

84 Community Fundraising Ideas

Airplane Toss: Section off part of a parking lot into squares. Put prizes in each square and sell registration forms that the participants turn into a paper airplane. Pick a busy time of day and have the people toss their paper airplanes to win the prizes on each square.

Amusement Park Tickets: Make arrangements with a local amusement park where a portion of a day's ticket sales go to your affiliate.

Another Man's Treasure – Collect gently used items from group members to be sold at a yard sale.

Antique Car Show: Charge auto exhibitors a fee to display their cars in a store's parking lot. To generate additional funds incorporate raffles, drawings, and concession stands. You might also charge participants a fee to vote for their favorite cars, and then present "People's Choice" awards to the exhibitors.

Bake Sale: Collect baked goods and host a bake sale at a local store or bank.

Barbecue: Hold a sidewalk BBQ to sell hotdogs, burgers, chips and soda. This is a great event for weekends or holidays. Often vendors will donate items to this event.

Bingo Is Its Name-O – Get prizes donated and charge an entrance fee.

Birthday Pledge – Ask for donations to a favorite cause instead of birthday gifts.

Bowl -A-Thon: Participants collect pledges and then bowl a set number of games. Set a per-person minimum (\$50?) for each participant.

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny or other character: Host a breakfast with the Easter Bunny or another cartoon character. Attending children receive breakfast and a picture of themselves with the character.

Bottle (or Can) Drive: Hold a neighborhood bottle drive or place a container at the local redemption center for donations.

Buck-a-Pound: Participants pay \$1 for every pound lost and \$2 for every pound gained in weekly weigh-ins.

Buy a Meal – Volunteers donate homemade meals to sell.

Car Wash: A few buckets, sponges, some mild dish detergent, soft towels, water and lots of elbow grease is all it takes to turn a few spare hours into extra cash. Prices can range from \$2 - \$5. Three volunteers per car is the rule of thumb.

Casual for Kids Day: For a donation, employees are allowed to dress casually on a specified day.

Change It – Start a competition between classes, families or individuals by giving them each a coin jar to collect change for a designated amount of time. The one with the most collected wins a prize.

Cheap Auction: Gather 50-100 items. Sell tickets for \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Ticket holders can choose which items they want to "take a chance at" by placing a ticket in the corresponding jar.

Chefs' Galore: Find a host location with excellent space and viewing possibilities, such as a local country club. Find 7 –10 chefs who will donate their time and food (possibly different ethnic foods). Sell tables at \$500 per round table of 8 – 10 people. The event can be a formal night out with an opportunity to taste several different types of food.

Civic Group sales: Work with local civic group such as the Legion to sell flags or bracelets to commemorate special causes/events.

Cookbook Sales: Get friends and family to contribute some of their favorite recipes and compile a cookbook. Ask local celebrities to participate, i.e., the mayor, local television and radio broadcasters, athletic coaches, and others whose names are well known to the community.

Cook Off – Solicit local celebrities to enter their best dishes and have people pay to vote on the winner.

Choose the Torture – Have donors pay \$1 a vote to decide which form of “torture” to inflict on your organization’s leader (i.e. dye hair, dress as a clown, trade a job for a day).

Comedy Night: Have a comedian perform. Sell tickets for the event.

Counting On You: Participants guess the quantity of jelly beans, paper clips, marbles, coins, M&Ms, etc. Participants pay to enter the counting contest and the winner gets a prize.

Craft Sales: Rent space to creative artists in your community. Charge a flat fee for each local artist and crafts person to exhibit and sell their handmade items. Ask each participant to donate one item, then raffle or auction them off to raise additional funds.

Dance Marathon: A continuous, multi-hour event where participants raise funds through pledges. This event blends dancing, music, games, food and a variety of entertainment into one experience where can you raise a LOT of money.

Derby Day: Host a day of field events such as a 5K run, an obstacle course, a tug-of-war, and “carry the coach.”

