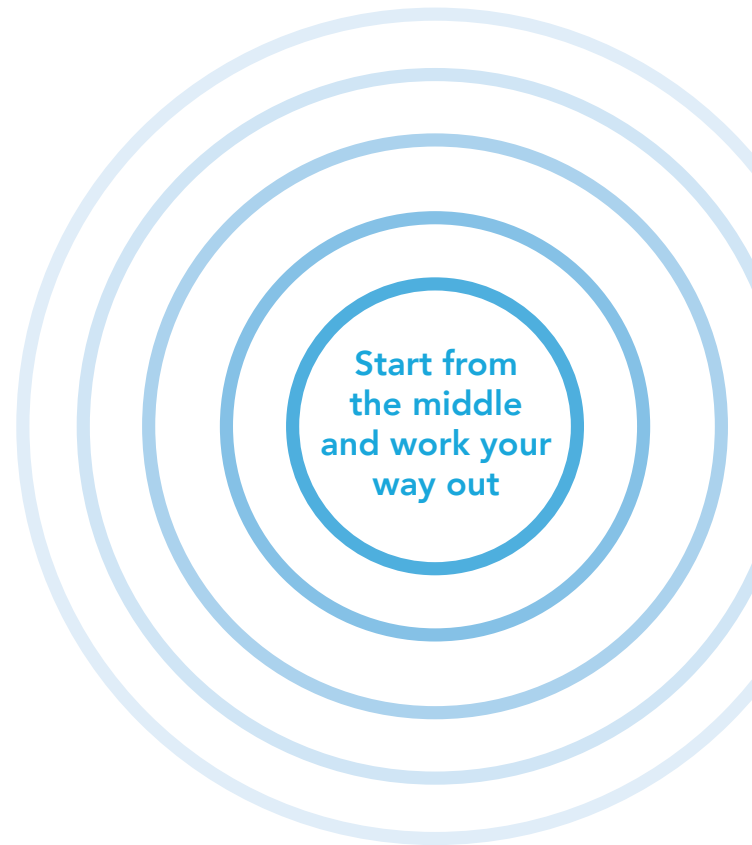
Be personal. Be direct.

"Plan plan plan! Know who you're going to promote to, how and when. Ask people to review your rewards and the campaign before posting it – whether it's friends or people who've successfully crowdfunded before."

Ilana Taub, Co-founder
Snact

"Have a member of your team available to respond to questions, feedback or concerns during and after the campaign."

Matt Giles, Head of Projects
Crowdfunder.co.uk

Counting down to launch

Save the date

Make sure everyone who needs to know, knows the date for launch. Set up reminders to ensure all the key people are putting their pledge in on hour one

Prepare images

Check that you have plenty of new images that you can use to promote your project. Photographs of people, places, events and products are all great. Bright, bold images make creating content, flyers, posters and social media posts much easier and effective.

Review the plan

Make sure that you are clear on the plan to promote your Crowdfunder project from the first day to the last. Check which messages you're sending out to which groups, when they're being sent, and how.

Getting off to a good start

Launch day can be both exciting and nerve-racking. If you've put in the work and followed your plan, it could be one of the biggest and best days of your Crowdfunder campaign.

There are three main ways of getting off to a good start. If you want to get off to a great start, do all three.

Check which messages you're sending out to which groups, when they're being sent, and how.

10

Line up the first 10 pledges

The hardest part is getting off zero, so aim to have secured as much of your initial target in promised pledges before going live. Make sure those people know exactly when your project is launching.

Getting a strong number of backers early on will give your project credibility and make it look much more attractive to wider audiences.

Make contact

Call, text or email – all give you access to those you've warmed up at the touch of a button. Drop them a line to let them know that the big day is here as soon as your project goes live. Give them a gentle reminder in a day or two, be persistent and they'll probably still pledge in the first week.

Throw a launch party

The best way to get everyone excited about your campaign is throwing a party. Make some noise on campus! Ask all the key groups on your network map to come along and get them to bring a friend. Make it fun, showcase your project video, serve great food and introduce people to some of your rewards. Choose somewhere where attendees can access the internet on their smartphones or other devices and get the pledges owing!

Key action

A project without any pledges does not look credible or attractive to people outside of your own close network. Because of this, it's important to secure your first few pledges by speaking directly to people you know before promoting your project to everyone else.

Sending emails

Around 40% of pledging on Crowdfunder is driven by emails, so don't neglect your inbox during your campaign.

6 email essentials

1 Making personal contact is key – nobody likes a 'Dear Sir' email. One-to-one is always more effective.

2 It's handy to be able to check open and click rates on your emails so that you can specifically target those who didn't engage the first time.

3 Emailing your personal and business contacts should be high on your list of priorities when your project goes live. If people don't respond to your first message, email them again a few days later.

4 When sending follow up emails to your contacts, name drop people who have already pledged on the project – don't forget to say thanks and celebrate together.

5 Think carefully about what to write as the subject of your emails – make it interesting and unique, avoid using lines like 'please pledge' or 'help me' as they can look spammy and will put people off.

6 Include an image and link to your Crowdfunder page in your email signature so that everyone will see it each time you message them.

Updating your website

For the duration of your campaign, your website should aim to funnel all traffic over to your Crowdfunder page. If your website has a great big image on the home page, replace it with a graphic that links straight to your Crowdfunder project.

You also have the option of using your own unique Crowdfunder widget. This is a little piece of code that you can use to embed on web pages. If you're not sure how to do that, get in touch with a techie friend or whoever helped you to set up your website.

