



A to Z of Fundraising

A

Anti-Complaint Day – Charge co-workers \$1 for each time they complain about something.

Art Sales – This fundraiser is perfect for youth teams, as students produce creative works of art and host a show where parents, family, and friends can buy their completed masterpieces.

Ask Everyone You Meet – Download the FUNdraising App so that when you talk to people about your event, you can ask them to donate right there on your mobile phone.

Assembly – Offer a “Some Assembly Required” service during the holidays, putting together toys and other items in exchange for a donation.

Auctions of All Kinds – Talk to your employer about auctioning off a prime parking space or a half or whole day off from work. Or consider auctioning off a picnic lunch, afternoon desserts, homemade dinners, local artwork, or other creative and fun items.

B

Babysitter Service – Babysitters are always a commodity!

Bagel Sales – Talk to a local vendor and ask them for a discount on bagels if you buy a few dozen each Friday. Take them to work and collect donations for them. This concept is also good for soft pretzels and donuts.

Bake Sale – Get friends/colleagues to bake up some goodies and collect donations at the office or at sports games or other events. Don't forget to use the FUNdraising App to easily accept credit cards and scan checks.

A “NO-Bake Sale” – Co-workers are often happy to pay for goodies so they don't have to bake them.

Balloon Day – This is great for students. Collect donations for ACS balloons with a message attached for \$2 each. Students take orders in advance and then deliver the balloons and messages. What a great idea for Valentine's Day! You could also do this with flowers with messages attached.

Barbecue Lunches – Prepare barbecue lunches for donations. Charge extra for delivery.

B-I-N-G-O – Bingo games. Don't forget to ask participants to donate their winnings!

Birthday Celebration – Help save lives from cancer by asking people not to purchase cards or gifts for your birthday, but to donate to your team instead.

Block Party – Host a neighborhood block party. Collect donations for food and admission.

Book Sale – Encourage co-workers, family, and friends to dust off their bookshelves and contribute to a book sale.

Boss for the Day – Allow people to bid on being boss for the day. Highest bid wins!

Bounce-A-Thon – Have local elementary school students take home a collection envelope and collect pledges for bouncing a basketball for one hour. Each class in the school takes turns gathering in the school's front hall throughout the day to bounce their basketballs.

Bouquet of Flowers – Ask a local florist to donate one bouquet of flowers for January, February, and March; then have colleagues donate for a chance to win some springtime for their desk.

Bowling Chance – One dollar gives you the chance to throw two balls (toy bowling set). If you strike, your name is entered into a drawing two times. If you spare with your second ball, your name is entered into the drawing once. Team to solicit a nice prize for the drawing.

Bowl Away or Strike Out Cancer – Plan a bowling event that can be held annually and is more than your average night at the lanes. Each team that collects donations for tickets to the event gets a credit back to their fundraising. Coordinate two bowling heats and schedule them on a day that doesn't interfere with scheduled league play. The cost is \$10 per heat for adults and \$5 for kids. Volunteers could also focus on getting lane sponsors at \$25 per lane.

Breakfast Treat Day – Bring in healthy treats (like fruit and yogurt) for a Monday morning meeting, and encourage donations in exchange for the treats. Offer desk-side delivery for pre-orders.

Brown Bag Lunch Day – Everyone brings in their own lunch and donates the money they would have spent eating out to your event fund.

Bus Tours – Arrange for a bus trip to a fun destination, such as New York City or Atlantic City. Your team collects donations for the tickets and gets a portion of the ticket price. The tour company handles the rest.

C

Carpool for fun and profit! – Ride together and donate your gas/toll money. It's good for the environment, too!

Car Wash – During the business day, wash cars for customers and employees alike.

Car Window Washes – Ask a local fast-food restaurant if your team can wash their customers' car windows in the drive-through line.

Casino Day – Hold a casino day where the players gamble for play money which they can use to buy items donated by local businesses.

Celebrity Waiter – Celebrities are asked to seek donations for 10 dinner tickets and then serve as the waiter for their table of guests. Guests are encouraged to "tip" their waiter, as tips are the primary way funds are raised at the event. Challenge another team to raise more than you – Challenge friends and family to out-donate one another. If your sister gave \$25, challenge your brother to give \$30, etc. See if a local radio station will promote your challenge on the air.