Dessert Tasting Parties: A small contribution to try different desserts and concessions. Coffee and tea also can be sold at this event.

Diva it Up – Design and sell t-shirts advertising your group’s cause.

Easter Egg Hunt: In-store, park or other venue. Charge \$1 entry fee for each child.

Eat for a Cause – Ask a local restaurant to donate 10% of their profits on a designated night for your cause in exchange for encouraging supporters to eat there.

Eating Contest: Sponsor an eating contest. Get creative with this one: use pies, cakes, pancakes, hamburgers or moon pies.

Flea Market: Rent the spaces in a parking lot to people who are interested in taking part in a flea market. One person’s junk is another person’s treasure!

For the Birds – Deliver a group of fake pink flamingos to a donor’s yard and leave a note explaining the cause and asking for a donation to “replant” the flamingos in the yard of the next “victim” the first donor designates.

Gingerbread Fair – have a build-a-gingerbread house event with donated or bulk-purchased gingerbread house kits. Donated prizes for the best houses. Alternately, give kits to local chefs or restaurants to create a house and raffle them at an event or the local mall.

Give it Up – Sponsors commit to give up a regular activity for a month and donate the money they save to the designated cause.

Go Casual – In schools or offices, everyone gets to dress down if they raise enough money to meet a goal.

Go Hairless – Volunteers commit to shaving their heads if a specified amount is raised by a deadline.

Going Once, Going Twice – Seek out service and product donations and hold an online or in person silent auction.

It's a Bust – Sell balloons for \$10 each and insert a number in each that corresponds to a raffle ticket given to the purchaser. Pop a balloon for each available prize and read off the winning number.

It's a Wrap – During holidays (Christmas, Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc.) coordinate with a store to offer gift wrap services.

It Tastes so Sweet – Get baked goods donated to sell at a large event like a dance or basketball game.

Karaoke Style – Have participants raise pledges for their commitment to lip-sync and sell tickets to the performance.

Kisses for Kids: Sell small bags of Hershey Kisses (8-10 pieces in each) for \$1 with a note card attached

Magic Show: Charge \$3 per child for a special show.

Matching Gift – Ask a corporation or individual to match any donations your organization collects in a specified amount of time. Then, contact potential donors about giving to match the gift.

Miracle Flowers: Sell carnations for \$1 with a note card during holidays or special events. Secretary Day, Boss's Day, Easter, St. Patrick's Day and many other holidays are perfect for this event.

Pancake Breakfast: Host a public breakfast, charging a set fee for the meal.

Pay it Forward – Give each person in your organization \$10 and a specific amount of time to use the funds to raise as much as they can for the cause.

Photo Contest: "Kids Do the Darndest Things" is a popular theme for the contest. Create divisions – amateur, professional and photos taken by children. Establish an entry fee and plan displays in a mall or other venue. Allow people to vote by putting donations in corresponding jars. The winners are determined by the total amount raised in their jar.

Progressive Hors d'oeuvres Gala: An evening of hors d'oeuvres at two prominent homes in the community and perhaps a third home for dessert. The homes should be within walking distance of each other.

Quarter Mile: Collect enough quarters to stretch them a quarter mile through a store or parking lot. You can try to do this for a mile as well!

Raffle – donated items such as a quilt, television. Check for raffle license regulations in your community

50/50 Raffle – Sell raffle tickets and offer half of the proceeds as prizes.

Recycling: Aluminum cans can be collected all year round and proceeds from the recycling center can be donated.

Rent-a-Worker - Volunteers commit to working for an afternoon doing any odd jobs sponsors "hire" them to do.

Reverse Raffle – All potential sponsors get a raffle ticket and sell it back for \$10 to avoid getting their name drawn to do something embarrassing.

Rush to Crush Grapes Stomp: Two-person teams compete against each other to see who can crush the most grapes. It all takes place in a half-barrel. Points are earned for the most original and creative stomping style. Gold, silver, and bronze medals are given to winners of each heat. Heats take place hourly. At the end of the day, a grand prize winner is chosen and awarded a trophy.

