

College Fundraising Toolkit

Table of Contents

- **About RARE Foundation**

- **Fundraising Ideas**

- **Ready to Use Messaging**

- **Donations & Impact**

- **Why Campus Fundraising**

- **Tips/Challenges**

- **Fundraising Platforms**

- **Contacts**

Welcome

Welcome, Rare Disease Campus Champions! You have the power to bring change from your campus to the national stage. By joining the RARE Foundation's campus fundraising, you're helping amplify the voices of over 30 million Americans living with rare diseases.

This isn't just about fundraising — it's about building awareness, sparking conversation, and showing what student advocacy can accomplish.

Thank you for being here!

About The RARE Foundation

The RARE Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan organization powered by the rare disease community to improve health outcomes by driving change through evidence-based policy, leading science-driven policy and regulatory research, activating the community to advocate for their rights and needs, and strengthening the rare disease community.

On campus, your role is to educate, activate, and inspire, bringing the rare disease conversation to your peers.

Why Fundraising Matters

- College students bring creativity, energy, and influence that can spark meaningful change. By hosting a fundraiser for the RARE Foundation, students help support vital programs and events, such as...

RARE Artist

RARE Artist is a national advocacy program where the rare disease community uses art to share their stories and drive meaningful change.

RARE Young Adults

RARE Young Adults brings together motivated members of the rare disease community, ages 16–30, to build confidence, strengthen advocacy skills, and create meaningful impact in public policy.

RARE Pride

RARE Pride fosters a supportive environment, enhancing care and advocacy for LGBTQIA+ individuals with rare diseases.

RARE Disease Week

RARE Disease Week on Capitol Hill: Brings hundreds of advocates from around the country to Washington, D.C. to meet directly with lawmakers and advance rare disease policy priorities.

RARE Across America

Connects advocates with their Members of Congress in local districts to build ongoing policy engagement via in-person and virtual meetings.

Community Scholarships

Provides life-changing financial support to students living with rare diseases, helping them pursue higher education and achieve their academic and career goals.

Fundraising Roadmap

Create a Fundraising Page and Timeline

Collect donations through your page and lay out a clear start and end date to refer back to. Setting these in the beginning helps everyone stay organized and motivated.

Set a Goal

What do you want your event to accomplish? Start small, You can always increase your goal overtime!

Plan Your First Event

Get Creative! You know your college crowd best—think about shared interests, habits, and favorite spots to spark donor ideas and fundraisers.

Identify Potential Donors & Make Your First Ask!

Put together a list of names and school emails of contacts that might support this cause. Consider asking clubs, sports team, class friends, neighbors, etc.

Fundraising Activity Ideas

Bake Sale

- Sell homemade treats during school events

Fitness Challenge

- Host a 2.8-mile walk (for Rare Disease Day) or 10,000-step challenge

Restaurant Night

- Partner with a local restaurant for a percentage of sales

Rare Facts Trivia Night

- Charge admission for a fun, educational competition

Fundraising Activity Ideas

Parking Spot Auction

- Auction preferred student or teacher parking spaces

Jeans or Pajama Day

- Invite students to donate for a casual dress day

Art or Silent Auction

- Auction student artwork, crafts, or donated items

Holiday Gift Wrapping

- Wrap gifts for donations during the holiday season

First Steps

Inquiring About Space: Most colleges require you to reserve space and/or register fundraising events. Check your student activities office website or event portal for forms and deadlines.

Understand Campus Policies: Review rules around fundraising (e.g., food sales, raffles, or use of university branding). Some schools require special approvals for selling items, posting flyers, or collecting donations.

Connect with Campus Offices: Reach out to Student Activities, Student Government, or the Dean of Students office — they can provide guidance and help with approvals.

Secure Materials & Resources: Make a checklist of what you'll need (tables, chairs, posters, permits, food items, donation jars, or QR codes for digital giving). Ask campus offices if they can lend equipment.

Tips for Success

Know Your Crowd

Think about what students at your school actually care about — sports, music, food, school spirit, or specific causes. Plan your fundraiser around things that will grab their attention and make them want to show up.