Change: "A Little Change Makes a Lot of Cents" – Bank and credit union teams can post this message at the teller line: "Donate the 'cents' from your deposit to (name of team) and support the fight against cancer."

Change Jar – Keep a change jar in high-traffic areas at work.

Chari-tea – Invite your friends to a tea party, and encourage them to wear their finest hats. Ask for a suggested donation from your guests, and ask each team member to provide a component of the tea (finger sandwiches, biscuits, exotic teas, etc.). To add awareness to your fundraising event, ask a survivor to share his or her story.

Characters/Mascots for a Cause – For a suggested \$25 donation, guests at this event will receive a meal (could be breakfast, lunch, or dinner), an autograph book, and an opportunity to take photos with their favorite characters/mascots.

A HOT-HOT-HOT Chili Cookoff! – Invite colleagues at work to participate in this challenge. Ask other colleagues to make donations for a chili lunch and have them select a winner.

Cleaning Service – Provide a housecleaning, attic, basement, or garage cleaning service.

Coin Cans at Sporting Events – Place ACS coin cans at sporting events to collect donations. Have the event announcer promote your efforts during the event to boost collections.

Coin Rolling – Save all your extra change and then roll your coins once a month. You'd be surprised how much money you'll have!

Coin Toss – Ask a local mall if you can collect all the coins tossed in their fountain for a designated time period. Be sure to post signs stating that the coins will be donated to the American Cancer Society.

Comedy Club – Ask a local comedy club to host an evening in support of your event. Invite all teams to sell tickets. For instance, if a team collects donations for 10 tickets at \$10 each, they've just raised \$100 for the American Cancer Society.

Cookbooks – Collect recipes from employees for a cookbook. You can have them published for as low as \$2 each and ask for suggested donations of \$7-8.

Craft Fairs – Have your team sell crafts or artwork at a local festival.

Crafts – In a holiday mood? Craft tree ornaments or other homemade treasures and collect donations for them!

D

Dance for Cures – Students can hold a school dance with admission fees donated to the American Cancer Society. Pick a theme – sock hop, beach party, disco, square dance, dance for senior citizens, etc.

Day Spa – Provide haircuts, manicures, and massages in exchange for donations.

Decorating Service – Provide a holiday decorating service – for a donation, of course! Dedicate your personal efforts to someone who has been touched by cancer or in honor of someone who has passed away from the disease. Promote your services in a mailing to friends, relatives, co-workers, doctor/dentist, hairdresser, church or service club members, Christmas or Hanukkah card list, etc.

Deliver Flyers – Offer to have your team deliver promotional inserts for a local business for one or two weeks. In Washington state, the phone company paid a high school team \$2,500 to distribute the new phone books in their community.

Deliver Meals – Have a meal day where your team will cook and deliver breakfast, lunch, or dinner to local businesses. Fax them a few days ahead of time with the menu, costs, and how to order.

Dime Fundraiser – Bring some empty water bottles to work and collect dimes from your colleagues. You can raise \$100 by filling just one water bottle, so if 10 people fill 10 bottles, you've raised \$1,000!

Dinners – Coordinate a spaghetti dinner or other gourmet feast and collect donations from attendees.

Drawings – Coordinate a drawing for a donated item from a local business (dinner for two, movie tickets, etc.).

Dress Casual Day – Check with your employer about hosting a dress-down day. Employees who donate to your fundraising campaign will be allowed to dress casual on a specified work day.

Duck Race – Collect donations to enter a rubber duckie in a "race" down a local stream or river, with the owner of the winning duck receiving a donated prize (movie tickets, gift certificates, etc.).

Dunking Booth – Set up a dunking booth at a local community event, and recruit local celebrities to sit in the booth. People can also pay a "dunking fee" to have someone else sit in the booth!

E

Email – The number one reason people give for not donating is because they aren't asked ... so ask! You can use one of our template messages or write your own. Ask your friends, family, colleagues, etc., and challenge each person to raise more than the others.

