100 Unique Fundraising Ideas

Here’s a list of 100 unique fundraising ideas that are sure to get you started — or spark a new idea of your own.

1. **Fashion show** — Got a catwalk? Got models? Got some haute couture? You actually don’t need any of the above to pull off a fundraising fashion show. All you need is floor space, benefit t-shirts and a few staff members willing to put themselves out there and be goofy. You’ll be selling your organization’s **merchandise** in no time.

2. **Auction a date** — This trope works great if the date in question is someone well known or beloved in the community. Think outside the box on this one. Your CEO — dressed up for the date as the winner’s choice character from history?

3. **Silent auction** — You don’t have to auction off gift baskets. Get creative with the auction items. Think about **experiences** instead of things. Perhaps you have a donor willing to grant access to his vacation home for the weekend, for instance.

4. **Carnival** — A carnival is always a fun way to raise funds. And you can invest whatever level of overhead feels appropriate. Skip the antique carousels and make up your own games with homemade booths and costumes for a lower cost and more personalized **event experience**.

5. **Treasure hunt** — Use an app like **Action bound** to set up a treasure hunt that combines an IRL (in real life) experience with augmented reality on a device.

6. **Pamper-yourself festival** — Curate a selection of stalls offering things like luxury beauty treatments, chair massage, makeovers, wellness items, and clothing from local boutiques.

7. **Balloon pop** — Fill a room with balloons, hide prizes inside a select few, and sell needles to event-goers for a chance to “pop for prizes.”

8. **Open house** — Invite the public to tour your charity grounds and see what happens behind the scenes. Those who buy tickets to the tour feel involved at the ground level.

9. **Singles charity night** — Bring dating hopefuls together to honor a cause with activities that tie directly back to your cause: making dog toys for a local animal shelter or cooking meals for the homeless, for instance.

10. **A “night in”** — Host a relaxed, laid-back gathering at your home (dress code: PJs and sweats) and ask guests to donate what they typically spend on a big night out.
11. **Ugly sweater party** — We all have that one horrible sweater a well-intentioned family member knitted us. It’s time to put it to good use.

12. **Morning dance party** — An alcohol-free dance party with fancy mocktails made from energizing fresh-squeezed juice.

13. **Themed costume party** — Forget about the fancy gala construct. Not everyone wants to wear a starched shirt. Instead, consider a historical theme like “Come as your favorite feminist” or “Guess which inventor I am?” Check out this blog for more ideas on how to choose a memorable event theme.

14. **Red cup party** — Host a cocktail party and have participants buy red Solo cups at the door, at a wildly inflated price to be donated to your cause.

15. **Silent disco** — No need to hire a professional DJ or performer. Simply plan a killer playlist and provide each attendee with a headset when they enter the door.

16. **Sky lantern sendoff** — Host an evening celebration where partygoers make a wish on a paper lantern, light a flame inside, and send it off in the sky.

17. **Venue-specific dance performance** — Vermont’s [Farm to Ballet](#) features summertime dance performances on local farms all over the state. Dancers perform an originally choreographed piece that tells the story of farming throughout the year. A ticket purchase gives donors the chance to watch the show and learn more about that particular farm. Choose your own imaginative variation based on your event venue and organization.

18. **Theater** — Consider partnering with a local theater company willing to provide the venue, equipment, props, and costumes. Or, arrange to have profits from one of their normal performances go to your cause.

19. **Photo exhibition** — Have participants contribute photographs they’ve taken that relate to your charity. Have an art opening where event-goers buy a ticket to attend, than auction off the photos.

20. **Craft fair** — Get a bunch of artisans on board and charge tickets at the door. This idea is perfect for the holidays, when people are keen to buy unique, original gifts for their loved ones.

21. **Haircut party** — Find a local salon whose stylists are willing to donate their time for just one day to giving haircuts. Customers pay what they think their haircut is worth, and all of the money goes to your cause.

