



# A Guide to Fundraising for the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter

Fundraising doesn't have to be difficult... it can be fun.



Help your network of family and friends take the stress out of fundraising.



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The mission of the Scleroderma Foundation is threefold: to provide educational and emotional support to people with scleroderma and their families; to stimulate and support research designed to identify the cause and cure of scleroderma as well as improve methods of treatment; and to enhance public awareness of scleroderma and related diseases.

# Getting Started with Fundraising

Tips to help you reach and exceed your fundraising goals.

**1. Reach out to people you know.**

Starting your peer-to-peer fundraising by asking your closest friends, family members and coworkers will help you be more comfortable and successful.

**2. Share your passion.**

Being passionate about the mission of the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter when you talk to others will make them want to engage and donate.

**3. Share a personal connection or story as it relates to the scleroderma community.**

Starting a conversation with statements like, "It's a good cause," will not have the same impact as telling your personal story or how you are connected to the scleroderma community. Share some statistics about scleroderma: 1 out of 906 Americans are living with scleroderma. There are over 10,000 children, men and women living with this disease in Michigan. There is no known cause or cure and few treatments.

**4. Be specific in your ask.**

When asking someone for a donation, be specific in your request. If you would like a \$25 contribution, ask for that amount. If you think this person can donate more, be confident in your ask and request more. The worst the person can say is no. Every person is a potential donor.

**5. Use your social media to encourage donations.**

Social media is the perfect way to recruit donations and an easy way for those who do not like face-to-face fundraising. Posting what is important to you is an outstanding way to educate your followers about what you are involved with.

**6. Set an attainable goal and raise it as needed.**

Determine how many people you can reach out to and consider the level of gift each might give to the event. Total that amount, and that can

become your fundraising goal. Then, watch your total. As it gets close to being achieved, increase it. People want to know they are helping you reach your goal, and some may consider not giving as much if they think you are close to it.

**7. Ask your donors to share their generosity with their network.**

Your donors can help you reach and exceed your fundraising goal by talking to their own network. It only takes one question, "Do you know anyone who would consider donating to help me reach and exceed my goal?" Again, remember the worst thing someone will say is no.

**8. Update your progress.**

Update your donors often about your fundraising progress on social media and through emails or in-person updates. Keep them engaged in what you are doing and excited that their own dollars are making a significant difference in the overall campaign. You never know what will compel someone to provide a second gift or ask someone else to contribute to your campaign.

**9. Do a fun event with friends, family members or coworkers to add to your fundraising revenue.**

Team leaders have organized garage sales, raffles, house parties, jeans days at their work, backyard events and even dinners to raise funds creatively. Think about what motivates your network and then plan a fun event to watch your peer-to-peer fundraising revenue increase without much effort. You will also be creating awareness and education. Remember FUNdraising does not have to be challenging, it can be creatively done when you work with your network.

## Tips for Writing Your Fundraising Letter

**It is important you take the time to create a letter that has a call to action and tells a story.**

1. Tell your story (including your connection to scleroderma).
2. Use simple and straightforward wording. Be specific in your ask. Do not hesitate to request what you want.
3. Personalize the letter. Use "you" and "I" in the body of the letter so the reader will feel a connection to the ask.
4. Make your letter easy to read.
5. Avoid making paragraphs longer than seven sentences.
6. Use bullets when possible to make strong points.
7. Bold or underline important statements.
8. Talk about how the donation will have a direct impact on the scleroderma community and those who have scleroderma. People are more inclined to donate when they know where the funds are going.
9. Hand sign the letter and send a stamped return envelope.
10. Add a P.S. to the letter. This can capture the attention of the reader.
11. Research shows the length of the letter does have an effect. Longer letters have been shown to bring in larger gifts. Shorter asks do not always provide enough reasoning for a larger contribution.
12. Make a strong call to action. Be specific and include deadlines and timing.
13. Make an emotional, heartfelt appeal.
14. Provide details about how the gift can be made. Give links and addresses to send a check or offer to pick up the donation when possible.
15. Write a handwritten thank you. It's a personal touch that is highly valued.
16. Establish relationships with your network even after the event. Share details about the work the Michigan Chapter is doing, interesting articles and future events.
17. When necessary, send a gentle reminder letter or email. People are busy and things slip their minds. Don't assume someone is not interested simply because they haven't responded.

# Sample Fundraising Letter

**Use this sample fundraising letter as a template. Customize and structure your letter anyway you want so it becomes a tool that works hard for you.**

(Personalized Greeting),

I am fundraising for the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter, and every dollar I raise will directly impact over 10,000 people living with scleroderma in the state of Michigan.