Team Up

You don't have to do it alone! Partner with clubs, student government, teachers, or school groups to help spread the word, boost attendance, and maybe even cover some of the costs.

Make It Personal

People are more likely to give when they understand why it matters. Share real stories, photos, or messages from the rare disease community to show the impact behind your fundraiser and help people feel connected to the cause.

Don't Forget to Say Thanks

Always thank the people who donated or helped out — and let them know how much you raised or what you accomplished. It's a great way to show appreciation and keep them interested in helping again in the future.

Challenges to Consider

Budget vs. Expenses

Be realistic about what you can spend vs. raise

Competing Campus Events

Check the campus calendar so your event doesn't get overshadowed

Volunteer Availability

Make sure you have enough help for setup, running the event, and clean-up

Keep Going — Your Efforts Matter

Every “no” is still a step forward. You're spreading awareness.

Every ask teaches you confidence, resilience, and leadership.

Every action helps educate others about rare diseases.

Every effort leaves an everlasting impact for families and the future.

Your courage to ask creates change. Keep going you're making a difference!

Using Diverse Media Channels

- Fundraising requires using your own social network to raise money and spread awareness

How to Reach Your Donors:

- ✓ Email
- ✓ Social Media
- ✓ Phone Calls/ Text Messages

Ready to Use

ELEVATOR PITCH

GIFT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

EMAIL TEMPLATE

SOCIAL MEDIA CAPTIONS

Elevator Pitch

“Hi! I’m a College Student Ambassador with the RARE Foundation. We’re raising awareness for the 30 million Americans living with a rare disease and making sure they have access to diagnosis, treatment, and care. This event is part of that effort. All the funds go directly to advocating for the rare disease community and driving policy change. Even just stopping by or spreading the word helps us make a difference!”

Email Template 1 (General Donation-Individual)

Subject: Support My Fundraiser for the Rare Disease Community

Dear [Name],

I'm raising funds for the RARE Foundation, a nonprofit that works to improve the lives of over 30 million Americans living with rare conditions. The RARE Foundation advocates for better policies, advances science into action, and ensures patients and families have access to the diagnoses, treatments, and care they need.

Your support — at any level — will make a real difference. Together, we can help amplify rare disease voices and drive meaningful change.

You can donate here: [link]

Thank you so much for considering a gift!



Email Template 2 (Invite-Individual)

Subject: Join Me in Supporting Rare Disease Patients

Dear [Name],

I'm organizing a [bake sale / trivia night / event] on [date] at [location] to raise funds for the RARE Foundation. The money we raise will help advance advocacy efforts, support research, and ensure patients and families affected by rare conditions can access the care they deserve.

Even if you can't attend, you can still support the cause by donating here: [link]. Every dollar makes an impact — and together we can help make rare diseases impossible to ignore.

Thank you for your support!

Best,

Email Template 1 (General Donation-Company)

Subject: Support My Campus Fundraiser

Dear [Company],

My name is [NAME] and I'm participating in a campus fundraiser for the RARE Foundation, a nonprofit that empowers the voices of over 30 million Americans living with a rare disease.

The RARE Foundation works to ensure that people living with rare diseases have timely access to diagnosis, treatment, and care — regardless of their condition. Through research, policy, advocacy, and cross-sector partnerships, the RARE Foundation is driving real change for families facing delayed diagnoses, limited treatment options, and barriers to care.

My goal is to raise [GOAL AMOUNT] by [DEADLINE], and I'd be so grateful for your support.

Best,



Email Template 2 (General Donation-Company)

Subject: Request: Local Support for Our Campus Fundraiser

Dear [Company],

My name is [NAME] and I'm participating in a campus fundraiser for the RARE Foundation, a nonprofit that empowers the voices of over 30 million Americans living with a rare disease.

The RARE Foundation works to ensure that people living with rare diseases have timely access to diagnosis, treatment, and care — regardless of their condition. Through research, policy advocacy, and cross-sector partnerships, RARE is driving real change for families facing delayed diagnoses, limited treatment options, and barriers to care.

