



50+
Ideas for
Fundraising
&
Social Outreach



**United Coalition of
Reason**

www.unitedcor.org
www.seculardirectory.org
(202) 744-1553





Being able to raise funds for your organization is always useful. However, coming up with the ideas can sometimes be difficult. Similarly, finding social outreach projects that really make a difference to your local area, and that have been successfully tried elsewhere with the minimum of red tape, are also difficult to envisage.

In this booklet we have compiled lots of fundraisers and social outreach projects that have been tried and tested. Whether it be for your own group or a charity, they are easy to organize and fun to be involved with. We have also included some helpful websites that can assist with ideas and logistics as well as reasonably-priced accessories, should you require them.

Sometimes the simplest ideas are the best. In the next few pages we have outlined a mixture of some simple ideas that require only a small amount of investment and time to organize, and some ideas that require a little more thought and effort.

Equipment for schools: Low income area schools often struggle to provide students with equipment for scientific inquiry and computers. Try to engage businesses in the area to match what you raise in equipment for the schools. Let local newspapers know what you are doing so that they will benefit from good publicity as will you and the school.

Toys for Tots & Toys for Tots Literacy : Donate cash or new books at participating UPS Store and Mail Boxes locations. Donations can also be made online. You can check location to find out if they are conducting a book drive. To find the nearest location, go to www.theupsstore.com or www.mbe.com.

Children's socks and undergarments: Collect new children's clothing, undergarments and socks for back-to-school clothing drives for underprivileged children in their local areas.

Litter pick up: Adopt a section of local highway and maintain its cleanliness.

Letter writing campaign for the troops: Collect supplies to send to a soldier overseas. If you would like to send a care package to a nonbeliever overseas, you can contact *Beyond Belief Network* who will get names for you from *Military Association of Atheists & Freethinkers*. Or, you can contact MAAF directly for a list of items needed <http://militaryatheists.org/network/> and click on civilian outreach.

Social outreach and acts of kindness that make a difference

Literacy: Age- and gender-specific books are always needed in low socioeconomic areas. Any school in these areas will be grateful for good condition books.

Feed the homeless.

Provide sack lunches once a month/week and/or special dinners throughout the year at a local shelter.

Build a home.

Partner with *Habitat for Humanity* to build a home for someone in need. Many chapters have an "all woman build" where women in the community can come together and help a family!

Care for the children.

Host a Babysitting Co-op and give single moms a break.

Reach out to the retired.

Visit the elderly and spend time visiting, reading, talking, painting toe nails, etc.

Women's shelters : If there are any women's shelters in your area contact them to find out what basic everyday products would help the women in their shelter, then find a way to raise awareness of the need in your local community and raise the needed items for the shelter. One less thing for them to deal with. (Omaha and South Dakota CoRs both successfully raised their profiles with "Mardi Bras," supplying shelters in their areas with much needed feminine products and got great publicity.)

Get sponsored for something.

There are many things that you can get people to sponsor you for. Think creatively: the most popular though are sponsored **walks/runs** (depending on how fit your participants are) or a **bike ride**. However, I have seen people sponsor men to have their **legs waxed**. One man had a single clean stripe up the centre of his leg (he couldn't take the pain of any more). He asked if it would grow back before his football game on Sunday, this was Friday. If you can get the children involved, a **sponsored silence** is always popular. Some other ideas are:

Sponsored **swim; dog walk; head shave** or **moustache and beard shave ; haircut** (remind any willing "victim" that it *will* grow back, but you never know they might like the new look).

Giving up something you would really miss, like deserts, coffee, wine, TV or your mobile phone, and get people to sponsor you for each day that you manage to go without (no cheating allowed)

Sponsored **handcuff**: this has two ways of raising funds. Several willing fundraisers agree to be handcuffed to each other. People sponsor them for every minute / 5 minutes they are handcuffed together. The couple must then go around collecting donations and will only be set free when they raise "bail." (An amount determined by you, but make it realistic.)

Host a Quiz Night. General knowledge quizzes are always popular. Teams are always best: you can charge an entrance fee for each team to participate and a small entrance fee for people to watch. You can serve drinks and snacks for a nominal fee as well as sell raffle tickets for small prizes. (sometimes businesses will donate small prizes to help advertise their products or service) A prize for the winning team is always a good draw.

Board game tournament. Similar to a quiz night, except individuals pay a fee to participate. Again, drinks and snacks (at a nominal fee) are always a bonus.

