

## **40 Fundraising Ideas**

### **1. Car Wash**

Car washes are often overlooked, but they can be a great way to take a task off someone's to-do list while simultaneously converting them into a supporter of your cause. Host the event at a location that's easily visible and accessible from high-traffic areas. You'll also want to make sure you have plenty of space to wash, dry, and collect money from customers.

Strategize how to promote your upcoming car wash so donors can work it into their busy schedules. Social media and email are great places to start, but word of mouth can be just as impactful.

### **2. Bake Sale**

This is a fan-favorite! Simply charge a flat rate for each baked good. [Ontario rules allow you to sell many home-made treats](#) without worrying about food safety laws.

### **3. Dance Marathon**

Challenge participants to join a 24-hour dance marathon to raise money for your mission. Have dancers launch peer-to-peer campaigns with a minimum goal for participation and encourage attendees to create teams to see which group can raise the most. This fun fundraising activity keeps participants moving and creates ample opportunities for in-person connection. You could also invite supporters to request their favorite songs for \$5 to raise additional revenue.

### **4. Photo Contest**

Run a photo contest to engage attendees, build brand awareness, and connect with donors more organically. Identify a theme or subject for your contest, then invite donors to share their photos on Instagram with the appropriate hashtags and photo tags. Collect all entries, upload them to a central landing page, and ask your community to vote for their favorite by making a small monetary donation.

If you prefer to keep it all on social media, determine the winner by identifying which photo gets the most likes. Offer to share the winner's photo on social media accounts and our website home page.

### **5. A Challenge (eg ice-bucket, dunk tank, beard growing ...)**

Invite donors to commit to a challenge to win a competition or raise funds. Think how successful the [2014 ALS Ice Bucket Challenge](#) was in raising money, or the [Movember](#)'s annual campaign that challenges supporters to grow their facial hair for the entire month of November to raise awareness for men's health. Ideas for challenges:

Head shaving - If you can find brave supporters to go the extra mile for your nonprofit, a head-shaving fundraiser is a great way to bring attention to your cause and attract new audiences. Participants pledge to shave their heads (or beards) to raise money. In return, you can offer an exclusive prize and community recognition on neighbourhood social media platforms.

## **6. Cooking Class**

Whether gathering in person or online, a cooking class is a great way to interact with your community in a relaxed, creative environment. Ask your employees, volunteers, or donors if anyone would be interested in leading the class or turn to the experts and hire a chef to take the lead.

Charge a flat registration fee or offer a fundraising minimum for supporters to earn their spot in class. If you choose to host this event virtually, charge admission to attend the livestream.

As part of your livestream fundraising initiative, include an incentive for larger donations by offering time with the chef after class for anyone who reaches the tier two fundraising level.

## **7. Breakfast in Bed**

Ask local businesses to donate breakfast staples like muffins, fruit, bagels, and coffee for this easy fundraising idea. Next, have supporters and their networks place orders. Enlist volunteers to deliver the goods and encourage tips in the form of donations.

Create a menu that demonstrates impact, so your supporters know what their donation provides. For example, a \$20 donation gets you a fresh bagel, homemade croissant, and hot coffee, but more importantly, it pays for a pet's flea treatment.

## **8. Dinner Party**

This fundraising idea makes sense for any occasion. Whether you host a potluck harvest dinner or a cocktail hour, sell tickets and invite guests to a rented venue, a volunteer's home, or a park for a delicious picnic. Let your guests know how meaningful this dinner, and their contributions, truly are.

## **9. Exercise Lessons**

Whether you focus on yoga, tennis, or self-defense, host an afternoon where participants can donate to receive a lesson from a local expert.

To find a qualified instructor, reach out to local gyms or workout studios to see who might be interested in donating their skills for a good cause. You could also turn to social media to source potential exercise professionals in your area who might be a good fit for your event.

### **10. Silent Auction**

Plan a silent auction. Reach out to your network to start assembling items and appoint a committee of volunteers to solicit their contacts for additional gifts.

By shifting this event to virtual, it becomes more accessible to your audience. Consider promoting any auction items in an email blast and on social media to engage attendees, then take advantage of the opportunity to ask for additional donations throughout the event.

### **11. Pancake Breakfast**

Heat up the skillets and recruit a team of passionate volunteers to serve up endless stacks of pancakes in support of your nonprofit. Advertise your event weeks in advance to give donors enough time to plan ahead and be sure to increase your marketing cadence the week leading up to the event to keep it top of mind.

Ask donors to purchase a ticket to your all-you-can-eat breakfast event or remove the registration cost altogether to increase accessibility and ask supporters to donate in exchange for a hot meal once they arrive. Whichever you choose, just make sure you have plenty of butter and syrup to go around.

### **12. Games Night**

Host friends and families at a games night that is also a fundraiser. Invite guests to dress up and donate to participate. Offer prizes for game winners like a gift card to a nice restaurant in your area.

Your game night can also be for all ages, complete with various options from Monopoly to charades. Charge for entry and host mini tournaments among different sets of players.

