



English in Action Teachers Learning Abroad – UK

Fundraising Guide

Your involvement in ESU-English in Action's TLab-UK program impacts more people than you probably realize. Because of your commitment to your own intellectual development, you are helping increase the visibility of this long-standing program. Furthermore, you are demonstrating to your students and colleagues the importance of life-long learning, and we are confident that your decision to embark on this adventure will impact teachers and students for years to come.

To help you be successful in raising funds for your endeavor, we have carefully designed the following fundraising guide filled with TLab-UK program content, fundraising guidelines, and TLab alumni tips.

About ESU-English in Action and TLab-UK	2
TLab-UK Scholar Commitment	3
Fundraising Information – Tips	4
Fundraising Ideas: Social Media	5
Fundraising Ideas: Letter Writing	6
Fundraising Ideas: Other Options	6
Fundraising Ideas: Special Events	7
TLab-UK Scholar Quotes	8
Thank You	9



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Thank you again for your participation in TLab-UK, and welcome to the ESU-English in Action family. Please contact us with any questions.

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About ESU-English in Action

ESU-English in Action employs English as a catalyst to foster global understanding and good will through educational opportunities and cultural exchange programs. In a shrinking world dominated by dollars and digits, unprecedented migration, and bloody national borders, ESU-English in Action believes in building a better world through the English language and international exchange. We work to inspire common bonds, person-to-person – one conversation, one presentation, and one exchange at a time. By promoting creative and confident civil discourse, we enable participants to rise to their potential as individuals, thrive as global citizens, and join worldwide in pursuing conditions for peace.

About Teachers Learning Abroad (TLab) – UK

The TLab-UK program has long provided American high school teachers the opportunity to continue their education at prestigious centers of learning in the United Kingdom: the University of Oxford, Shakespeare’s Globe (London), and the University of Edinburgh.

Through nearly 60 years, TLab-UK scholars from all over the United States have returned to their classrooms invigorated and equipped to share their newly acquired teaching and learning strategies with millions of students nationwide. The program has served more than 2,500 American high school and middle school teachers since its inception, and we estimate that, over the course of their careers, TLab-UK alumni have impacted over two million students.



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TLab-UK Scholar Commitment

Some TLab-UK Scholars receive full or partial scholarships from their local ESU-English in Action Branches. Other scholars pay their own way using personal resources, school funds, or other fundraising avenues. Regardless of your situation, if you have applied and been accepted to a TLab-UK course, you have committed to ensuring that ESU-English in Action has received funds for your tuition from scholarships, your schools, or funds you have personally raised *prior to* departing for the UK.

Refund/Cancellation Policy

Because TLab-UK operates at various academic institutions, you are responsible for ascertaining your specific institution's cancellation and refund policy. Please note that the UK-based institutions' policies might be subject to change at any point, and ESU-English in Action cannot intervene on a scholar's behalf. Generally, once a scholar has accepted their position within a particular course, they have committed to paying all accompanying fees for that course.



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Fundraising Information: Tips

We make every attempt to price our courses so that they are affordable for teachers, but some individuals will still need to solicit funds from outside sources in order to fulfill their dream of studying in the UK. If you think of yourself as “just a fundraiser” for your summer learning adventure, you are selling yourself short. This experience is so much more than a traditional PD; rather than focusing on pedagogical components such as standards and assessments, TLab Scholars are in the unique position to indulge their own curiosity. To that end, don’t be afraid to think outside the box when it comes to raising funds. This is a way for you to spread the word to other teachers about the importance of investing in their own intellectual development. One by one, teacher by teacher, we hope to be able to affect great change in the way teachers and school leaders think of professional development.