22. **Neighborhood street party** — This is a great way to make money for a local cause or a recent calamity. Have neighbors donate food, drinks and lawn chairs.

23. **Community garage sale** — Most people have tons of stuff they are secretly dying to get rid of. Have them donate it to a neighborhood sale with the proceeds going to your charity.

24. **Car wash** — This classic isn’t just for high school sports teams. Have your execs washing the cars to really appeal to the community.
25. **Dog wash** — Invite the public to come get their pooch polished up.

26. **Clothing swap** — Everyone brings a bag of clothes they don’t wear anymore. Set everything up on retail racks, and let participants “shop” the swap for one new piece of apparel. Donate all the rest to charity.

27. **Coupon book** — Solicit local businesses to participate by offering awesome deals on their products and services. Sell the books for charity.

28. **Tip night** — Ask a local restaurant or café to donate tips or a percentage of sales for the night to your charity.

29. **Golf tournament** — If there’s a particularly ritzy golf course nearby, ask them to donate some less popular hours to your cause.

30. **Roshambo tournament** — You don’t need any special equipment to play rock-paper-scissors, just your hands and some black-and-white-clad referees at a bar. Set up the rules and get the crowd riled to bet on their favorite contenders.

31. **5K race** — **Fundraising runs** are a timeless way to raise money for a good cause. Make yours stand out with a costume requirement or unusual location.

32. **Paddle race** — Host a standup paddleboard contest and let beach bystanders place bets on the winners.

33. **Home run derby** — Take a queue from Major League Baseball and hold a home-run hitting contest. Charge for entry or take bets on the winner.

34. **Kickball tournament** — For most of us, this was the first sport we ever learned in school. Everyone knows the rules.

35. **Tennis tournament** — Host round-robin tennis matches with doubles teams, and sell refreshments to participants and viewers.

36. **Coaching sessions** — Ask the local high school’s coaches to sign up for weekly coaching sessions for various sports, then auction those off to the community.

37. **Slam dunk competition** — Recruit some local basketball stars to act as judges on made-up categories like “form” and “panache.”

38. **Poker tournament** — The proceeds will go to charity, of course, but the winner gets acclaim and a grand prize.

39. **Beer pong tournament** — Set up multiple stations around your venue, with local microbrews selling beer they’ve donated to your cause. The ultimate winner takes home a keg.

40. **Climbing challenge** — Rent a climbing wall or team up with a local climbing gym to hold a race to the top.
41. Trivia night — Host a trivia night at a local bar and have participants pay to play. For extra credit, the bar can donate a portion of proceeds of drinks and food sold.

42. Stair climbing contest — Find a venue with a lot of stairs, like a stadium with 360-degree bleachers. Have participants recruit sponsors.

43. World record attempt party — Give guests a list of “highly attainable world records” they can attempt to break at your event.

44. Buddy run — The buddy being your dog. Like a canine-friendly 5k. Great for fundraisers benefiting animals!

45. Bowl-a-thon — Bowling is a crowd-pleaser, and this one’s a great rain-or-shine activity. You can set up informational and merch booths in the bowling alley, too.

46. Casino night — Take the gambling up a notch with multiple card games, costumes (Wild West theme, anyone?) and cocktails.

47. Dunk tank — Rent a dunk tank and charge participants for a chance to dunk willing local celebrities.

48. Game night — Rent arcade machines or old Atari or Nintendo games for a throwback game night!

49. Yoga with animals — From goats to kittens, animal-themed yoga classes are all the rage right now. Team up with a local animal shelter or petting zoo who will provide the animals to help spread awareness of their own cause.

50. Activity marathon — Dream up an activity you, your friends, family or coworkers can try to do for 24 straight hours, and stream it live or get the local new to cover it. Dance marathons are the most popular variation.

51. Skating event — Host a roller skating or ice skating event and charge an admission fee.

52. Workout class fundraiser — Ask a hot local workout spot to host and help promote your fundraiser. Charge an extra fee for entrance to this special one-time class with everyone’s favorite instructor.

