Livingtree – How To Create A Campaign

Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or idea by raising small amounts of money from a large number of people, typically via the internet. The following steps and guidelines will help you create an online fundraising campaign using Livingtree (formerly known as Edbacker), which is the crowdfunding partner of Austin ISD and Austin Ed Fund.

GETTING TO KNOW LIVINGTREE

Why should I use Livingtree?
Livingtree is the new AISD-supported crowdfunding platform for online donations. The platform enables schools to create fundraising campaigns, accept online credit card payments, manage donor information, and communicate with donors using preloaded templates and social media links. Livingtree has been customized to meet the needs of our district and includes a built-in principal approval process, direct deposit into AISD accounts and automated donor receipt for tax purposes.

What can I raise funds for?
Livingtree campaigns allow schools to raise philanthropic dollars, also known as donations, to support instructional-based initiatives. Campaigns that provide goods or services to a donor in exchange for their gift, such as t-shirts or candy, are not allowed. Please see the chart below for examples of campaigns that are approved for Livingtree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate Livingtree campaigns:</th>
<th>Inappropriate Livingtree campaigns:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Equipment and supplies</td>
<td>• Personal campaigns</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Musical instruments</td>
<td>• Cash or funds to be given to individuals</td>
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<td>• Travel to national competitions</td>
<td>• Sales of any kind (i.e. popcorn, t-shirts)</td>
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<td>• Field trips</td>
<td>• Fundraising for non-district organizations and charities (i.e. American Red Cross) must receive proper approval from the Superintendent</td>
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<td>• School events</td>
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<td>• Scholarships</td>
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*If you are unsure whether your campaign is appropriate for Livingtree, please contact Ryan O’Donnell in the Office of Innovation and Development at ryan.odonnell@austinisd.org.
APPROVAL PROCESS OVERVIEW

School Based Crowdfunding Campaigns
Campaigns follow a two-step approval process:
1. Bookkeeper review. Once a teacher or club representative creates a campaign, the bookkeeper assigns the appropriate accounting code. The bookkeeper then notifies the principal that the campaign is ready for his/her approval.
2. School principal review. Once the school principal approves the campaign, the campaign will be published on the school’s Livingtree page.

GETTING STARTED

Crowdfunding Video
Several resources exist on the Livingtree website to help schools create and implement successful fundraising campaigns. The following video provides a general overview of crowdfunding using Livingtree: [https://intercom.help/livingtree/en/articles/2054929-video-campaign-creation-walkthrough](https://intercom.help/livingtree/en/articles/2054929-video-campaign-creation-walkthrough)

Log into Livingtree
- Go to learn.livingtree.com and click on the Log In button at the top of the page. Enter your email address and password.
- If this is your first time using Livingtree, click on Forgot Password. You will receive an email to your Austin ISD email address with a link to reset your password.
- If your Austin ISD email address is not registered with Livingtree, please contact Ryan O’Donnell at ryan.odonnell@austinisd.org to start a new account. **Do not create your own account!**

Create a Campaign
After logging in to your Livingtree account, click on Fundraising on the left-hand side bar and then click on Create a Campaign.
STEP 1 – BASICS

Campaign Template
Living Tree provides two options for creating a fundraising campaign. You can create your own customized campaign, or use Livingtree templates that contain preloaded text and images.

- **Custom Campaign**
  Schools can upload their own images and content to create a customized campaign for raising money online. When choosing the custom campaign option, the content fields will be empty and must be completed in order to publish the campaign.

- **Based on Template**
  Livingtree campaign templates are preloaded with content and images. These templates enable users to quickly and easily create a campaign, and are a great option for those who are unsure what information to include in their fundraising campaign. The templates are editable, which allows schools to upload images and change the text.

**Campaign Name**
Select a campaign name that is short and descriptive. The campaign name will also be the URL for your school’s fundraising webpage. Examples include, “Campbell Elementary Library Fund” or “Padron Elementary Fun Run”.

**Select a Category**
Use the dropdown menu to select one category that best describes your fundraising campaign. The Livingtree platform enables users to search for campaigns based on category. This feature will increase your campaign’s reach and visibility on the Livingtree website.

**Short Campaign Description**
Write 1-2 sentences that describes your fundraising campaign and includes your school name. The short description appears under your campaign name at the top of the webpage, as well as beneath the thumbnail of your webpage on the Livingtree website.