With 1 out of 906 Americans being affected, the need is greater than ever for more resources, quality education, and effective awareness and marketing campaigns.

As you may know, I have a personal connection to the scleroderma community. As a (patient/family member/caregiver), I know firsthand the devastating effects of the disease. My journey began (share specific details).

The Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter is a cause close to my heart because they make a significant impact in the lives of those living with scleroderma.

Will you consider contributing to my campaign? I have a goal to raise (add in goal amount). A gift of (suggested amount) can go far toward achieving the strategic goals of the Michigan Chapter. We are looking to increase the reach of our educational programs, create juvenile programs and resources that are currently non-existent in Michigan, extend our reach to the medical community, and expand our marketing, media and public relations campaigns. Every dollar you give will benefit these initiatives.

Thank you in advance for supporting my efforts! I could not meet my fundraising goal without your generosity.

(Signature goes here)

P.S. If you would like to make your donation online, go to [scleroderma-mi.org](http://scleroderma-mi.org) and click on "donate." The link is secure and easy to use. You can also send a check made out to the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter in the enclosed stamped envelope.

# Sample Fundraising Letter To A Previous Contributor

**Use this sample fundraising letter as a template to reach out to those who have previously donated to the Michigan Chapter.**

(Personalized Greeting),

Thank you for your continued support of the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter, a charity I am passionate about. Your generosity has significantly benefited the Michigan Chapter's three-fold mission of support, education and research.

The funds raised last year helped the Michigan Chapter:

- Increase awareness
- Expand exposure and media coverage of scleroderma
- Develop educational programs for support groups
- Enlarge patient panels with medical students
- Create resources for those who are living with scleroderma
- Offer web-based learning experiences for the scleroderma community throughout the world

**You helped make this all possible. Your gift touched so many lives and allowed for growth and strategic planning to ensure the future of the chapter remains strong.** Despite all the growth we have seen in the past year, there is so much more work to be done. With 1 out of 906 Americans living with scleroderma and over 10,000 of those residing in Michigan, the time is now to step up and make an impact.

I raise funds because (briefly explain why you fundraise). Last year I raised XX, and this year, my goal is to raise XX. I need your help to get there. Will you help me exceed my fundraising goals?

If you would like to make your donation online, go to [scleroderma-mi.org](http://scleroderma-mi.org) and click on "donate." The link is secure and easy to use. You can also send a check made out to the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter in the enclosed stamped envelope.

(Signature goes here)

# Email Templates to Encourage Donations

## Template #1: First Email

I am raising money for a cause that's close to my heart: the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter. My goal is to raise \$XX by DATE. Every dollar will directly impact over 10,000 people living with scleroderma in our state. Did you know? 1 out of 906 Americans have scleroderma, and there is currently no known cause or cure. I want to help educate, create awareness and raise funds for the three-fold mission of the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter: support, education and research. I hope you will support my goals.

Every dollar raised will have a significant impact on the scleroderma community and the work the Michigan Chapter is doing.

Thank you for considering a contribution. No matter the gift you can provide, it will make a difference.

To donate, go to [scleroderma-mi.org](http://scleroderma-mi.org) and click "donate." The link is secure and easy to use.

## Template #2: Follow-up Email

I recently sent you an email about my fundraising efforts for Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter (and my upcoming fundraiser to benefit them, which will be held on XXXX). I know how busy you are, so I wanted to remind you that it's not too late for you to donate. Every dollar will make a significant difference and will impact the lives of over 10,000 people living with scleroderma in Michigan.

I hope you will help me meet and exceed my fundraising goal of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. I am getting closer to this mark, and with your help, I am confident I can reach the goal. Donating and registering is easy, just go to [scleroderma-mi.org](http://scleroderma-mi.org) and click "donate."

Thank you for your support. I look forward to sharing my progress with you.

## Template #3: Updating Your Progress

Thank you so much for your recent contribution to my fundraising efforts for Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter. Your kindness and generosity enabled me to raise a total of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to date. What an accomplishment! I am proud of my efforts and would like to keep fundraising. I am grateful that you share the same commitment to raising funds to support the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter. Together, WE CAN get closer to finding a cure.



#### Template #4: You've Reached Your Goal

My fundraising efforts benefiting the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter are over, and it was a tremendous success because of your generosity. I wanted to take a moment and share the total of my fundraising efforts. Working together, we were able to raise \$ \_\_\_\_!

You played an active part in that total and I thank you. I hope you understand the significance of your donation and how it will directly impact the scleroderma community. You are a truly generous giver and friend.