### **13. Murder Mystery Party**

See who can piece all of the clues together to solve the mystery at this classic fundraising event. Attendees can reserve their spot in the game with a flat registration fee but be sure to remind them to invite friends and family members to join the fun.

Spice things up by encouraging attendees to dress in costume, or even consider adding a costume contest element to get donors excited.

#### **14. Wine or Whiskey Tasting**

Wine and dine your community of supporters with an invitation to a wine night fundraising event. Ask local wineries or restaurants to donate a bottle or two in exchange for free marketing or host your wine tasting at a local business that would contribute a portion of their proceeds to your organization.

Consider hiring a sommelier to teach attendees how to properly taste each wine and educate the group on the history of each drink being served, or collect a basket of fine wines, cheeses, wine glasses, and bottle openers to auction off at the event for additional donations. You could even throw in a gift card to a local vineyard.

#### **15. Fashion Show / Dress-Up Birthday party**

To launch a memorable fashion show, ask participants to create and bring their own masterpieces or reach out to local clothing shops and boutiques for donated outfits and make it a dress-up party. You can also do makeup for children. Make a runway through your living room or across the lawn. Ask for donations in lieu of gifts

#### **16. Movie Night**

Host a film screening or a movie marathon at a local park or auditorium. Sell tickets and snacks for suggested donations. Maybe invite attendees to help determine which movie you'll stream by donating a few dollars toward their favorite film on the list.

#### **17. Tie-Dye Party**

Host a "create your own T-shirt" get-together. Charge an entrance fee or ask for donations in lieu of gifts. Invite attendees to create their own masterpieces. Since making T-shirts isn't an extremely time-consuming activity, prepare some other family-friendly games, crafts, or challenges for the event to ensure attendees stick around.

#### **18. Scavenger Hunt**

Send participants running all around town (or just your yard and neighbourhood) with an organized scavenger hunt. Stick to a classic scavenger hunt where people have to find and collect designated items or go digital and have individuals or teams simply take a picture of the items or locations on the list and submit them for approval.

Charge a registration fee in advance. Offer a head start or hints in exchange for donations on the day of the hunt and give bonus points to the individual or team who collects the most trash as they explore and tidy up your city.

### **19. Karaoke Night**

Invite donors to let their hair down and have some old-fashioned fun with a night of karaoke. Charge for entry, then encourage spectators to vote for their favorite performers through small monetary donations. The performer with the most donations at the end of the evening will be crowned the winner.

Encourage supporters of all ages to participate in a battle of the generations. Categorize all performers into individual age brackets, then leave it up to the audience to determine which group deserves the karaoke crown. Offer incentives to the winners to motivate participation or simply remind them of the bragging rights they'll earn.

### **20. Afternoon Tea Party**

Invite your friends, neighbours and family to relax, sip their favorite tea, and support our mission. Attendees can secure their entry with a standard registration fee, then dress up for your classy high-tea fundraiser to make the most of the event. Prepare elegant cutlery, fine china, and classic tea party snacks. Consider partnering with a local tea or coffee shop for fancy pastries.

### **21. Plant Sale**

Have a great garden and need to divide some perennials? Or maybe you like growing things from seed but always have too many seedlings to plant? People love local plant sales. You'll need to advertise it amongst your neighbours or on a neighbourhood site. Be careful [not to sell any invasive plants!](#)

### **22. Trivia Night**

Trivia nights are a weekly occurrence at bars for a few simple reasons—they're easy to organize, affordable to host, and can be customized to appeal to any audience. You might ask a local restaurant or bar to host your fundraising event and encourage participants to form teams in advance.

To earn their spot in the competition, set a minimum fundraising amount that each participant must meet to play. If registrants don't meet the minimum, they can donate the remaining amount. Charge an entrance fee for anyone not participating in the competition but still wants

to support your cause and be part of the action. You can also host a virtual trivia night to reduce overhead costs. Simply create a list of questions, secure an engaging virtual host, and encourage attendees to tune in for the live event to earn designated prizes.

### **23. Yard Sale**

Collect gently worn clothes and home goods for a yard sale your community won't want to miss. If you have valuable items, like first-edition books or signed collectibles, you can hold an exclusive auction for these top-tier pieces at the end of the day. Take pictures of the items and post them on social media to generate buzz around the event.

### **24. Community Potluck**

Invite supporters to dig out their family recipe books for a community potluck. This cheap fundraising idea is accessible to people who might not be able to afford a ticket to your annual gala or other large fundraisers but still want to get involved with your cause. Encourage donors to buy a ticket then simply show up with an appetite and their favorite meal, dessert, or drink in hand.

To leave attendees with something special to remember the evening, you might ask guests to submit their recipes ahead of the potluck so you can create a collection (home-made cookbook) of everyone's unique contributions. Send the recipes home with each person as a gift for attending.

### **25. Bottle Drive**

Engage friends and neighbours in collecting beer and liquor bottles and cans to drop off at your place or set out at end of their driveways on a certain day and time for you to collect. Take these into your local Beer Store to collect the money. Its amazing how many people just toss these items in their blue boxes!