53. Dinner en blanc — An elegant pop-up dinner where diners wear only white. To lower your expenses, make it a potluck picnic at a beautiful park.

54. Food fight en blanc — A less elegant dinner where everyone wears white, but they don’t mind getting filthy. Serve spaghetti and meatballs; watch mayhem unfold. Make sure there’s a hose on premises.

55. Pig roast — Recruit a local pig-roasting expert and charge attendees by the plate, with classic sides like potato salad, cole slaw and chips.

56. Alice in Wonderland-themed tea party — Find a whimsical spot to serve mid-day earl grey and biscuits with “eat me” signs on them.
57. **Teacup pig tea party** — Another idea for a tea party? Tea with teacup pigs. They shouldn’t be trusted near the food, but they will draw a crowd.

58. **Chili cook-off** — Charge by the steamy, spicy bowl and ask a few local microbrews to donate the beer to wash it down.

59. **Food truck rodeo** — You simply need a parking lot, a permit, and a handful of local food trucks willing to attend. Charge for entrance, and the food trucks can still charge their normal prices inside.

60. **Bake sale** — This is an oldie but definitely still a goodie. Stand out with a theme that’s on point with your fundraising focus, like baked goods made from locally sourced ingredients to benefit local farmers.

61. **Adult lemonade stand** — Spice up the sweet-tart drink with liquor and make sure to ID.


63. **All-inclusive pancake breakfast** — Make sure you offer options for everyone — the gluten-free, the vegan, the sugar-free, and the foodie who will eat anything.

64. **Pie-throwing contest** — Invite people to come take out their aggressions and indulge their sweet tooths.

65. **Winery tour** — Team up with a local winery that doesn’t offer tours to the public every day. Include an additional donation for personalized or white-label bottles from their special collection.

66. **Beer run** — Like a pub crawl, but with more urgency. Participants stop at bars along the route. Said bars donate their brews for a good cause.

67. **Celebrity cooking class** — Find a local chef willing to host a class in his kitchen (or rent one) and end the lesson with a lively and intimate group dinner.

68. **Cake walk** — Like musical chairs, except the winner gets cake, not a chair. Ask a local bakery to contribute the beautiful (and delicious) prizes.

69. **Stone soup party** — Have you heard the old folk story about the town that comes together to make a communal pot of soup? Have participants bring a soup ingredient, and cook up the recipe together. Then enjoy the spoils of your efforts with some nice crusty bread.

70. **Spaghetti Dinner:** Host a spaghetti dinner to benefit breast cancer. Have all of your friends help with the cooking to make an event where families are welcome and are charged a donation entrance fee to join in the fun. Or organize a potluck party along the same lines where everyone brings a dish to pass and gets to socialize with friends and neighbors. The entrance fee to the party becomes your donation.
71. Wine-Tasting Party: Have a wine and cheese-tasting party. If you know anyone (who knows anyone!) who owns, manages, or works in a winery — ask if they will host it! Charge at the door. Blind tastings are fun — or dress up the event with some very special vintages.

72. Mentorship auction — Set up bidding for one-on-one chat sessions with thought leaders or participating celebrities. The conversations can happen remotely, thanks to the plethora of video chat tech.

73. Film screening — Host a night at the movies replete with popcorn and candy.

74. Sausage sizzle — Popular in Australia, hosts of BBQs charge for sausage wrapped in bread and donate the proceeds to charity.

75. Seedling sale — Set up in a busy parking lot and ask departing drivers to purchase seedlings of plants or trees. Call it a “carbon exchange” — for the pollution their cars emit, drivers purchase a seedling, and you commit to planting it.

76. Christmas tree recycling — A January-specific fundraising idea, charge a fee to dispose of a tree. If you have the space (and permit) for it, a bonfire party can turn the necessity into a festivity!

77. “Junk” donations — Some stuff isn’t worthy of a garage sale, but it’s still worth money. Have community members donate their used ink cartridges, defunct electronics and old magazines. You can resell these to recyclers for a profit.