Thank you again for being part of my fundraising effort.

# Social Media Templates & Tips

Templates and tips to help you fundraise.

## 1. Include a call to action in your social media posts.

Creating a call to action with your social media posts will help increase your engagement for your fundraising efforts. Use phrases like:

- Now's the time to get involved in a worthwhile cause. Donate online now.
- There are over 10,000 people with scleroderma in Michigan. Please help me exceed my fundraising goal of \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Make an impact that will be long-lasting. Donate to the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter today.

## 2. Grab attention.

Being passionate about the mission of the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter will make it more enticing for others. To inspire donations, use words that spark emotion.

## 3. Share a personal connection or story as it relates to the scleroderma community.

Sharing something personal will give readers a compassionate reason to engage. Don't just state that the Scleroderma Foundation is a worthy organization or a good cause. Go into detail about why a donor should provide a contribution. What makes the Michigan Chapter different? Share statistics about scleroderma: 1 out of 906 Americans are living with scleroderma. In the state of Michigan, there are over 10,000 children, men and women living with this disease. It has no known cause or cure and few treatments. If you need more facts, look at the Michigan Chapter website ([scleroderma-mi.org](http://scleroderma-mi.org)) or email Laura Dyas at [ldyas@scleroderma.org](mailto:ldyas@scleroderma.org).

## 4. Maximize the timing of your post.

Research shows the best times to post on Facebook are Thursday and Friday, from 1 to 3 p.m., with an 18% increase in engagement.

## 5. Create an event to encourage donations for Stampede Scleroderma.

Facebook makes it easy to create an event and raise funds. The Michigan Chapter is already eligible for these types of events. All you need to do is create your own personal page and begin posting.

**6. Use video when possible.**

Consider creating a short video about why you are involved with the Michigan Chapter and post it on social media. Share your passion on video so your enthusiasm can be seen and heard.

**7. Update your progress.**

Keep social media updated about your progress: how close you are to achieving your fundraising goals or if you are hosting any upcoming fundraising events. This will increase interest and engagement.

**8. Make sure your links are working correctly before you post.**

**9. Publicly thank those who have donated.**

Thank donors publicly if they will allow you to use their name on social media. If not, you can mention you have received a donation and how the funds will benefit the Michigan Chapter.

# Creating Your Social Media Messaging

Creating personalized social media messaging will help you encourage donations to the chapter. We've provided some examples of social media posts that you can customize for your network.

## 1. I am working hard to make an impact. Want to join in?

I'm hosting a third-party event for the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter, and I'd love for you to attend. Every dollar will make a significant difference to over 10,000 people living with scleroderma in Michigan. Join me on DATE at LOCATION from TIME. PROVIDE DETAILS HERE

## 2. Updating your network

My fundraising for SFMC is adding up. I am XX% toward my goal and only need \$XX to get there. Donating is quick, secure and easy. Every dollar has a lasting impact on the 1 out of 906 Americans living with scleroderma. Donate online now by going to [scleroderma-mi.org](http://scleroderma-mi.org) and clicking "donate."

