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Helping **you**
to raise money

Creative **Fundraising**

www.vas-swindon.org

Why bother raising your own money?

With dwindling grants and greater competition for funding, you may need to focus more on raising cash yourself. It makes sense to include lots of different sources of funding in your fundraising strategy. Some fundraising activities can be out there working for you, whilst you concentrate on other forms of income generation.



Besides bringing in cash, community fundraising attracts publicity for your work and demonstrates your commitment to your work. Funders like to see organisations helping themselves.

How do we go about it?

There are plenty of tried and tested fundraising activities you could adopt, as well as newer methods of raising cash offered by technology. It's important to choose activities appropriate to your organisation, manageable within your resources, and worth the effort.

An original idea will catch people's imagination and more easily generate interest and cash. But originality being difficult, you could try "**Fundraising Ideas (a-z)**" available on the VAS website or look out when you are in other areas of the country for fundraising ideas which have not yet reached Swindon and be the first!

Other ideas and resources (such as templates for invites and posters, advice on gaining maximum publicity, practical suggestions and creative ideas) can be found at the following websites:

www.how2fundraise.org
www.ideasfundraising.co.uk



**Money grows on the
tree of persistence**

Japanese Proverb

Food

You must be aware of hygiene and make sure that the food you provide is safe. Don't be put off by regulations, but do check out the easy to understand guidance from the Food Standards Agency. Even if there is no legal requirement to label the food, it can be done voluntarily, giving the list of ingredients and details about ingredients that could cause an allergic reaction, such as nuts. You don't need to register with the local authority environment health department if you are organising a one-off event providing food, but you may need to if you do so on a regular basis so check with Swindon Borough Council.

See VAS publication “**Food for Fundraising**” or Food Standards Agency website www.eatwell.gov.uk.

Alcohol and music

If you are planning to sell alcohol or use live or recorded music at any fundraising activity, you will need a licence. The venue may already have one, so check with them. If they don't, you can easily implement a temporary event notice, allowing you to sell alcohol. If you don't want to obtain a licence you can allow people to bring their own drinks and you might want to make a small charge for 'corkage'.

Both Swindon Borough Council has information on how to apply for licences on their website (look under “**Licences**”).



The Money Mountain

To reach your fundraising total, you will need a range of activities, some requiring lots of effort and bringing in large amounts of money, and some requiring little effort and bringing in only small amounts. A “money mountain” is a useful tool to help you plan the mixture of these activities you need.

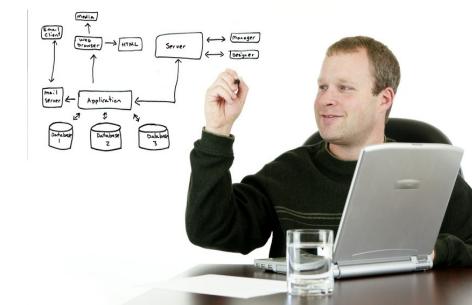
Most importantly, avoid activities that require lots of effort but bring in little money (even if they are someone's pet project!) (see ‘**Is it Worth it?**’ below).

For more information see VAS's publication “**Money Mountain**”.

Plan each Activity

Before you embark on any particular fundraising idea, make a plan of everything you will need to do to get the money flowing in.

You can find various ‘Gant charts’ online (plans of what needs doing when). The simplest chart is just a grid with a timeline at the top and tasks down the left hand side, showing when each task needs to be started and completed. Indicate who is doing what. Keeping this up to date and sharing it with everyone should avoid duplication of effort because people do not know who is doing what when or a necessary step being missed.



Is it worth it?

Prepare a budget, showing all the expenses required. Estimate how much time and effort it will take. Estimate how much you are likely to raise. Try to be realistic.

Also, identify expenditure needed before the event, e.g. insurance, stock, equipment. How will you meet those costs until the event has occurred?

You may decide that the return on this activity will not be worth the investment or that it will divert too much effort from the day to day running of the organisation.

If so, select different fundraising activities, or this may be an opportunity to bring in new volunteers, enthusiastic to take on fundraising.

Consider your responsibilities and taken them seriously

Most activities will have legal and insurance implications, for example:

- Will you need DBS checks for events involving children and vulnerable adults?
- Do you need a permit to collect money?
- Is public liability insurance required?

See advice in “**Types of Fundraising Activity**” sections below.

Work with Others

You are one of many charities organising fundraising activities. Look for opportunities to work with others to share the workload and each others strengths. For example, encourage your supporters to take part in



If you have high value goods, you need an audience with appropriately sized wallets. The auctioneer needs to be entertaining and skilled at raising the bids. Set reserve prices on everything in advance, so you don't waste valuable donations by underselling them.



