

Patreon Alternatives

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Many online content creators including YouTubers, musicians, game streamers, podcasters, writers, and comic book artists use Patreon to supplement their income.

The membership platform provides a simple and easy way for them to connect with their supporters and get steady incomes from their content.

Unlike other online revenue formats that are often insufficient and reliable for content creators to get paid, Patreon ensures they get a steady source of income with ongoing support, instead of all at once.

However, Patreon has been the subject of censorship controversy, which has left a bad taste in users' mouths, and seen some of them fleeing from the platform. This has led to big losses for creators as users seek out the best Patreon alternatives.

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What Is Patreon?

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Patreon is an online crowdfunding platform founded by Jack Conte (a YouTube musician) and Sam Yam in 2013.



Conte noticed that he wasn't making much from his music career so he decided to create a site that would allow his fans to pay him directly in return for the value they received from his content.

Patreon enables patrons or fans of content creators and artists to support their work thus allowing them to earn extra income on what would otherwise be free content.

The platform acts as a middleman for fans to make donations to creators, and it has become a popular site for YouTubers and podcasters, among other content creators.

Creators can access tools for acquiring, managing, and energizing their paying supporters through a payment mode that's based on subscriptions.

It's a win-win solution as fans can see where their contributions go, while creators retain their creative freedom and get their deserved earnings.

Fans also get access to unique membership benefits like engaging experiences, exclusivity, and additional access.

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Creators using Patreon set up subscription-based, monthly payment tiers with different levels of content each having their own pledges for various perks.

Patreon makes money by taking five percent of the fees paid to creators, who keep 90 percent of the revenue they make.

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However, Patreon has some major drawbacks too:

- Rewards for new paying fans for the first month are limited
- Payment is processed slowly
- Censorship issues cause heavy losses owing to reducing fan base
- Low discoverability of creative projects

If you're a content creator, influencer, or YouTuber, and you're not achieving the success levels you envisioned when you joined Patreon, check out our list of the 10 best Patreon alternatives you can join to grow your following and earn your income.

Best Patreon Alternatives

1. Kickstarter

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Kickstarter is a global crowdfunding platform that started in 2009 and boasts more than 18 million backers and over 64 million pledges.

The site is ideal for art, music, games, theatres, films, photography, designs, and many other content formats.

Content creators like designers, writers, gamers, developers, musicians, support specialists, and robot-builders, among many others, will find Kickstarter an ideal platform for their projects.

Unlike Patreon's recurring subscription-style model, Kickstarter is suited for one-time creative endeavors. Plus, if your campaign misses the fundraising mark, you don't earn anything.

Kickstarter works best for content creators who put out a few major works each year compared to those with continuous streams of content. You can also launch a new campaign once the old one has run its course.

Kickstarter is a more exclusive platform compared to Patreon, so small-time creators may want to carefully consider this before they join.

However, it has had more than 186,000 projects successfully funded by the end of 2019 and more than \$5.1 billion in pledges, making it a worthy alternative to Patreon.

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The platform fee is similar to Patreon's lowest-tier subscription at five percent, and campaigns undergo fairly strenuous pre-screening before they're approved.

The campaigns must also be honest, clearly presented, and create something to share with others.

Projects can't offer equity, fundraising for charity, or promote prohibited items.

For projects that are successfully funded, the supporters' cards will be charged once the project reaches its deadline, otherwise, the card won't be charged at all.

2. Indiegogo

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Indiegogo is a platform that offers live crowdfunding campaigns and innovative products so that you can hunt for clever innovations and fund the next big thing.

The platform touts itself as the place where new launches align with the many new and groundbreaking products that sometimes take flight long before they hit mainstream availability.

There are thousands of campaigns launched weekly with great designs, technology, and other great innovations often with limited-time pricing and perks for early backers.



Unlike Patreon, you can bring your dream to life and get support from backers, whether your idea is charitable or creative.

You can also evaluate campaigns closely as you would with Patreon's tracker, and contribute at your level of affordability in the event that a team can't complete a project as planned.