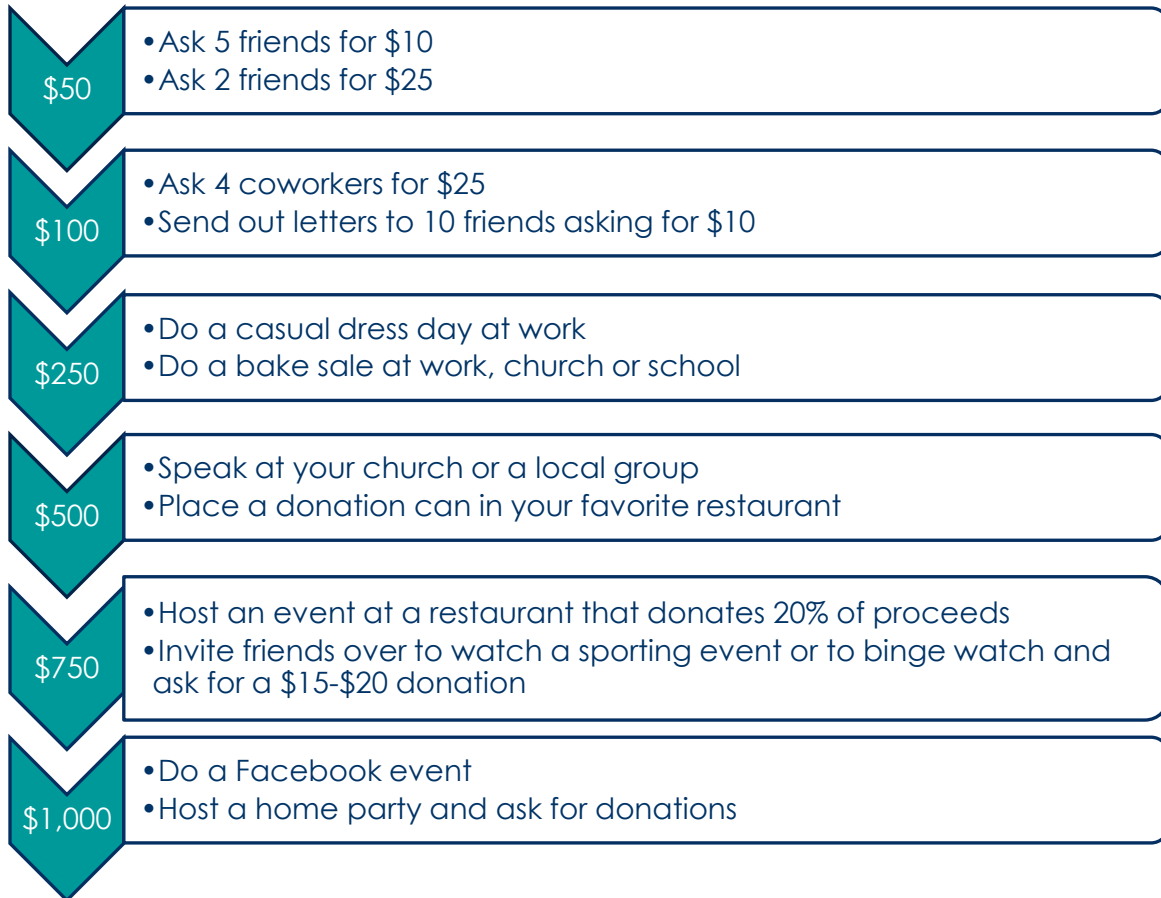
## 3. If you reach your goal

We did it! You helped me reach my fundraising goal of \$XX to benefit the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter. I couldn't have done this without you. Since there is still so much work to be done for this disease, I've decided to increase my goal for those who have not had the chance to give yet or would like to give more. Can you help me reach my new goal of \$XX. Donate now by going to [scleroderma-mi.org](http://scleroderma-mi.org) and clicking "donate."

# Making Your Fundraising Plan

It's important to map out an effective plan to help you achieve your fundraising goals.

Use the tips below to chip away at your fundraising totals:



**Be creative when raising funds and put the FUN into fundraising.  
Think outside the box to meet your fundraising goal.**



## Making Your Solicitation List

Taking time to create a list of people to solicit to is an important part of fundraising. Being diligent about not skipping anyone is an even more important component.

Know that you are not asking for yourself, you are asking for the over 10,000 persons living with scleroderma in Michigan. Believe in yourself and create your solicitation list. Remember, the worst someone can say is no. Imagine the excitement when they say yes!

Mom	Social Media Group
Dad	Employer
Brother(s)/Brother-In-Law(s)	Co-Workers
Sister(s)/ Sister-In-Law(s)	Church Family
Aunt(s)	Golf Buddies
Uncle(s)	Favorite Restaurant(s)
Cousins	Coffee Hang-Out
Nieces	Book Club Members
Nephews	Rotary Group
Grandparents	Kiwanis Group
Godparents	VFW Group
Nanny	BNN Group
Babysitter(s)	Investment Group
Neighbors	Financial Advisor(s)
Doctor(s)	High School Group
Dentist(s)	College Group
Manicurist	Children's School Group
Hair Salon Staff	PTA Group
Gym Staff	Groomer for Your Animals
Pharmacist	Vet
College Roommate(s)	Drycleaner
Fraternity Group	Attorney
Sorority Group	Bowling Group
Community Group Friends	Motorcycle Group
Coach(s)	Boating Group

## The Importance of a Personalized Plan

**Putting everything you've learned together and creating a personalized plan will be the key to effective fundraising. If you still have questions, email [ldyas@scleroderma.org](mailto:ldyas@scleroderma.org) and Laura Dyas will assist you with your fundraising needs. Together, we can and will reach our yearly goal.**

It's important to make a personalized fundraising plan that works for you. The more comfortable you feel, the more effective the plan will be. If you don't like directly asking people for money, consider other ways to raise funds.

Be creative, have fun and personalize to your own style. Know your audience and what they like. People will be generous when they are having fun, so gearing activities around what they like to do will encourage larger donations.

