

Maximising the fundraising potential of your event

There are a few different ways to raise money at an event. The simplest ideas are usually the best but feel free to use any other creative ideas you have.

Sell tickets

It might sound obvious but this really is the easiest way to raise money at an event. People feel they are getting value for money if part of their ticket price is going to charity, rather than being asked to donate additional money. It ensures everybody contributes and means you get guaranteed money, as long as people turn up.

Don't inflate the ticket prices too much or you will put people off. The price you choose will depend on your event and the entertainment on offer, as well as any costs you need to cover. Check what similar events cost and try and undercut them by a pound or two. If you have done well in getting a venue and entertainment for free or at a discount, you will be able to charge less than other events and still donate a chunk to ActionAid.

If money from the ticket sales is coming to ActionAid you need to state this clearly on the tickets and any posters or flyers, including how much and that we are a registered charity. For example '£2 from every ticket goes to ActionAid, registered charity no. 274467'.

Ask ActionAid to provide you with a logo you can use, and do run any promotional flyers or other materials using ActionAid's logo, past your ActionAid contact.

Let ActionAid know

Once your event is confirmed, do let your ActionAid fundraising team contact know all about it, and provide any promotional materials you may have. We can help you spread the word by listing your event on our website and any other relevant forums or web pages where it could attract attention.

Food and drink sales

If your event is selling drinks or food, ask the venue (or caterers) if you can increase the prices slightly and give the difference to ActionAid. Or ask if they could create a special item where some of the money goes to charity. E.g. 'Buy our special ActionAid cocktail for £3.50 and £2 goes to ActionAid'.

If you are providing food or drink yourself, make sure the venue has the correct license and then sell it or ask for donations.

Collections

Having collection boxes placed on a bar or around a venue is an easy way to raise extra funds, but don't expect to raise a lot of money this way as people are unlikely to give much without being asked or getting something in return. Getting volunteers to man collections on the door or walking around during the event is usually more successful, but be careful not to harass people or make them feel pressured into donating.

You can collect money on private property (like a bar, college or shopping centre) as long as you have permission from the owner, but you need a license from the council to collect money on the street. Please don't make house to house collections. Make sure any collection tins or boxes are secure and monitored at all times, and that they clearly display ActionAid's name and registered charity number.

Raffles and auctions

These money making gems are old favourites and people instantly know what to expect and are willing to take part.

Raffle prizes don't need to be amazing, one really good prize and lots of smaller ones work well and people will have a better chance of winning something. Visit local business for raffle, auction and tombola prizes – just make sure you have some official ActionAid materials and details of the event so they know you are genuine. Think about your audience and try and get prizes they would want – music vouchers, bottles, a meal for two or beauty treatments are popular.

If you're holding a raffle at your event (where you are selling tickets and making the draw at the same event) you won't need a license to do so. If however you are planning on selling tickets to people living at different addresses over a period of time, you may need to apply to your local council for a license. For more information on the rules and regulations of running a raffle please contact your local council, or the Gambling Commission:

www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk

Telephone: 0121 230 6666

Fax: 0121 230 6720

Email: info@gamblingcommission.gov.uk

Enquiries

Gambling Commission
Victoria Square House
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B2 4BP

Auctions are great if you have a big crowd and desirable prizes on offer. Rather than trying to get prizes with a monetary value, getting your mates to make promises to do things and having people to bid for them is a great way to make money out of nothing! Use people's talents, so if you have a friend who works in a cocktail bar, they could spend an evening creating cocktails at the winner's house for their friends. Good cooks could make one winner a homemade cake every week for a month, artists or photographers could do portraits or photo shoots, fitness fanatics could give a series of personal training sessions, DJs could create a tailored mix of the winner's favourite music.



The top raffle prize is a free tattoo at this gig in Birmingham.

There are in depth guides to running raffles, auctions and more at www.how2fundraise.org. You need to register to get access but it's free.