Scavenger Hunt: Each team gets pledges to participate. The team that finds all of the clues first wins the grand prize. Have first, second & third place prizes, and a token gift for each participant.

Scratch Cards – Donors receive a sheet of coupons for local businesses for a small donation of a few dollars.

Sit-a-thon – Offer babysitting services for a designated evening or two.

Skate-A-Thon: Have the use of a skating rink donated for a couple of hours. Participants get sponsors and individuals to pledge for the hours or laps they skate. Have a concession stand to raise additional funds.

Skip a Meal – Sponsors commit to giving up a meal together and give the money saved to the designated cause.

Smoothie Stand – A healthy and yummy twist on the tired ol' lemonade stand.

Snowman Soup – dollar store mugs with candy cane, hot chocolate mix, mini marshmallows, Hershey kisses and recipe for making 'snowman soup'. Great teacher or client gift.

Spa Night – Volunteers give manis, pedis and 5 minute massages at a Women's Night Out for donations. Have local businesses contribute.

Spell S-U-C-C-E-S-S – Hold a spell-a-thon with each contestant collecting donations for the number of words they spell correctly. The top winners receive donated prizes.

Spirit Chains: Have each homeroom at a local school sell paper links for 10 cents. The links are assembled together in giant chain. Use school colors. Homerooms compete for "Most Spirit." Provide incentives for winning homeroom.

Sports Tournament – baseball, hockey, soccer etc., or have a single game with a celebrity or old-timers team.

Sports Days: Have a putt-putt golf tournament, a football skills contest, a basketball shoot out or other sports event. Participants pay an entry fee for the contest.

Strike Gold – Participants ask friends and family to donate old jewelry they no longer wear and turn the gold in for cash.

Super Bowl Party: Have a party, charge admission, and have people bring lots of food. Hold a raffle to raise additional funds. To make it more interesting, dress as your favorite player or make it mandatory to wear football clothing for entry. The same ideas can be adapted to other playoffs.

Swim-A-Thon: Each swimmer who competes must complete a set number of laps during a designated day. Individuals and sponsors are recruited to pledge a certain amount for each lap completed.

Taste of the Town: Ask local restaurants to participate in a "Taste of the Town" event. Charge a \$20 participation fee to restaurants and then charge guests \$5 to sample the food. Ask restaurants to donate gift certificates or coupons that can be raffled as an additional fundraiser during the event. Ask your local media to cover the event.

Teddy Bear Auction: Using a variety of teddy bears (different shapes, sizes and color) have local stores or crafts people each decorate a bear. Display all of the bears in one location and take silent bids on the bears.

Treasure Chest: Fill a chest with donated prizes and sell keys to open the chest.

Trendy Bracelets – Sell silicone bracelets that promote your cause.

Un-Invitation – Send out invitations to a made up event and offer invitees tickets to support the cause without having to leave home.

Used-Book Fair: Ask people to donate their used books to a sale. Give them two or three weeks to bring in the books. Award contributors by giving them a pin or sticker. When you have all the books collected, organize your book sale.

Weekend Picnics: Set up a food wagon in a parking lot and sell grilled hot dogs and hamburgers.

Weight-Lift-A-Thon: Participants get pledges for lifting larger and larger weights.

Who's Got Talent – Hold a talent show with an entry fee for each act and sell tickets.

Wishing Well: Nobody can resist dropping a quarter or two into a wishing well. To be effective, the well needs to be placed in a high-traffic area.

Work of Art – The younger members in your organization create a drawing that is transferred onto note cards, t-shirts, mouse pads or coffee mugs for purchase.

X Marks the Spot – Sell golf balls for \$10 each and send them all down a hill with the “tossler” blindfolded. The 3 that get closest to the center of a taped “X” below win cash prizes.