Don't forget you can sell services, not just things. Remember the Scouts “Bob a Job” week? Take notice of health and safety considerations, particularly if young people or dangerous tools are involved.

Lastly, other things to consider...

Handling Money

For some fundraising activities you will need a float. So think about what denominations of coin and how many you are likely to need.

Have somewhere secure to put the money. If you have a large event, consider having runners to collect up the larger notes and cheques and take them to the secure lockable box.

You should have two people to count the takings. Get both people to write the sum down on a piece of paper and verify that they agree on the same amount (or start counting again if they can't!).

Get lots of plastic bags for coins ready. Bank the money as soon as you possibly can, decide on a secure place to store the money if there is going to be a delay.

Volunteers can like this form of fundraising as the only requirement is to smile for an hour or two. But, street collections are also governed by regulation and to collect money or sell goods on behalf of a charitable cause in a public place, you need a permit from the Local Authority.

Swindon Borough Council has information on how to apply for a licence on their website (look under “licences”). You can also find the full regulations which cover what information the collectors need to display and how the money is to be collected and counted. See VAS publication “Street Collections”.

Selling Things

Anything you can buy, acquire or make can be sold at a profit. You may need to be aware of regulations covering the sale of certain goods (for example age restricted products, food or alcohol – see sections below).



You can buy merchandise (such as small teddies) badged with your logo from fundraising catalogues. Buy for £1 each and sell for £2 each. With volunteers selling them in the office or to their friends and neighbours you can achieve volume, profits and awareness of your organisation.

Cakes, jams and other edible produce work well at events or in offices (see guidance on **Food** below). **Never run an event without offering a cup of tea!!**

Auctions of donated goods (unwanted gifts, donations from businesses) or services (a free meal donated by a local restaurant) or local volunteers (grass cutting or baby sitting) depend for their success on having the right audience and the right auctioneer.

national or local sponsored events such as marathons, or organise an event such as a concert jointly and split the proceeds.

Types of Fundraising Activity

Fundraising activities broadly fall into the following categories:

- Events – including fetes, sales, sponsored walks
- Raffles
- Cash collections
- Donations (gift aid)
- Selling things (auctions, e-bay, merchandise, cakes, services, etc)

A few pointers on each of these....

Events

There are lots of things to consider in running a fundraising event. Broadly speaking you need to ask yourself

- will people take part?
- how much will it raise?
- will it be worth the effort?
- will it be legal?



See VAS publications “Fundraising Events Checklist” and “Fundraising Events Table”

Donations

The simplest form of fundraising (which many English people seem reluctant to try) is asking for donations. People connected with your organisation or in your community will give, **but you have to ask them.**

- Ask for the right level of donation. Don't ask very wealthy people for a £5 donation, ask for a substantial amount. Conversely, don't alienate the less well off by expecting a large donation. Provide a menu of donations tied to specific items (e.g. £20 pays for a chair, £200 pays for a table and £2,000 pays for the new flooring)
- Many people would rather give a donation than help organise, or participate in, a fundraising event (some people just hate fun!!)
- Make it easy to give. Use envelopes or online giving.
- Register your organisation for Gift Aid and encourage all your donors to sign a Gift Aid declaration. It is not difficult and can increase the value of donations by 25%.

See VAS publication “**Gift Aid**”.

Raffles

Raffles can be a low cost (money and effort) method to make funds easily. Whenever you are running another event, hold a raffle too. You need to be aware, however, that as raffles are a form of gambling (a lottery) they are governed by Gambling Commission regulations which you must follow and you may need to register with the Commission.



There are broadly 3 types of lottery you may be running :

Small Raffle

This is the easiest raffle to organise and does not require registration. Tickets are only sold during your event, not before. You can spend a maximum of £250 on prizes but all donated prizes can be accepted. You cannot offer a cash prize but gift vouchers are OK. All the money raised must be donated to a specified cause.

Private Raffle

You do not need to register this raffle. Tickets for this can be sold to people living or working in the same premises, or who are members of an organisation. This type of raffle can only be advertised on the premises or on the tickets.

Society Raffle

A society raffle enables tickets to be sold over a period of time to the general public. It is run by a group of people and must be registered with your local authority or gaming board. There are strict rules regarding this sort of raffle and you must ensure you have taken advice before you start.

See VAS publication “Holding a Raffle” or see the Gambling commission website www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk

Cash Collections

Collecting money in the street takes lots of willing helpers and organisation but can be a good source of regular income once you work out which days of the week or year and which locations are the most profitable.