

 **SKATE ONTARIO**

# FUNDRAISING GUIDE



**SKATE ONTARIO**  
SKATECANADA





## FUNDRAISING GUIDE

### Table of Contents

1. STEP 1: Determine the FUNDRAISING GOAL	3
2. STEP 2: Identify the TARGET AUDIENCE	3-4
3. STEP 3: Create a FUNDRAISING STORY	4
4. STEP 4: Establish the TYPE OF FUNDRAISER	4-5
5. STEP 5: Implement a MARKETING AND PROMOTION PLAN	5-6
6. STEP 6: Construct an OPERATIONAL EVENT TIMELINE	6
7. STEP 7: THANK SUPPORTERS	6-7
8. STEP 8: EVALUATE your fundraiser	7
9. Summary	7
10. Sources	8
11. Fundraising Planner	9-10
12. Fundraising Ideas	11
13. Sample Flyer	12
14. Sample Call-to-Action Letter	13
15. Sample Thank-you Letter	14

# FUNDRAISING GUIDE

Fundraising is an essential part of a club's/school's yearly activities. Fundraising can be used to purchase new equipment and helps to reduce the cost of skating programs, operations and special projects.

This guide is designed to help clubs/schools plan and execute successful fundraising endeavours and will provide you with a variety of fundraising opportunities, examples of fundraisers, and a "how-to-plan" guide to make your fundraiser a success. With the help of this guide, you will be able to:

- ✓ determine achievable fundraising goals using SMART goals;
- ✓ use an organized approach to plan your fundraiser;
- ✓ create a story to share for promotional purposes or possible sponsors;
- ✓ determine the most impactful way to promote your fundraiser;
- ✓ thank sponsors for their generous support; and
- ✓ evaluate the effectiveness of your fundraiser.

## "THE PLAN"

### STEP 1: Determine the FUNDRAISING GOAL

The first step of any fundraising campaign is to determine what you're raising funds for. Make a clear goal that is:

- **Specific**
  - ◆ What are the funds for? (For equipment, a club room, ice show, special event, or travel.) What's the dollar amount needed? Be as specific as possible.
- **Measurable**
  - ◆ How are you going to measure and monitor whether or not your goal has been met?
- **Achievable**
  - ◆ A goal should test your abilities but still remain possible to achieve. What is the size and scope of your fundraiser? Does your club/school have the people, time and resources available to raise the funds? It's always better to underestimate than overestimate.
- **Relevant**
  - ◆ Ensure that your goal is relevant and aligns with your club's/school's yearly plan. Is pursuing this goal worthwhile? Is it the right time? Does the goal match other efforts and/or needs of the club/school? How will your goal advance your club/school? Will it attract new skaters?
- **Time Based**
  - ◆ Creating a target date for your goal is critical in order to stay on track. Even if you don't have a hard deadline for your project, set an end date for your goal. Setting a target date allows for better scheduling and increases the motivation of involved stakeholders. Example: "We want to raise \$5000 by the end of March 2019 to pay for the travel and accommodation for two skaters who are competing at the Provincial Championships."

For more information about SMART goals, please refer to the following resource documents:

- ✓ [SMART Goals Information Sheet](#)
- ✓ [SMART Goals Detail Sheet](#)
- ✓ [SMART Goals Worksheet](#)

### STEP 2: Identify the TARGET AUDIENCE

A target audience is a group of people who are most interested and invested in the type of services that your club/school offers. These are people who are most likely to participate in a fundraiser and/or pay for a service or item that is offered.

Consider the following:

- Should your fundraiser target new members, local businesses, and outside community members or should it target already engaged club/school members?
- Depending on your target, how would your approach to promotion and marketing differ for each audience?
- Once you've defined your target audience, you can decide on the best way to reach them. If your target audience is broad, you may choose to disseminate information using social media. If your audience is small and specific,

distributing flyers at a session may be more appropriate.

Example: Our target audience includes local businesses and community members.

