



# Community Fundraising





**Congratulations!** You've decided to build an **inclusive playground!** We are so glad that you decided to include all members of your community to enjoy your playground - from children with physical, cognitive, developmental or sensory disabilities, to grandparents with mobility challenges, your park will be a place where everyone is welcome, and everyone can participate.

The funding to pay for your beautiful new playground can come from a variety of sources that can include government grants like civic parks departments, the Tire recycling Municipal Grant Program and provincial grants through Community Facility Enhancement Programs (CFEP). It can include funding support from community organizations like Kiwanis, Rotary Club, Knights of Columbus, church groups and others. It can also include cash donations from local community members, and local businesses.

A portion of your playground's funding will need to come from fundraising activities your group will undertake beyond the grant applications, and outright invitations to donate to your community.

We have some great ideas and guidelines here to help you plan and execute fundraising initiatives.

This **Fundraising Idea Book** will help support you with turning your playground ideas into a reality. These ideas are based on known activities that other community and school groups have used to raise funds for their projects.

**Good luck with YOUR fundraising!**

**We can't wait to see what you come up with.**



## Bottle Donations

Bottle runs are an easy way to get your community on board with raising funds for the playground. Coordinate with the nearest bottle return depot to have them direct donations identified for your community to you.

For bottle donations, your fundraising group can arrange a bottle drop off day and your group can take them to the depot. Conversely, you can work with the local bottle depot and have community members bottles to a specific location directing their returns via direct depot to the depot with them forwarding the deposit refunds to your community.

Either or, you will need to promote this throughout your community via typical social media streams (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) along with community newsletters, webpages, blogs community signs, posters and door flyers. You can pay to have your flyers distributed by a flyer delivery service, you can use Canada Post services, or you can enlist the power of your community service groups (i.e. scouts) and volunteers to deliver the flyers.

## Partner with local restaurants and retailers

Partner with a local restaurant to commit proceeds from meals on a given special day, week or even month. Some past successful campaigns have included:

**Cobs Fresh Bread** has a program in place called “Dough Raiser Program” where 5% of each noted sale will be donated back to your community project.

**McDonalds** franchisees have run special days where a designated amount from the sale of items are donated back to your community project, and they will inquire at the till if the purchaser would like to make an additional donation to your cause. You may be asked to set up a display during the day, giving you a chance to engage and educate people on your playground.

**A&W** franchisees have in the past run special days were \$1 from each meal sold on a given day is donated back to your community project.

**Denny’s** has run month long events where proceeds from specific menu items generate donations back to a local community’s charitable project.

**Local Pubs** can run special nights that include a cover charge that gives patrons a free drink and appetizer, with the balance going to your community project. You may be able to run special events during that evening like raffles or silent auctions. The community usually must provide *appealing* auction items.



These can come from the local business community in the form of coupons, discounts, passes or merchandise. Sports merchandise does particularly well.

Candidates for partnering in your local business community include:

<b>Restaurants</b>	<b>Bars/Pubs</b>	<b>Grocery Stores</b>	<b>Specialty Shops</b>
<b>Candy Shops</b>	<b>Coffee Shops</b>	<b>Pharmacies</b>	<b>Children’s Retailer</b>
<b>Bank Branches</b>	<b>Insurance Brokers</b>	<b>Realtors</b>	

*With a little brainstorming you can add to this list quickly.*

## Raffles

Many community and school groups run raffles to raise funds for their inclusive playgrounds. Vendors will sometimes provide items at a discount or even free if they are being used to raise money for a qualifying charitable purpose. For example, Airlines:

### **WestJet Airport Community Giving program**

*At WestJet we support charities and not-for-profit organizations in the communities we serve through the Airport Community Giving program with an in-kind (non-cash) gift of flight donation of a roundtrip for two, anywhere we fly. This donation is to be used for fundraising purposes, such as an auction or raffle item.*

Keep in mind that WestJet has specific guidelines that you must meet to qualify for this giving program. For more information [click here](#).

### **Air Canada Sponsorships and Community Investments**

*Air Canada needs the communities where it operates and where its employees, customers and other stakeholders live and work to be healthy, financially strong and dynamic. To achieve this, Air Canada and the Air Canada Foundation offer in-kind and monetary support for charitable causes, events or organizational sponsorships in exchange for brand visibility and engagement with communities, customers and employees.*

Keep in mind that Air Canada requires 3 months lead time to approve your application. [Click here](#).