As part of my fundraiser, I'm hosting a bake sale on [DATE] at [LOCATION] and would love to feature treats from local businesses. Would [COMPANY NAME] be willing to donate [# OF BAKED GOODS] to help us reach our fundraising goal?

In recognition of your generosity, we will display your business name and logo at the bake sale table, thank you in our event promotions on campus and social media, and share photos featuring your contribution (if you'd like)!

Thank you for considering this request! I'd be happy to answer any questions or coordinate pickup/delivery at your convenience.

Best,



Gift Acknowledgement – Individual

Subject: Thank You for Supporting the Rare Disease Community

Dear [Donor Name],

Thank you so much for your generous gift to support the RARE Foundation. Your contribution is helping advance advocacy, research, and access to care for the more than 30 million Americans living with rare diseases.

I'm so grateful for your support — together, we're making rare diseases impossible to ignore.

With gratitude,

*Depending on the fundraising platform you choose, donors will receive their formal tax receipt directly from that platform (e.g., Facebook Fundraisers or GoFundMe for Nonprofits will issue receipts automatically). If a gift is made directly to the RARE Foundation, the tax receipt will be issued by the RARE Foundation.

Gift Acknowledgement – Company

Subject: Grateful for Your Support!

Dear [Company/Donor Name],

On behalf of the RARE Foundation, thank you for your generous contribution to my fundraising campaign. Your support helps empower the voices of over 30 million Americans living with a rare disease and ensures that they have timely access to diagnosis, treatment, and care.

The RARE Foundation works to drive meaningful change through policy advocacy, research, and collaboration — efforts that would not be possible without the generosity of supporters like you. Your gift is making a real impact for families who too often face delayed diagnoses, limited treatment options, and barriers to care.

Thank you again for your generosity and belief in this mission. Together, we are driving change and creating a brighter future for individuals and families navigating life with a rare disease.

With gratitude,



Social Media Post/Caption

Sample Caption 1: Why I'm Fundraising

I'm fundraising for the RARE Foundation because [insert your personal reason or who you're honoring]. 1 in 10 Americans live with a rare disease, yet 93–95% have no FDA-approved treatment. Together, we can change that. Join me by making a gift today: [Fundraiser Link]

Sample Caption 2: The Power of Small Gifts

Every dollar makes a difference. Whether it's \$5, \$15, or \$50, your gift fuels advocacy for equitable access to diagnoses, treatments, and cures for people living with rare diseases. I'm fundraising in honor of [insert personal story/connection] — will you join me?
Donate here: [Fundraiser Link]

Sample Caption 3: Progress Update /Milestone Post

We've already reached [insert % or dollar milestone] of my fundraising goal! I'm so grateful for everyone who has supported this campaign in honor of [insert your personal connection or story]. Let's keep the momentum going!
Give here: [Fundraiser Link]

Social Media Post/Caption

Sample Caption 4: Mission-Driven

1 in 10 Americans lives with a rare disease, yet most have no treatment or cure. I'm fundraising for the RARE Foundation to ensure patients' voices are heard in Washington and beyond. Every dollar helps move science into action. Join me today: [Fundraiser Link]

Sample Caption 5: Personal Connection

I'm supporting the RARE Foundation because [insert personal reason]. This organization empowers patients and families to advocate for research, policy, and equitable access to care. Donate here: [Fundraiser Link]

Sample Caption 6: Urgent / Impact

93–95% of rare diseases have no FDA-approved therapy. That's why I'm raising funds for the RARE Foundation — to help change this reality. Together, we can make rare disease voices impossible to ignore. Give here: [Fundraiser Link]

Testimonials

Testimonials are a powerful way to bring your fundraiser to life and make it more personal. By sharing real stories like those about advocacy journeys, research impact, community connection, or hope for the future you give your audience something tangible to connect with. These stories help illustrate why the cause matters, highlight the difference the RARE Foundation makes, and show how support changes lives.

Template 1: Advocate / Family Experience

“When my [child / parent / sibling / loved one / I] was diagnosed with [name of rare disease or ‘a rare disease’], we felt [emotion: lost, overwhelmed, uncertain]. The RARE Foundation gave us [tools / resources / connections / hope] to [advocate in Washington / connect with others / raise awareness / push for change]. That’s why I’m fundraising — to give more families the same [support / voice / hope] that we received.”