### STEP 3: Create a FUNDRAISING STORY

Your fundraising story should elicit excitement in your project and boost the motivation of your target audience. Don't presume your audience knows everything about your club/school or the reasons why you're trying to raise funds; in fact, you should write your fundraising story as though you're talking to someone who has no prior knowledge about your club/school. Provide your target audience with reasons why they should support your fundraising project.

Your fundraising story should answer the following questions:

- Why does your club/school need this money?
- Who and how many people will benefit?
- When do you need it?

Use the following guidelines when creating your fundraising story:

- 1. Clearly state the goal of your fundraiser.** *How much money is needed?*
- 2. Identify why the funds are needed.** *What exactly are you raising money for? This isn't as simple as saying, "We're raising money to cover the cost of travel to competitions for our skaters." It is important to communicate a clear and specific goal, such as "We want to raise \$5000 by the end of March 2019 to pay for the travel and accommodation for two skaters who are competing at the Provincial Championships."*
- 3. Expose the impact of raising funds.** *Outline who will benefit from the fundraiser and describe the effect it will have on the benefactors. For example, "This year, we are proud to announce a first for ABC Skating Club: two of our skaters have qualified for the Provincial Championships in Ottawa. We're launching a fundraising campaign to provide financial support for our skaters travelling to this prestigious event. This is a life-changing opportunity for our young skaters who are representing our club against the best in the province. It will only be made possible through the kind support of people like you."*
- 4. Be clear in the "ask."** *Don't be afraid to ask. No fundraising program has ever been successful without asking. Your request will be most effective if it is specific and aligns with the goal of the fundraiser. For example, "A donation of \$10 will pay for one hour of travel time for one skater going to Provincials."*

### STEP 4: Establish the TYPE OF FUNDRAISER

Now that you've determined your SMART goal and identified the target audience, you can establish the best type of fundraiser to suit your needs.

#### EVENTS

Event-type fundraisers are a good choice if you want to:

- increase community involvement;
- promote your club/school to the community;
- celebrate while raising money with your skaters, coaches, parents and family; or
- honour or recognize someone in your club/school/community.

#### RAFFLES

Raffle-type fundraisers are a good choice if you want:

- a quick way to raise funds for a specific purpose;
- a simple, easy to organize fundraising activity; or
- to increase community involvement.

Raffles can also be a piece of a larger fundraising event. Research the laws and regulations regarding raffles, lotteries, etc. within your municipality to ensure your fundraiser adheres to legal standards.

#### SPONSORSHIPS/PARTNERSHIPS/DONATIONS

Sponsorship is when a person or an organization provides funds for a project or activity in a club or school. Donations are gifts (monetary or other) to support a club/school for operations or special projects. Businesses have a wide range of resources and are often willing to get involved with local clubs/schools.

Sponsorship or donation-type fundraisers are a good choice if you:

- want to involve the local business community with your club/school;
- have someone in your club/school who has a connection to a local business;
- have an event or special program to promote; or
- want to raise money with minimal volunteer support.

## GRANTS

A grant is a sum of money given by an organization, especially a government, for a particular purpose.

**Advantages:**

- Grants often mean receiving generous amounts of money.
- After obtaining a grant, you are more likely to receive others.
- Grants help to build credibility and increase the visibility of your organization.

**Disadvantages:**

- Preparing grant proposals often requires time consuming research.
- Grant money often has strings attached to it; you cannot do whatever you want with the funds.

## PRODUCT SALES

Product sale-type fundraisers are a good choice if you:

- acquire a few adult volunteers who can actively participate;
- have a club/school population that can sell to family and friends;
- have lead time to contact a company and organize sales before seeing any profits; or
- do not have the advance money required for some events.

It is important to note that food fundraisers tend to have a high level of community participation.

## STEP 5: Implement a MARKETING AND PROMOTION PLAN

Getting the word out to your target audience is a crucial step in a successful fundraiser.

