




How to

HOST A FUNDRAISER

Panda Ambassadors

A photograph of a man in a light-colored jacket crouching by a campfire at night. The fire is bright and glowing, with many sparks flying upwards into the dark blue night sky. The man is looking down at the fire, and his face is partially illuminated by the fire's light. The background shows the dark silhouettes of trees.

WWF is a member-supported organization. Individual donations account for about 30% of our total operating budget—more than any other source. Those donations allow WWF to do the amazing things we do. With that money we equip and train wildlife rangers, innovate and implement new tech to stop illegal fishing, help local communities safeguard their natural resources, and so much more. Hosting a WWF fundraiser contributes directly to those efforts. It's also a great way to rally your community around an important cause.

Step 1. Check out Panda Nation!

Hosting a fundraiser is easier than ever, thanks to [Panda Nation](#), our online fundraising tool. Visit Panda Nation to get an idea of some of the fundraising activities you can do. You will see options for fundraising on behalf of a particular animal, as part of an athletic activity, for a special occasion, or for any other activity. You can also see existing fundraisers and read stories of successful past events.

Step 2. Decide on an activity, occasion, or event

The sky's the limit when it comes to what kind of fundraiser you want to host. Popular ideas include birthday parties, marathons, and rummage sales, but you can do just about anything that you think will be successful.

Brainstorm a few ideas with others. Talk to friends about what kind of fundraising events they like to attend or would be willing to help with. See if there are any special occasions coming up—birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, etc.—that could anchor your fundraising event. You can even log on to the Panda Ambassador Facebook group and share and find ideas.

The kind of event you choose will depend partly on your fundraising ambition. Do you want to invite people to have some fun and chip in a few bucks for WWF while they're at it? Or do you want to attract a larger crowd of potential donors to raise as much money as possible? Both options—and a range of options in between—are perfectly valid and up to you!

Choose something that you can pull off with the time and workforce you have. If it's just you planning the fundraiser, a party or small educational event with a suggested donation might be best. If you have an entire club of people working with you, something like a bake sale, an art auction, or a rummage sale might be feasible.

Step 3. Set a fundraising goal

Go ahead and set a fundraising goal for your event. Think of something on the high end of realistic—if everything goes perfectly, how much do you think you could bring in? Setting a higher goal will encourage you and your patrons to work that much harder to pull it off. And if you find out during the process that your estimate is way off, either too aggressive or too conservative, you can always adjust it.

Step 4. Work out the logistics

Once you've decided on your fundraiser, you need to come up with a basic plan for how it will work. Hosting a fundraising event is just like hosting any other event, with an added component of soliciting donations. That means you have to do all the legwork involved in planning your event—decide on a location, figure out who you want to attend, and make a plan for what your guests will do.

The logistics might be easier than they would be for a formal event. For example, you can host a birthday party with your own friends at your own house, without a ton of advanced planning. For sales and community events, things get more complex.

Whatever you decide, you'll need to work out the basics of who, what, when, where, and how. A component unique to fundraisers is figuring out how you want to accept donations at your event. Will you allow donations only through your Panda Nation page (more on that in the next step)? Decide and prepare in advance based on what you think your attendees will want—and also what you or your volunteers can handle.

Step 5. Set up a Panda Nation page

Your event is set—you've got the date picked out, the space reserved, a guest list in mind, and all your activities planned. Now it's time to set up your individual fundraising page on [Panda Nation](#). This is easy to do. From the homepage, just choose the type of activity you will be fundraising around and then fill out your information, including your fundraising goal, as prompted.

This is an important step for a few reasons. First, it helps WWF know where your donation is coming from. Random checks in the mail are great, but with the data we collect on Panda Nation, we get valuable information about the kind of people who are contributing, what their interests are, and what types of fundraisers are most successful. This helps us make sure our future fundraising efforts are as efficient as possible. It also helps us bring in new potential members. People who agree to donate to your project through Panda Nation for the first time might be interested in learning more about what WWF does and how they can help.

Setting up a fundraising page on Panda Nation also helps you. It gives you a landing page to send people to, where they can learn more about your event. And it's a page that's connected to WWF, making it easy for people to see where their money is going. It helps you keep track of your donations and see the progress toward your goal.

Panda Nation also collects the money for you. You don't need to mess with credit card apps, tax receipts, bank transfers, or any of it! People can donate online before, during, or after your event.

And finally, a page on Panda Nation also lets your audience and attendees know your fundraiser is legitimate. They don't have to question whether their donation will end up at WWF, because they donate directly to us through your page. This gives your event extra credibility, especially if you're working with the general public.

Step 6. Promote your fundraiser

When promoting your event, give all the pertinent information—what, when, and where—and make it clear that you're hosting a fundraiser for World Wildlife Fund. You can even provide a suggested donation amount or your total fundraising goal. Direct people to your Panda Nation fundraising page so they can donate in advance of your event, or can donate even if they don't plan to attend.

You may also want to create an event on Facebook or an evite to help you track RSVPs. If you're trying to reach an audience beyond your friends and family, you might want to post some physical fliers in or around your event location. Contact local blogs and community websites and ask them to include your event in their calendars. Ask local environmental, civic, or school organizations to promote your event in newsletters and on their websites.

Come up with an invitation list—including local VIPs if appropriate. Talk to them in person, send them an email, or consider sending a formal invite through the mail.

Step 7. Enjoy yourself!

Whether you've organized a party, an athletic event, or a formal presentation, make sure you take the time to enjoy your event. Take pride in what you've accomplished, whether you hit your fundraising goal or not.

Be sure to share with your guests why WWF is so important to you, and what kinds of things WWF will be able to accomplish with their help. Thank everyone for attending, donating, and supporting. Let everyone know how close you are to reaching your fundraising goal—or celebrate if you've already met it.

Step 8. Share your experience

Log on to the Panda Ambassador Facebook group and let everyone know how successful your fundraiser was. Did you meet your goal? Did you have a great time? Do you plan to host more fundraisers in the future? What went really well and what will you do differently in the future?