



# Fundraising Kit

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# Introduction

Dear Student,

Welcome to the **G.I.F.T.S.** experience! Our whole reason for existence is so that you, and other dedicated filmmakers like you, can find ways to independently conceive, fund, produce, and distribute your motion picture ideas. We believe in the power of independent filmmakers to change culture and society for the better, and we want to help you as much as possible. That's why the **G.I.F.T.S.** curriculum is intensive ("film boot camp"), hands-on (no classrooms), and self-directed (mentors help you make **your** movie). We try and prepare you for the world of small-budget independent filmmaking by giving you the confidence and essential skills you need to make award-winning movies at a furious rate, while saving time and resources that you can use to build your own production company.

A crucial skill of any successful "independent" is fundraising. We are happiest when we see students actively fundraising for their education. While **G.I.F.T.S.** courses are very reasonably priced, filmmaking is one of the most costly cultural pursuits. If you're going to learn how to raise funds for your films, you might as well start early; the movie you make here as a student may well be the least expensive production you ever make, so it's a good place to start.

## Bursaries and Scholarships

The Access to Media Education Society (AMES) (ph. (250) 539-5904, web: [www.gulfislands.com/ames](http://www.gulfislands.com/ames), email: [ames@gulfislands.com](mailto:ames@gulfislands.com)) and **G.I.F.T.S.** have teamed up to provide bursaries and scholarships for students attending **G.I.F.T.S.** for our regular courses. Bursaries are based on financial need, and students are eligible for up to \$300 in aid. Scholarships are for full tuition of a Media Intensive Program (\$595 in value) and are based on competition. Application forms can be found on the internet at [www.GIFTSfilms.com](http://www.GIFTSfilms.com) or by phoning the AMES or **G.I.F.T.S.** offices.





# Other Sources

Before you approach someone for funds for your education, be sure that you have done the research you need to confirm that those funds are available. Use libraries, community centres, career centres, the internet, phone books, and word of mouth before picking up the phone. We don't keep up-to-date information at the G.I.F.T.S. office on what funds are available for students, since there is such a broad and ever-changing array of possibilities. Consider the research you are doing as part of your training as a filmmaker: don't be afraid to make mistakes, but be sure you've done your homework. Above all, remember the name of the game: contacts. Use your contacts well, and start with those you know best, then work outwards from there.

## Community Organizations

This is often your best bet for one-time educational funding.

Community Arts Councils and other art oriented organizations who work at the local level often provide support and funding for local people who want to get involved in the arts. Check your town, city, or region's community organization listings (usually available from local municipal governments).

Service clubs (such as Rotary and Lions clubs) are another great source of local funding, and are usually very locally oriented, so search your community listings.

Employee funds are pools of philanthropic funds contributed to by the employees of large corporations. While they are usually destined for charitable organizations, some funds are occasionally available for individuals.

Religious institutions such churches or temples usually have service clubs associated with them, and are not always limited to funding their own members.

## Local businesses

Don't be too reluctant to approach local businesses for sponsorships. You will have to be well-prepared to do this properly; have a letter of introduction and the right contacts lined up. You may have to make an appointment and have a presentation ready.

Financial institutions often have educational awards. Even (or especially) smaller Credit Unions often have significant sponsorships and grants. Check with your local financial institutions to see if they have any funding programs.





## Foundations

Foundations and other charitable organizations may have educational grants and scholarships. Many of them are set up specifically to support education in the arts. There are extensive listings of these organizations in the central branches of most city library systems.

## Social Services

Social Services departments, both federal and provincial, can be approached to provide finances towards education or training if your family is on assistance. If this applies to you, contact your local branch or social worker and inquire about what funds might be available to you for an intensive course in media production. We will be happy to provide further information on courses if you are asked for it.

## Do It Yourself!

First, there's the most obvious way: save up. Work at a paying job and salt it away in advance for a course. Discipline with your budget is another hallmark of a successful independent filmmaker.

You may also independently fundraise: create your own raffle, or canvass the neighbourhood. Have a fundraising gathering: invite friends and relatives and artistic mentors to help with fundraising ideas. If you know other students who are interested in coming to G.I.F.T.S., you can organize a group event, such as a car wash or dance. Don't forget the need to advertise such events well!

If you have a job but haven't saved up all that you need to take a G.I.F.T.S. course, you may consider the payment plan, which allows you to spread payments over six months. See the course calendar or the website for further details.

