



# **GRASSROOTS FUNDRAISING GUIDE**

**HELP US LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST  
AUTOIMMUNITY!**

# HELP US LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST AUTOIMMUNITY!

We're calling on you, our amazing community, to lead the way in grassroots giving!

## GRASSROOTS GIVING

Donations are an essential driver in helping the Autoimmune Association carry out our mission to lead the fight against autoimmunity. And it's powerful stories like yours that move folks to give back to our mission.

Grassroots giving is the perfect opportunity to call on your network to give for the greater good. We hope that you will consider joining us in sharing your autoimmune odyssey, engaging in one of the fundraiser ideas outlined in this guide, and continuing to stand side by side with us in the fight against autoimmunity.

Captured in this guide is a series of creative fundraising ideas with a set of tools to help you bring them to life!

Questions or need additional support? Get in touch at [hello@autoimmune.org](mailto:hello@autoimmune.org) or by giving us a ring at 586-776-3900.

"The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others"

MAHATMA GANDHI

# Part 1

The heart of giving back is  
**YOUR STORY!**

# THE HEART OF GIVING BACK IS YOUR STORY!

Before diving into fundraising ideas, it's essential to spend some time thinking about how you want to communicate your autoimmune odyssey. It is your story and experience that will move people to action!

Here are some tips as you think about how you want to frame your story:

## Be Concise

As anyone living with an autoimmune condition knows, the journey is anything but simple! Try to be as concise as possible so as not to overwhelm readers or listeners with too much information.

## Identify Your Defining Moments

Focus on the defining moments in your journey by asking yourself the following questions:

- How did you feel the moment you were diagnosed?
- What has been one of the most painful moments you have experienced living with an autoimmune condition?
- Think of a time you got much needed clarity in your journey...how did that feel?
- When is a moment you have felt deeply supported in your autoimmune journey?
- Have you ever heard the word “remission”? What does that feel like?
- Do you long to hear the word “remission”? What do you imagine that would feel like?

Select a few defining moments to communicate as your story.

## **CRAFT YOUR CALL TO ACTION**

You've shared your story, now why should people donate? Ask yourself how has the Autoimmune Association helped you? Or why do you believe supporting the Autoimmune Association is important?

Here are some ideas to help spark your "why":

### **We're Stronger Together**

There are millions of people living with over 100 autoimmune diseases. Our patient odysseys share deeply rooted similarities. By coming together, we can accelerate autoimmune education, awareness, advocacy, treatment, and someday, cures.

### **Driving Research**

The Autoimmune Association has funded over \$5 Million in autoimmune research and helped to secure over \$3 Billion federally funded autoimmune research in the last three years. This research is the key to unlocking new treatments and someday cures for people living with autoimmune conditions.

### **Facilitating Community + Connection**

The Autoimmune Association gives people living with multiple autoimmune diseases a much needed community. Our Inaugural Autoimmune Summit convened over 2,000 autoimmune patients virtually from across the country and around the world with over 4,000 messages exchanged and testimonials from attendees that they "felt very seen and heard" and loved "meeting so many new people with so much in common."

“Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world.

ROBERT MCKEE



## **CRAFT YOUR CALL TO ACTION**

### **Delivering Mission Critical Resources**

The Autoimmune Association maintains comprehensive resources on over 100 autoimmune diseases and continually works to provide up to date information on the state of autoimmunity. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the Autoimmune Association has brought together leading physicians and public health agencies to provide our community with the information they needed to navigate unprecedented times.

### **Advocating for Equitable Access to Care**

The Autoimmune Association is your champion on Capitol Hill, working tirelessly to fight for policies that bring equitable and sustainable access to care.

## SAMPLE STORY

From Autoimmune Association Board Member Lilly Stairs

At the age of 19, I was diagnosed back to back with Crohn's Disease and Psoriatic Arthritis. The Crohn's Disease left me with bleeding ulcers in my small intestine and the arthritis was total body and rendered me essentially immobile.

I remember sitting in the hospital bed and typing all three of my conditions into Google (I had previously been diagnosed with psoriasis at the age of 7). What came up but the term "autoimmune".

I had never heard this term before despite the fact that millions of Americans currently live with one or more autoimmune conditions.

After my diagnosis, I found a home in the Autoimmune Association that offered a community of people living with multiple autoimmune conditions just like me. I am so grateful for the work they do to unite patients from across conditions so that we can come together to accelerate autoimmune education, awareness, advocacy, treatment, and someday, cures.

I hope that you will consider giving back to an organization that has given so much to me and the millions of people living with autoimmune conditions around the world and donate to the Autoimmune Association.

### **Submit your story**

Please consider [submitting your story to be featured](#) on the Autoimmune Association website. We love community stories to drive awareness and education!

# Part 2

## Fundraiser Ideas

“ Giving is not just about making a donation, it's about making a difference.

KATHY CALVIN



## FUNDRAISER IDEAS

### Send an Email

While inboxes are crowded these days with newsletter subscriptions you forgot you signed up for, a personal note often stands out in the noise.

Consider sending a thoughtful email out to your family, friends, colleagues, and network encouraging them to donate.

### Send Snail Mail

Who doesn't love to get mail that isn't a bill or advertisement?! Send a personal letter to your network.

You can draw on the language suggested in the email template.

# FUNDRAISER IDEAS

## Post on Social Media

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and beyond! Consider sharing a few posts on social media encouraging others to donate.

We have templates and graphics in the tools and templates section to help make posting a breeze!

## Facebook Fundraiser

Facebook Fundraisers are an easy and fun way to activate your network and encourage your online friends to donate.