A **Bingo night.** Individuals pay for a card to play and there are prizes for lines, full house, etc. Drinks and snacks add to the funds being raised.

Old-fashioned disco night. This would require a larger space, but if you have a budding DJ in your group, it would mean you won't have a fee for the music. It could also require participants to dress up in the chosen era. Tickets can be sold in advance to give you an indication of numbers, but have a door fee as well for latecomers. This event is also a great opportunity for some fun, themed raffle prizes.

Talent show, Pantomime or Karaoke evening. This does take a little more organizing, but can be a lot of fun. For the talent show, you can hold auditions and pick the best performers to participate. Tickets can then be sold for the show. You can hire karaoke equipment for a reasonable price and charge a fee per song. If you have some budding thespians in your group, why not put together a pantomime. The websites below offer scripts at reasonable prices or for a license-per-performance:

www.bencrockerpantomimes.com/pantomime-scripts.php

offthewallplays.com/search-plays/musicals-and-

Some websites for fundraising ideas

Many of these sites have the same ideas that are listed in this booklet, but they also have some other suggestions and free fundraising webinars.

www.wellspring.ca/niagara/get-involved/host-an-event/101-fundraising-ideas.aspx

<http://www.fundraising-ideas.org/DIY/>

<http://brainchild.org.au/support-us/fundraising-ideas>

www.24fundraiser.com/200-inventive-fundraising-ideas/

www.easy-fundraising-ideas.com/

www.gofundme.com

www.pinterest.com/fundraiserhelp/fundraising-ideas/

<http://info.firstgiving.com/about-us/resource-library/?gclid=COWnurPBjMUCFS9o7Aod6w4Avw>

<http://www.donordrive.com/why-donordrive/?gclid=ClAQqtTDjMUCFS9o7Aod6w4Avw>

Midsummer masked ball: This will take quite a lot of organization, but could be a very special (and lucrative) event. Go all-out to make it as flamboyant as possible, and charge between \$20–\$30 per ticket. Got a friend with a barn? Glam it up with candles (electronic ones) and decorations, request that guests dress up and give a free glass of bubbly to everyone on arrival...the ritz!

Pub/Bar Games: Skittles, darts, pool, cards... Charge people to enter; the manager will appreciate the business and might agree to donate free drinks to the winner/s.

Aluminum collection: Collect aluminum cans and tin cans and sell them to a recycling company in your area.

Race night: Pre-record about 8 races: it can be anything from horses, camels or dogs. But make sure it is something people might not have seen. Have a board with the runners for each race. People place bets on who they think will win, come second, third depending on the number of prizes and percentage of winnings you have decided on. You then run the race videos. (Make sure folks are ok with this kind of event, especially minors.)

Silent auction: Offer donated items for auction at an event or at work. The highest written bid wins.

Bowling competition: The alley rental is the biggest expense but some alleys will give discounts for charities or off peak days. Teams pay to enter. Have a trophy or prizes for the winning team.

PBS television or radio: Not only a social outreach but to raise your profile, offer to man the phones of your local PBS station. Watch their expression when you tell them you're the local atheist, skeptic, agnostic, humanist group or even a heathen group.

Day of Community Service: Gather a group of volunteers together and contact a number of organizations for which you would be interested in volunteering. Then, have people sponsor you to do community service for 24 hours.

Scavenger Hunt: Set a route and make a list of items that the participants need to find in order to win. Advertise your scavenger hunt well and charge everyone a small fee to participate. The winning person/group gets a prize.

Auction: Have individuals, groups and businesses donate goods and services. Be creative in what you can auction-off and make certain that the goods and services are sold at reasonable prices (or create a "bidding war" for fun).

Carnival Day: Host a mini-carnival, with games, prizes and popcorn, in a local park, at a state/county fair, or your own building (don't forget insurance!). Charge an admission and/or a small fee to play games. Some ideas for carnival games: Barbecue pit; cakes and biscuits; Pitch-a-thon: Rent a radar gun and measure how fast people can throw a baseball or kick a soccer ball: charge \$1 per try. Give a prize to the fastest Balloon Pop: Before filling a balloon with air put a note inside and have a certain number of the notes worth a prize. People buy balloons and pop them in the hope of getting the prize. For more ideas for carnival games see the website below.

www.carnivalsavers.com/freeboothideas.html

Coffee morning or bake sale

Car washing for a donation or fee

Raffle: Local business will usually donate small prizes for good publicity: a win-win situation for you and them!

Bring-and-buy sale Like a yard sale but people bring and donate things as well as buy something, just need a location; remember to include a raffle, snacks and drinks.