Here are some commonly used tools:

**Word-of-mouth:**

- Word-of-mouth is a classic method of promoting an organization's fundraising efforts. It is best to use word-of-mouth in conjunction with other promotional tools.

**Email campaigns:**

- Email promotion is a key tool for distributing information about your fundraiser. Keep in mind that many of your supporters need to hear about your fundraiser on multiple occasions before they commit to participating or donating. Plan to send at least three email communications.
  - ◆ Fundraiser announcement – This is a "save the date" type of communication. Announcements heighten excitement and allow your target audience to plan ahead.
  - ◆ Event reminder – Send an email invitation that highlights the main attraction of the fundraiser.
  - ◆ Last-chance email – Create a sense of urgency to boost last minute participation.

Keep emails clear and to the point. Create motivation and increase participation with a picture and a brief paragraph to call your target audience to action. Make sure to provide a link to your fundraiser on your website landing page directing interested parties to further details.

**Websites:**

- Keeping your website up-to-date with information about upcoming events at your club/school will encourage members to routinely check back.
- Consider giving your fundraiser its own webpage on your site and highlight it on your home page to maximize impact.

**Social media:**

- **Facebook**
  1. Create a page – Facebook pages are a great way to keep people informed about your club/school and its events throughout the year. Pages enhance stakeholder loyalty and allow you to provide updates throughout the year, ensuring members are apprised of events and important information.
  2. Create an event – Facebook events are a great way to get the word out for a specific fundraising effort.

If you create an event through your Facebook page, you will also be able to 'boost' your event as a way to advertise on Facebook to other members in the community. 'Boosting' your event requires a minimal investment of \$20, but will be beneficial in terms of promoting your event.

3. Invite friends and family – Invite your friends, family and people who you feel will support or advocate for your organization to 'like' your Facebook page.

- **Instagram/Twitter**

- ♦ Upgrade your Instagram profile to a business account. There is no cost and upgrading will give you access to more Instagram features like tracking the performance of a post with insights, sharing links in Instagram stories, scheduling Instagram posts and using promotional/advertising campaigns. Twitter also offers options for promotion: users can easily promote tweets and view the metrics associated with their promotion to monitor reach.
- ♦ Create a fun #hashtag and encourage people to use it on both Instagram and Twitter. To incentivise people to use your hashtag, you could organize a promotion or giveaway for followers who use the hashtag leading up to, during, or after the event.
- ♦ Ask vendors (or those involved) to share pictures from your event to show their participation. For example, if you hire a photographer to take pictures at your ice show, have them mention your event on their social media platforms to increase reach and attendance.

### **Traditional Media**

- Use local newspapers, direct mailings, flyers, school publications, bulletin boards (standard or digital) to spread the word about your fundraiser.

### **Community involvement**

- Consider offering a place for vendors at your fundraiser. Increasing the number of attendees and the amount of participation at your event can increase your chance for success and help to foster relationships with community members.

### **Celebrity Recruitment**

- Recruiting local celebrities (such as politicians, musicians, news anchors or business persons) to host an event, can allow organizations to attract wealthy donors.

### **Other tips:**

- Take pictures! Photographs are a great way to show your target audience the impact of their support and the success of the fundraiser. Photos can also help promote future fundraising endeavours.
- Try adding some mystery or surprise to your fundraiser: prior to your event, allude to different surprises that will be announced as the day approaches. By doing so, you can keep your audience on their toes and build additional hype for your event.
- Consider creating incentives for people to participate in and/or promote your event. This tactic works well for fundraisers that are easy to track, such as event tickets, raffles and product sales. Come up with a fun way to reward individuals with things like gift cards, free tickets for raffles, etc.

## **STEP 6: Construct an OPERATIONAL EVENT TIMELINE**

An event timeline is an integral piece of the fundraising plan. Creating a detailed event timeline will help you plan and execute a successful fundraiser. Consider important dates such as room booking deadlines, product distribution timeframes, permit schedules, set-up times and communication/promotion timelines. An operational event timeline can be used by all members of your fundraising team to stay on track.

