



# Volunteer Fundraising Guide



## Who We Are

**Habitat for Humanity New York City** transforms lives and communities by building quality homes for families in need and by uniting all New Yorkers around the cause of affordable housing.

# What We Do



**We build homes**



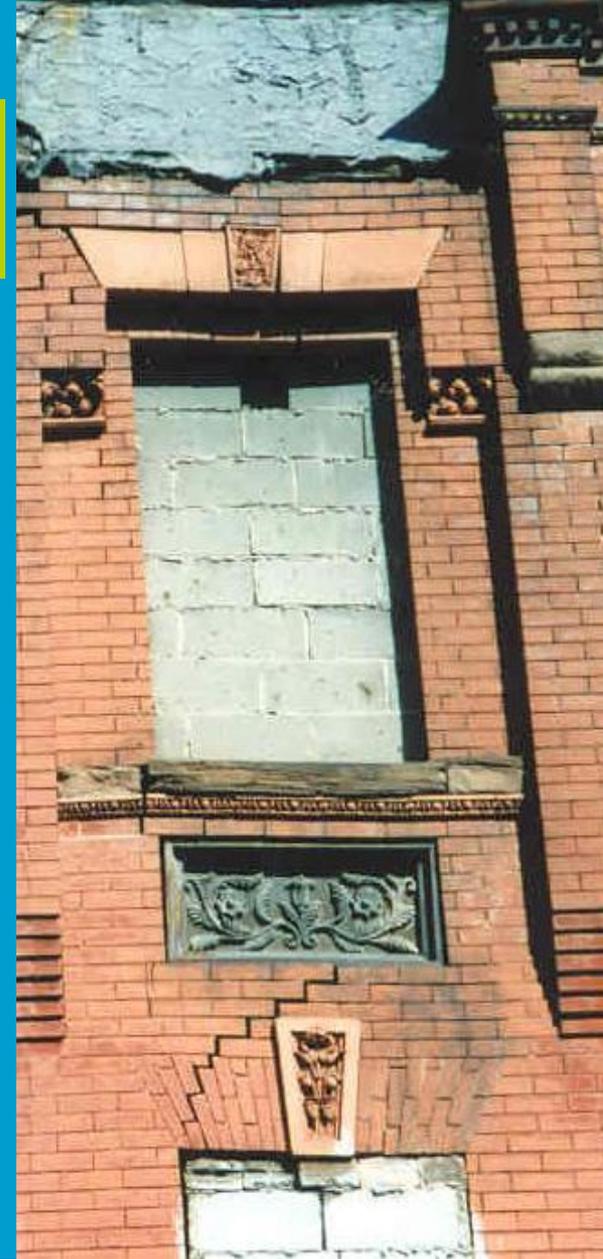
**We unite communities**



**We advocate for affordable homeownership**

# The Need

- More than one-third of NYC households are severely rent burdened
- Only 32 percent of New Yorkers own their own home
- New York State has one of the highest foreclosure rates in the country
- The number of overcrowded apartments in NYC is growing



# Benefits of Homeownership

- Physical and financial stability
  - Build equity
- Improved education, better healthcare, etc.
  - 65% of children have improved grades, 59% of children have better classroom behavior
  - Decrease in mold, pests, etc.
- Affordability for generations to come
- Increase in civic engagement



# Who We Serve



Homeowners are selected based on ability to pay, willingness to partner and their housing need.

- Low- to moderate-income New Yorkers
- Families and single individuals
- Must earn between 50 and 80 percent of the area median income (AMI)
- First-time homeowners
- Must have at least a 620 credit score
- Must put 250 hours of “sweat equity” into their home
- Families commit to a 1% down payment, 30 year 2% fixed interest rate mortgage

# Additional Initiatives



## **Habitat NYC ReStore**

Our retail store sells used building materials and home goods at a 50-80% discount. The ReStore is a “green” social enterprise – it diverts 390 tons of reusable materials per year from landfills.