There are many stories you can read from different entrepreneurs, browse campaigns, and evaluate development stages and potential risks to production. This helps you know what project to fund so that you can help them succeed.

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Unlike Patreon that has a subscription-based payment system, Indiegogo operates on a reward-based system that lets backers raise funds for startups, ideas, products, and charities.

Indiegogo's platform fee is also five percent like Patreon, but the funding is keep-what-you-raise or all-or-nothing and is for one time endeavors like Kickstarter.

The main differences are that Indiegogo doesn't prescreen campaigns, and though the campaigns have a maximum length of 60 days, you can launch continuous campaigns once your first campaign succeeds.

3. Podia

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Podia is an all-in-one marketing platform that allows you to offer more than just creative content.

You can offer online courses, digital downloads like eBooks, audio and video files, memberships, and webinars among others.

You can also build a website in minutes, create a storefront, sales pages, and more, and grow your email list with the native email marketing platform.

Podia also lets you chat in real-time using the integrated live chat tool and communicate with people who visit your products, offer support, learn what they want you to build, and boost your sales. You don't need to pay extra money or add third-party tools or apps to chat.

The platform is ideal for solopreneurs, startups, and anyone on a lean budget selling digital content, memberships, and online courses.

This is different from Patreon, which is largely for content creators who upload videos, music, and other such content.

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Podia is actually a creator-friendly Patreon alternative, created in 2014 and is now marketed as an e-learning platform such as the likes of Lynda or Udemy and others.

Like Patreon, you can sell access to your work on an ongoing basis in Podia, but you won't pay any fees on any donations from your contributors; all you pay is a flat monthly fee for using Podia.

There's a monthly package for membership, and if you want to sell digital downloads or online courses, or want to use the email marketing service, you'll also pay \$39 for a monthly subscription.

4. Memberful

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Memberful was founded in 2013 like Patreon to help content creators customize the experience for their fan bases and sell memberships.

It's now a part of Patreon, which acquired Memberful in 2018, but it's still a plugin for WordPress that accommodates fast scaling. This makes Memberful ideal for media companies and larger enterprises.

Memberful integrates with MailChimp and Stripe for recurring payment transactions and allows members to subscribe for exclusive content.

You can sell memberships to fans who enjoy your work and pay charges depending on the subscription package you opt for.

Memberful isn't a crowdfunding platform like Patreon though. It's a website plugin so you'll only install it on your site and fans are able to sign up for subscriptions and access exclusive content.

Plus, you can set Memberful up to accept subs for monthly, annual, or other lengths of time, and the users can get access to varying content levels.

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Patreon saw the similarities between Memberful and its own offerings and ultimately acquired the plugin even though it still operates as a standalone service.

Memberful integrates into your podcasting workflow so you can sell podcast memberships, build reliable and recurrent revenue.

You can also manage multiple shows, sell gift subscriptions, add your own custom branding, sell group subscriptions, offer free trials, and add staff accounts.

You can sign up for any of its three packages – Starter, Pro, and Premium plans. The Starter is free, while Pro and Premium plans cost \$25 per month and \$100 per month respectively with different features and perks like coupon codes and newsletter integrations.



Memberful offers features like analytic data on totals or revenue, automatic syncing of membership data to your WordPress site, single sign-on (SSO), paywall for restricted access, and RSS feed option.

For the Starter plan, Memberful takes 10 percent of what you earn before paying processing fees, while the Pro and Premium plans cut the platform fee down to 4.9 percent.

5. Buy Me a Coffee

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Buy Me a Coffee (BMC) is a free donation-based platform that began as a WordPress plugin, like Memberful, but over time has become a fully-functional membership platform for creators.

Like Patreon, BMC is designed to help fans contribute monthly or one-off to support businesses they care about and creators to receive ongoing support. You can share exclusive content, sell digital downloads, and earn from the contributions of your fans.

The platform was created in 2018 so it's fairly new compared to Patreon and features three main monetization products: WordPress plugin, Coffeelinks, and Buttons.

Buttons can be used on different platforms and can feature on your WordPress site with a logomark added to it.

