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Getting in with the funding crowd



Are you an artist? Do you have a project idea? Are you looking for alternative sources of funding?

Wedidthis.org.uk is a crowdfunding platform for the arts that was founded by Ed Whiting and Hen Norton in January 2011. Since launching we have seen 28 projects reach their full funding targets and have raised over £60,000 for the arts in just nine months.

Crowdfunding provides a way for

artists, collectives and organisations to raise money for their arts projects but also an easy to follow model to communicate, market and develop creative ideas from their earliest stages.

In order to start a crowdfunding campaign the process is simple. You must first of all have an idea and commit to making this idea happen, assuming that you reach your target amount raised. You must then set an amount you want to fundraise for and put together a short list of rewards. The rewards offer the artist a way to give something back to their individual givers, while at the same time opening up the process of making work. Popular examples of rewards have included invitations to tea with the director, or postcards from an artist as he walks across Europe tracing the journey of writers from the past. As artists, it is easy to forget the value of what your creative worlds have to offer those outside the artistic making process, from an opportunity to stand on the stage or gain access to the artist's studio. You can give your supporters these experiences beyond those they get by attending ticketed exhibitions and performances. You can offer them the chance of a more enriching experience and exposure to the

creative process of making, in return for small donations.

In order to receive the funding you must reach your target amount set before your 30 days are up. All campaigns run monthly over a period of 30 days, this is based on our results drawn from the pilot stage of the site. When we ran projects for up to three months, we immediately recognised a lull in the middle and a loss of momentum after four weeks. Four weeks is a good amount of time to run a strategic and high-energy campaign and keeps people excited throughout. All projects are launched on the same date and run together over this period of time.

WeDidThis works closely with the projects that we include in our portfolios. Hen Norton co-founder and site curator has a background in the arts as a creative producer. Ed and Hen work closely with the projects to develop their pitches and reward offers. WeDidThis also offers a more in depth level of help to project managers and artist teams for a small consultancy fee if they wish to spend extra time working to develop their campaign strategies and drawing on the experiences of other projects successes and failures.



All images taken at We Did This: Art Club

We believe strongly, at WeDidThis, in the role of offline communication and interaction and therefore run monthly WeDidThis Arts Clubs around the country to bring projects and funders together in person and to help build momentum for the projects campaigns. We are also launching an online auction house this month to provide a space for artists to sell their work and offer buyers the opportunity to bid and become owners of WeDidThis artists works.



If you would like to crowdfund for a project with WeDidThis or have any questions at all, do get in touch with Hen Norton:

projects@wedidthis.org.uk

or you can submit an online application via the site. You can follow us on twitter at WeDidThisUK and also join us on Facebook.



We are currently putting together our next portfolio of projects for the New Year and planning our January Arts Club in London. This portfolio will launch on the 5th January 2012 and the deadline for submissions is the 20th December 2011 so do get in touch soon. •

For more information also check out WeDidThis Founder Ed Whiting's latest blog post: www.wedidthis.org.uk/2011/11/09/wedidthis-insights-blog-1.