Envelopes at Restaurant Tables – If you work at a restaurant or in an office with a cafeteria, place an envelope at every table stating, "We are helping the American Cancer Society end cancer as we know it, for everyone. Donate today!"

Environmental Cleanup – Do some good for your community and assemble a team to clean up a local park, forest, or river. Ask local businesses or residents to sponsor your cleanup team.

Errand Service – Offer to run errands for people who need help getting everything done!

F

Face Painting – Set up a booth at a local community event. Kids love it!

Flowers and Plants – Collect donations for pretty houseplants or bouquets from your garden, and watch your donations blossom.

Fruit Baskets – Ask local stores to donate fruit, baskets, and cellophane. Have your team collect donations for the baskets in advance (suggest \$20 per basket). Hold a basket assembly party and have team members deliver the baskets they sold.

Fry Day Friday – Ask a local fast-food restaurant to donate a dime from every order of fries sold every Friday for a specified amount of time.

FUNdraising App – Send emails, track your progress, and share your efforts on social media from anywhere at any time. You can also easily and securely collect debit/credit card and check donations to support your fundraising efforts. The app is great for car washes, bake sales, or any of your fundraising activities! It is available to all registered American Cancer Society event participants.

G

Garage Sales – Clean out your attic, garage, and basement, and host a garage sale to raise money for your team.

Gift Shopping Service – Offer your team members as personal shoppers for people who are pressed for time.

Gift Wrapping – Ask a local mall or store if your team can set up a gift-wrapping station. Have wrapping paper, ribbon and other supplies donated.

Golf Tournament – Work with your local golf course to host a golf scramble. This is a great way to network with members of the community in a completely new way! Recruit a group of volunteers to plan the event and secure donated prizes and awards by reaching out to community businesses.

H

Haunted House – Organize a haunted house and charge admission. Don't forget the hayride and apple cider.

Helper for a Day – Shovel snow, rake leaves, or mow your co-worker's/neighbor's lawn, and donate your fee to your event.

Home Parties – Host a jewelry, kitchen, candle, clothing, or home decorations party and donate the profits to your team.

Hole-in-One – Set up a portable putting green in your office and let your colleagues try to put one in for a donation. Have prizes for anyone who gets a hole-in-one!

Host a Sports Game Party – Invite guests to come watch the big game and ask for your donations to your fundraising campaign. Whether it's the basketball playoffs, Indy 500, or Masters final round, all you need is a large-screen TV and an exciting event to watch!

I

Ice Cream Social – Set up an old-fashioned ice cream parlor and soda fountain, offering refreshing summer treats for a donation to your team.

Ice Plunge – Teams come together on a set date in the winter and jump into a chilly body of water. You can incorporate other fundraising components into this event, such as a silent auction, raffle (if permissible in your state), costume contest, mission moment, and awards ceremony.

J

Jail & Bail – For a donation, employees can have a colleague “arrested.” The arrested employee must post bail for an additional donation, or a bounty can be placed on the arrested employee’s head. They will be held until the entire bounty is raised. Bounties can run \$100+ per inmate.

Jewelry Sale – Work with a wholesale company to sell jewelry, with your team receiving a percentage of the sales. Or have your team members donate jewelry they don’t wear anymore, ask a jeweler to clean it up for you, then hold a sale.

K

Kiss the Pig – Select three to five well-known and well-liked employees or community leaders. Have the employees/community choose the individual they would like to see kiss a pig by dropping donations in jars. The contestant with the most money in their jar must kiss the pig!

Knit to Save Lives – Use your knitting or crochet skills to make simple items like coffee cup cozies, scarves, or hats and offer them for a donation.

Knock Out Cancer – Ask your employer if you can set up a punching bag in your office lobby or cafeteria, and for a donation let staff take out their aggressions on cancer.

L

Lawn Service – While you are mowing your lawn, ask to mow someone else’s for a donation to your team.

Letters – Write letters to friends and business associates, thanking them for the specific amount they gave you last year and asking for donations for this year. For a better reply rate, ask to have donations returned to you by a set date and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Line Dancing – Work with a local club or hall to offer a night of line dancing lessons. Ask a DJ to donate their services and recruit someone to teach the lessons.