Coffeelinks are hyperlinks that creators can send to their supporters and give them a chance to donate. You can combine the links with Dropbox when selling digital products, attach to YouTube video links, or with Typeform and other software.

With BMC's WordPress plugin, you can place the button wherever you want on your site and sync it to your account.

BMC is designed for individuals and your BMC page is a delightful experience for your audience. There's a one-tap payment without many sign-ups like other platforms, and you can customize your page to your liking.

The platform takes a 5 percent cut from creators' earnings and processes payments via PayPal or Stripe.

BMC makes every effort to make payments more meaningful and less transactional, which is why it's about supporters buying you a coffee, not donating to you.

They access your extras, not purchase them, which is what makes creators succeed on the platform.

BMC also listens to creators, ships exciting features as they come, and also has a community for creators to hang out.

6. Liberapay

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Liberapay is a platform for creators who produce continuous software or content and receive recurring donations for their work based on an open-source structure.



Unlike Patreon, where creators receive continuous support from their fans, Liberapay caps the donations to €100.00 a week per donor in a bid to prevent external influence.

Started in France in 2015, Liberapay helps fans fund creators and projects they appreciate. You can build free software, spread free knowledge, and get a stable crowdfunded basic income to enable you to keep doing the good work to benefit everyone.

Creators receive financial support for their free art, knowledge, or software, and get funded by recurrent donations.

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Donors find someone they want to give money to, control when and how much to pay, and whether it's a manual or automatic renewal. Donations are funded in advance and receive donations about renewals.

Creators, on the other hand, put up their profiles explaining what they do and why they want donations.

They also explain what the donations will be used for, and then receive payments through PayPal or Stripe, and contact fans to ask for their support.

Liberapay is run by a nonprofit organization and has an open-source code unlike Patreon, which is handled and run under Conte and Yam's company.

The features you'll find in Liberapay include:

- Teams, to let project members receive and share money without setting up a legal entity
- Multiple languages and currencies. Liberapay is available in 15 languages with partial translations in 10 other languages and descriptions published in 124 languages. Currencies include Euro, USD, and 33 other currencies but no crypto-currency.
- Integrations with Twitter, Mastodon, GitHub, and 9 other platforms
- Pledges, to donate to people who aren't on Liberapay yet. Once they sign up they'll receive the donations. Sponsors like nonprofits or businesses can also donate on Liberapay.
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7. SubscribeStar

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SubscribeStar is a membership media platform that offers access to media content published by content creators (Stars) to the users or subscribers, who pay for the subscription.

The independent platform operates on a monthly subscription like Patreon and offers content marketplace functionality for the Stars so they can get paid for their work. SubscribeStar is for every company or person who produces original, legal, and engaging content regularly.

Like Patreon, content creators like comedians, artists, bloggers, entertainers, musicians, podcasters, vloggers, commentators, fashionistas, and any others can use the platform. Your content and data are protected, and you get comprehensive statistics



and analytics.

SubscribeStar is fully compliant with all industry requirements and its pricing fee structure and policies are easy to understand.

You can start and run a Star account for free, and your revenue will depend on how many subscribers you have and the subscription price you set.

The calculation factors in the five percent service fee and transaction processing fees of 2.9 percent plus \$0.30 on average.

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Other unique features include Trust Period, Discord and Google Analytics integration, Anti-scraping protection, an API for connecting your own apps with SubscribeStar, and fast, secure payouts.

You also get to use interactive polls to embed in your content and engage your audience, external videos you can embed from Vimeo or YouTube and other services, and two-factor authentication.

8. Ko-Fi

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Ko-Fi is a fun and friendly way for creators to receive support from their fans and make an income doing what they love most. It's a friendly way of asking fans to support your work for the price of a cup of coffee.

Unlike Patreon, Ko-Fi doesn't charge a platform fee on your donations. You can claim a free page for yourself and show your best work, organize it into albums, and share it with your fan base.

You can also write posts and update fans automatically about your goals, creations, and work-in-progress, let them unlock rewards for a monthly subscription or one-off donation, and commission unique pieces of work for them.

