

**The Anatomy of an Email Ask:**

**Emails should be personal.** Address each one by name and add an anecdote for each person.

**Explain your connection to the project**. Why are you involved? How did you get involved? If the money raised has an impact on you personally, explain how.

**Give context of wider impact.** If the project has the potential for a larger impact in the community, explain it to the potential donor.

**Mention partnership with institution.** The institutional support further validates your project’s merit; use that. Note that donations to the project are tax deductible. \*Fresno State foundation has a 501c3 status.

**Reference the amount of money you are trying to raise.** Be transparent about how the money will be used.

**Ask them to donate.** Tell them the issue you’re working to solve can’t be fixed without their support.

**Ask them to share.** Not everyone will have the capability to give at that time. Mention that they can also be helpful by sharing with someone they know who may be passionate about the subject matter.

**Keep it as short as you can**. All of the above pieces are crucial, but people also have short attention spans. The biggest focuses should be on your connection to the project and that person, while giving them a compelling reason to check out the project page.

**Pull them into the journey with you.** Whatever the subject matter of your project, you’re starting a journey of how to solve a particular issue. With all of the above pieces, you’re creating a story about how you will accomplish your goal. Remember that the personal emails you send are there to take donors with you on your journey. You are sending these e-mails to people who care about you and people who care about this subject matter. Tie that personal touch in wherever possible. At the end of it, they should feel inspired to act because of you and the impact of your project...and your promise to take them on the journey with you (via updates).

**\*EXAMPLES BELOW**



**Example #1:**

Dear Jessica,  
  
I hope this e-mail finds you well and rested after your vacation to Tahiti! I would love to meet up soon and talk about both your trip and your extensive international travel, as I soon will be embarking on my first international journey. I have been selected among a team of engineering students through the university to travel to Honduras and build water filtration systems for a rural town outside of the capitol. As I finish my final year of school, I’ve begun to find a passion for public health and the impact engineering has on creating safer communities for people around the world. We are planning to put in 4 different filtration systems throughout the town we will be working within, but we do have to purchase these items prior to the trip, which end up costing approximately $1200 per system. This cost was going to be spread among all of our team’s payment for the trip, but we came together and decided we wanted our amazing communities to be a part of this trip as much as we were, so we are raising $5,000 to purchase the equipment.

With your incredible international development work, I thought of you immediately when I started creating my list of friends who might be interested in supporting my team in our endeavor to bring clean water to this town in Honduras and to grow as engineers that help the developing world. All donations are tax-deductible, as they are directly through the university, and a donation of any amount would be a huge help. Additionally, I would be so grateful if you could share this project with your community of folks that do international development work as well.

You can find a link to our project site here, where the donations are taken: (LINK). Please let me know if you have any questions!

All my love, Katie



**Example #2:**

Dear Jeff,

So good to see you at the national conference last month! Your research surrounding traumatic head injury in college athletes continues to inspire me. As you know, the head trauma center I am involved with at the university has been doing similar research with high-school athletes and are working to put together a program that will bring the testing we’ve created to check and monitor student athletes with traumatic head injury in three of the lowest income schools in the surrounding area. With the university’s family of schools and connections into the local school system, we’ve identified these schools and identified a cost point of $3,000 per school for testing and treatment over the next school year. We’ve taken it upon ourselves as a center to raise this money on our own and through the use of the university’s crowdfunding platform, we are attempting to raise the $9,000 it would take to implement this program in the three identified schools.

As someone with an affinity to this topic, I knew immediately I wanted to invite you to join this project with me through a donation. Our team is hoping to gather pre- commitments to our project from our friends who are passionate about the work we do. When we launch in 2 weeks, can I count on you for a donation? Even a donation of $100 brings the services to 2 individual students and will benefit from a year of care because of your generosity.

Please let me know if you have any questions about the project or the work we’ll be doing, I’d love to sit down and talk with you about it!

Thank you in advance, Mark



**Example #3:**

Dear Sarah,

My name is Eric and I am the current President of Fresno State’s engineering design team. Since you graduated in 2009, our team has grown exponentially and has continued to excel in the competition circuit, placing in at least the Top 10 in each of the 5 competitions we entered in the past few years! This year, we have the opportunity to showcase our designs on the international scene at a competition in Europe. This is an amazing and once in a lifetime chance for our team, which is where you come in.

We as a team recognize that none of us would have been able to have the same amount of success without the hard work and dedication of all the engineering team members that came before us. Without your legacy, we would not have the sophisticated and award-winning designs that go us recognized at an international level. I am writing to you today to continue that legacy, and to help us continue our success through a donation to our cause.

As you know, as a student organization we receive limited funding from the university for our competitions and travel. To compete in Europe this summer, we will need to cover the costs of transporting our team and some equipment across the pond. After crunching the numbers, we found that it would cost $7,500 for us to send 5 team members to the competition. The university has allowed us to use its new crowdfunding website, through which we hope to raise the funds needed to allow our team the chance to continue to learn and succeed.

I hope you think back on your time with the engineering design team with fond memories, as your past is our future. Please consider going to: [link] and supporting our efforts to expand our horizons and learn from student engineers across the globe.

If you have any questions, or would like to hear about the competition and our current designs further, we’d love to have you back at the lab any time!

Thank you for your time and consideration,

* Eric