Template 2: Policy & Research Impact

“As a [rare disease patient / caregiver / advocate], I’ve seen how long it can take to get a [diagnosis / treatment / care plan]. The RARE Foundation has mobilized advocates like me to push for [legislation / research funding / access to treatments] that speeds up [diagnosis / research / drug development / equity in care]. Your gift helps make that possible, and I’m fundraising to keep that momentum going.”

Testimonials (continued)

Template 3: Community & Connection

“When I first connected with the rare disease community through the RARE Foundation, I realized I wasn’t [alone / invisible / without a voice]. Being able to [share my story / meet others / advocate together] has given me [strength / hope / purpose]. I’m fundraising to help others find the same [community / empowerment / voice] that changed my journey.”

Template 4: Hope for the Future

“Living with [name of rare disease / a rare disease] has been [challenging / exhausting / full of unknowns], but the RARE Foundation is working to make the future brighter. By [advocating for science-driven policy / pushing for faster research / ensuring access to care], they’re giving families like mine hope. I’m fundraising so that [future patients / children / families like ours] won’t have to face the same struggles.”

Template 5: Gratitude & Action

“I’m grateful for the support I’ve received from [family / friends / the RARE Foundation community], but I know so many others still face [isolation / long waits for diagnosis / limited treatment options]. That’s why I’m taking action by fundraising for the RARE Foundation. With your support, we can [amplify rare disease voices / fuel advocacy / bring change faster] for those who need it most.”

Fundraising Platforms

Facebook

- Create a fundraiser and share it with friends, family, and your community.
- Add photos and explain why the RARE Foundation matters to you.
- Post regular updates and invite others to share.

GoFundMe for Nonprofits

- Build a fundraising page that tells your story and tracks progress toward your goal.
- Share the page through social media, email, and text.
- Thank donors and celebrate fundraising milestones.

Personalized RARE Foundation Donation Page

- Create an official page connected directly to the RARE Foundation.
- Personalize it with your story, photos, and fundraising goal.
- Easily share your unique donation link with supporters.

Facebook Fundraisers

BEST FOR

- Quick campaigns connected to birthdays, milestones, or awareness days.

HOW IT WORKS

- Create a fundraiser, share your story, and invite friends and family to donate

WHY USE IT

- A simple, familiar way to reach your existing social network and inspire others to share

GoFundMe for Nonprofits

BEST FOR

- Broader campaigns designed to reach beyond your immediate network

HOW IT WORKS

- Create a page featuring your story and fundraising goal, then share it through email, text, and social media

WHY USE IT

- A recognizable, user-friendly platform with tools that make storytelling and sharing easy