HOW TO MAXIMISE THE AMOUNT YOU RAISE

The golden rule is to keep your event costs as low as possible and avoid investing money you aren't certain you will make back. If it's your first fundraising event, don't be too ambitious – we don't want you ending up out of pocket. Remember even £20 can make a difference to someone's life.

Keep costs down

Aim for a 3:1 return on investment, so for every £1 you spend putting on the event, try and raise £3. So if you are organising a gig and all your running costs come to £100, you should be confident of raising at least £300 on the night, a donation of £200 for ActionAid.

Do everything you can to keep your costs as low as possible. Ask for freebies or charity discounts at every opportunity. If putting on an event from scratch is costing too much, try and piggy pack on an existing event. A savvy organiser should realise charity events pull more people through the door, and if you offer to help promote and organise the charity side of it, you're helping them out massively.

Crunch some numbers and set realistic prices

Get quotes for all your costs and add them up to work out how much money you need to raise. Then work out best case and worse case scenarios and plan from there. For example...

My ActionAid event costs	
Venue hire	FREE
Hiring extra mics (50% discount)	£30
Refreshments for bands	£25
Travel expenses for bands	£15

Printing 500 flyers	£30
Printing 30 posters (discount from print shop)	FREE with flyers
Total	£100
Total amount to aim to raise	£300

My ActionAid event fundraising targets	Best case scenario	Worst case scenario
Ticket sales	150 people turn up	50 people turn up
Raffle sales	100 tickets sold	20 tickets sold
Extra donations	£50	£5

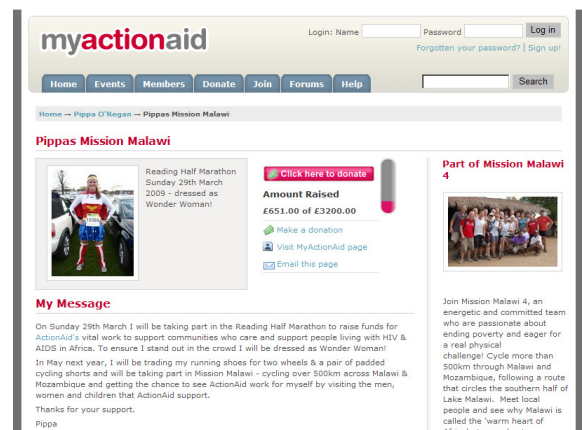
If you sold entrance tickets for £3 and raffle tickets for 50p, in the best case scenario you would make £550 on the night, leaving £450 for ActionAid when you take away the costs, which is fantastic. But on a bad night you would only make £165, leaving £65 for ActionAid when you take away costs.

You will be doing everything you can to make sure you end up with the best case scenario but bad weather, a rival event at the last minute or less publicity could mean a lower turn out. Allow for something in the middle and fix your prices to make sure you get that 3:1 return. In this case, it would be a good idea to put the prices up to £3 for advance tickets and £4 on the door, and £1 for a raffle ticket.

Raise extra money online

There will always be people who can't make it to your event but that want to support what you are doing. Make sure they can still help out but setting up a fundraising page online and put this on all your posters, flyers and web pages.

Visit www.myactionaid.org.uk to set up your online fundraising page. It takes seconds to set your page up and any money people donate comes straight to us so you don't need to worry about messing around with cash or cheques.



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Tell people where their money is going

Visit the ActionAid website, review the fundraising pack or read our Priority Project information (www.actionaid.org.uk/priorityprojects) for examples of how your money will be spent. Do share this information with your sponsors – they will be more likely to support you if they know the difference their money will achieve.

We can also send you general leaflets about what ActionAid does so if you don't feel confident talking in detail about this yourself, have these around for people to read.



Yun Try, 7, and his mother Touch Sim at a school for orphans in Battambang, Cambodia.
Photo: Nicolas Axelrod/ActionAid



Anita, 8, is a street child living in Bhopal, India. ActionAid is providing shelter, healthcare and education.
Photo: Atul Locke/Panos/ActionAid



Alex Mitto, 25, is a young activist who talks to school children about HIV/AIDS, STIs and pregnancy in Kenya.
Photo: Sven Torfinn/ActionAid