

FUNDRAISING RESOURCE GUIDE · 3

Fundraising Email Subject Lines

Adaptable examples for clear, considerate fundraising communication.

A useful subject line helps someone understand why your email deserves their attention. It should fit the message inside, sound like your organization, and respect the relationship you have with the reader.

Use these as templates

The examples in this guide are starting points, not tested claims of success. Replace every bracketed detail, check that the statement is true, and match the subject line to the purpose of your email.

Choose one main idea. A subject line does not need to tell the whole story, but it should give a fair idea of what the reader will find. Put the most useful words early so the message still makes sense if a phone cuts it short.

SUBJECT LINE

Our [campaign name] fundraiser ends [date]

PREVIEW TEXT

See the goal, the progress so far, and how to take part.

EMAIL MESSAGE

Explain the purpose, share one useful detail, and offer a clear next step.

1. Personalized invitations

Use a person's name or a relevant connection when it feels natural and your information is accurate. Personalization should reflect a real relationship. Have a version that still reads well when a name is missing.

- Best fit: A welcome, a relevant invitation, or a progress update to people who already know your group.

[First name], here is what your support helped make possible

[First name], join us for [community event]

An update for our [team or community] supporters

Thank you for being part of [campaign name]

EXAMPLES TO ADAPT

Invite people to take part

2. Questions that invite participation

Ask a question the email actually answers or gives the reader a way to act on. Keep the tone welcoming and avoid questions that pressure or shame someone into giving.

- Best fit: A clear invitation to give, volunteer, attend, or learn more.

Could you help [group] reach [specific goal]?

Will you join us for [event name]?

Want to see what our community made possible?

Looking for a way to support [cause] this month?

3. Practical how-to messages

Use this approach when the email offers useful instructions. Make the promised help specific and deliver it in the message or the linked resource.

- Best fit: Participation instructions, volunteer information, and helpful resources.

How to take part in our [campaign name] fundraiser

How to share [campaign name] with your community

Three ways to support [cause] this month

Your guide to joining [event name]

Pair the subject line with helpful preview text

Many inboxes show a short line of preview text beside the subject. Use it to add a useful detail instead of repeating the same words.

Subject: Our [campaign name] fundraiser ends [date] | Preview: See the goal, the progress so far, and how to take part.

Subject: Thank you for being part of [campaign name] | Preview: Here is what your community helped support and when we will share the next update.

EXAMPLES TO ADAPT

Keep the relationship going

4. Real deadlines and timely reminders

Mention a deadline only when it exists. State the relevant date or time in the email, including the time zone when needed. Claims about matching gifts, limited places, or final opportunities must reflect the actual terms.

- Best fit: Genuine campaign deadlines, event registration, and accurate reminders.
- Use carefully: If a deadline changes, explain the change plainly. Avoid repeating “last chance” when it is not the final opportunity.

[Event name] registration closes [day]

One week left to support [campaign name]

Our [campaign name] fundraiser ends [date]

Reminder: [event name] is this [day]

5. Announcements, updates, and thanks

Not every email needs to ask for money. Share useful news, report progress accurately, and recognize the people who helped. Thank-you messages are part of the relationship, not simply a bridge to another appeal.

- Best fit: Launches, invitations, honest progress reports, and acknowledgments.

Introducing [campaign name]: Help support [purpose]

You are invited to [event name]

An update on our [specific project]

Thank you: Our community raised [confirmed amount]

Here is what happens next for [project name]

Learn, then improve

Before you send

- Does the subject line accurately describe the email?
- Have you replaced every placeholder and checked names, dates, amounts, and links?
- Is the purpose clear without exaggeration, guilt, or false urgency?
- Does the message offer one clear next step?
- Does the email respect the recipient's preferences and include the appropriate way to stop future messages?
- Have you checked how the subject, preview text, and email look on a phone?

Learn from your own audience

Review more than opens. Consider whether people follow the link, register, give, reply, or ask useful questions. Open counts alone do not establish that a subject line worked.

If your list is large enough for a meaningful comparison, test one difference at a time across similar audiences. For a small group, clear writing and relevant messages may be more useful than trying to declare a winning subject line from a few responses.

Your message in one sentence

We are inviting [audience] to [one clear action] because [specific purpose].

Keep building your toolkit

Explore the other free guides in this series.

Fundraising Basics: Part 1

A practical starting point for schools, nonprofits, teams, and community groups.

health-matters.us/resources#fundraising-basics

Online Giving Experience: A Practical Checklist

Review the path from the first invitation to the thank-you.

health-matters.us/resources#online-giving-experience

Find the complete series at health-matters.us/resources.