## **Habitat for Heroes**

This initiative engages our service members, Veterans and military families through opportunities to apply for homeownership or critical home repair services, attend financial literacy classes and volunteer!

## **Emerging Leaders Program**

More than 150 low-income youth receive career readiness and skill training as interns and volunteers at our construction sites.

# Fundraising for Habitat NYC

Step 1: Make sure you've set up your personal fundraising page at [events.habitatnyc.org/fundraise](https://events.habitatnyc.org/fundraise).

Step 2: Once you've set up your fundraising page, complete the three following items right away (research shows that fundraisers who complete these items within 30 days of launching their campaign have a greater chance of meeting their goal):

- **Make a donation to your own campaign.** Your friends, family and coworkers are more likely to give if they see that someone else already has. And who better than you? Making your own donation shows them that you are serious about meeting your goal and helping transform lives and communities in New York City.
- **Personalize your fundraising page.** Get personal and tell your supporters why you care about Habitat NYC and why you are work so hard to raise the needed funds and awareness for affordable homeownership (a paragraph or two will do!). Remember that while your supporters care about the mission of Habitat NYC, they primarily care about you.
- **Reach out to your inner circle.** Send individual emails to 5-10 of your closest people. Getting your inner circle on board and donating will help your fundraising build momentum. These 5-10 supporters should be the people you fell most comfortable with. It will be a “no brainer” to ask them to donate.

# Tips for writing to your inner circle

- **MAKE IT PERSONAL**

Don't feel like you have to stick to the pre-written, suggestion email. You know your inner circle best. Write the email for each person so that it is unique to their personality and what will resonate with them.

- **TAILOR YOUR MESSAGE**

Tailor your message to the specific person you're emailing. Do they like short emails with bullet points? Do that! Do they like longer emails that explain background and have a good story? Do that!

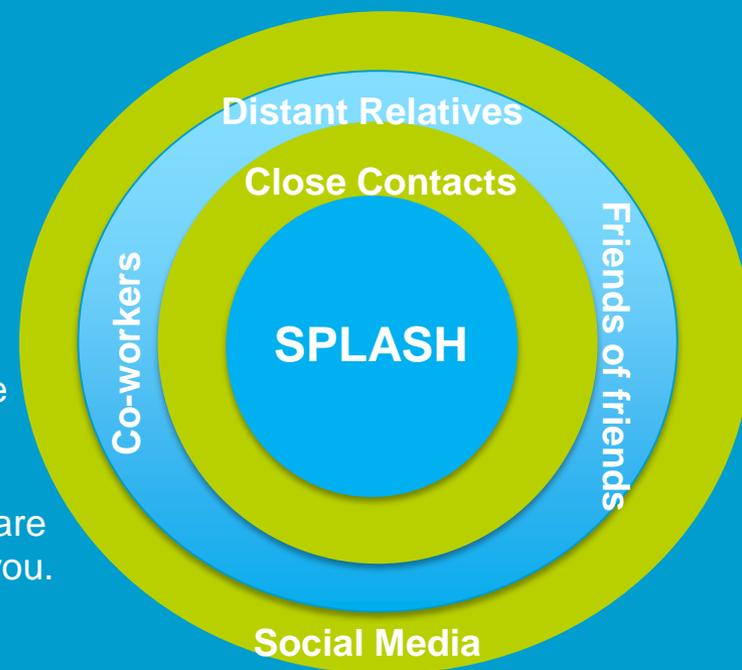
- **DON'T FORGET THE REASON WHY YOU'RE EMAILING THEM**

Make sure you include a direct request for a donation and the link to your fundraising page.

# Make Your Fundraising Splash!

Visualize your fundraising strategy like the splash and ripple that happens when you drop a pebble in water.