Loose Change Drive – Request a coin can from the American Cancer Society, or use a soup can from home, and ask everyone you know to donate their loose change. You’ll see how quickly the can fills up!

Lunch with the CEO – Auction off a lunch (or a round of golf) with the CEO or president of your company.

M

Matching Gifts – Ask your human resources or personnel department if your employer offers a matching gift program. If so, complete and submit the required form to the American Cancer Society. Your donations could be doubled!

Movies – Rent short videos (old, classic films or cartoons are great), and host a movie week during lunch hour. Charge admission and invite employees to watch while they eat their lunch.

Mustache Mania – Encourage men on your team to grow mustaches, and have people donate to the weekly winner with the most grown hair.

N

Name Bead Bonanza – Take orders and create personalized bracelets, key chains, or necklaces for a donation to your team.

NASCAR Raffle – Collect a variety of NASCAR promotional items (an autographed item from a driver would be ideal, if you can get one), and hold a raffle.

O

October Festival – Have pumpkins, straw bales, dried corn stalks, colorful gourds, and bright flowers for your decor. For the main attractions, consider a pumpkin-carving or scarecrow-decorating contest, apple bobbing, face painting, or a bake sale.

Odd Jobs – Call your neighbors and offer to do some odd jobs, such as cleaning out rain gutters, shoveling snow, raking leaves, etc.

P

Pancake Breakfast – Host a breakfast with fresh, hot pancakes, and offer a variety of fillings and toppings.

Parking – Collect donations for parking spaces during major community events such as fairs, carnivals, etc. You can also provide valet parking service for a donation.

Payroll Deduction – Employees can make their own contribution by having it deducted directly from their paycheck.

Penny Jar – Popular with school teams. A clever twist on this old favorite is to have the award go to the team that raises the least amount. The teams will “sabotage” each other by putting more pennies in the other team’s jars!

Percentage of Sales – Work with a local store to host a special shopping day where a percentage of sales are donated to your team, or designate a set time during which a percentage of sales from a specific item will benefit your efforts. You could also work with a local restaurant on a similar opportunity.

Personal Donation – Start off your campaign by making a personal donation. Your friends, family, and business contacts will realize how important this cause is to you.

Pet Fashion Show – Host a pet fashion show where owners can flaunt their pet’s favorite outfits. Collect donations as an entry fee and hold a contest for the best outfit, most creative outfit, etc.

Pet Service – Offer to walk dogs or feed animals when people are traveling or working long hours for a donation to your team.

Pies – Bake delicious, homemade pies and offer them for a donation. Use fresh fruits and seasonal flavors.

Pie Toss – Have a school take orders for pies for \$5 each. The pies are then delivered to the recipient, who has the option of getting hit with the pie, buying the pie for \$5, or paying \$10 to have the pie sent back to the person who sent it to them.

Pot Luck Lunches at the Workplace – Declare every Wednesday to be “ACS Potluck Day.” Team members take turns preparing foods, salads, desserts, etc. and offer to employees at the workplace at a set price or donation.

Pretty Baby Contest – Ask employees to enter their baby pictures and have colleagues vote using donation jars. The jar with the most donations wins a donated prize. Have a sheet for people to guess who is in the pictures.

Prom – Hold a prom for adults. Don’t forget a photographer!

Q

Questions for Cures – One team raised money by having their boss, who was constantly being asked questions, collect \$1 donations for each question. Word spread throughout the company about what he was doing, and soon everyone started asking questions and paying up.

Quilts – Hold a raffle for a quilt made by employees themselves. Collect donations for quilt squares in honor and in memory of people touched by cancer.

R

Rec Room Bingo – Make your living room a bingo hall, and invite the neighbors. A suggested \$10 donation is needed to play. Have prizes donated for the winners.

Recycle – Collect aluminum cans and take them to a recycler. Or if you are near a bordering state that gives refunds on returnables, turn them in for cash.

Rock-N-Roll Party – Invite the neighborhood teens over for an evening of fun and music in your family room; and the other parents can pay not to have the noise at their house.

Romance – Auction off a romantic dinner. Either prepare the meal yourself or seek a donated meal from a local restaurant.