Golden Rules of Fundraising

- The key to successful fundraising is to **START EARLY!**
- You raise money only when you ask. Some schools have funds available. If you’re not sure about this, that means you have not asked yet; if you don’t ask, you might miss a funding opportunity.
- Ask **BIG** – Don’t ask for \$10 and hope for \$50. When you ask for \$50, you may get \$50, or you may get less, but if you ask for smaller amounts of money, that’s probably all you will receive.
- Keep a good attitude. Be prepared for the fact that not everyone is going to donate. It should go without saying that the more people you ask, the more donations you will receive. If you do not hear “no” a couple of times a week, you should ask yourself if you are reaching out to enough people.
- Although it might feel uncomfortable, try not to feel bad or embarrassed about asking people for money. Remember, you are investing in your own intellectual development, which will lead you to have a greater impact in your classroom. You are modeling those “intangibles,” such as maintaining a sense of curiosity and learning for learning’s sake, that will benefit your students long after they take the end-of-course exam.
- Talk about your course! Tell everyone you meet or know about what you are doing over the summer and how their donation will help.
- It is important for *you* to decide what methods will best fit each of your donors. Make it easy for people.
- If you think of your fundraising as a chore, it will become one.
- Consider the timing of your request. Building fundraising sites and sending out appeals might work best prior to a holiday or birthday.
- Never underestimate the power of Matching Gifts!
 - Find out if your school, Parent Association, or district would match some or all of the funds you raise.
 - If your school does not have an “official” matching program, there are still creative ways to strengthen your fundraising campaign:
 - Seek approval for a faculty “dress down” day that allows employees to wear “casual Friday” clothing for a small donation
 - Itemize your expenses and ask your principal to sponsor one or more item(s) (e.g. “\$50 purchases the books for my course!” or “\$20 will allow me to reserve a train ticket from Heathrow Airport to Oxford!”)

Fundraising Ideas: Social Media

Use Facebook, Instagram, or other social networking sites to publicize your efforts and your plans. When posting on social media sites, be sure to ask for a specific dollar amount, typically between \$20 and \$50, but provide a statement that any contribution helps.

It is recommended that you set up a fundraising website via DonorsChoose.org or GoFundMe.com (see page 6 for further information), then share the link on your personal page(s).

Facebook

Here are a few sample Facebook posts you could use or adapt for other social media sites:

Dear [Friends, Family, Colleagues, etc.]:

I have recently been accepted to attend [Name of Course] at [Name of Institution] as part of ESU-English in Action's TLab-UK program. In today's world of increasingly standardized education, it's more important than ever for teachers to equip themselves with the deepest possible content knowledge and model the importance of pursuing one's passion. I've solicited funding from several different sources, but I still need your help. If you are willing or able to donate \$10, \$20, or perhaps even \$50 to fund my trip, you will be helping this teacher re-kindle his [her] love of [subject area]. I've set up a fundraising page, which you can reach by following this link: [www.\[enterfundraisinglink\].org](http://www.[enterfundraisinglink].org). Thank you in advance for any help – I promise to provide you with a full report of my adventures!

Dear [Friends, Family, Colleagues, etc.]:

This summer, I will travel to the UK as part of ESU-English in Action's TLab-UK program. This program aims to honor teachers by providing them with a different kind of professional development, one that focuses more on content instead of pedagogy. This is an exciting opportunity for me, and although I've been lucky enough to be accepted to my chosen program, I still need some help funding my trip. I've set up the following fundraising page:

[www.\[enterfundraisinglink\].org](http://www.[enterfundraisinglink].org). Any help - \$20, \$30, or even \$50 – that you can contribute towards my trip would be greatly appreciated. I promise to regale you with tales of my adventures, and, if you're lucky, I'll let you read my final paper!

Thank you for supporting my personal and professional development.

Twitter:

- Use the hashtag #ESUTLab
- Start following and encourage others to follow @ESUUSNational
- Provide links to any personal fundraising pages

Fundraising Ideas: Letter Writing

Remember, the more people you ask, the more money you will raise! Taking the time to mail letters to potential funders will provide you with the opportunity to explain why you have chosen to enroll in a TLab-UK course.

Expand on one of the suggested Facebook posts in order to provide more detail about your course, such as the content you will be exposed to and how you plan on taking what you learn this summer back to your students in the fall. Even in letters, be sure to provide information about how people can donate, such as a link to your personal fundraising page (see below).