78. Tote bag sales — Team up with a local grocery interested in encouraging customers to bring their own bags. You supply the bags, for a fee that ties directly back to your cause.

79. Guided hike — Host a guided hike on a trail led by an expert who can point out the value of the environs and why our natural world is so valuable.

80. Meatless Monday dinner party — Giving up meat just one day a week can have a huge positive impact on our environmental footprint. Promote the idea of “meatless Monday” with a hosted dinner cooked by a celebrated vegan chef.

81. Plant a community garden — Invite those with aspiring green thumbs to come together and plant a community garden to benefit at-risk communities.

82. Battle of the bands — Invite some local guitar heroes and give your donors a chance to support your cause and enjoy the performance.

83. Talent search — How many of us have rock-n-roll dreams? Here’s everyone’s chance to try out for a band. “The band” is one you’ll put together for this event, with the grand prize a chance to perform at a local venue.

84. Karaoke contest — Recruit a local celebrity or two to judge participants willing to put themselves out there, The Voice-style.

85. Drawing auction — Invite bids on framed artwork by youth from a local school or organization or from your co-workers children.
86. **Family friendly mud run** — Create a down-and-dirty obstacle course and invite the kids to dive in.

87. **Talent show** — Invite friends, family or coworkers to come up with a talent and put on a show.

88. **Used book drive** — Ask people to drop off books they’ve already read and either resell them or rent them out for a small fee.

89. **Dare fundraiser** — Sponsor a social dare contest in which participants agree to do outlandish things if sponsors contribute a certain amount of money.

90. **50/50 raffle** — At the end of the day, the winner gets half the pot, and the other half goes to your charity of choice.

91. **Baby photo contest** — Charge a small entry fee for participants to upload their baby photos, and then have the crowd vote on categories like “cutest,” “chubbiest,” and “most improved.”

92. **Call sprint** — Send out flyers or virtual links ahead of time to let targets know you’ll be calling and asking for a donation.

93. **Donations on your event page** — Make it easy for people to give even if they can’t attend your event with donation buttons on your event page.

94. **Themed t-shirts** — You don’t have to pay for a big print run up front. Instead, spread the word about the memorable merch via social media. T-shirts ship straight to your donors when the fundraiser is over.

95. **Fundraising bracelets** — Remember the LiveStrong silicone wristbands? You can craft more modern, classy bracelets working with a local designer, and sell them for the cause. Just make sure they have an iconic design that makes them immediately recognizable.

96. **Gala Night:** Host an elegant or formal party. Have food and beverages donated.

97. **Garden Tour:** Hold a garden tour at your home or at a local historical home. Have the tour promoted through your local newspaper.

98. **Host a coffee get-together** at your home or at a local coffee shop. Ask your favorite coffee shop to donate the coffee (and maybe even some goodies!). Invite your neighbors and friends. Let them know they will have a chance to pay tribute to someone affected by breast cancer (or any cancer) by signing your shirt. Suggest a donation of $20 (or more!). Get creative and have them sign pink ribbons to be attached to your shirt, or pink buttons, etc. You’ll have the coolest shirt on Walk day!

99. **Game Night:** Host a game night — Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit, Scrabble, Poker, Bridge, Bingo. Serve donated food and drinks. Charge at the door.

100. **“Thons”**: Cut-a-thon (hair salon), Mow-a-thon, Shovel-a-thon, Rake-a-thon. You name it. You can do it for donations.
Many walkers host local events and activities to help them reach their fundraising goal. If you plan to fundraise through these methods, please remember the following:

Local communities often have laws governing fundraising activities like raffles, garage sales, leafleting, and other promotional activities. Please check with your local government before fundraising in these ways. If you plan to post flyers in a public space (grocery stores, malls, parking lots, etc.) please check with the Property Manager first, before posting your materials.

Be sure to note that your fundraising activity is for the Susan G. Komen MORE THAN PINK Walk.