Ko-Fi allows you to get paid directly and upfront, build a monthly income through memberships and even select the number of slots you're offering on your own terms. If you don't want to take commissions, you can refund them.

You can also reward subscribers with exclusive content like tutorials, process videos, or a sneak peek of your work catalog and more. Once a fan subscribes to your page, you'll get paid directly and instantly.

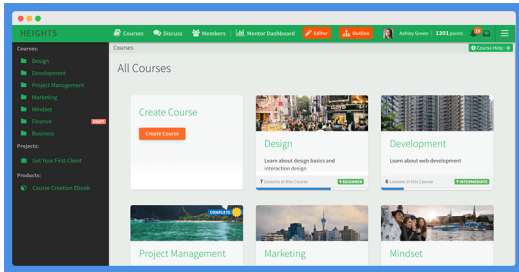
Among the features Ko-Fi offers include direct payment via PayPal or Stripe, messages encouragement from supporters, a gallery to showcase your work, posts, rewards, goals, subscriptions, commissions, paywall to offer exclusive content, and a WordPress plugin to request for support.

Ko-Fi also allows you to get in-stream donation messages through Stream Alerts, and a profile to display your creative profile.

If you want three times more income, the Ko-Fi Gold subscription is available for only \$6 monthly.

The Gold package offers exclusive posts and rewards, commission tools, shorter Ko-Fi username, gallery extras, analytics insights, shorter Ko-Fi name, previews for new features, and a no-ads experience.

9. Heights Platform



The Heights Platform allows you to launch brilliant online courses and offers native landing page creation tools and payment processing. It also offers customization options for you to build a branded platform and custom domain.

Coaches, solopreneurs, and consultants can use the Heights Platform to impart a sense of discovery so that their students can translate the knowledge to action. Entrepreneurs can also monetize their expertise and forget about spending time putting complicated and inflexible systems together.

The Heights Platform offers other features like analytics, gamification, marketing tools, content editing, community building, white-label branding, hosting, and support. It also integrates with Dropbox, Google Drive, Instagram, Zapier, Facebook Ads, Google Analytics, and more.

You can choose from three different plans: Basic, Pro, and Academy for \$39, \$79, and \$399 respectively.

10. Tribe

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Tribe is a powerful and flexible platform for building branded and integrated communities. The community platform touches product managers, marketers, developers, and customer support.

You can use Tribe to give your brand social dimension and engage users for further discussion and connection under your brand. Users can follow, explore, ask questions, start discussions, comment, upvote, and share different content types.

The platform is white-label so you can customize and adapt it to your brand, and integrate it to your site. The feed is machine-learned and personalized, and you can reward members with virtual currency and let them redeem for your services.

This virtual currency is different from Patreon's, which is about receiving payments from the supporters and rewarding them with great content.



Tribe also offers smart targeting to target audiences based on their behavior in the community, and gamification to incentivize and credit supporters through points and badges.

Tribe also offers analytics and apps integration with over 20 leading business tools including Slack, Zapier, Hubspot, and Intercom.

Wrapping Up

Patreon is a great platform for creators to show their best work and receive support from fans. It can keep them going even in the toughest of times.

However, it has its drawbacks and flaws, which is why users and creators alike are constantly on the lookout for Patreon alternatives.

You can use any of the 10 options in our curated list of Patreon alternatives, but we recommend Indiegogo. Not only is Indiegogo free to use, but you can get backing whether your idea is charitable or creative.

Plus, Indiegogo allows you to start a campaign, so it doesn't pre-screen campaigns like Patreon and others on the list do.

While Indiegogo has a maximum length of 60 days for your initial campaign to run, you can always launch continuous campaigns that ride on the success of the first campaign.

Indiegogo also charges a five percent platform fee, but you can opt for the all-or-nothing or keep-what-you-raise format depending on the project.

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Visitor Analytics & SEO Tools

Address 17 William St.

Contact Person Stellar Sphinx

Mobile Number 646660078

Email admin@stellarsphinx.com

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