S

Shutterbug Mania – Are you a photography buff? Take candid shots around the community or schools and sell to your subjects. Or offer to take photos at a friend’s wedding.

Skate Away Cancer – Get a group together for roller-skating or skateboarding with each person making a donation to participate.

Skunk Them – Put stuffed skunks on co-workers’ desks. They need to give a donation to be “de-skunked” and make the skunk disappear.

Splash Hop – Host a swim party at your local community pool or YMCA. In the winter, hold it at an indoor pool, complete with tropical snacks and drinks.

Sponsors – Ask your neighborhood to sponsor a team. Ask businesses you regularly support to be a \$100 contributor.

Sporting Events – Ask your local semi-professional sporting team to host an ACS night. You can typically purchase a set number of tickets at a discounted price (or have a sponsor cover the cost) and then collect donations for full price. Additionally, these teams will often order custom ACS jerseys and auction them off, which can raise quite a bit of money. Incorporate recognition by inviting survivors to attend for free (their guests can purchase a ticket).

Sports Challenges – Set up challenge matches between individuals or departments for bowling, tennis, racquetball, softball, or other sports. Charge an entry fee and admission fee.

Student Involvement – If you have connections to your community’s school – whether you work at one or are involved as a parent – consider engaging the entire school in fundraising for your event. Middle and high schools may be willing to implement a fundraising campaign in the months leading up to October. Host a kickoff event to help everyone learn more about ACS events, and set a fundraising goal. You may even want to ask your staff partner to set up a special website. Organize fun fundraising activities such as T-shirt decorating contests, flash mob activities, bra decorating contests, planting events, and pink dress-up days. The possibilities are endless!

T

Table Tents – Ask a restaurant if you can put signs or cards on their tables asking patrons to contribute to the American Cancer Society by adding a donation to their check.

Tailgating Party – Hold a tailgate party (at the game or in your house) before the game and ask for donations.

Taste of the Town – Ask several local restaurants to donate food. Collect donations for tickets and have the restaurants set up their dishes in one local location, such as a community center. Your guests pay one price and get to sample many different foods!

Turkey Dinner – Around the holidays, organize a festive turkey dinner for your co-workers and ask that they make a donation to attend.

Turkey Drawing – Ask people to donate a dollar for a chance to win a holiday turkey.

U

Unique Boutique – Collect or make one-of-a-kind items and raise funds via a silent or live auction. This is a great idea for the holiday season.

V

Vacation Day – If you are on a team with your co-workers, ask your boss if you can offer a bonus day off for the team member who raises the most money.

Vending Machines – Coordinate with your vendor to add five cents to the cost of a snack or soft drink prior to your event, with the extra nickel going to your team total.

Video Sale – How many times can you watch “Forrest Gump?” Collect donations for those old videos and CDs at work or at other events in your community.

W

Wall of Hope – Designate a display wall at work or in your community. Each donor writes their name on a card (available from the American Cancer Society) that is displayed on the wall. Create a competition between colleagues or team members to get the most cards on the wall.

Wine Tasting – As with any fundraiser – but especially with this one – the wine must be donated and all liquor liability laws must be followed.

X

Xmas/Holiday Tidings – Make fresh evergreen wreaths and yule logs to sell, adorned with festive holiday bows, berries, and pinecones.

Y

Yard Displays – Place plastic pink flamingos in the front yard of unsuspecting donors and request a donation for them to be removed. The homeowner can make an additional donation to select the yard where the flamingos are placed next and yet another donation to ensure the flamingos don't wind up back in their yard again. Don't forget to include an envelope for their donation.

Yard Sale – Coordinate with other teams and designate a day as "ACS Yard Sale Day" to increase business by sending buyers from sale to sale. Have maps printed showing locations of all the different sales.

Yoga – Work with a local yoga studio to host a special one-time class, or a weekly class, where either all or a percentage of the proceeds benefit your team.

Z

Zoot Suit Party – Hold a swing dance party and give an award for the best Zoot Suit.

Zzzz – Work with your boss to plan one day where all team members can come in a half-hour late. Each member will pay a fee to sleep in and dream of a world free from cancer.