

How to Ask for Donations

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Tips & Tricks

Structure of an Ask

- 1) Personal Introduction, connect on a human level
- 2) Explain why RFUS's work matters to you
- 3) Why you thought of asking them specifically
- 4) What RFUS is and why it's important that they give right now
- 5) Make the ask!
- 6) Say thank you (This step is very important!)

Examples

Social Media

- I'm raising money to protect rainforests. Will you join me in supporting Indigenous peoples who are standing up against deforestation? *[your link here]* @RainforestUS
- I feel strongly about protecting our planet and all of its fragile ecosystems. If you do too, consider making a donation to @RainforestUS *[your link here]*
- It's our Earth, our future, and our responsibility! @RainforestUS is preventing deforestation in partnership with Indigenous peoples. Please support rainforest protection and join me in taking action for our planet *[your link here]*.
- To address #ClimateChange we must stop deforestation. I'm proud to support @RainforestUS, which works directly with Indigenous peoples to defend their forests and our planet. Will you join me and donate? *[your link here]*

Text

- Hey *[name]*! Because I know you also care about the environment and climate justice, I thought you'd be really into this organization I'm raising money for, Rainforest Foundation US. I can email you more info about them if you're interested.
- Hi *[name]*! I'm fundraising for an organization I really care about for *[fundraising reason]*. Rainforest Foundation US works with Indigenous peoples to stop deforestation in the rainforest. Can you make a donation to help me reach my goal? *[your link here]*

Email

Outline

Dear _____,

Open by checking in with them, e.g. "How are you doing these days?". I want to tell you about an organization that's really important to me, Rainforest Foundation US (RFUS), and ask if you'll donate to my fundraiser!

I'm really worried about the future of our planet, and particularly the people and animals that live in the rainforests. *[Feel free to add more here and get personal – the specific reasons you decided to hold a fundraiser, the things that you most want to see change in the world relating to the rainforest. Don't be afraid to speak from the heart!]*

I thought of you because *[reason/common value/common interest why you think this person would be excited about protecting the rainforest]*. RFUS has been partnering with Indigenous communities in the Amazon and other rainforests in Central and South America for over 30 years to protect vital rainforest ecosystems and address the climate crisis. Right now, RFUS and their partners are working to:

- Train Indigenous leaders in how to use high-tech tools for protecting their territories
- Support Indigenous communities to win land rights and map the forest where they live
- Amplify the voices of Indigenous climate activists in governments, courts, and around the world
- Strengthen Indigenous organizations fighting for climate & rights and build up their abilities

I want to make sure this important work continues—and I hope you do too!

For my fundraiser, I'm trying to get *[goal]* of my friends and family to donate before *[date/deadline]*. Would you consider making a *[amount]* donation?

You can go to rainforestfoundation.org to learn more and donate! If you're not sure yet, or have any questions, I'd love to talk more.

Thank you,

Your name

Filled-in example

Dear **Zainab**,

How have you been since Ami's birthday party? It was great to see you there. I want to tell you about an organization that's really important to me, Rainforest Foundation US (RFUS), and ask if you'll donate to my fundraiser!

I'm really worried about the future of our planet, and particularly the people and animals that live in the rainforests. **Rainforests are an immense part of what's going to keep our planet cool, and once they're cut down they can't be replaced! Our leaders aren't doing enough to prevent the climate crisis, and supporting activists in the rainforest, on the front lines of climate change, feels to me like an important part of building the world I want for my children.**

I thought of you because **of our conversation about climate justice at the party—you made some really lovely points.** RFUS has been partnering with Indigenous communities in the Amazon and other rainforests in Central and South America for over 30 years to protect vital rainforest ecosystems and address the climate crisis. Right now, RFUS and their partners are working to:

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I want to make sure this important work continues—and I hope you do too!

For my fundraiser, I'm trying to get *[goal]* of my friends and family to donate before *[date/deadline]*. Would you consider making a *[amount]* donation?

You can go to rainforestfoundation.org to learn more and donate! If you're not sure yet, or have any questions, I'd love to talk more.

Thank you,

Ziv

Advice (With Examples)

- **Be confident, and always remember why you are doing this.** Remember you are inviting people to live into their deepest values. If you've decided to ask them, I'm guessing they'll already be at least decently in support of what RFUS does—so you're giving them a chance to support something they care about too. (I have never had any of my friends be offended or angry when I asked them to make a donation.) Plus, the person you're asking cares about you, and it'll make them feel good to support you in something you care about!

- **Speak from the heart!** Talk about what's important to you personally, and why you chose to ask them specifically. Not only is that more persuasive, but it will make it clear to your friend that you're engaging with them as a person, not just as a wallet.
 - For example, "I'm worried about the planet my kid is going to inherit, and I know you are too."
- **Be as honest and straightforward as you can.** If you're feeling awkward or uncertain, say so! I find it's helpful for both me and the other person to be specific with how much you're asking for—but if you're not sure how much to ask for, you can totally say that too. You can also ask them permission to ask them about donating! When you're clear with what you're asking, it makes it easier for them to say no, or to make a counter-offer if they want to do something slightly different.
 - Ex. 1: "I've never really done this before, but I really believe in this cause—do you mind if I ask you to make a donation?"
 - Ex. 2: "Would you make a \$50 donation to protect the rainforest before the end of the year?"—and when they say yes, don't forget to tell them how!
- **Follow up with people!** Make sure to say thank you, of course, but it's also okay to check in with someone who said they'd make a donation—often people genuinely want to, and forget, and appreciate the reminder.
 - For example, "Thank you so much again for making that donation to RFUS—I really appreciate it. Did the donation go through okay?"
- **Be open to having a larger conversation, and don't be afraid to go deep.** Talking about charitable giving can be a nice doorway into talking about people's convictions, visions for the future, and what they really care about—I don't know about you, but I love getting to know how my friends feel about that stuff.
 - For example, "The world is so messed up right now—what are the biggest problems you're worried about?"
- **Ask for help staying accountable, if you need it.** Set explicit goals and deadlines, and come up with a plan in advance if you can. Always feel free to reach out to me with anything—I can answer more questions, or just help cheer you on!