## **STEP 7: THANK SUPPORTERS**

Sending a thoughtful thank you message to supporters is a vital part of a successful fundraiser. Thank-you letters strengthen relationships with supporters and community members and will help drive future fundraising programs. Supporters want to know how their participation has helped your club/school.

Here are a few key elements to a good "thank-you" note:

- ✓ *Keep the writing informal.* Instead of writing "On behalf of ABC Skating Club, we would like to thank you for your support," (formal), try, "Thank you for your support - you've made our day!" (informal).
- ✓ *Make it personal.* Address the thank-you letter to the supporter (use their name and double check the spelling).
- ✓ *Share the impact of their support.* Tell your supporter where the money was allocated and the effect it had on your skaters.
- ✓ *Include photos.* Pictures are a great way to display the impact of contributions.
- ✓ *Be timely.* Make sure to send thank-you cards immediately after the fundraising campaign concludes.

- ✓ *Send invitations to evoke future involvement.* Invite supporters to visit your website and/or social media platforms to encourage them to check back for information about future events.
- ✓ *Keep supporters up-to-date through the year.* Let people know how your club/school is progressing as a result of their support. For example, "Our skaters have been given a huge boost by the great community support – thanks again!"

#### Other ways to thank supporters:

- **Thank-you events** – Thank-you events are a great way to gather supporters together to thank them for contributing to your fundraiser. Some examples include hosting an afternoon thank-you lunch, or inviting supporters to a banquet or special performance by your skaters.
- **Public recognition** – Public recognition could include things like listing sponsors or supporters in your club's/school's newsletter, website, bulletin board or ice show program. You could also create a "supporter wall" or plaque where your supporters are highlighted and recognized.
- **Certificates or awards** – It's nice to give supporters something to take home to remind them of your club/school; ideas include certificates, medals or plaques.

## STEP 8: EVALUATE your fundraiser

Measuring the success of your event ensures you'll capture the important details of your organizational needs to improve future fundraising efforts. Findings from your evaluation will also inform and jumpstart preparations for your next event.

#### Synthesis Questions:

- Did you raise the amount of funds required?
- Did your target audience participate as expected?
- Did you secure any new members or supporters?
- Will existing supporters take part in this type of fundraiser in future seasons?
- Are there any changes that could be made for future endeavours?

## SUMMARY

- **Ask**
  - ◆ Few supporters will go out of their way to find a fundraiser to contribute to. It may feel uncomfortable to ask for money, but it is an essential task in order to gain support. If you don't ask, you won't get.
- **Show the impact**
  - ◆ Supporters want to know that their assistance has made a difference. As the level of support or amount of donation increases, the more supporters want to know exactly where their contribution was utilized.
- **Deliver on promises**
  - ◆ Did you purchase the new equipment you were raising funds for? Did your skaters travel to Provincials and compete? Did you get new costumes for the ice show? It is important to follow through on your goal(s), communicate progress and connect with your supporters.
- **Build relationships**
  - ◆ Sustainable fundraising is about establishing and nurturing relationships between supporters and the sports they love. Make sure your relationship with supporters is about more than just the fundraising contribution – they need to feel connected to your club/school. Let supporters share in the success of your club/school – both on and off the ice – and introduce them to other like-minded individuals.

## SOURCES

Accelevents – 37 ways to promote your fundraiser

Aplos – Eric Burgess – Fundraising guide for nonprofit organizations

Australia Sports Foundation – Why people give to sport

Australia Sports Foundation - Fundraising toolkit

Be the match Foundation – Community Fundraising Toolkit

Campaign Sports – Campaign Stories

Charity Village – Fundraising Q & A: How effective are your special events?