Fundraising: Other Options

1. The website DonorsChoose.org is dedicated to helping teachers fund many classroom- and school-related endeavors. They have a [section of their site](#) devoted to professional development study abroad trips, and ESU-English in Action can provide price quotes and any necessary information that will help get your project started. You may request funding for the total trip cost, or for specific stipends (e.g., travel, per diem amounts, books, etc.). Consider creating a DonorsChoose project and sharing it widely via social media.
2. GoFundMe.com is a website that people – not just teachers – use to raise money for myriad causes. Consider creating your own GoFundMe account and sharing it widely via social media.
3. Fund for Teachers (www.fundforteachers.org) provides monetary support for teachers to pursue professional development domestically and internationally. Teachers apply for a grant and are then notified whether or not they received an award. Note that the award announcements from FFT might occur after scholars must commit to a place in their selected summer program. Please be aware of your institution's cancellation policy, in the event that you commit to attending but do not receive a grant from Fund for Teachers.
4. Donors might not be able to offer money, but they can donate in other ways, including:
 - Donating frequent flier miles in order to lessen travel costs. Flights to the UK are typically cheaper from an East Coast hub, such as JFK, Boston, or Newark airports; you can use someone's donation of airline miles to cover any domestic travel costs to get to any of these hubs. Similar to raising money, several people can contribute their airline miles to your frequent flier account, depending on your selected carrier. Check with the airline to see how long it will take for donated miles to post to your account.
 - Donating hotel points if you plan to arrive in the UK a day or two before your course starts (or stay past your course end date).
 - Helping you obtain reading materials. Present any bibliophiles you may know with your course reading lists to see if they have or can help you access any of your required reading materials.

Fundraising Ideas: Special Events

Workplace: Consider these ideas to get your colleagues involved (you might inspire them to follow in your footsteps and sign up for a TLab-UK course themselves!)

1. **Casual Day:** Talk with your HR department or principal about having a designated “dress down” day to support your fundraising. You could raise even more awareness and relate it to TLab-UK by encouraging teachers and staff to don any British-themed apparel. Each employee who wants to participate would contribute a small fee (usually \$3 to \$5 per person). Be sure to check to see if your principal or supervisor would then match the total amount of donations you receive.
2. **Department Lunch Raffle:** Check with your principal to see if they would buy lunch for members of the department who win a lunch raffle. Faculty and staff would purchase raffle tickets from you, and the department to which the raffle winner belongs receives lunch for his/her department.
3. **Team/Club Ticket Sales:** Reach out to team coaches or club sponsors to see if a portion of ticket sales from a particular game or event could be donated on behalf of the club or team to your course fees.

Local Establishments: Think about venues you frequent close to your home or school. Then, approach the proprietors about any of these ideas.

1. **Benefit Happy Hour:** Visit any local bars (even better if it’s one that you frequent with friends or co-workers) and speak to the general manager about hosting a fundraiser. Get them excited about your purpose! You can negotiate with them about what would work best – you never know what they would be willing to do. Once you have finalized the details with the establishment, be sure to advertise it so that people show up!
2. **Benefit Coffee Hour:** This is the same idea as the Bar Happy Hour above, but it involves a coffee shop, instead. Consider approaching an establishment that you know a lot of your friends or colleagues visit on their way to work.
3. **Bookstores:** Since you are trying to raise funds towards your educational pursuits, local bookstores might be a great venue to approach regarding donations. You might check to see if they would donate a portion of any travel- or British-themed books sold over the course of a pre-arranged timespan.

Be sure to advertise any events that you arrange so that people actually attend/participate. Also, have thank-you notes on hand so you can express your gratitude immediately following the event.

TLab-UK Scholar Quotes

These quotes and stories from our 2017 program alumni are meant to serve as inspiration as you begin your fundraising journey. You may also want to include them in any information you share with potential supporters.

What in your life don't you know yet? In other words, what learning experience would you like to have that would really benefit you as a human being?