Personalized RARE Foundation Donation Page

BEST FOR

- **Personalized campaigns, school fundraisers, and team fundraising efforts**

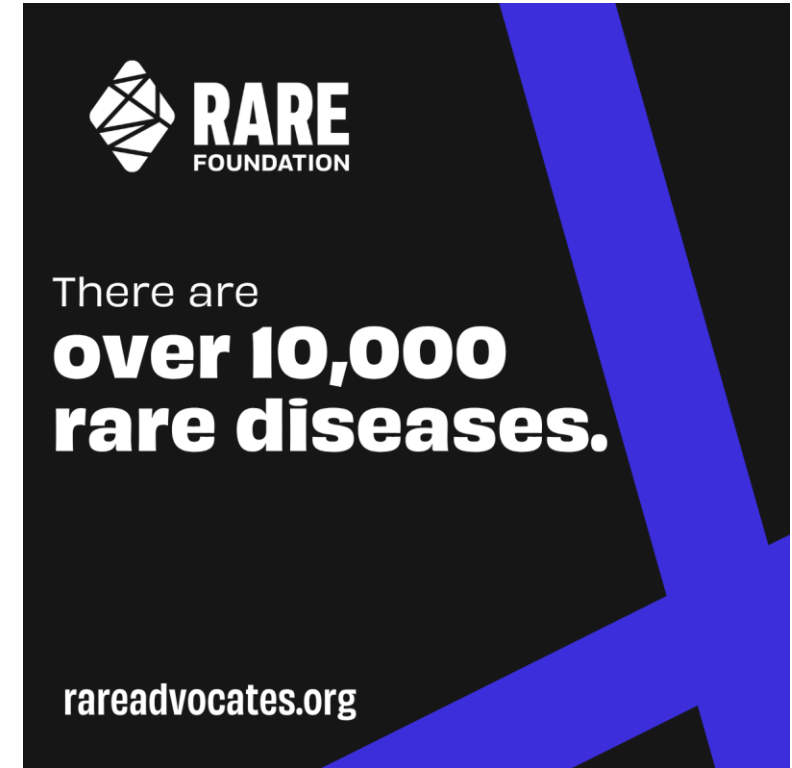
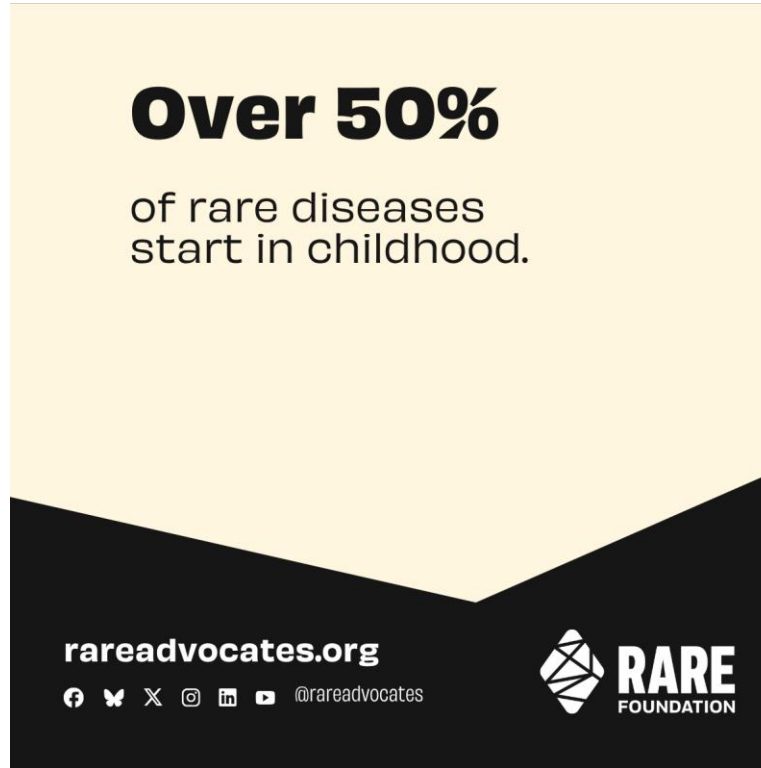
HOW IT WORKS

- **Work with the RARE Foundation to create an official page featuring your story, photos, and fundraising goal**

