IOBY 101
# Table of Contents

ioby 101 .................................................................................................................................................. 3

What is ioby? ........................................................................................................................................... 4

What is crowdfunding? .......................................................................................................................... 5

What services does ioby offer? ................................................................................................................ 6

What resources does ioby provide? .......................................................................................................... 7

What support will I get from ioby? .......................................................................................................... 8

How does ioby's fundraising coaching work? ......................................................................................... 9

How is ioby's platform tailored for community projects? .................................................................. 10

What can I fundraise for on ioby? What CAN'T I fundraise for on ioby? ............................................. 11

Where does ioby work? .......................................................................................................................... 13

How do I get started? ............................................................................................................................... 14

What is the fee for using ioby? ............................................................................................................... 15

How is ioby funded? ............................................................................................................................... 16

Who will donate to my crowdfunding campaign? .............................................................................. 17

How much can I expect to raise? .......................................................................................................... 18

How long is a typical crowdfunding campaign? .................................................................................. 19

Will ioby fundraise for me? ................................................................................................................... 20

Will ioby promote my campaign? ......................................................................................................... 21

What will make my crowdfunding campaign successful? .................................................................. 22

What if I don't meet my funding goal? .................................................................................................. 23

When and how will we get our funds? ................................................................................................... 24

How does ioby's fiscal sponsorship service work? .............................................................................. 25

Can I use ioby as a fiscal sponsor for a grant my project received? .................................................. 26

Can ioby apply for a grant on my behalf? .............................................................................................. 27

Are donations made on ioby tax-deductible? ....................................................................................... 28

Does ioby send tax receipts to my project's donors? .......................................................................... 29

Holiday closures ...................................................................................................................................... 31
What is ioby?

Ioby is a nonprofit crowdfunding platform for local, resident-led positive change. Our name stands for “in our backyards” - the positive opposite of NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard). We believe local residents know what their communities need and are best positioned to lead long-term positive change. Our platform and services are tailored to help residents and grassroots organizations gain the skills and resources to become community leaders.
What is crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding is a method of fundraising for a project that uses an easily shareable and accessible online platform like ioby's to collect many donations. With crowdfunding, small donations from many people can add up to big impact.
What services does ioby offer?

ioby provides an affordable, online crowdfunding platform, paired with customized one-on-one fundraising coaching from a Leader Success Strategist, an experienced crowdfunding coach. This hands-on, personalized support is available to everyone who fundraises with us.

ioby can also offer you fiscal sponsorship, if your project is eligible, so that you can collect tax-deductible donations and make the most of your crowdfunding campaign.

We also regularly provide free workshops and online trainings in crowdfunding.
What resources does ioby provide?

Our resources aren’t just limited to fundraising. Here are some of the many resources we provide:

• **Leader Toolkit**: Our toolkit of fundraising tips and best practices to help you succeed.

• **Learn from a Leader**: Our series of easy how-to guides and videos from past ioby leaders in planning and implementing projects from community gardens to pop-up festivals.

• **Recipes for Change**: Need to know how to make a quick and effective video? How to get community support for your project? We have guides to help your project overcome some common non-fundraising hurdles.

• **The Rainmakers**: For those with ambitious fundraising goals, our Rainmakers guides provide a little extra help in planning and carrying out a larger-budget campaign.

• ioby Action Corps: Our awesome network of experts in everything from landscape architecture to permitting, Action Corps is standing by to help you with your tough questions about getting your project off the ground.

• Free in-person convenings and [peer-to-peer learning webinars](#): We love bringing people together to share what they've learned along the way. [Sign up for our newsletter](#) for info on upcoming events.
What support will I get from ioby?

ioby isn't like any other crowdfunding platform. We provide tailored, one-on-one support throughout your campaign.

ioby won't raise money for you, but we're here to help you at every step while you do. When you run a crowdfunding campaign with ioby, you'll be paired with a Leader Success Strategist who will walk every step of the way with you while you campaign. They'll help you draft a compelling campaign page, strategize the asks you'll make of the people you know, and help you solve roadblocks along the way to get you to your goal. If you have a question about fundraising or need help brainstorming who in city government can help you get permission to get your project done, turn to your Leader Success Strategist.
How does ioby's fundraising coaching work?

