

There are many online fundraising platforms offering fantastic opportunities for your charity to run campaigns and appeals for donations. But what factors might influence which you choose?

Is it cost alone? Or is it the support on offer, or whether there are additional funding opportunities like match funding or the chance to apply for small hyperlocal grant funds?

We have researched a selection of some of the more well-known platforms, and put together further information to help you make the right choice for your organisation. Other platforms to look at include Kind Link, Global Giving and Everyday Hero. Please check on the relevant websites as changes may have been made since publishing this resource.

Tip One – Get some easy wins the Gift Aid way

Are you sure the community you are targeting in your fundraising campaign know about the impact of Gift Aid? Don't assume they all do. Remind people to tick the Gift Aid option and allow your charity to claim back an additional 25p against tax on every £1 donated. In order to claim, you must be registered with the Charity Commission. Once registered, you need to create a Government Gateway account to set it up. The good news is you can backdate your Gift Aid claim by up to 4 financial years. [Read more about Gift Aid](#) for registered charities or CASCs (Community Amateur Sports Club).

Tip Two - Debit vs credit card debate

Whenever possible encourage your donors to use their debit cards or PayPal account to donate, because your charity receives less money if they use a credit card**. Think about the points of contact you have with your donors, and supporters/fundraisers where you can get this message across. The comparison table below outlines the basic costs your charity will incur on a donation of £10, after deduction of fees and processing costs for debit/credit cards.¹ You can see that some platforms charge monthly or annual fees and one has a set up fee. The difference between the cheapest and most expensive is just under one pound.

	Just Giving *	Local Giving	BT My Donate	PayPal Giving	The Big Give	Virgin Money Giving
Your donation	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00
Gift Aid optional	£2.50	£2.50	£2.50	£2.50	£2.50	£2.50
Transaction fee	£0.63	£0.63	Nil	Nil	£0.50	£0.20
Debit card processing Fee ²	£0.13	£0.34	£0.15	Nil	Nil	£0.15
Total cost to charity	£0.76	£0.97	£0.15	Nil	£0.50	£0.35
Total donation	£11.70	£11.53	£12.35	£12.50	£12.00	£12.15
Ongoing costs	£15 - £39 + VAT per month	£60 + VAT per annum	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
One-off set up costs	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	£100+VAT

Sources: [Money Saving Expert.com](#) ¹ [The Big Give](#) ² July 2018

1) *JustGiving has launched a free new to fundraising page so you can evaluate the service with no fees

2) ** Some platforms have an increased fee for credit card donations

Tip Three - Check out the levels of support on offer

One of the most important things for a small charity starting out is finding out about the levels of support from the platform itself. The majority of fundraising sites offer both FAQ sections and Help guides. But would you be looking for more help to set up your fundraising page? How easily could you contact the platform? Only two of the platforms we looked at provide their phone number. Others provide webchat or an online form to request contact and you can ask them to call you back. We tried both phoning and webchat on several sites during our research - everyone was really helpful with lots of information. But if you are going need to speak to someone to get you started, then 'support' is one of the key criteria you use to select your platform. Remember to allow sufficient lead time of at least a day for any answer to your first email.

Tip Four – Web & social media integration

Another important consideration is reaching donors and inspiring fundraisers using other media channels including your website and social media. If you use social media for your charity, look for features that make it easy for your supporters to use – e.g. donate and share buttons, or injecting a bit of fun with GIFs. Can you inspire your supporters sufficiently to set their own fundraising campaign on your behalf? If so, all of these platforms can host individual fundraiser pages, except PayPal.

	Just Giving	Local Giving	BT My Donate	PayPal Giving	The Big Give	Virgin Money Giving
FAQ	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Help Guides	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Mobile App	Android /IOS	No	Android /IOS	Android /IOS	No	Android /IOS
Training	Online webinars	Yes & London 1:1 support	Yes	Yes	Multichannel marketing templates	Yes
Support	Email, case studies	Phone, email, post	Email & live chat	Email	Email	Phone, email, post
Web & Social Integration	Widgets & donate buttons	No	No	Donate now button	No	No
SMS giving	Yes - no charge for texts	No	No	Yes plus email giving	No	Yes
Insights & reporting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fundraiser pages	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Match Funding	No	Yes (Local Giving own campaigns)	No	No	Yes (identify match funding yourself)	No
Extras	Direct debit for regular giving	Small grants	Employee volunteer project	Linked giving to trusted partners on e-Bay	Trustee finder, Philanthropy in schools, Big Advice Column	1:1 webinars to demo features

Read a great [blog post](#) from Katherine Low Settlement outlining successful match funding campaigns with useful tips to help you plan your first attempt at online fundraising.