

## 6.3 Fundraising Ideas

---

Simple fundraising ideas, which you can vary:

### 1. **Club/band night:**

Club nights are some of the riskiest fundraising events to organise, but with a little bit of planning you can potentially raise quite a lot of money. Think carefully about the location and the timing: you don't want your event to clash with any major exams, essay deadlines or other big club nights.

Although weekends seem like the more obvious option, getting a venue for free, for example, will be a lot easier on a weeknight. It might be a good idea for advance tickets to be cheaper, as this way you're more likely to at least break even before the event itself.

- ★ **Remember what you're up against.** Make your event cheaper than other club nights, but not too cheap, as you don't want your night to seem like it's not worth going to. Offer quality performers/DJs, and pay a lot of attention to the way you advertise, as the event should be attractive to people who normally go to clubs/gigs!
- ★ **Get a band or a DJ to play for free.** If you find it hard to get anyone to perform for free, offer something: that they can sell their CDs at the event, that they will get their name and MySpace address on all advertising etc. Just try not to offer money!
- ★ **Get a venue for free.** If you don't happen to know anyone in the club business, you could phone up some local clubs and ask what they can offer. There are several ways this could work out:
  - **If you present your case well, you might get the venue for no cost at all.** This would mean all money made from ticket sales would be yours. Make a realistic estimate of how many people you will bring in for the owner, and don't forget to mention you're fundraising for charity.
  - **Offer a proportion of ticket sales as a payment.** This means you won't spend more than you manage to raise, but be careful, as you don't want half of your hard-earned money to go to a club owner.
  - **You get the venue for free, but there's a minimum spending requirement at the bar.** This means you keep all the money you make from ticket sales. Be VERY careful with these deals, as if your guests don't spend enough money, you will most likely be presented with a rental fee, which could potentially be even more than what you've managed to raise. So do make sure you know what you're getting into!
- ★ **Advertise! Then advertise some more. Then finish off with a bit of advertising...** Nothing is more important than advertising when putting together a club/band night, as you're usually aiming for a lot of people attending, and it usually takes more money and effort from people to show up. **Therefore, advertising for a club night or gig should:**

- **Be appropriate for the type of event.** This means that leaflets' quality should match up to other club leaflets you see around, as that's what you're competing with!
- **Target a wide range of people.** For a successful club night, you need to get much more people to turn up than
- **Be energetic and enthusiastic.** This means that you don't just put up a few posters and wait for people to call you. Make leaflets and leave them everywhere, set up a Facebook group, and be relentless – there's a lot of competition!
- ★ **Be VERY proactive with ticket sales!** There's so much going on at universities, that unless you remind people constantly, they won't remember to show up to your event. Set up a stall in a busy location at uni a couple of times during the last couple of weeks before your event. Sell tickets outside your university, especially on the day of the event, sell them to your friends, or even better, and get your friends to sell them to their friends. **Just make it extremely easy for people to buy a ticket!**

## 2. Pub night:

It should be easier for you to get a venue for free than with club nights, and you might even get the landlady/landlord to put up a special promotion on (that you can then advertise), or to donate some of their profits to you.

You do need to advertise relentlessly, and don't forget to take advantage of all of your contacts! There are a couple of things to think about:

- ★ **Combine your event with a pub quiz, a raffle, an open mike night, or collect voluntary donations.** Make it fun and don't be restricted by ideas of what people usually do in a pub.
- ★ **Instead of selling tickets, include other ways of fundraising in your pub night.** People are much less likely to pay to go to a pub, so do think about creative ways to raise money. Offer quality entertainment, and make people feel comfortable, rather than pushing for money by charging for entry.
- ★ **The quirkiest the better!** Include something that isn't normally associated with the setting. Here are a few examples:
  - **Karaoke.** You can charge people a (voluntary) fee to sing, or just have it as something to liven up the night.
  - **Set up a big screen and a games console, and charge people a pound a go.**
  - **Get people to vote on any existing competition.** Think big sports events, the Eurovision Song Contest, or anything you can show on a big screen and people can vote. Or combine this with your raffle, and sell countries to people. Then the people with the winning country win the prize.

## 3. Stall sales:

Stalls are very easy to plan, but you do need to get permission, and do make a realistic estimate of costs – e.g. don't spend three weeks baking cake for a hundred pounds. If you don't have permission to 'sell' things, you can suggest a 'minimum donation of e.g. 50p for cakes'.

- ★ **Be imaginative, proactive and try to get noticed! Approach people, or make it very easy for them to approach you.** Do check at your university whether you're allowed to walk around cafeterias and common rooms selling your cake, rather than just standing behind your stall.
- ★ **Do sell something else than cake as well**, for example badges are very easy and quite cheap to get made. Or sell t-shirts. Or hugs. Remember that this doesn't have to be a major thing, for example just making certificates or badges that say something like 'I support local refugees', and giving them away as part of a cake deal, for example, could be successful.