Checklist.ws – Fundraising Event Checklist

Classy – How to properly evaluate your fundraising campaign

Constant Contact - Allison Gauss – How to Write a Meaningful Thank You Email for Donors

Constant Contact – Miranda Paquet – 4 easy ways to promote your fundraiser

Endless Events – Everything you need to know to create your event timeline

EveryAction – The Nonprofit fundraising strategic plan

Firespring – Kelly Medwick – Creating a Checklist to plan your nonprofit fundraisers

Frontstream – The Ultimate Fundraising Event Checklist

Fund for Public Schools – Fundraising Toolkit

Fundly - #7: Fundraising letters to raise money through events

Fundraising Expert – Nine Steps to Fundraising Success for Sports Clubs

Gallagher, Damian & Gilmore, Audrey & Stolz, Alina. (2012). The strategic marketing of small sports clubs: From fundraising to social entrepreneurship. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*. 20. 1-17. 10.1080/0965254X.2012.657225.

Gofundme.com – Sports Team Fundraising tips

Gofundme.com – Your Fundraiser Story: A Comprehensive Guide

Greater Giving – Evaluation Event Success

Institute of Fundraising – Institute of Fundraising Blog

GuideStar: Blog – Crafting fundraising letters: Seven top tips

Help.justgiving.com – Fundraising

KnowHowNonProfit.org – How to Thank Your Supporters

Pitchero – Will Hinch – 17 helpful tips for marketing your sports club

Raise-Funds – Tony Poderis - Asking for the Money: “If you don’t ask, you don’t get”

Rival IQ – Erica Bell – 9 Actionable tips for fundraising with Instagram

The 5 Keys to Successful Fundraising by Sandra Sims 2nd Edition

The Fundraising Authority– A Sample Donor Thank You Letter for You Non-Profit

Upleaf technology Solutions – How to define your target audience

Winspire – Ian Lauth – Top 5 tools for promoting your fundraising event on a budget



## FUNDRAISING PLANNER

KEY AREAS	NOTES
<p><b>1. Determine the FUNDRAISING GOAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are our fundraising goals?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ What are the funds for?</li> <li>◆ How much money needs to be raised?</li> <li>◆ Estimate the time available for completing the fundraising project</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>2. Identify the TARGET AUDIENCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is your target audience?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ new members</li> <li>◆ local businesses</li> <li>◆ community members</li> <li>◆ club members</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. Create a FUNDRAISING STORY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create your fundraising story               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Why does our club need this money?</li> <li>◆ Who and how many people will benefit from this money?</li> <li>◆ When are the funds needed?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Establish the TYPE OF FUNDRAISER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What type of fundraiser is best suited for your cause?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ event</li> <li>◆ raffle</li> <li>◆ sponsorship/partnership/donations</li> <li>◆ product sales</li> <li>◆ grants</li> <li>◆ other</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. Implement a MARKETING &amp; PROMOTION PLAN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify promotional opportunities:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ direct appeal letter</li> <li>◆ newsletter article/write-up</li> <li>◆ press release</li> <li>◆ email campaign</li> <li>◆ website</li> <li>◆ social media</li> <li>◆ flyer</li> <li>◆ celebrity recruitment</li> <li>◆ bulletin board</li> <li>◆ radio</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



KEY AREAS	NOTES
<p><b>6. Construct an OPERATIONAL EVENT TIMELINE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a committee (if needed): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ assign roles and tasks</li> <li>◆ recruit volunteers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Create an event timeline and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ What are the expected costs?</li> <li>◆ What is the expected revenue?</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Important dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ start/end dates, event date(s)</li> <li>◆ booking/reservation deadlines</li> <li>◆ product distribution timeframes (deadlines, shipping, distribution)</li> <li>◆ permits</li> <li>◆ set-up, supplies timeline, equipment</li> <li>◆ communication/promotion timeline</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>7. THANK SUPPORTERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will we thank our supporters? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ thank-you notes</li> <li>◆ public recognition</li> <li>◆ thank-you event</li> <li>◆ certificate/award</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>8. EVALUATE your fundraiser</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did we run a successful fundraiser? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Were the funds needed raised?</li> <li>◆ Did our target audience participate?</li> <li>◆ Did we reach new members?</li> <li>◆ Will supporters take part in this type of fundraiser in the future?</li> <li>◆ What changes can we make to improve future fundraisers?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



## DONATIONS/SPONSORSHIP

A great way for individuals/businesses to get involved, give back and support your club/school!