Other candidates for “in-kind” donations of raffle items include local businesses that actively market in your community including:

- |                     |                                      |                             |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Hotels</b>       | <b>Vacation Destinations</b>         | <b>Travel Agencies</b>      |
| <b>Golf Courses</b> | <b>Pro Sports Organizations</b>      | <b>Car Rental Companies</b> |
| <b>Bars/Pubs</b>    | <b>Car / Motorcycle / RV Dealers</b> | <b>Specialty Shops</b>      |
| <b>Theatres</b>     | <b>Restaurants</b>                   | <b>Home Improvement</b>     |

*With a brainstorming session we're sure your group can come up with many - many more!*

## Events and Tournaments

Many community and school groups run special days like a Bar-B-Ques or outdoor events in their parks with special guests from the community, fun games, prizes and treats.

Things to keep in mind when considering these events include:

- |                            |                             |  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>City Permits</b>        | <b>Food Permits</b>         | <b>Contingency plans for inclement weather</b> |
| <b>Restroom facilities</b> | <b>Volunteer Management</b> | <b>Signage</b>                                 |

Special Guests from the community could include:

- |  |  |                       |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| <b>Civic, Provincial and Federal Politicians</b> | <b>Firefighters, Police &amp; Paramedics</b> |                       |
| <b>Entertainers</b>                              | <b>Local News</b>                            | <b>Sports Figures</b> |

Promote via typical social media streams (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) along with community newsletters, webpages, blogs community influencers (politicians, realtors etc.) Community signs and door leaflets can be considered too.

Tournaments are also a great way to generate funds for your projects these can include:

- |                    |                         |                          |                         |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Golf</b>        | <b>Curling</b>          | <b>Darts</b>             | <b>Bowling</b>          |
| <b>Bocce Ball</b>  | <b>Lawn Bowling</b>     | <b>Softball</b>          | <b>Motorcycle rides</b> |
| <b>Runs/Walks</b>  | <b>Cycling</b>          | <b>Poker</b>             | <b>Racquet Sports</b>   |
| <b>Video Games</b> | <b>Board Game Night</b> | <b>Concerts</b>          | <b>Bake Sales</b>       |
| <b>Pub Crawls</b>  | <b>BBQ</b>              | <b>3 on 3 Basketball</b> | <b>Movie Night</b>      |
| <b>Dance</b>       | <b>Trivia Night</b>     |                          |                         |



Make sure to choose a tournament that your committee members enjoy already and would have fun organizing and promoting.

Consider teaming up with a tournament that already exists and ask if they will share a portion of the fees with your charity. Less work than starting your own charity, find a way to add value to their existing event through promotion and provide donated prizes.

## Event Planning Checklist

### 1. Set goals

When planning beforehand, set goals for what you want the fundraiser to accomplish. You should have one main goal alongside minor objectives. Make these specific and measurable. For example, maybe you want to raise \$5000 towards your playground equipment. You can measure this goal in a specific dollar amount with a straightforward purpose: “Kids’ inclusive playground”

A minor objective could be gaining 30 new potential volunteers. Still measurable, still purposeful, but smaller than the main goal. Outlining these intentions beforehand will make the event’s purpose clear to everyone in your organization and those attending.

### 2. Establish a budget

You can’t set a well-studied goal before knowing how much has to go into the event. By going through your financials and resources, you’ll get a clear picture of what you need to invest in order to make the event successful. Take into account all possible expenses:

- ♥ Venue
- ♥ Decorations
- ♥ Food & refreshments
- ♥ Printing, mailing & postage
- ♥ Travel expenses
- ♥ Programs or brochures
- ♥ Equipment
- ♥ Entertainment
- ♥ Licensing & permissions
- ♥ Insurance
- ♥ Advertising
- ♥ Speaker fees
- ♥ Door prizes

Don’t overstretch the budget but remember, a properly budgeted event means no surprises and properly funded events will increase their appeal can increase potential returns.



### 3. Give yourself enough time

Make sure you have enough time scheduled beforehand to plan. The larger and more intricate the fundraiser, the more time you will need. Depending on the size of the event, you should begin planning at least 3-6 months in advance, and when booking a venue (golf tournaments for example) you may need to book the facility a year in advance. This gives your organization time to organize and prepare materials, plus provides enough time for you to advertise and promote your event so potential attendees have enough notice to arrange for it in their calendars.