**Campaign Project Creator**
Enter the school name (Bowie HS, etc.) or organization name (PTA, Band Booster Club, etc.).
STEP 2 – CAMPAIGN BODY AND MEDIA

Campaign Primary Media
The primary media is the image or video that appears below the campaign name and short campaign description. Select an engaging image or descriptive video that will effectively emphasize your message and motivate donors to act.

Upload Campaign Media
- To upload an image, click on the Image box (it will turn green) and click Choose File. You will be prompted to upload a photo from your computer. The photo can be any dimension, and will automatically be resized to fit the web page.
- To upload a video, click on the Video box (it will turn green) and copy and paste the YouTube URL for your video into the URL field.

Campaign Body Text
Write a detailed description of your fundraising campaign, including the crowdfunding goal, how raising money will impact the school, students or local community, and how the funds will be used. Try to be clear and concise in your description of the campaign.

Additional Media
As an option, users can add additional photos or videos to the campaign.

STEP 3 – GOALS

Goal Amount
Enter the total amount you want to raise during the campaign. When deciding on a goal, consider increasing your goal by 5% to cover credit card processing fees and the fee to use the Livingtree platform. Please note that it can take up to 30 days to receive donated funds at your school.

Start Date and End Date
Select a start and end date for your campaign. Crowdfunding campaigns are not bound by Austin ISD’s two week fundraiser rule, but we recommend short timelines (less than 45 days). Short timelines create a sense of urgency and help maintain momentum once donors begin to give to your campaign.
Donation Amounts
Set specific giving levels based on your fundraising goal. Use this section to describe any recognition opportunities that come with making a donation. Donors who wish to give an amount not shown may enter a different donation amount on the payment page.

STEP 4 – SHARE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA (OPTIONAL)

Social Media
Use your social media login credentials to promote to your circle of potential donors via Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn. Donors will contribute to a campaign if they know the creator, if they connect with the story, and if they are reminded of the campaign over time.

STEP 5 – FINANCE-RELATED OPTIONS

Teacher Accounts
For teacher accounts, the field containing the Accounting Code will be filled in by the school bookkeeper. Please leave this field blank. To notify your bookkeeper that your campaign is ready to be assigned an accounting code, click Submit to Financial Accountant. Bookkeepers will then enter the appropriate accounting information related to your campus activity fund.

After entering the accounting information, the school bookkeeper will submit the campaign to the principal for approval. The school principal will review the campaign and approve or suggest edits. After receiving final approval, the campaign will be published on the Livingtree website. You will receive an email from Livingtree confirming the publication of your campaign.

PTA Accounts
For PTA accounts, you may connect to PayPal to receive donations. To send donations directly to your PTA PayPal account, click PayPal Connect and follow the steps to connect your account to the Livingtree campaign. The fee to use PayPal is 5% plus .30¢ per transaction, which includes 2.1% to Livingtree. If your PTA does not have a PayPal account, you can receive donations via American’s Charities, Livingtree’s 501c3 partner. The fee to use America’s Charities is 1%. This is in addition to 5% plus .30¢ per transaction for Livingtree and PayPal fees.
To notify your school principal that your campaign is ready to be approved, click Submit for Approval. The school principal will review the campaign and approve or suggest edits. After receiving final approval, the campaign will be published on the Livingtree website. You will receive an email from Livingtree confirming the publication of your campaign.

Livingtree Receipt and Thank You Message

A thank you letter will be automatically generated by Livingtree after a donation is made. Users can customize by checking the box under Use Custom Livingtree Receipt Thank You Message.

Preview

Click the Preview button to view your campaign. If you would like to edit the content or image, click anywhere on the page to exit the preview mode. Click on the Back button to revise.

STEP 6 – RECEIVING FUNDS

District Process

The process for receiving donations was created in conjunction with Austin ISD Finance. All Livingtree donations will be processed through Austin ISD’s PayPal account and are associated with a campus student activity account. Once the money is received in Austin ISD Treasury, funds are transferred to the corresponding activity account. Please note that it can take up to 30 days for donated funds to be deposited in your school account. Tax receipts acknowledging the donation will automatically be sent to donors via email.

PTA Process

Donations made to PTA-sponsored campaigns will be processed through the individual PTA’s PayPal account.