Using social media

Social media is another heavy-weight crowdfunding tool that can hugely impact your campaign's success, if you use it well. Most of us are pretty familiar with various social media platforms and use it to stay in touch with friends, share photos, find jobs or even just stay up to date with the latest news.

f	**🐦**	**in**	**📷**
Facebook is one of the best platforms for generating pledges	Twitter is brilliant for generating awareness	LinkedIn is a great place to look for corporate support	Instagram is best suited to businesses with strong visuals

Get established

If you haven't set up a Facebook page for your business yet, now is the time! Add a strong profile picture, pre-load a few interesting posts, then invite everyone you know to like it. Encourage your friends to all like and share your page.

Ground rules

A good rule to stick to is one Facebook post a day. Look at when your audience is most likely to be online – that's the time to post! Your Facebook posts should always include an image, video or link – posting with plain text alone is a big no-no. Prepare a bank of good quality, vibrant, eye catching images.

Content

Post a variety of different types of content; stories, testimonials, videos, infographics, stats, progress towards your target and behind the scenes updates. You could also highlight your best rewards with a stand out post.

Share

A great way to reach people outside of your existing audience is by asking your friends to share your posts on Facebook.

Boost your posts

Boosting a post may help you get more likes, shares and comments. Boosted posts are also a way to reach new people who are likely interested in your idea but don't currently follow you on Facebook.

Competitions

Running competitions through your Facebook page is a great way to build your audience and create a buzz around your project.

Events

It's a good idea to hold at least one event either before, during or after crowdfunding. You can easily create an event on Facebook to connect with your online audience in an offline way.

Facebook live

Facebook Live is the best way to interact with your audience in real time. Answer any questions they may have. The engagement levels on Facebook live is much higher than a generic Facebook post, so be sure to plan a few of these through the duration of your project.

Top Tip

Tag your backers on social media to show your appreciation and make them feel important – particularly those who have contributed larger amounts. It's a great way of get your project in front of their contacts too.

"Social media was the most useful tool for us. We had a large following already on Facebook (over 1,000) which really helped us get the word out there. We asked our friends and supporters to spread the word"

The Control Tower Bed and Breakfast

"Cut sections from your video into short snippets that can be shared around on social media."

Si Walker, Coach
Crowdfunder.co.uk

Press and blogs

If you're hoping to reach a wider audience, having your Crowdfunder project featured in the press or on blogs should be high on your priority list. Don't be disheartened if you don't get any coverage straight away – be persistent and try a different angle.

Go local

Local news outlets love publishing stories local angles, so make the connection clear in your press release.

Timing

Wait until milestones project to gather more momentum when pushing out a press release. Each one needs to be 'newsworthy' to catch journalists' attention, which is usually just on launch, when you hit 100% of your target, or only have 1 week of funding left to go.

Images

Attach a selection of vibrant high resolution photographs with your press release. Include real people, not just product images and a mix of portrait and landscape.

Focus

Make sure all press coverage mentions your Crowdfunder campaign specifically. Include your project URL and check the spelling carefully – ask for it to be included in the piece.

Make connections

- Ask if anyone you know has any contacts in the press or blogging world. An introduction can massively improve your chances of getting coverage.

- Bloggers are contacted every day by strangers who only want publicity, without offering much in return. To stand out, think about out how you can help them out – don't rush straight in with your request.

- Look through newspapers to find the name of journalists who are writing about stories like yours – address your press releases to them personally and follow up with a phone call. It's usually quite easy to find journalists on Twitter too.

Sending project updates

From your Crowdfunder project page you can send 'updates' to keep your supporters in the loop. It's the best way to keep in touch with everyone, make them feel valued and excited about the campaign. Include a shareable graphic or bit of text that you can ask your backers to re-post to their own contacts.

It's also a brilliant way to show newcomers that you're active and engaged – make them want to join your Crowd!

Each project update you send out will land in every backer's email inbox, so try to keep to sending just one or two updates a week. It's fine to send a few more at the end when things can move very quickly – keep on top of the excitement. Use a mix of text and images to encourage your backers to share the message.
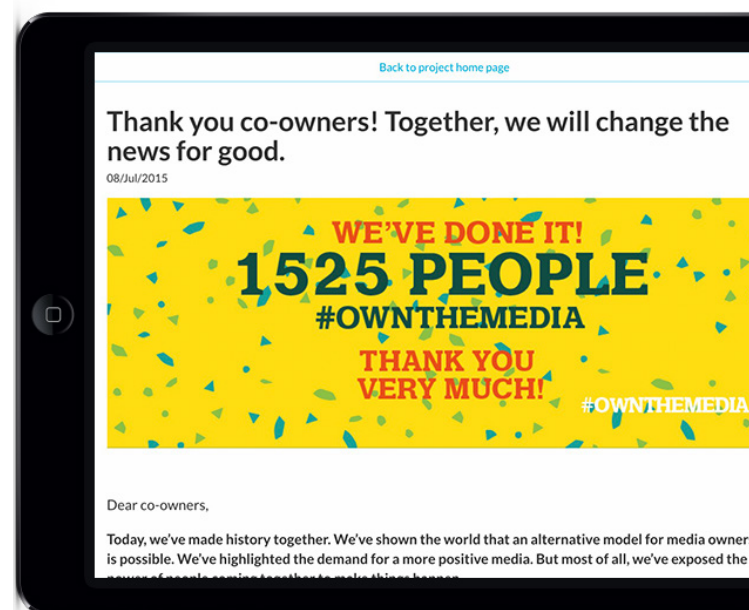
84% In a recent survey, 84% of Crowdfunder supporters said that receiving project updates is important to them. Keep your supporters up to date and build stronger relationships for the future.

Next step

You're now ready to launch your project on Crowdfunder and start collecting funds. GOOD LUCK!

Start crowdfunding

www.crowdfunder.co.uk/start-crowdfunding

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