- **SPLASH**: Send your “Inner Circle” email to 5-10 very close contacts (usually your family and a couple of close friends). Your closest contacts are the ones most likely to give to your fundraising effort and will build your foundation of support.
- **RIPPLE 1**: Send an email to 10-15 of your close contacts (usually 10-15 of your closest friends).
- **RIPPLE 2**: Send an email to as many other contacts you can that you feel comfortable reaching out to (usually your co-workers, friends of friends, distant relatives, others in your email “contact list.”)
- **RIPPLE 3**: Social Media- Post your fundraising page to the social media sites you use. Make sure to include a snippet of why Habitat NYC is important to you and how close you are to making your goal. Studies show that the closer you are to your goal, the more likely people are to give to support you. People really want to be a part of a “movement.”



# Tips for writing to your outer circles

- **BE YOURSELF**

Again, remember to be yourself even in these emails as well. Start by explaining why you're fundraising and how Habitat NYC has touched you personally. Why does Habitat NYC matter to you?

- **DESCRIBE THE WORK THAT HABITAT NYC IS DOING**

This doesn't have to be long, only a sentence or two, but help your supporters see how their donation will make a difference in hard-working NYC families' lives.

- **BE CLEAR**

Be clear to your supporters about what you're asking them to do. Make a donation to support your campaign.

- **LINK**

Include a link to your fundraising page.

- **THANK YOU**

Say thank you!

# Social Media Tips

- **SET GOALS**

Break down your fundraising goal into smaller goals (\$200 week one, \$500 by the halfway point, etc.) and use social media to show your progress towards those goals. Ask people to help you meet each of these goals.

- **TAG, YOU'RE IT!**

One of the best ways to use social media is to tag your supporters who have already donated in a thank you post. Not only is this a great shout out, but also allows the post to show up to their networks as well. This also helps build the sense of “movement” that will get people donating!

# Social Media Tips

- **#awesome**  
Using hashtags (#) means that your posts join the other people using the same hashtag, creating a conversation and a network of images. They are also a great way to get people who aren't involved in your campaign to see the posts and learn more about the campaign. Use relevant hashtags like **#habitatnyc**, **#affordablehousing**, **#NewYorkCity**, etc.
- **YOU DON'T HAVE TO "ASK" IN EVERY POST**  
Share photos, updates, or stories of the families you'll be helping through your fundraising. Post an inspirational quote or other inspiring images.
- **USE THE SHARE FUNCTION**  
Your fundraising page has its own sharing tools. Share directly from that page to share your personal story of why you're fundraising, or link directly to your fundraising page for easier donations.

# Follow Up. Check In. Remind.

- **GOALS**

Use the goals you set as a natural follow-up schedule. Your email can easily get lost in an inbox, so use the goals as a way to follow up, check in, or remind people of that you're trying to accomplish. It's a great way to include your progress and ask for their support.

- **OFFER TO MATCH ALL OR A PORTION OF RAISED FUNDS**

Examples that fundraisers have done in the past: matched dollar for dollar, donated \$10 for every person who donates, match up to a certain dollar amount.

- **STORIES**

Make sure to include stories when checking in and a reminder of why Habitat NYC is important to you. If you've come across any good blog articles or have seen related stories in your social media newsfeeds or in your daily reading, include those as well.

- **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Don't limit your follow up to emails. Use social media as well. Often seen as a less intrusive medium, people are more receptive to frequent updates through social media.

# Thank, thank, and thank again.

Your personal fundraising page will send an automatic thank you email when a supporter donates to your fundraising effort. However, you should also try to thank each one individually, whether that's through a social media shout out, personal note, or phone calls.

# Think outside the computer...

Email and social media are not the only ways to meet your fundraising goal. Create special events or memorable experiences for your friends and family and charge a cover donation to join in on the fun.

Past examples include:

- Concert at a local coffee shop by a friend and their band
- Partnering with a yoga instructor to offer classes
- Hosting a derby party or any other sort of social watching event

You know your supporters and what they like to do. Use what excites them to help you meet your goal!



# Thank you!

To discuss more fundraising tips,  
please feel free to contact:  
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