We want your project to succeed, and we will provide you with as much support as you need along the way.

Before your campaign goes live, you'll have access to ioby's Leader Toolkit, an easy, getting-started guide, as well as other fundraising resources that are specific to your campaign's needs. You'll also be paired with one of our Leader Success Strategists, an experienced fundraising coach who can help you plan your budget, create a campaign schedule, and hone your fundraising asks. They're ready to help by sharing proven tips and guidelines to help plan your fundraising campaign, and they will help you troubleshoot throughout your campaign.

Are you a first time fundraiser or not sure where to start? Your Leader Success Strategist can be there every step of the way-- Just call or email your Strategist!

If you're feeling confident in your fundraising chops and don't need much help, let your Strategist know! We'll only provide support when you want it.
How is ioby’s platform tailored for community projects?

We've designed our platform to be ideal for community-benefit projects in several important ways. With ioby, you can:

• raise tax deductible donations even if you're not a 501(c)3.
• always keep what you raise with our flexible finish policy.
• seek volunteers and donors at the same time.
• access all your donor contact info to help you cultivate your local base of support.
• fundraise with suggested donation levels instead of cash-value gifts.
• be sure that every donor automatically receives an acknowledgment letter that they can use to claim a tax deduction.
What can I fundraise for on ioby? What CAN'T I fundraise for on ioby?

On ioby, anyone with a great idea for change in their community can raise funds, find volunteers, and access our training and resources. To fundraise on ioby, your project must:

- be based in the United States or US territories,
- have a public benefit rather than private benefit, and
- EITHER be managed by a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization or government entity, OR have a fiscal sponsor (ioby could serve as your fiscal sponsor - information about this service can be found here).

Leaders have used ioby to fundraise for community gardens, food justice, local park improvements, community organizing, neighborhood events, immigrant rights advocacy, school and after school programs, public art, farmer’s markets, historical preservation, renewable energy, bike infrastructure, public transit improvements; the sky's the limit!

We cannot currently support campaigns that benefit just one individual or family (such as campaigns for medical costs), international campaigns that benefit non-US residents, or political campaigning and lobbying activities. And while we're not legally able to support many of the costs associated with starting a for-profit company, we can work with small businesses on projects to improve their community.

Wondering if your project is eligible? Check out the glossary of legal terms below or tell us about it at ioby.org/idea.

- **501(c)3 nonprofit**: An organization as described under Section 501(c)(3) of the US Internal Revenue Code, such as a public charity or private foundation. This type of organization is exempt from federal tax and may receive charitable, tax-exempt donations. You may search registered 501(c)(3) organizations here.
- **Fiscal sponsor**: A fiscal sponsor is a nonprofit organization that has agreed to manage the funds raised by an informal group or individual for a charitable project. Often, fiscal sponsors accept charitable, tax-exempt contributions on behalf of the unincorporated group or individual.
- **Government entity**: Charitable contributions made to governmental units are tax-deductible under section 170(c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code if made for a public purpose. Therefore, government entities may receive a direct disbursement from a nonprofit organization without fiscal sponsor oversight. Examples include municipalities, public schools, libraries, or townships. To verify that we may disburse charitable funds to a government entity, ioby staff will ask for a Governmental Information Letter.
- **Private benefit** or private inurement: When the person or group raising the funds intends to spend them on private interests, or may themselves benefit from the possession of the funds or items purchased with the funds. For example, a private interest may include raising
charitable funds to pay oneself for a service or to purchase property. It may also include raising funds to repair one's family home or to plant a garden on private property. Private benefit may also include spending charitable funds to purchase items that will be used in one's own home, or the home of select friends or family.

- **Public good:** According to the Internal Revenue Service:
  - “IRC 501(c)(3) exempts from Federal income tax: corporations, and any community chest, fund, or foundation, organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, or educational purposes, or to foster national or international amateur sports competition (but only if no part of its activities involve the provision of athletic facilities or equipment), or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals, no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual, no substantial part of the activities of which is carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided in subsection (i)), and which does not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office."

