

Checklist for a Successful Fundraising Event

Be creative...

Brainstorm with family and friends to develop an event that will be interesting and enjoyable. The list is endless and so is your creativity!

- Virtual event ideas: trivia, at-home wine tasting, game night, happy hour, movie viewing party, murder mystery, book discussion, musical concert, cooking or cocktail workshop, dance lesson
- In-person event ideas: golf outing, an auction, 5K walk or run, bowling event, spa day, grand openings, car wash, art fair, fashion show, wine tasting, black tie event, car or motorcycle show

Set your goals... time to prepare a budget!

- What is the expected event revenue? (sample budget available upon request)
- Develop a revenue list (donations, silent/live auction, ticket sales sponsorships, percentage of food and beverage and other possible revenue sources).
- What are my expenses? (sample budget available upon request)
- Develop an expense list (rental, insurance, publicity, print materials, food, entertainment, décor, and other costs associated with the event).
- Will my event raise awareness for a particular cancer or research area?

Save the date...

Once you have selected the type of fundraising event, you'll need to select and SAVE THE DATE.

- Check a community calendar for other events that may be taking place at the same time.
- Complete the Community Fundraising Event Application. If you have questions, a member of our staff will be happy to help—please email ashleymay@northwestern.edu.

Recruit your event committee...

- A great source of support for your event can be found by forming a committee of your closest friends, family, community members, and colleagues to help manage the many components and logistics involved in event planning.
- Divide event details and logistics among your committee members.
- Develop your event timeline—who is involved and when tasks need to be completed.

If online...

- What platform will you be using? Is a subscription required?
- What length of time and what number of participants does the platform allow?
- What security measures will be in place (e.g. meeting password, virtual waiting room, etc.)
- Will you need to use break-out rooms? If so, will these be assigned at random or will you want to curate them ahead of time based on your RSVP list?
- What guidelines will you want to have in place? Be sure to review these at the start of the event. For instance, let guests know if they should use “raise hand”, “chat”, or Q&A features.
- What creative elements can you incorporate? (e.g. Zoom backgrounds)

If in-person...

- Will it be an indoor or outdoor event? Is there a back-up plan in case of inclement weather?
- Is it insured?
- Is there adequate parking?
- Do you need a kitchen facility?
- Is there handicap accessibility?
- Are there any restrictions on vendors that can be brought to the venue?
- Are there any entertainment restrictions?
- Are there any special permits required for the space or event?
- Can the space accommodate the number of people you are expecting?

Plan your marketing campaign...

- Who is your target audience?
- How will you get the word out to your target audience?
- Will I use the Lurie Cancer Center logo? How can I advertise at no cost?
- Will I create a press release?
- Will I create a flier? (samples available upon request)
- How will I advertise on Facebook and other social media sites?
- Will the local merchant organization help promote the event?
- Should I send out e-vites?
- Will the facility where the event is being held promote the event?
- Should I contact local business organizations to promote the event? (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, etc.)
- Are there any local radio stations that will assist in promoting the event?
- Is there a local newspaper that will feature a story about the event?

Remember, ALL promotional materials need to be approved by Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine Development & Alumni Relations prior to publishing.

The event is over...now what?

- Who do I need to thank for making the event a success? Be sure to express your appreciation all of their efforts to support your fundraising event.
- Consider sharing with attendees and constituents how much was raised to support the Lurie Cancer Center and that they have made a difference in the lives of our faculty, staff, and students.
- Within 30 days of the event, gather the event proceeds and submit to:
Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine
Development & Alumni Relations
Attn: Ashley May Coussens
420 East Superior Street, Rubloff Building 9th Floor
Chicago, IL 606011
- Your check should be made payable to "Northwestern University."

Lastly, congratulate yourself and your team for creating a successful fundraising event to support the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University.

Thank you for your efforts and generous support!