

Conserve Challenge: Fundraising guide

We've created this 10-step guide to take you through the stages of planning and running a fundraising event. It's one example of how you might approach your fundraising challenge that you can adapt as required. Remember to stay safe while doing this activity, and be careful when using the internet and social media.

If you're working towards an Explorer award, you might want to run two fundraising events. If you're working towards a Conserver award, you might want to run four events. You could choose activities that appeal to different groups of people so that you can ask a range of people for donations each time, making it easier to raise money.

Thank you for raising money to help us fight the ocean emergency. We'll use the money you raise to fight for a cleaner, better-protected, healthier ocean.

Step 1: Choose your fundraising activity

You're going to spend a lot of time doing this activity. Think carefully about what you enjoy and what you're good at, as well as what you think might raise the most money.

There are three main ways to raise money:

- Get sponsored to do something sporty, like running or cycling for a set time or distance, or something that is challenging for you, such as a sponsored silence or phone ban
- Hold an event where people pay to take part, such as a Big Blue Day at school, college or work, a quiz, a clothes swap, or a Twitch gaming stream
- Sell items, such as an auction of promises, planters made from milk cartons, or tote bags made from old clothes.

You can fundraise virtually or in person. Find more ideas in our [fundraising guide](#).

Step 2: Plan

Choose the date, time and place of your fundraising event.

Create a checklist of everything you need to do for your fundraising. For example, who is going to support you? Do you need to buy supplies? Do you need to train? Do you need any special permissions? Are there any rules or regulations you need to follow? Can you find a local business, like an estate agent or shop, to pay to sponsor your event?

If you need help with planning your fundraising, email us any time at fundraising@mcsuk.org.

Step 3: Write down your motivations

Why are you doing this? People are often more likely to donate money when they understand why you were inspired to fundraise.

Write down your reasons for fundraising. What's the problem you're working to solve? Why is this cause important to you? What difference will people's money make? You can find information on our website, including some helpful facts and stats about the ocean emergency and information about [what we do](#).

Write a summary of your reasons for fundraising that you can use when you're asking people to support you.

Step 4: Set your target

How much money would you like to raise? Think about how many people might sponsor you, take part in your event or buy items.

Then think about the average amount each person might donate, or pay for tickets or items you've made. If you're not sure what people might pay, you could survey a sample.

Now multiply the estimated number of people by average donation amount to calculate a fundraising target.

The easiest way to collect donations is on a JustGiving page. Our JustGiving page is <https://www.justgiving.com/mcsuk>. You could also run a Facebook fundraiser or collect cash on the day.

Step 5: Start your publicity

People need to know about your fundraising if you want it to be a success!

Decide on the best ways to publicise your fundraising:

- Do you, your family or friends have social media accounts you could use to publicise your fundraising?
- Could you email people about what you're doing?
- How can you encourage people to share information about your plans?
- If you're running an event in school or a community venue, is there a noticeboard?
- Can you ask to be featured in local newsletters?
- Are there local Facebook and WhatsApp groups who would promote your activity?
- Will local shops put posters in their windows?
- Is there a local newspaper that could write an article about you?

We'd love to hear about what you're doing – please tag us @mcsuk.

Create your publicity materials. Look at social media posts and publicity posters from charities. What images do they feature? How do they use video to tell their story? What words do they use? What essential information should be included?

Websites like [Canva](#) provide free templates of posters, flyers and social media squares. [Unsplash](#) and [Creative Commons](#) provide free-to-use images.

Step 6: Prepare and continue to publicise

Preparation is the key to success. Train, make your items for sale or organise your event.

Continue telling people about what you're doing and asking for support and donations. Posting about your progress on social media is a good way to capture people's interest. Keep explaining why you're raising money.

Step 7: The big event

The big day is here! You've spent a lot of time preparing for this moment – remember to enjoy it! You may feel stressed at times but try to focus on why you're raising money and on the difference you'll make.

Make sure you take lots of photographs and video of what's happening on the day to send to us at fundraising@mcsuk.org.

Step 8: Collect donations

20% of donations come in after the event because people intend to give money but forget. A reminder about what you've done and a link to your fundraising page can prompt a donation.

If you collected cash on the day, now's the time to pay it in safely. You can pay it in online at mcsuk.org/donate. Please email fundraising@mcsuk.org if you can't donate online. You can record offline donations on your JustGiving page to give you a total of the amount fundraised.

Step 9: Say thank you

Thank everyone who donated, attended or supported you by sharing a thank you video, email, poster or social media post.

We would love to see what you did. Please send your photos and a description to fundraising@mcsuk.org.

Step 10: Learn from your experience

Reflect on what went well and what could be improved. You could create a list of dos and don'ts to be used by other John Muir Award participants.

Take a moment to celebrate your achievement. The money you raise will make a difference in fighting the ocean emergency.

Thank you!

Thank you for your amazing fundraising. We will use the money you've raised to fight for the future of our ocean. Find out about more ways you can work with us to save our seas at mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do