



**Merlin
MS Centre**

UK Charity Reg No: 1093691

Organisers Advice Sheet

The following information is designed to help you make the most from your Fundraising Event. If you require any further information or advice please contact the Fundraising Department on 01726 885530 or e-mail sarah@merlinmscentre.org.uk

Choosing a Venue:

- Think about location – is it easy to find and well sign posted; is it accessible to all people who wish to attend.
- Facilities – are there adequate catering, toilet and parking facilities.
- Safety – Ensure there are adequate fire escapes and exits; is the venue well maintained and well lit at night.
- Cost – Sometimes facilities will be provided at a reduced rate or at no cost for charitable events.
- Insurance – The venue should have adequate Public Liability Insurance.
- If being held outside have a back-up plan in case of bad weather

Running the Event:

- Ask for help pre-event and on the day – friends, colleagues, family, neighbours
- Some community groups can provide additional help – scouts, clubs, schools, colleges etc
- Organise a rota of helpers and allocate specific tasks to avoid confusion on the day
- Hold a pre-event get together to cover all aspects of the day

Costing your Event

- Try to have an accurate cost of everything – venue hire, food and refreshments, entertainment, raffle prizes etc – before deciding on ticket or entry price
- Try to get items donated – keep it local. Often a personal contact at your local shop can be far more successful than writing to large companies, which are inundated with requests from charities.
- It can be difficult to predict numbers when ordering supplies – try to sell tickets in advance and make sure you have enough of everything you need.

Publicising Your Event

- The Fundraising Office can produce publicity materials for you - posters, invitations, flyers, sponsor forms, balloons etc. Please give the office at least 2 weeks notice before the date you intend to distribute any printed materials.
- If your event is open to the general public put up posters and notices in as many places as possible near to the venue/location of your event – local shops, newsagents, supermarkets, clubs, pubs, hotels etc
- Ensure details of where and when, ticket price/entry, contact details and include the Merlin MS Centre's charity registration number on all publicity materials
- Contact the local press and radio – listings are generally free, but make sure to e-mail or ring well in advance (at least 10 days) to meet their printing or broadcast deadlines.
- Use social media to spread the word – Facebook, Twitter, Linked-In etc. Like our Facebook page and ask us to add your event to our website.

Increasing Your Profits

- If you have a main theme to your event such as a Cream Tea try to add other attractions such as craft, book, plant stalls, a raffle, tombola and children's games.
- Ask your employer to match £ for £ what you raise – it shows your companies generosity and may even lead to free publicity

Sponsored Events

- Set up an online giving page via JustGiving or other online sites.
- Collect the money as you go – the hardest bit about sponsorship is collecting the money. If you ask people to donate when they pledge, it saves chasing them up.
- Ask absolutely everyone you know – send e-mails, text and call friends- old and new, relatives, work colleagues and everyone at your local pub, club, and gym.
- If you are an IT whiz, set up your own event website with pictures and details of the Merlin MS Centre to get friends and families to pledge on line
- Ask people to pay a set amount against a time for your sponsored event - the nearest to your likely time to complete it, the higher the price. Have a prize for the winning time.

Your Responsibility

- We want you and your guests to enjoy your event. In most cases common sense is all that is needed to avoid incidents and accidents.
- Please take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of everyone attending. A risk assessment will identify any potential danger spots
- For example you should ensure the suitability of the venue –check that fire exits are clearly marked and not obstructed in any way, are there sufficient fire extinguishers provided; emergency evacuation procedures; Is there a First Aid box or trained First Aiders for larger events.
- Care should be taken in the preparation, cooking and selling of food to ensure your event complies with the regulations under the Food Safety Act 1990
- If you are handling cash consideration should be given to the handling of cash and the security of those involved in collecting and banking money.

Finally **HAVE FUN** – Fundraising is hard work, but it is a great way to have fun, make friends and feel a real sense of achievement.

If you have any concerns about your event please contact the fundraising office for further advice on 01726 885530 or e-mail sarah@merlinmscentre.org.uk