Still not sure? Contact us at success@ioby.org or (917) 464-4515 x 7
Where does ioby work?

Anyone in the United States can fundraise on ioby. We support leaders everywhere from small towns to big cities. ioby has offices in NYC, Memphis, Cleveland, Detroit, and Pittsburgh. Over 2,000 neighbors nationwide, from over 300 towns and cities, have collectively raised more than $7 million in citizen philanthropy through ioby.
How do I get started?

To get started, just go to ioby.org/idea, and tell us about your project or idea. When you submit your project idea, you can immediately access our training materials and begin building your ioby campaign page.

Within about 24 business hours you will also hear from a member of our team who will be in touch with you to answer any questions and set you on the path toward fundraising success.
What is the fee for using ioby?

Our fee is one of the absolute lowest among crowdfunding platforms, and there is no up-front cost for using ioby. At the end of your campaign, we retain a 3% donation fee on the total raised that covers secure third-party donation processing. This fee applies to all ioby campaigns.

If you raise over $1,000 in your campaign, we retain a flat fee of $35 that helps us keep our platform running (and we waive that fee if you raise less than $1,000).

If you elect to use ioby's fiscal sponsorship service, we will also retain a 5% fiscal sponsorship fee on the total raised.

Your ioby Success Strategist, your dedicated crowdfunding coach, will add your estimated fees into your fundraising goal at the beginning of your campaign so there are no surprises.

Read more at ioby.org/fee.
How is ioby funded?

As a nonprofit, ioby receives foundation grants and individual charitable gifts that help fund our core operations. We also rely on the voluntary support of the community of project leaders and donors who we serve.

Every time a donor supports a project on ioby, they are given the option of adding gratuity, a small donation to ioby, to their total. Gratuity is made transparent to donors during check out and is completely optional, but it is essential to keeping our fees low and coaching services strong.
Who will donate to my crowdfunding campaign?

Crowdfunding campaigns are funded by neighbors, friends, family, local businesses, and others from your and your fundraising team’s network who would love to see your project brought to life.
How much can I expect to raise?

While there's no "typical" project budget, many ioby projects fall in the range of a few thousand dollars. We've worked with groups raising anywhere from $100 to more than $100,000. Your Leader Success Strategist, your dedicated fundraising coach, will work with you to make an achievable fundraising plan that's tailored to your project, timeline, and fundraising team.
How long is a typical crowdfunding campaign?

Campaign length varies depending on how much is being raised and how quickly you fundraise, but an average ioby campaign lasts about 6-8 weeks. You can work with your Leader Success Strategist, your dedicated fundraising coach, to make a fundraising plan that's tailored to your project and timeline.
Will ioby fundraise for me?

No crowdfunding platform fundraises for your project, but ioby will provide the tools and coaching you need to run an effective crowdfunding campaign.

ioby regularly shares projects with our national audience via our blog and social media, and our network can give your campaign some extra exposure, but know that most donations to online crowdfunding campaigns are made by people in the extended network of the fundraising team.

No matter what platform you use, successful crowdfunding always starts with YOUR crowd.
Will ioby promote my campaign?

ioby loves to share project stories with our national audience. Where possible, ioby will amplify your team’s fundraising efforts through blog posts, newsletter features, and other social media channels to share your project story, updates, and results. By keeping your Leader Success Strategist looped into interesting campaign news and events, they will be able to work with ioby’s communication team to surface promotional opportunities.

And although sharing your campaign story on ioby’s network can give your campaign exposure, just remember that most fundraising campaigns are funded by folks you already know, and 90% of online donations are made by people already associated with the campaign and fundraising team.
What will make my crowdfunding campaign successful?

While no two crowdfunding campaigns are the same, we’ve collected several best practices from the 2,000+ projects that have been funded on ioby’s platform. Every leader who works with ioby is assigned a Leader Success Strategist, a grassroots fundraising expert who can help you craft a winning campaign page, set the right campaign target, build a strong team, plan campaign communications, and more. Your Strategist can provide you with strategies and resources to set you up for success!
What if I don't meet my funding goal?