- TLab-UK Scholar, University of Oxford, History, Politics and Society Summer School

I wanted to come to Oxford to get to the source, to re-energize myself. So often, in education, there's the chance to forget - in the bureaucracy of it all - what first enflamed you about a particular subject and why the classroom deserves to be such a dynamic place.

- TLab-UK Scholar, University of Oxford, History, Politics and Society Summer School

This opportunity has been like a high school football coach being able to go play and practice with the Chicago Bears. What you bring out of that – the challenge, the experience of being back in the role [of student], having experts guiding you as models while also instructing you – that can't be replicated anywhere else.

-TLab-UK Scholar, University of Oxford, English Literature Summer School

Professional development has been at the forefront of my time as a teacher, and so I have applied to and attended conferences all over the United States, so I feel like I have pretty good background knowledge of what PD should look like. This has been completely transformative, the most comprehensive professional development I've ever been a part of.

-TLab-UK Scholar, University of Oxford, English Literature Summer School

I will never be the same. This was life-changing. It has been an amazing, can't-look-back-it's-only-forward-from-here type of experience.

-TLab-UK Scholar, University of Oxford, English Literature Summer School

This is Oxford, a gold-standard, legendary academic institution. These professors are giving us more of their time, choosing to educate us with content layer upon content layer. If any teacher has the opportunity to do this, I highly recommend it. You won't ever look at your material the same way.

-TLab-UK Scholar, University of Oxford, English Literature Summer School

[This] was a life-changing experience. The whole program was very well conceived and executed; our writing tutor was top-notch; the master classes and workshops indispensable; my writing colleagues extremely talented people from all over the world.

-TLab Scholar, University of Edinburgh, Creative Writing Program

This has been an incredible, hands-on experience, with access to people who are the true experts in Shakespeare's work. I never would have had this experience back home in any other professional development.

-TLab-UK Scholar, Shakespeare's Globe

I feel tremendously honored and lucky and fortunate to have been able to participate in this three-week program. It has clearly changed the way I teach and the way I look at Shakespeare.

-TLab-UK Scholar, Shakespeare's Globe

Thank You

First, THANK YOU – you are making a difference in the lives of your students by choosing to pursue these intellectually stimulating and rigorous courses of study. You are also helping ESU-English in Action increase the visibility of this program. Every teacher like you who decides to invest in their own intellectual development proves that this program is worthwhile and here to stay.

Don't forget to thank your donors after you have returned from your time abroad. Share your pictures, stories, and experiences with them!

Sample Personal Thank You Letter (tailored to a scholar attending a University of Oxford TLab-UK course):

Hello, Generous Donor!

I made it back from the UK, and my perspectives have shifted in ways I never thought possible!

I started my journey at 10:00PM, as I boarded my overnight trans-Atlantic flight from XXXXXX to London's Heathrow Airport. After a brief coach journey to Oxford, I finally found myself at the hallowed gates of XXXXX College, ready to embark on my summer of learning.

<insert picture>

With your generous support, I was able to raise enough money to fund my studies as part of ESU-English in Action's TLab-UK program. This program provides teachers like me the chance to invest in their own intellectual stimulation and development, something that is vastly different from any other type of professional development I've participated in over the last few years! For three weeks, I immersed myself in university life at Oxford. As a student in Oxford's XXXXXX summer course, I was re-visiting my university days – up in the morning for lectures, afternoon seminars, even taking meals in my college's dining hall (although this dining hall was *slightly* older than the one in my undergraduate alma mater)!

<insert picture>

As this summer concludes, I am looking ahead to the upcoming school year with a renewed spirit and an invigorated attitude toward the content I teach. My students will benefit, because they will see before them a teacher who invested in him/herself, and who took part in a summer of learning and intense coursework for the sheer joy of it. Without your support, this experience would not have been possible for me.

Thank you for your generous support and for investing in my education. It was humbling to receive the kind of response I did, and it was great to re-connect with so many people through this process.

Cheers!