

Fundraising Event Tips & Tricks

Throwing a fundraising event can be a great way to engage your network, spread awareness, and raise more funds. Check out our handy tips and tricks on how to throw a great event!

- 1. Decide on your event type:** Consider your audience when choosing a venue. Are you mainly inviting adults? Try throwing a bar party, wine tasting, or hosting a trivia night. Do you want a family friendly event? Consider a bowling party, potluck picnic, Paint Nite, or work with a local restaurant to host a dine-out for charity night. Visit www.paintnite.com/fundraisers for information on scheduling a Paint Nite fundraiser, and www.groupraise.com to find a restaurant near you with a dine-out for charity program.
- 2. Maximize your attendees:** Invite your network and encourage them to bring friends. Reach your audience through Facebook, word of mouth, e-vites, or event planning websites like www.eventbrite.com. Promote your event on social media and encourage your guests to do the same. Determine your goal number of attendees and anticipate that on average $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the people you invite will attend.
- 3. Consider costs:** The best strategy is to get everything for a fundraising event donated so that all proceeds support the mission. While this is not always possible, try to keep expenses low. When costs get out of control, it's possible for events to actually lose money! Offer to promote any businesses that give you a discount or, better yet, a donation of their goods or services. Benefits to these donors could include recognition on your fundraising page and social media networks, exposure to your event attendees through signage and a shout out during the program. Don't be afraid to get creative about the benefits you can offer!
- 4. Monetize your event:** You've spent all this time planning, now it's time to make sure you maximize the monetary impact of your event!
 - a. Sell tickets to your event ahead of time-** did you know the average attendance rate at a free event is less than 50%? Selling tickets ahead of time will help encourage attendance at your event, and guarantee funds raised.
 - b. Add a raffle to your event!** Ask local businesses to donate products or gift cards to raffle off, or do a 50/50 raffle. Popular raffle prizes include wine baskets, spa gift certificates, sports or event tickets, jewelry and handbags, and more. Businesses like supporting their local communities, so don't be intimidated to ask!
- 5. Follow up:** It's important to follow up with your prospective attendees after they've received an invitation. On average it takes three asks before someone takes an action so don't be afraid to follow up to ensure your guests received their invitations, check in if they haven't purchased their ticket yet, and send a reminder email before your event! After your event, follow up with everyone you invited to share highlights from the event and how much you raised, thank your donors, and provide information on joining your team- you never know who you may have inspired to get involved!
- 6. Get tips and advice from your local Take Steps staff!** While we can't pay for expenses or sign contracts for your events, we are happy to discuss your plans, provide feedback or brainstorm new ideas. Email takesteps@crohnscolitisfoundation.org to discuss your plans.