Electronics/equipment

Ice time (skate show, event, session)

Event tickets

Competition travel

Sports memorabilia

Costumes

Volunteer time

Partnership with local charity (bingo, community groups)

Products

# SKATE ONTARIO FUNDRAISING

## IDEAS

EDUCATION

## EVENTS

Gather members of your club/school, family, friends and community and make a huge profit! Be creative!

Ice show

Community BBQ/ bake sale/yard sale

Skate-a-thon (anything a-thon: bowl, dance, walk!)

Food/bottle drive

Comedy night

Game night

Golf/baseball tournament

Dance/karaoke/ yoga/exercise class/ mini Olympics

Tag day weekend at local retail store

Paint/scrapbook party

Curling funspeil

Pasta dinner

## GRANTS

A great way to increase visibility and credibility, or to kickstart a big project.

Community organizations

Municipal

Provincial

## RAFFLES/DRAWS

Everyone loves to win a prize!

Ontario Skater Promotional Contest

50/50 draw

Dinner for two/ date night

Penny tables

Theme/holiday gift basket (gift cards, scratch cards)

Ticket draw (skating/sports event)

Silent auction

## PRODUCT SALES

Purchase items with a kickback for your club/school!

Club team wear

Gift cards

Online shopping

Coupon books

Food items (pizza, cookie dough, pepperoni sticks, butter tarts, fudge, chocolate, popcorn, fruit/vegetables, turkeys/hams, perogies, cheese)

Paper products (labels, wrapping paper)

\$\$\$

# Join us for ABC Skating Club

# TAG DAY!

We're raising \$5,000 to give our skaters the opportunity to compete at the Provincial Championships and represent our club against the best in the province. This life-changing opportunity for our young skaters will only be possible through the kind support of people like you.

Our Provincial competitors will be collecting donations outside of ABC Grocery store on February 19, from 2:00 – 4:00 pm.

ABC Grocery Store  
123 Skating Way  
ABCville, ON



# THANK YOU!



Supporters will receive a token gift from the club.



123 Skating Love Lane  
ABCville, ON  
ABCskatingclub@email.com



SKATE ONTARIO  
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Join us for ABC Skating Club

TAG DAY!

Founded in 1956, the ABC Skating Club is a pillar of the ABCville community where hundreds of children have discovered a love for the sport of skating. We are proud to offer opportunities for young athletes to train and reach their individual goals in skating. Our ABC Skating Club alumni members have become coaches and officials, and have brought their children and grandchildren back to skate with us.

This year, we are proud to announce a first for ABC Skating Club: two of our skaters have qualified for the Provincial Championships in Ottawa. We're launching a fundraising campaign to provide financial support for our skaters travelling to this prestigious event. This is a life-changing opportunity for our young skaters who are representing our club against the best in the province. It will only be made possible through the kind support of people like you.

A contribution of \$10 will pay for one hour of travel time for one skater going to Provincials... Every bit helps! Thank you again for considering supporting our skaters.



THANK YOU!

Follow us on SOCIAL MEDIA:





123 Skating Love Lane  
ABCville, ON  
ABCskatingclub@email.com



Dear Pam,

We sincerely appreciate your support for our club's Provincial team fundraiser.

Your contribution will help give our skaters the opportunity to represent our great community against the best in the province at the Provincial Championships. This competitive opportunity will bring our team closer together and provide memories that will last a lifetime.

You have made a real difference. Thank you once again for your support – it means the world to us.

With gratitude,

ABC Skating Club

*ABC*



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