

# How to Build a Monthly Giving Program





# Have you ever wondered how other charities keep their important work going?

It's all about building a strong, steady stream of support. **Monthly giving programs are a proven strategy to engage loyal donors and help you forecast more accurately for the future.** Monthly giving is like planting seeds that grow into a forest of help, especially during tough times and slow seasons.

In this eBook, we'll show you how to set up monthly giving programs and make it easy for donors to be your superheroes, helping your charity thrive!





# Why You Should Build a Monthly Giving Program

Asking for support is what you do naturally as a charity – it helps your good work, contributes to overhead costs, and moves your mission forward.

Here are the reasons why sustainable monthly donations are a great idea for everyone involved:

- **Increased Donor Lifetime Value:** Take your lead from utility companies and banks who send monthly bills – they know that most consumers can get overwhelmed by big dollar amounts and are more comfortable with easy monthly installments.
- **Predictable revenue:** The good work that you do requires time and planning to make a difference, and accruing a monthly income from engaged donors best supports a sustainable program. When this is explained to supporters sincerely, they understand and agree.
- **Improved Donor Retention:** People may intend to give you to on a recurring schedule but without a program where they can 'set it and forget it.'
- **Reduced Fundraising Costs:** Finding new donors can get expensive, if you can retain more donors from events and campaigns, you can reduce efforts that don't give you the same return (ROI).
- **Mission Impact and Cause Awareness:** A regular donor relationship spanning months and years gives you an engaged supporter, advocate, and cause champion in the long term ... And that's the goal!



It may take a culture shift at your organization to start thinking about opportunities to grow your monthly donor base. Once your team is tuned in to identifying potential regular donors—whether it be through face-to-face fundraising or simply asking any existing donors, volunteers or fans to give monthly—you may be surprised at how generous your supporters can be.

# How to Remove Barriers to Donors' Monthly Giving



We know: Asking for donations month-over-month can seem like a tough sell on the surface. Positioned the wrong way, it can feel like a nagging obligation! That's why it's so important to make sure your donors **understand the power of giving regularly.**

Here are a few ways to demonstrate why monthly giving is a smart choice:

**Give donors control:** Donors want to know what the experience of monthly giving at your charity is like. Online donation forms can give donors a great deal of control. For instance, you can give donors the option to choose the transaction date and number of monthly installments themselves. Make sure your materials answer these questions. Flexibility in giving means more monthly donations!

**Smooth over concerns:** "Along with payment flexibility, donors also want to know how to pause or stop monthly donations if personal circumstances change. Reassure them by letting them know that they can "pause" rather than outright cancel their recurring giving. This is a way of putting donations on "hold" for a future time when the donor feels comfortable with the monthly expense. And of course, you should assure donors that they can cancel their monthly donation at any time without receiving further solicitations if that's their wish.


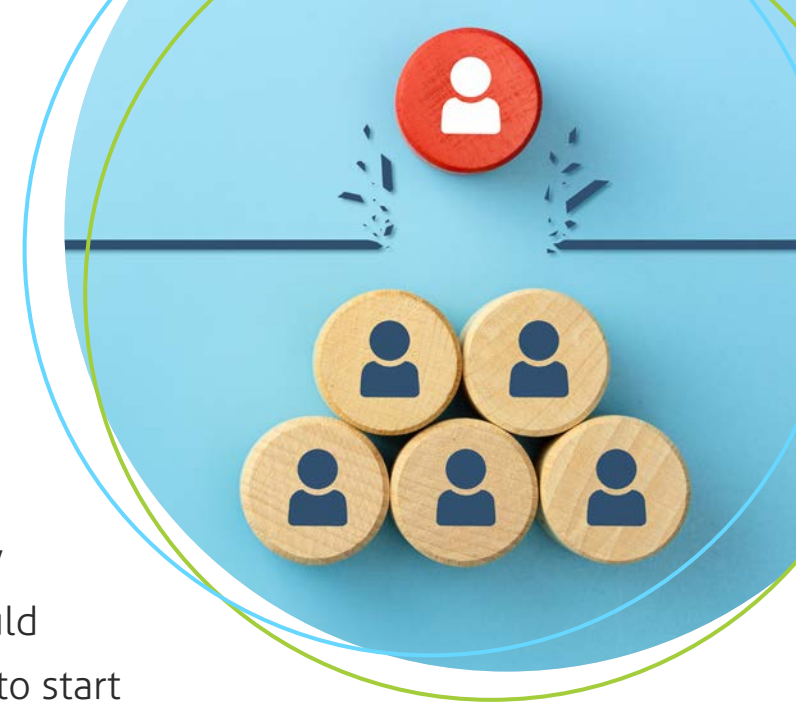
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## How to Remove Barriers to Donors' Monthly Giving