WHY USE IT

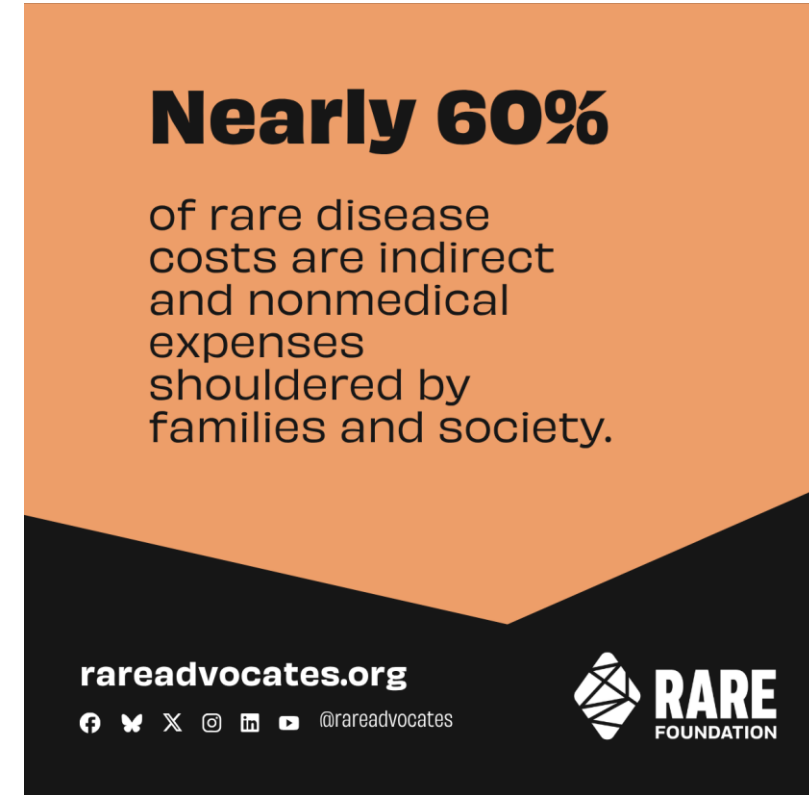
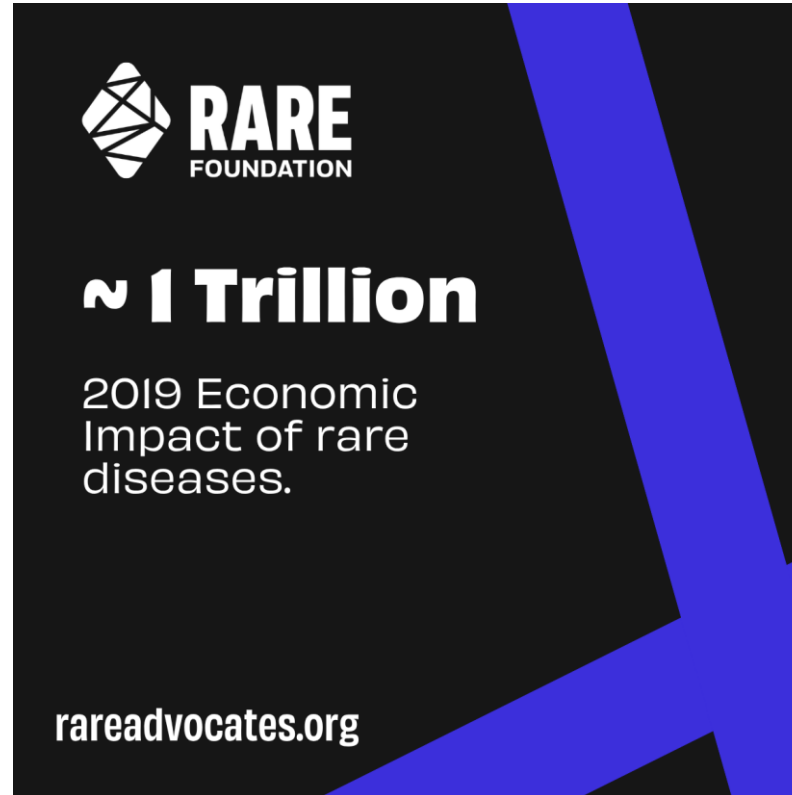
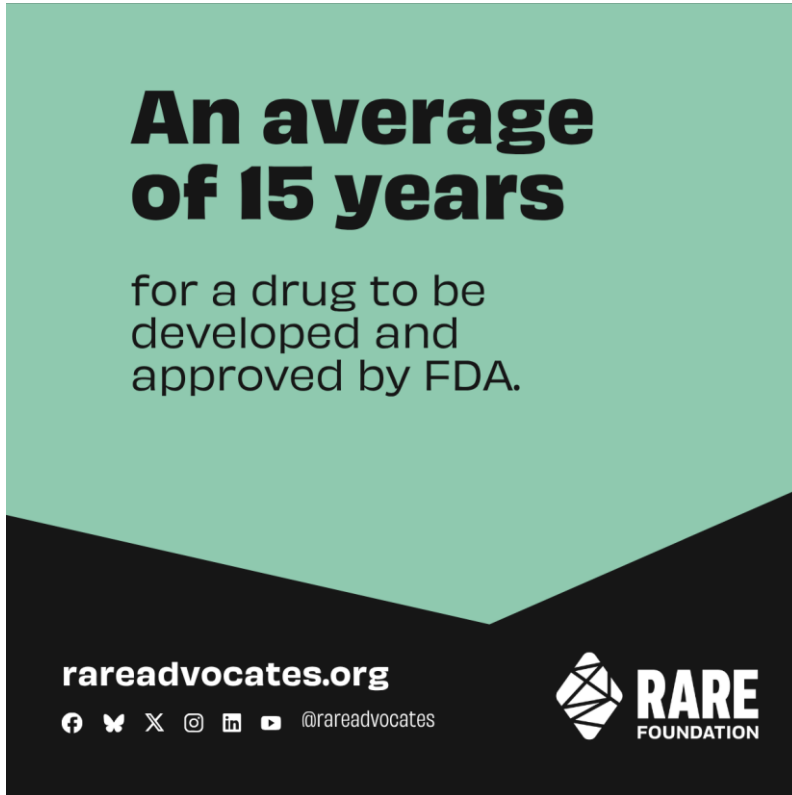
- **Donations go directly to the RARE Foundation through a trusted page designed specifically for your campaign**