Educate your network. No one wants to give to a black hole. Share who we are, why you are passionate about us and where the funds are going. It's important for someone to know why they're donating to the Michigan Chapter.

A wise woman once told me that the only fear in fundraising is hearing a no. Even then, a no doesn't mean no forever, it can mean no for only today. Don't take a no personally. Thank the person for listening and ask if you can reach out again at another time. Ask if the person would consider coming to the event to learn more about the Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter, or if this person would volunteer at the event. Ask if they have a skill we could possibly use. Maybe this is someone who we could add to our board of directors or even spend an hour offering advice. Advice meetings are priceless, and we learn so much from our community members.

Everyone in your network has the potential to give a contribution, become a volunteer, give an in-kind donation, do an advice meeting or become a sponsor for the event. Determine how best to use everyone in your network before asking, or ask an open-ended question such as, "How can I best use you and your talents to benefit the Michigan Chapter?" People welcome being asked where their skills can be used.

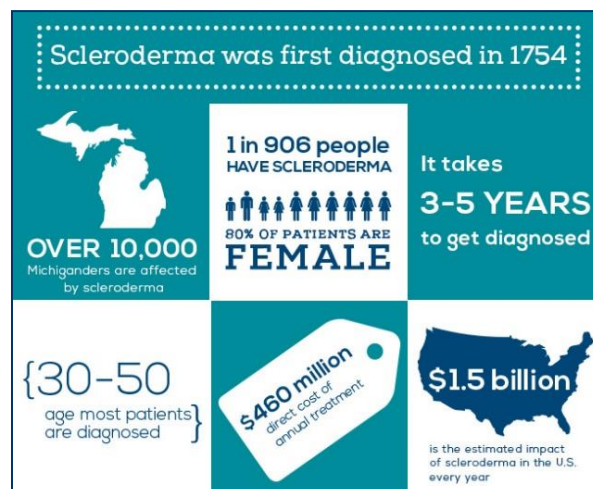
# Scleroderma Facts

Providing information about scleroderma can be beneficial when soliciting for donations. An educated donor will be more compelled to contribute if he/she understands who benefits from their contribution.

- Scleroderma is a chronic, autoimmune connective tissue disease. Symptoms typically include some or all the following: sensitivity to cold in fingers and hands, thickening of the skin, shortness of breath, difficulty swallowing, joint stiffness and pain, and damage to internal organs.
- Autoimmune diseases, which affect more than 50 million Americans, are the third leading cause of death in the United States.
- There are over 10,000 persons living with scleroderma in Michigan.
- 1 out of 906 American are affected by scleroderma.
- 95% of scleroderma cases begin with Raynaud's phenomenon (hands and feet become abnormally sensitive to cold).
- Federal research funding for scleroderma lags behind other diseases of similar prevalence.
- Misdiagnosis is common. It can take three years or more for an individual to be diagnosed and receive appropriate treatment, often due to lack of familiarity with the disease among medical professionals.
- In Michigan, some clinics have reported seeing as many as **10 newly diagnosed scleroderma patients per week.**
- Although scleroderma can strike anyone (from infants to the elderly), an estimated **80% are women** between the ages of 25 and 55.
- The estimated total economic impact of scleroderma in the United States in **\$1.5 billion annually.**



- The direct cost of treatment for scleroderma patients is more than **\$460 million annually**.
- The thickened skin in scleroderma is caused by overproduction of collagen, which is the basic component of scar tissue. Abnormal accumulation of collagen is called fibrosis.
- There are basic forms of scleroderma: systemic (systemic sclerosis) usually affects the internal organs or internal systems of the body as well as the skin, and localized affects a local area of skin either in patches (morphea) or in a line down an arm or leg (linear scleroderma), or as a line down the forehead (scleroderma en coup de sabre). It is very unusual for localized scleroderma to develop into the systemic form.
- There are many clues that define susceptibility to develop scleroderma. A genetic basis for the disease has been suggested by the fact that systemic scleroderma is more common among patients whose family members have other autoimmune disease (such as lupus).
- In rare cases, systemic scleroderma runs in families, although for the vast majority of patients, there is no other family member afflicted.
- Environmental factors may trigger the disease in the susceptible host. For example, silica exposure has been associated with scleroderma, and certain drugs can cause scleroderma-like reactions.
- Localized scleroderma is more common in children, whereas systemic scleroderma is more common in adults. However, both can occur at any age.





**For more ideas or assistance with fundraising, contact the Scleroderma  
Foundation Michigan Chapter**

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