[Click here](#) to get your Facebook Fundraiser started! Remember - don't forget to customize it to include your personal WHY.

## “Treat Yourself” Fundraiser

It's great to treat yourself every once and a while. Consider encouraging your network to reflect on how they treat themselves and make a swap and treat others (aka the Autoimmune Association) instead.

A powerful way to do this could be including what the cost of treats and activities local to you. This could include things like a Starbucks coffee, pizza at a local restaurant, a massage, a workout class, an Amazon purchase...

## Bake Sale

Who doesn't love baked goods?? Break out the pie pans and rally your friends to bake goods for good.

# FUNDRAISER IDEAS

## **Partner with Local Small Businesses**

Are you a regular at a local spot? Chat with the Manager or Owner about teaming up for a good cause! Ideas include a percentage of sales from that day going to the Autoimmune Association and/or a designated place within the establishment encouraging patrons to donate.

See if your local bar will do a custom drink to celebrate with a clever name. Our personal favorite is “Immuni-tea!”

## **Sweat It Out!**

Partner with your local workout studio to run a class where a portion of proceeds are donated to the Autoimmune Association.

Or host your own walkathon, 5K, or sporting event to get people moving (and donating!)

## **Corporate Giving**

Work with your HR department or manager to organize a campaign where the company encourages folks to consider donating to a list of mission-aligned charities. There’s also always the option for the company to do matching gifts to double the impact of each employee!

## **Buy Donors a Coffee**

Encourage your network to donate and for each person that donates, offer to Venmo them a few bucks to buy them a coffee.

# FUNDRAISER IDEAS

## Leverage Your Artistry

Are you an artist? Jewelry designer? Crochet beautiful blankets? A hairdresser? This is a great opportunity to leverage your talent for good. For each person that donates, offer them something designed by you or a service you offer for free or at a discounted rate.

## Raffle

Organize a raffle with all ticket proceeds being donated to the Autoimmune Association. You can either personally donate a sum of money to be won or partner with your favorite businesses to donate items or gift cards to be raffled off.

## Host a Party or Event

Cook a nice meal for family and friends, invite folks over for a full out soiree, or plan an event like a comedy show or fashion show. Make a toast sharing your why and encourage guests to consider donating.

## Have a Yard Sale

Get organized and breathe easier. Host a yard sale with proceeds going to the Autoimmune Association.

## Host a Class

Host an in-person or virtual class with a fun activity like cooking, wreath decorating, terrarium making, painting etc. Ask folks to donate for admission!

## Create Your Own

This is by no means an exhaustive list of ideas. If one of these ideas speaks to you, run with it or use these ideas to get you started crafting your own fundraiser.

# Part 3

## Tools + Templates

Access a word document version of the tools + templates for easy copy + paste [here](#).

## EMAIL TEMPLATE

**Subject Line:** Help me support the Autoimmune Association!

To my [INSERT GROUP] (i.e. family, friends, colleagues)

Grassroots giving is a crucial fundraising movement unleashing the power of radical generosity that encourages people to donate to charity.

I am reaching out with the hope that, should you have the means to do so, you consider joining me in supporting the [Autoimmune Association](#).

As many of you know, [INSERT A FEW SENTENCES ABOUT YOU OR YOUR LOVED ONE'S AUTOIMMUNE JOURNEY AND HOW IT HAS IMPACTED YOU].

The Autoimmune Association means a lot to me because [INSERT YOUR WHY].

Join me in making a difference for this organization that means so much to me.

[Donate here.](#)

Thank you for your consideration. I hope you have a wonderful day.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POST TEMPLATES

Posts are Twitter character count friendly but can be used across platforms!

Join me in helping the Autoimmune Association lead the fight against autoimmunity! Donate here: <https://autoimmune.org/donate/>

The Autoimmune Association brings millions of people living with over 100 autoimmune diseases together to accelerate education, awareness, advocacy, treatment, and someday, cures. Donate to help advance their mission: <https://autoimmune.org/donate/>

The Autoimmune Association gives people living with multiple autoimmune diseases a real community. Their #AutoimmuneSummit convened 2K+ autoimmune patients & left attendees feeling "seen and heard". Donate to help advance their work: <https://autoimmune.org/donate/>

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the Autoimmune Association has brought together leading physicians & public health agencies to provide our community with the info they need to navigate these unprecedented times. Help support their work: <https://autoimmune.org/donate/>

The Autoimmune Association is a champion for the autoimmune community on Capitol Hill, working tirelessly to fight for policies that bring equitable and sustainable access to care. Support their important work: <https://autoimmune.org/donate/>

Millions of people are living with autoimmune diseases in the US. 78% of these individuals are women. Support the Autoimmune Association's work as a leader in the fight against autoimmunity: <https://autoimmune.org/donate/>

The Autoimmune Association has funded \$5M+ in autoimmune research and helped to secure \$3B+ federally funded autoimmune research in the last three years. Support their efforts to unlock new treatments for the autoimmune community: <https://autoimmune.org/donate/>



I am only one but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something.

EDWARD EVERETT



## **THANK YOU!**

Thank you for your dedication to the Autoimmune Association and our autoimmune family. We are so grateful to have volunteers like you!

**Don't forget to tag us on social media!**

### **Twitter:**

<https://twitter.com/AutoimmuneAssoc>

### **Instagram:**

[@autoimmune\\_diseases](https://www.instagram.com/autoimmune_diseases)

### **Facebook:**

[/Autoimmunity](https://www.facebook.com/Autoimmunity)

### **Get in Touch:**

[hello@autoimmune.org](mailto:hello@autoimmune.org)

586-776-3900