### 4. Find Sponsors

Corporate sponsors provide financial backing and security for your cause. Meet with possible supporters and discuss details to see if the event has potential for their involvement. Talk about who the fundraiser will reach, what your organization's mission and cause are and how you'll promote the sponsor at the event.

When backers are interested in your fundraising events, their involvement will allow your group to expand its budget and reach a larger audience. Additionally, the sponsor receives corporate benefits from working to better the local community.

### 5. Recruit volunteers and delegate work

Event planning comes with a lot of work and leaving the assignment to only 2-3 people can become troublesome for committee members, community volunteers and the organization. Working together helps clarify what work needs to get done and who needs to accomplish it. Establish a committee with a core group of individuals in charge of different aspects and lean on volunteers for any other assistance. Clearly communicate roles and tasks, and trust those who help and work around you.

### 6. Other "stuff" to consider

During all the hubbub of planning your next fundraiser, don't forget practical considerations your group may need to take into account. These can include but aren't limited to:

- ♥ Event health and safety;
- ♥ Access for individuals with disabilities;
- ♥ Liability insurance;
- ♥ Photography for the event (with proper consents for sharing images);
- ♥ Available first aid; and
- ♥ Any necessary transportation.

Taking care of these considerations beforehand helps ensure your organization has a smooth and successful fundraiser. Cover all the bases when planning and avoid any potential mishaps during your event.



## 7. Promotion

Once your fundraiser is planned out and ready to go, promote, promote, promote! Set up a strategy within your organization and market the event across various media: print, website, email marketing and social media. Get the community involved by asking volunteers, donors and sponsors to help promote the event. When it comes to marketing, you can never have enough promotion. More publicity means more constituents, which means more donations for your cause.

Nonprofits often struggle to develop a coherent marketing strategy for even their biggest and most important events. But if you can create great content that generates a buzz, your next event will have an enviable guest list. Next time you find yourself planning an event, consider these marketing methods:

**Press releases:** A formal press release announcing your event is a proven way to get the word out. Make sure you include the names of any guest speakers and describe the value your attendees will gain from the event. Send your release to local television and radio stations and post the release online.

**Video marketing:** You can use videos to showcase your creativity and promote your event in a variety of ways. If you recorded an event from a previous year, pull from images and short video and compiling them into a 'Highlights from Last Year's video. If you have guest speakers, consider interviewing them. Once you've got a great video, embed it on your website; upload it to YouTube and share it on your social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**Compelling images:** Because you're undoubtedly using social media to promote your nonprofit's event, make sure you have compelling images that grab peoples' attention and direct them to your event registration page. There are many online free tools and programs to help you create fun images for Social Media event promotion.

**Blog articles:** If your group's website doesn't have a blog, it most definitely should. Write blog articles that are relevant to your event and drive your audience to your event registration page by adding a call to action throughout those articles.

**Mystery:** Consider holding a little something back from your audience, so that they are interested in returning to your site to learn more. This could include a "big reveal" on the day of the event, a big auction item or something that will drive interest your way.



## Gift Card Fundraising

**Fundscrip** gift cards offer a program where you encourage supporters of your campaign to pay for their everyday expenses & gifts with FundScrip gift cards brought from FundScrip. Each purchase automatically includes a donation to the campaign. The supporter isn't out of pocket, and they shop where they would normally shop.

Participants buy a \$100 gift card, shop as usual at over 230 retailers pay using their gift card getting the full \$100 value and each purchase automatically includes a donation for your group. For more information [click here](#).

Other similar programs and funding tools are available from

[ShopFund\\$](#)

[FlipGive](#)

[Giftcards for causes](#)

[Fundly](#)

[Crowdrise](#)

## Organizing and Promoting

[Eventbrite](#) is a web-based tool to create event listing pages with built-in payment processing, analytics and support. It allows you to manage and track your ticket sales and promote your event with customizable pages. You can also expand your event promotion and find your audience where they discover experiences on partner sites like Facebook, Instagram and Spotify.

[Facebook Events](#) is another way to get the word out about your event and use your Facebook community to promote your event. A Facebook event is a calendar-based resource which can be used to notify users of upcoming occasions. Events can be created by anyone and can be open to anyone or private. The creator can invite his friends, members of a group, or fans of a page.

For a list of other on-line fundraising event tools visit [Double the Donation Matching Gifts Made Easy](#).

*Don't forget ... We are here to help!*