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**Progress corporate partnerships:** Extend your corporate partner support by linking employee contributions directly to your program services. Payroll deduction programs make it easier than ever for supporters to donate automatically at their workplace. Look for fundraising software, like [Workplace by FrontStream](#), that gives you flexible customization and configuration options to ensure every aspect of your partner campaigns provides a modern, personalized, pledge experience.

**Highlight the exclusivity:** Your monthly donors are a special bunch, so you should make sure they know it! The best place to start with this is by officially naming your monthly donors. Come up with a catchy “club” name so that these donors feel part of something exclusive and unique. (Think about the rising trend towards tribalism!)



Put together a **communications pipeline** for your monthly donors, whether it's a newsletter or regular email update, that offers an in-depth look into the good that their support is doing. Plan out your emails or direct mail pieces for this exclusive group, even if they are just a few times a year. What can you offer that's a bit extra? Contests? Special swag? Social get-togethers? Be creative!



# Monthly Giving Program Names to Inspire You



## Compassion Collective

### Tier 1: Compassion Crusaders

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$10

### Tier 2: Empathy Envoys

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$25

### Tier 3: Harmony Heroes

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$50

### Tier 4: [Founder's Name] Champions

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$150

## Heartfelt Heroes

### Tier 1: Heartwarmers

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$15

### Tier 2: Kindness Keepers

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$30

### Tier 3: Empowerment Elite

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$60

### Tier 4: [Founder's Name] Guardians

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$180

## Impact Innovators

### Tier 1: Change Champions

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$20

### Tier 2: Progress Pioneers

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$40

### Tier 3: Transformation Trailblazers

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$80

### Tier 4: [Founder's Name] Innovators

Suggested Monthly Donation: \$150



Check out this [guide](#) packed with **100 Monthly Giving Program name ideas** that your donors will love!



# Special Premiums for Special Donors



Some monthly giving programs include small incentives to **encourage members** to sign up. Exclusive premiums for your monthly donors don't have to be fancy. Here are some ideas:

- Beautifully designed certificate that a donor can frame
- Hand-written thank you letter from your founder
- Personal call from an employee or volunteer
- Small toy or branded item (some programs also match the gift with the donation to a patient or client they serve; for instance, a teddy bear to a child in the hospital)
- Exclusive event, lunch, or tour of your facility
- Discount on a table at your annual gala or waived registration fees for your annual 5K or polar plunge
- Discounts from corporate partners or local businesses that support your cause



## Tell Your Story

Testimonials are powerful for a reason: We are all motivated by feedback from our peers! Take the time to ask your monthly donors why they have committed to giving regularly. Ask them how it makes them feel to know they are supporting you in a sustained way. Use those quotes and stories to help upgrade your one-time donors or new supporters.



# How to Ask for a Little More

You've got an incredible group of monthly donors backing your cause – their consistent support shows their generosity and dedication to making a difference.

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**But here's the exciting part:**

**They're eager to hear from you and get even more involved in your mission!**

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Monthly donors understand the power of ongoing support. They see themselves as partners in your organization's journey, and they value your continued engagement (without feeling bombarded with constant asks).

So, how do you ask for a little bit more from these amazing supporters?

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## How to Ask for a Little More

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**It's all about showing gratitude and offering opportunities for deeper involvement.** Consider reaching out a few extra times throughout the year, not just for donations, but to share updates, offer special gifts (like a calendar or a bookmark), or provide information on planned giving. When you bring them along with your progress and impact, it makes it easier to ask for more in a fund a need campaign.

Create a regular upgrade cycle so that you don't forget to invite these loyal donors to help just a little bit more (many charities call their donors annually to thank them and ask them to give more).