You can always keep what you raise on ioby, even if it's less or more than your original fundraising goal. ioby's "flexible finish" policy allows you to change your campaign deadline, revise your budget, and update your fundraising goal if needed. We understand what it's like to lead grassroots projects, and that sometimes, plans change.

Here are some tried and true scenarios in which flex finish comes into play:

Scenario 1: You're close to reaching your fundraising goal, but your volunteer workday is a coming up soon. You know you can get the project done with slightly less funds than you budgeted for and you want to disburse funds to purchase materials you need for your workday.

Flexible Finish: Send your Success Strategist an email with a revised budget describing how you'll complete your project with fewer funds raised than you originally planned.

Scenario 2: You're in the middle of a fundraising campaign and it's going better than you ever expected. You think you can probably raise more money than you originally planned.

Flexible Finish: Send your Success Strategist an email with a revised budget describing how you'll complete your project with more funds raised than you originally planned.
When and how will we get our funds?

You can receive your funds by mailed paper check or by secure e-payment (via ACH directly to your bank account). Depending on your preference and how fast you (and, if applicable, your fiscal sponsor) complete your paperwork, you'll receive your funds within 5 to 15 business days of closing your campaign.

Once you've finished crowdfunding, let your Leader Success Strategist know that you're ready to receive your funds. They'll send you a simple Project Agreement for you to sign, which essentially states that you'll use your crowdfunded money for its intended purpose--your project. Once you've signed your Project Agreement, we'll send you your funds within 7 business days if you opt to receive it by check. Your funds will usually arrive sooner if you opt to receive it by secure e-payment.

If ioby is your fiscal sponsor, we'll send the payment directly to the project leader listed on your ioby campaign. If ioby is not your fiscal sponsor, then we'll send the payment to your nonprofit organization or your fiscal sponsor.
How does ioby's fiscal sponsorship service work?

ioby fiscal sponsorship is required of all campaigns that do not have their own 501(c)3 status or a 501(c)3 fiscal sponsor. This allows donations to your campaign to be tax-deductible to your donors. If you do not have your own 501(c)3 status and do not have a 501(c)3 fiscal sponsor, ioby may be able to serve as your project's fiscal sponsor.

You'll just need to sign a simple fiscal sponsorship contract with ioby and provide receipts for all purchases made with your crowdfunded money. ioby charges a small 5% administrative fee for fiscal sponsorship. The fiscal sponsorship contract is essentially a commitment to use the funds raised in the manner you described in your fundraising campaign. Please be sure to save your receipts if you are making purchases in advance of receiving your crowdfunded money.

Please note that ioby is only able to offer limited fiscal sponsorship, extended for crowdfunded donations and to implement your project. If you are in need of comprehensive fiscal sponsorship (for instance, if you'd like ongoing fiscal sponsorship, would like to accept grants that exceed 25% of your campaign budget, would like to conduct your project on private property, etc.), you may need to obtain another fiscal sponsor before crowdfunding on ioby. Here are some tips on how to do so.

What ioby's fiscal sponsorship CANNOT do:

- **ioby cannot apply for a grant on behalf of your project.** If you apply for a grant as part of your crowdfunding campaign, we can provide a fiscal sponsor confirmation letter and a copy of our 501(c)3 letter, and we're able to receive the funds as long as the grant doesn't exceed 75% of your project's total funding need. **We cannot sign any agreements or make a commitment to provide grant reports.**
- **ioby can only serve as your fiscal sponsor for money you crowdfund on ioby.org.** Once your crowdfunding campaign is over and your money has been disbursed, we can no longer serve as your fiscal sponsor.
- **ioby cannot enter into other legal agreements on your behalf, like signing contracts or filing any government forms.** We also cannot provide you with forms for certificates of liability, site or event insurance, or similar actions.
Can I use ioby as a fiscal sponsor for a grant my project received?

