

RAISING YOUR SUPPORT

There are a few different approaches to funding your work in missions. If you have the funds already set aside for your trip, that is easiest; but for many called to work in missions, raising support is a necessary part of the calling. b2e© projects are team efforts. Raising support for your mission trip is a great way to expand your team. It is important to remember that the objective is not just to raise money; it is to allow others to partner with you in this ministry. If you are part of a group from the same church or community, make the most of your efforts by working together as a team to raise support. As you begin this faith building process, follow these ten guidelines for raising ministry support.

- 1. PRAY** Thank God for allowing you to join Him in this experience where He is already at work. Pray and trust Him to faithfully provide the needed resources to accomplish His purposes.
- 2. DETERMINE AVAILABLE RESOURCES** Calculate how much money you will be able to contribute to your project. This can include savings, earned money, tax refunds, gifts, etc. Once you determine how much you are willing to sacrifice for this mission, then you will know the amount you need to raise from supporters.
- 3. BEGIN WITH YOUR FAMILY & HOME CHURCH** The best place to start looking for supporters is with those who know you best and care about you. Some family members will want to give and usually all of them will want to be informed of your trip. Find out if there are resources available from your church to help cover the trip cost.
- 4. MAKE A LIST OF POTENTIAL DONORS** Talk with your family and friends to develop a list of individuals, groups, churches, and organizations that might be interested in supporting this project. Check with your church regarding their policy about raising money from church members.
- 5. SEND A LETTER** Write a letter to mail to your list of potential donors. Refer to the sample letter on page 12 for ideas, but try to use your own words. Include the following: a) Information about the dates, destination, and nature of the project you will participate in. b) Why you are going and what you and the team will be working to accomplish. c) The cost of your trip and how they can help. d) A request for their partnership through prayerful and financial support. e) Your letter should contain this statement: "Contributions to bridge2ethiopia are generally considered tax deductible; however, in accordance with IRS regulations, these designated offerings are subject to the governing board's control and discretion. When contributions for a particular individual exceed trip/support expenses, or if that volunteer is unable to participate on the trip, the governing board may redirect contributions to another activity within bridge2ethiopia mission program. If you are uncertain whether your donation qualifies for a tax deduction, please contact your tax consultant. b2e© is in the process of acquiring their 501c3. **ALL CONTRIBUTIONS GIVEN TO bridge2ethiopia SHOULD BE MADE TO: bridge2ethiopia.**
- 6. MAKE FOLLOW-UP CONTACTS** You can expect more people to support you if you make a follow-up call or visit. This is a good way for you to personally share with individuals and to

invite them to join the team. Your church or other groups may want you to give a brief presentation about your mission.

- 7. KEEP TRACK OF DONATIONS & MEET THE DEADLINES** Do your best to keep track of who joins your team. Who gave and how much? Who have you contacted? Aim to be a good steward of the investment that people are making in you. Keeping track of your financial status will also help ensure that you meet all the deadlines before your departure. Contact the Team's Coordinator at bridge2ethiopia if you have questions about donations received.
- 8. THANK THOSE WHO RESPOND** Set a goal to thank donors as soon as you learn that a donation has been received. bridge2ethiopia will mail a tax deductible receipt upon receiving your donor's gifts, but it's always a good idea for you to acknowledge them with a card, phone call, or both. Express your gratitude for their gift and your enthusiasm for having them on the team. Let them know you consider them as important as if they were going with you. Once again, ask them for their prayers.
- 9. SERVE GOD ON THE PROJECT** By this time all your support raising will be well worth the effort when you see the people you are able to serve! Try to remember that there are others who are on your team through their prayers and gifts. Think of creative ways you can share your experience with them and thank them when you return home.
- 10. REPORT BACK TO DONORS AFTER YOU RETURN** Be sure to write a letter telling your supporters about your mission. Thank them again and share some stories and results from your trip. You may want to send along a small gift or a picture from the trip. You may have opportunities to share in your church or other groups. Reporting back is a great way to cast the vision for more people to get involved in short-term missions. *Several resources are available through the web or in print which you can investigate if desired.*
- 11. ADDITIONAL NOTES ON FUNDRAISING** Many mission trip participants and missionaries have raised their entire support though effectively sharing their passion with people who know them. Many people cannot go themselves, but happy to partner with and send you. Remember to make your letter personal by adding a hand written, personal note to the bottom of the page of each letter you send. For your supporter's donations to be tax-deductible, the checks must be written to bridge2ethiopia, whether they send them to us directly or give them to you for mailing. Including an addressed envelope with your letter will increase your responses. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the receipt needed.

The sample letter on the following page is just a sample. Taking the time to use your own words and making the letter as personal as possible is important in sharing your passion with those who may support you. It is worth the time to write your letter well. Make sure you fill in the (*blanks*) with your information, name, etc. If a donation is made out to bridge2ethiopia for your travel, make sure the check is made out to bridge2ethiopia and on the form at the end of the donation letter, your name should be listed as the participant. You may need to raise all of your support, while others only have to raise some or none, please let others help you to come and participate as a volunteer!

SAMPLE FUND-RAISING LETTER

(DATE)

Dear Family & Friends, God has given me the opportunity to participate on a mission trip to Ethiopia, Africa, with bridge2ethiopia.org (b2e) on (DATE). The team I will be working with will be (state purpose of your team) to help Addis Kidan Baptist Churches in Ethiopia to (fill in).

First, please partner with me in prayer for those we will be serving, for my health, safety and effectiveness as a team member, and for the many details of this trip.

Second, please consider supporting me financially for this outreach. The cost of this (duration of trip) trip is \$(AMOUNT) and includes airfare to Ethiopia. If you would like to join the team in this way, please make your tax-deductable gift by a check payable to **bridge2ethiopia** and send it to **bridge2ethiopia**, 10801 Woodland Pond Pkwy, Chesterfield, VA 24838, along with the form below.

I am also including a list of items that can be donated to this trip if you would like to participate in this way. I will pack these items in my luggage and personally take them to the outreach when I go. Thank you for praying about being a vital part of our team.

Sincerely,

(NAME)

(Add a hand written note to personalize the letter)

Receipts for tax-deductable purposes should be made out to "bridge2ethiopia". Please use this form instead of writing my name on the face of your check. Thank you! Amount \$ _____ for (Your Name), (MISSION TRIP DATES) From: _____

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