### **26. Lemonade stand**

Have an enterprising youngster who wants to help? Advertise in your neighbourhood and post signs at mailboxes and end of your driveway (date, time). Maybe get some balloons or colourful streamers, set out a table and chair, lots of cups and glasses, a cooler of ice and a big jug of lemonade and your little fundraiser is open for business. Be prepared to assist with making change, restocking lemonade and ice and doing any cleanups!

### **27. Dog Walking**

It's not always easy for people to make time for an afternoon stroll with their pets, but you can help make their days easier by walking their dog in exchange for a donation.

Launch an online sign-up sheet where donors can reserve a date and time, submit their donation, and insert all relevant contact information. Charge a flat rate for a 30-minute walk or offer longer walks in exchange for larger donations. You could also offer additional services, like bathing their dog, for an additional fee.

### **28. Pet Sitting**

When people travel for the weekend or just go away for the day on business, it can be challenging to find someone they trust to take care of their pets. You could relieve some of their stress with pet-sitting service and donate what they're happily willing to pay. Do some homework to find the usual hourly rate or weekend price so you know what amount would be appropriate.

### **29. Book Sale**

People still love books to hold! Collect books from friends and family and advertise your event.

### **30. Holiday Cooking Competition**

Round up supporters and foodies around a friendly culinary competition. Contestants create their best holiday dishes with a specific ingredient or other criteria, and people pay to taste each dish and cast their votes. You could also 'auction off' the role of judge.

### **31. Winter Clothing Drive**

Host a clothing drive ahead of the onset of freezing winter temperatures to support and protect community members in need. Collect these in-kind resources early in the winter season to ensure adequate resources for your beneficiaries when the coldest temperatures hit in December and January.

In addition to giving jackets, hats, and gloves, encourage donors to contribute a one-time donation on top of their in-kind contribution that can go to help animals. Clarify how each dollar will directly benefit a community member and local pets.

### **32. Community Bonfire**

Get donors together for a night of smores, hot chocolate, and campfire songs. Sell tickets to your event online or locally. If you are able to sell at least 10 tickets, ask us if we can join you to speak at your bonfire. We might also be able to bring a slideshow to highlight what your

guests are contributing in your community. Consider adding a few other small games or activities for attendees to do throughout the evening. Something as simple as a bag toss, a cookie decorating station, or a holiday movie screening would work well.

### **33. Walk-a-Thon**

Encourage supporters to fundraise on behalf of your cause through a walk-a-thon peer-to-peer fundraising event. Provide attendees with all necessary fundraising and marketing materials they might need to solicit donations. Offer prizes. Although most commonly held at a track, you can take this event to a local park or even online to host a virtual walk-a-thon.

### **34. Pub Crawl**

Don't discount the potential of a fundraising event that's centered around bar hopping. Plan your route with local breweries who may offer potential discounts or ask participating bars and eateries to donate a portion of their profits to your cause. Charge for entry and invite registrants to secure donations for each stop they make. You can also charge a fee for people to participate in the crawl. To take it one step further, ask people to dress in theme or have participants earn branded swag for each stop they make on the crawl.

### **35. Basketball Tournament**

Put a spin on the standard basketball tournament with other fun games like dunk contests, free-throw contests, or dribble challenges. Keep it simple with a flat registration fee.

### **36. Run 5K Race**

Put a fresh spin on the traditional 5K by turning it into a team relay race. Runners can solicit their networks for donations or ask their friends and family to purchase event tickets to come to watch. Perhaps each leg of the race demands a particular costume theme or a humorous obstacle like carrying an egg on a spoon or a three-legged race. Or...

Host a race where people dress up in theme to add some extra flair to the classic endurance event. Whether it's zombies, Star Wars, Harry Potter, or another theme, a costumed race allows donors to dig out their Halloween boxes and have some fun.

### **37. Craft Fair**

If Pinterest has taught us anything, it's that the do-it-yourself aesthetic isn't going anywhere. Gather talented friends and family members to help create and sell custom crafts, like bracelets, paintings, keychains, or hand-stitched blankets. Or create these items then donate them to PAWS to sell at upcoming events.



### **38. Ice Cream or Strawberry Social**

This fundraising event idea is perfect for families and children. Ask your community and local businesses for wholesale prices for supplies and help you get the word out. Charge per scoop/bowl.

### **39. Dunk Tank**

While getting an adult to sit in the tank might take a little convincing, this fundraising idea is an engaging weekend activity sure to leave everyone laughing. Identify local 'targets' who might be willing to take a shift in the dunk tank and sell tickets to those interested in sending them for a swim.

You can sell different tiers of tickets, rewarding those who donate larger amounts with additional attempts to dunk the person inside. Another creative twist is kicking off a peer-to-peer competition leading up to the event, and the person who raises the least has to take the first shift in the tank.

### **40. BBQ Cook-Off**

Invite local chefs to cook up their best barbecue plate and ask guests to donate, taste, and cast their votes for their top choice. Segment the competition even further to crown the winner of the best barbecue sauce, rolls, or side dishes. No matter what, be sure to keep a lot of napkins on hand.