Yes, but only if:

• your project meets ioby's project criteria,
• you are using ioby's platform to crowdfund at least 25% of the project's total funding need. That is, if you expect to receive a project grant for $20,000 and want to use ioby as your fiscal sponsor, your team must commit to crowdfunding an additional $5,000 through an ioby campaign page.
• you are seeking a temporary, project-based fiscal sponsor.

If you do not seek funds in addition to the grant, prefer not to crowdfund, or are seeking ongoing--not project-based--fiscal sponsorship, ioby may not be the best fit fiscal sponsor for this particular project. Check out our tips on finding a fiscal sponsor here.
Can ioby apply for a grant on my behalf?

No. If you apply for and receive a grant as part of your crowdfunding campaign, we can accept the funds, but we cannot do anything more. We cannot apply for a grant on your behalf, nor can we sign any agreements, make a commitment to provide grant reports, or provide any ioby documents to a grantor.

ioby supports crowdfunding campaigns by local leaders who are working to build a base of supporters and donors in their community. If you are NOT interested in running a crowdfunding campaign, we aren't the right fiscal sponsor for you. Check out our tips on finding a fiscal sponsor here.
Are donations made on ioby tax-deductible?

Yes. Every donation to every ioby campaign is fully tax-deductible. When your donors give, they receive an automated thank you email receipt from ioby that provides them documentation of their tax-deductible donation.
Does ioby send tax receipts to my project's donors?

Yes! We've got you covered. When you fundraise with ioby for your important community project, we take care of providing tax receipts for your project's donors.

- When your donors give online via your crowdfunding campaign page, they receive an automated thank you from ioby that provides them documentation of their tax-deductible donation. This receipt is sent automatically on the date of their donation.
- When your donors give by check to your crowdfunding campaign, they also receive an emailed receipt to the email address they provide in their check donation instructions.

What can you do if your donor is having a hard time finding their receipt?

If your donor is having a hard time finding their emailed receipt, please ask them to check their inbox for an email from donations@ioby.org or info@ioby.org. The subject of the email is "Thank you for your donation to ioby.org!". Sometimes, this automatic message will get stuck in a junk mailbox. That's a great place to check, too.

If your donor still cannot find their receipt, we are here to help! Please ask your donor to request a duplicate receipt by emailing donations@ioby.org. Please note that their request may take a few business days to process.
Example tax receipt from ioby.org

Thanks for your donation on ioby.org!

Thank you for your donation - you're the best!

Your donation is going to directly to the project you picked! Your donation is an investment in stronger, more sustainable neighborhoods.

When you donate to grassroots action on ioby, your dollar works even harder. But money isn’t the only support these groups need. We encourage you to email your friends and family about the project you’ve just supported or volunteer with the project you’ve picked.

Date: 11/22/2019
Order: 
Confirmation #: 
Billing Information: 

Donation Detail
Project: Artwork
Credit of Love (Community) Revenue Class: $25.00
Gratitude to ioby (THANK YOU): $3.00
Total Donation: $28.00

This email officially acknowledges your donation as shown above, which should appear as “ioby.org New York City” on your credit card statement. We affirm that ioby did not provide any goods, benefits, or services to you, in whole or in part, in consideration of your donation. All donations to ioby and to projects on ioby are tax deductible in the United States to the fullest extent allowable.

ioby is an IRS approved 501(c)(3) not for profit organization; our legal name is In Our Backyards, Inc., and our EIN is 26-3253559. If necessary, please keep or print this email as a record of your donation for tax purposes.

Thanks so much! Talk to you soon!

Your friends at ioby

ioby
540 President Street, 3rd Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11217
917-264-4816
donation@ioby.org
Holiday closures

ioby's offices will be closed on the following days, and ioby staff will be unavailable to respond to support and coaching requests.

We appreciate your patience and will be able to return your calls, emails, and inquiries on the next business day following the holiday.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Year's Day</td>
<td>Wed, Jan 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</td>
<td>Mon, Jan 20, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>President's Day/Washington's Birthday</td>
<td>Mon, February 17, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
<td>Mon, May 25, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>Fri, Jul 3, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Day</td>
<td>Mon, Sep 7, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous People's Day</td>
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