#### 4. Raffle:

Raffles are easy to combine with other fundraising or awareness-raising events.

**Be proactive with selling your raffle tickets, and make it easy for people to buy several** (e.g. one for a pound, three for two pounds).

Just a couple of things that you need to know when setting up a raffle:

- ★ **There needs to be a prize**, and winning it needs to be dependent on chance. Prizes cannot total more than £500, even if they're donated.
- ★ **The raffle has to be held at a fundraising event**, where the draw also has to take place.
- ★ The law also states that no more than £100 can be deducted from sales for costs (e.g. buying the tickets, putting up posters), and that the value of tickets on sale has to be under £20,000 and the proceeds from all raffles in one year less than £250,000, but this is unlikely to affect your raffle.

#### 5. Movie / Quiz / Theatre night:

There are a lot of things you can do to turn your awareness-raising event into a fundraiser. For example, sell cake or other refreshments, badges or t-shirts, or tickets to another event.

If there's an existing popular quiz night at your university, you could try and negotiate getting them to donate profits to your society one week, especially if it's refugee week for example. This is quite unlikely to work, as there are so many worthwhile societies at universities, but do get in touch with some of the other societies and try and negotiate a period of a few weeks, during which you collectively take over from the quiz organisers, with the profits going to a different society each week.

#### 6. Sponsored anything!

Slightly crazy sponsored events are a great way to get generous donations and get some publicity. If it's low cost then it's usually a guaranteed fundraising success.

- ★ **Think outside the box.** The more common options, like runs and cycle rides are good, but do think about doing something slightly crazier and quirkier as well. Here are a few examples:
  - **Sleep outs.** A good way to get publicity for refugee issues is to organise a sponsored sleep out. These are particularly good for getting a lot of people involved.

- **Fasting.** A sponsored fast, for example during Ramadan, is something a bit different, and certain to grab people's attention.
- **Shaving/Waxing.** All kinds of crazy things are likely to attract a lot of attention, think waxing your legs for guys and shaving your head for girls. Be creative.
- ★ **Get a lot of people to participate in the sponsored thing.** Instead just the committee members, for example, taking part in the sponsored action itself, try and get as many people as possible. Even better if you can get a lecturer or a tutor to participate. If everyone agrees to a minimum sponsorship amount of £20, for example, you can raise quite a lot of money with very little time and effort required from the organisers. You can get people to sign up when you have a stall, or just ask around: if 10 people in your STAR group all get two more people to take the sponsored action, you've got 30 people and can raise up to 600 pounds!
- ★ **Remind people to get as many sponsors as possible.** Anyone should be able to get at least £20 worth of sponsorship money, and it isn't too hard to get a lot more.
- ★ **Get some publicity.** Advertise the sponsored event, and if you can get a lot of people to turn up, you can then include other things in the event (e.g. a bucket collection, a raffle, or a cake sale, depending on the setting). This way you can also continue to collect sponsorship money right until the action takes place. People might not be that interested in watching someone run a half-marathon, but they might want to see 10 guys wax their legs...

**There are many other things that could raise you a lot of money.** Here are some suggestions, and if you come up with something brilliant, please let the national office know!

- ★ **Sumo wrestling and bouncy castles.** Getting a sumo wrestling mat or a bouncy castle, for example, to your university is not actually that difficult, and has the potential to raise quite a nice sum of money. You can charge people a bit to have a go, as a lot of people will pay some money to experience something they haven't tried since childhood. You do probably have to get a permit from your university, and do think about the location carefully. Advertising is VERY important for this type of event, as the initial investment is quite large, so you have to make sure you actually raise some money. Companies that do bouncy castles, wrestling mats, movable climbing walls, and a variety of other things are easily found online.
- ★ **Organise a competition at university grounds.** This could be football, pool, or any other sport, or you could go for one of the quirkier options. For example, an egg and spoon race, a sack race, or a water fight could be a lot of fun, but do remember to ask for a permit from your university, advertise the event very well, and keep the costs to a minimum – this way, even if you only charge one pound to participate, you'll make at least some money.
- ★ **Organise an auction.** You can include an auction in another event, such as a pub night, or set it up as an event on its own. The items auctioned could be donated goods, experiences of all kinds (be creative, this could be dinner dates on Valentine's Day, tours of local attractions if you happen to know someone working at one, private gigs if your musician/comedian friends are willing to perform at someone's house, or donated tickets to gigs, for

example), or even pieces of art, if you happen to know any locally famous artists.

- ★ **Second-hand clothes sales and markets.** You would have to get people to donate unwanted goods first, and, again advertise your event very well.