Host a Murder Mystery Party. Guests pay to play a character. You can also adapt it to have non-participants; see if they can guess who the murderer is (also for a small fee).

The website is for dinner games for between 6-11 people but they can be adapted.

www.party411.com/Partygames MurderMysteryDinner.aspx

Cakes and biscuits for the game. Get your best bakers to donate items to sell at an event like a basketball or football game. (Check with the game organizers first.)



Silicone Bracelets – Have silicone bracelets made that promote your cause and sell them at events.

<http://24hourwristbands.com/custom-wristbands?gclid=COq6rN3K4sUCFQQSHwod4iAAcA>

Pink flamingos: Plant a pink flamingo in the garden of people you know who will play along. Have attached a roosting right and how much it will cost for the flamingo to roost elsewhere, or for them to move it to another location (with the same fee proviso). As the flamingo/s gain notoriety you can offer, for a fee of course, an insurance policy against roosting birds, thereby increasing your revenue (and jokes).



Cookbook: Have members of your group contribute their favourite recipes and create a booklet of the best ones to sell at events or online. Recipes that always gain a lot of interest are what to do with leftovers.

Spare Change: Whatever fundraiser you are doing, put out a jar for donations of spare change. Decorate it with quotes, pictures, and anything to attract someone's attention.

50-50 Raffle: No prizes are raffled off, only cash. The winner wins half of the proceeds brought in from ticket sales.

Dance marathon: Get people to sponsor you for every five minutes of boogying you manage (or for every song you shimmy to: "throw some shapes" on the floor). A small entrance fee can be charged for spectators. The couple or individual who can boogie the longest wins a prize.

Garden party: If you can find space, this is great fun. Whip up some cucumber sandwiches, dust off the picnic tables and crack open some *Pimms*. Charge a small entrance fee to include sandwiches and 1 age appropriate drink on production of ticket. After that, drinks can be sold.

"It's a Knockout" competition: Get some teams together and arrange assault courses, games and puzzles galore. Each team member pays to take part, with the winning team being awarded a prize. Variations on this can be, "dad and daughter" events, "mom and son," etc.

Jewelry Making: Buy beads and wire in bulk and get creative. Jewelry can be sold at any local fairs or events.

Charity Ball: Hire a DJ or a band suitable for the age group you are targeting. Rent a hall if you don't have somewhere suitable available. Advertise in local supermarkets or newspapers and sell tickets for the dance.

You've been framed: Advertise for participants to submit their funniest home movie clips for a small fee and compete with others to win prizes. The funniest clips could be compiled into a "bloopers" DVD to show or sell (Make sure you get the owners permission before including their clips.)

Guest Speaker Seminars: In every community, there are individuals who stand out for their service and their achievements. Ask these individuals to speak for an hour to help your organization. Sell tickets to anyone who wants to attend.

"Ironman" Contest: This is not your traditional athletic competition, but rather, men ironing the most shirts the fastest. Have audience members pledge money per shirt ironed by a contestant.

Line-Dancing Party: It's easy for everyone to participate in a line dance. Hold a line-dancing party and charge for tickets and refreshments.

Story night: Charge admission to an evening of great stories, jokes, and tall-tales. You could even plan this close to read across America day

www.signupgenius.com/school/readacrossamerica.cfm

The website below is the origins of phrases and fables some funny and interesting entries.

<https://archive.org/stream/brewersdictionary000544mbp#page/n19/mode/2up>

Matching Gift – Ask a corporation or business to match any donations your organization collects in a specified amount of time. School supplies are always a good one for this, but you may think of other applications.

Gas station attendant – Ask a local gas station if you can volunteer to serve as gas station attendants for a day, to clean windshields for donations.

Summer barbecue and auction: Encourage people to donate items for an auction. Charge a fee for entry that will include a ticket for something from the barbecue. Extras can be sold at a nominal price. (It is appreciated if you have vegetarian options available.)

Film night: This can be tricky if you don't have a suitable venue, but if you do it can be very enjoyable. Make sure you have plenty of popcorn/drinks available to purchase.

Enrichment Classes; Ask volunteers who are experts in their field to teach a class in cooking, yoga or dance. Charge participants a small donation to attend.

"Recycled" fashion show: Stage a fashion show whereby participants pay a small fee to enter their design. The rule is though it must be something that has been redesigned and remade from old clothing. Charge an entrance fee for spectators and have a prize for the winning designs. You can also have raffles and other items for sale during the show.