At ten months is a great time to ask for an increase in support. A phone call or email thanking your donors for everything they've helped you accomplish is a terrific opening. A \$5 upgrade – say, from \$20 to \$25 – makes a huge difference for your organization at the end of the year.

Your upgrade ask shouldn't be the first or only thing they hear from you after joining your monthly giving program. No matter how you plan your upgraded communications, make sure they know how special they are and how their support has made a tangible difference. **By building a strong relationship based on appreciation and impact, you'll inspire your monthly donors to continue their generous support and take it to new heights.**

## Tax Receipting and Monthly Donors

Most monthly giving programs annualize a donor's monthly contributions for a calendar year and then send out one tax receipt for the full amount in January of the following year. Your online fundraising vendor should be able to do this for your donors automatically if you choose to send out receipts by email. However you handle your receipts, your monthly program participants should always get communications that acknowledge their regular commitment—especially that first “thank you for signing up!” email or letter.





## Credit Cards and Security

Your online donors will have questions about how their credit card information is stored. Reassure them that for reoccurring donations, your staff members are not able to see the credit card number stored in your system. Administrators should only be able to identify a card by the last 4 digits. When a credit card expires, your staff will be able to update those details on the donor record or add a new card number to the system.



# How to Launch Your Program



The drive for donations is nonstop, but bringing in more monthly donors can significantly contribute to your organization's financial security. Here's a few things to consider when get started:

**Strategic timing:** Consider launching your monthly giving program during key fundraising periods like the year-end giving season, seasonal campaigns related to your cause, or around milestone events for your organization. Pairing your launch with a matching gift campaign can also create a sense of urgency and encourage more donors to commit to monthly giving.

**Prominent promotion:** Review your website and print materials to ensure that monthly giving options are prominently featured. Include the option for donors to give monthly on donation forms, pledge forms, or anywhere they can make a gift to your organization. Make the sign-up process clear and simple, so it's easy for donors to commit to monthly giving.

**Integrated messaging:** Incorporate messaging about your monthly giving program into your communications strategy. Highlight the impact of monthly donations and the benefits of sustained support in newsletters, social media posts, and fundraising appeals.



# Don't "Set it and forget it"

While recurring donations are great for donors to "Set it and forget it," this doesn't work for the fundraiser side. We recommend a comprehensive review annually, but some organizations, especially those with robust monthly giving programs, will benefit from biannual or quarterly reviews. Put on your donor hat and conduct your own secret shopping:

**Evaluate effectiveness** of your messaging and communications strategy in promoting monthly giving. Update messaging to align with donor preferences and address evolving donor needs.

**Assess the donor experience** throughout the sign-up process and donor journey. Look for opportunities to streamline the sign-up process.

**Review the incentives and benefits** you offer to monthly donors to ensure they are attractive and aligned with donor preferences. Consider introducing new incentives or updating existing ones to boost participation and engagement.

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# Don't "Set it and forget it"

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When it comes to reviewing your program, these metrics clarify what's working for you and what may need a new approach. Here are three (of many) main metrics to keep in mind:

## Retention Rate

Measure the percentage of monthly donors who continue their support over time. A high retention rate indicates strong donor loyalty and program effectiveness.

## Monthly Donor Growth

Track the number of new monthly donors acquired over a specific period to assess the program's ability to attract and retain supporters.

## Average Monthly Gift

Monitor the average gift amount from monthly donors to gauge the program's overall fundraising impact and donor engagement.



Grab this free eBook **9 LIT Tips to Fire-up Fundraising Performance** to learn about more key performance indicators (KPIs) you should use to better evaluate your overall impact and engage donors on a deeper level.





## Start Your Monthly Giving Program to Engage Supporters on a Deeper Level with FrontStream

Our digital all-in-one fundraising + donor and volunteer engagement tools make it easy to grow the depth and breadth of your support. Features like unlimited constituent records and communications, monthly giving program setup, dynamic SmartLists, and powerful integrations with platforms such as QuickBooks, Mailchimp, and Constant Contact, are just the beginning!

Chat with one of our fundraising and donor engagement experts to learn more about all the ways FrontStream can help your unique needs:

[Talk to an expert](#)