Approved Social Media Graphics



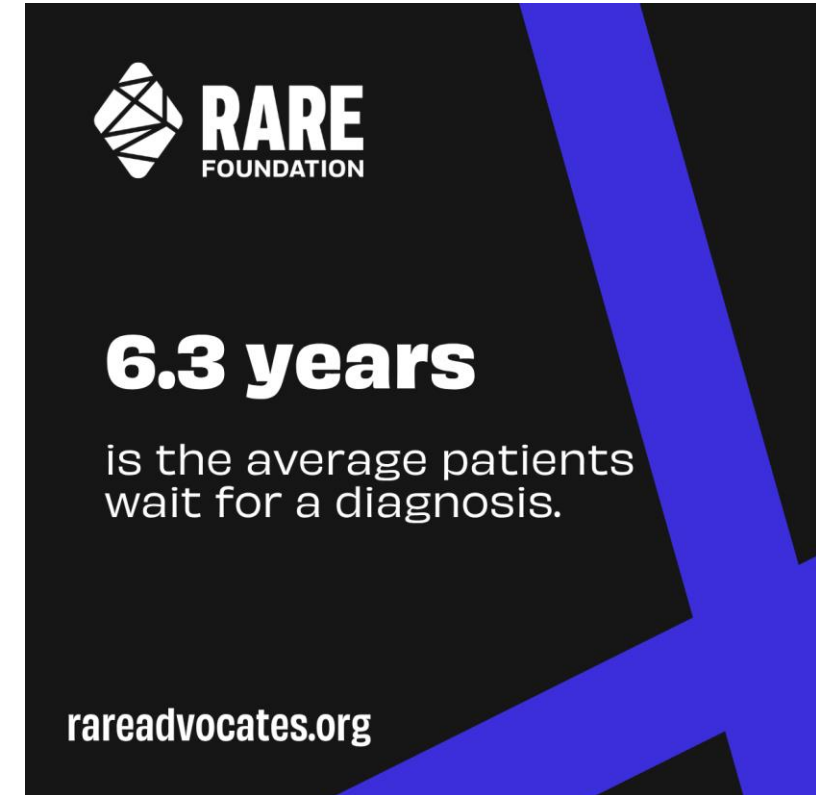
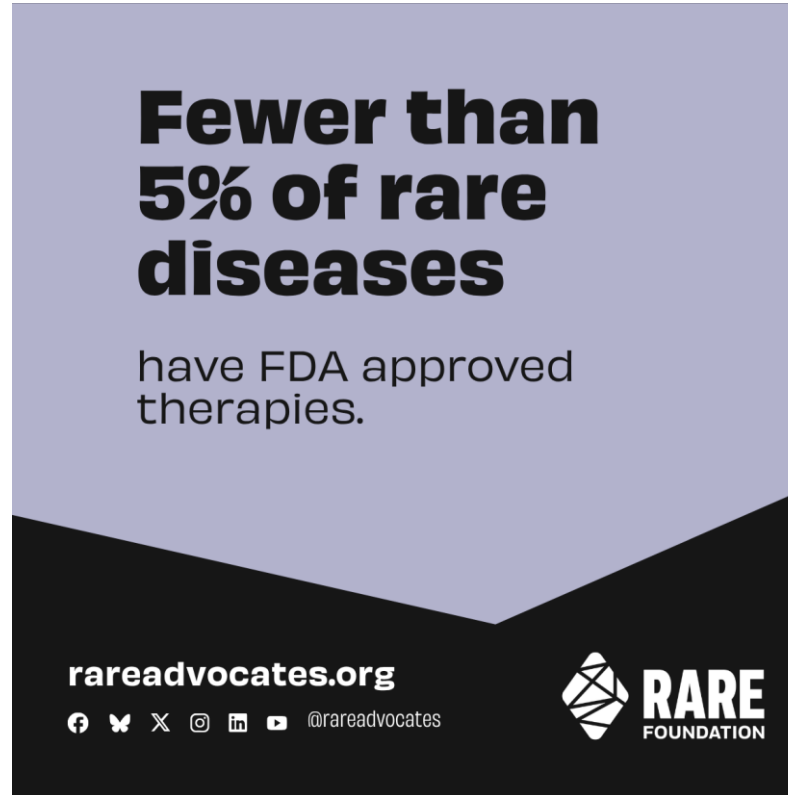
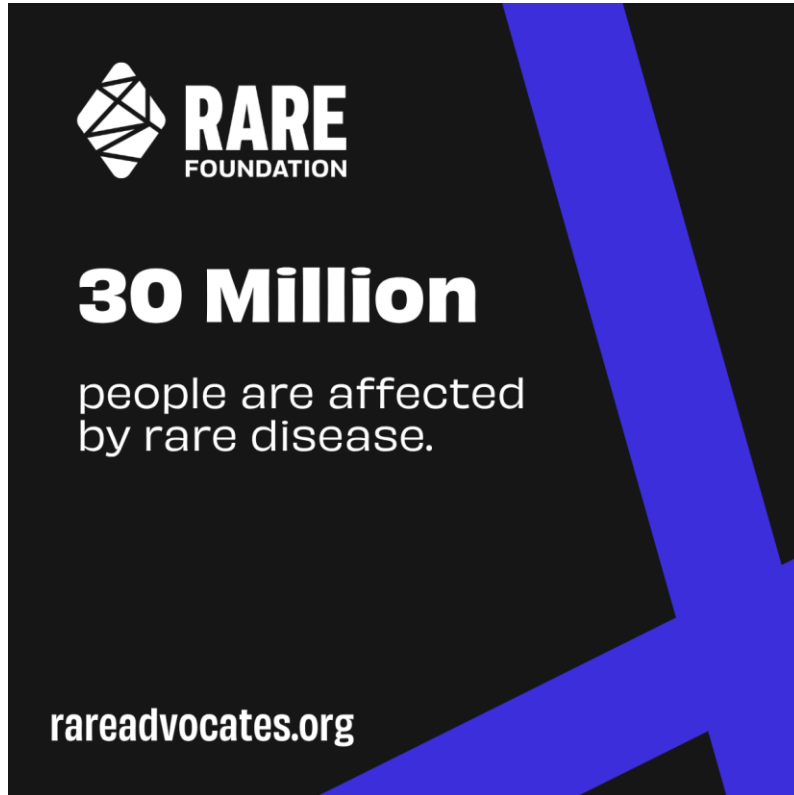
To use: right-click image and select Save as Picture, then upload the saved PNG to your social media.

Approved Social Media Graphics



To use: right-click image and select Save as Picture, then upload the saved PNG to your social media.

Approved Social Media Graphics



To use: right-click image and select Save as Picture, then upload the saved PNG to your social media.

Contacts

Have a question along the way? Please reach out! We're honored to help at any stage of your fundraiser.

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Thank you!