



FLAME INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER GUIDES

A-Z of Fundraising Ideas

Lots more ideas to get your fundraising going alongside the information in the Flame International Fundraisers Guide

Aerobic-a-thon - Break out the leotard and the Jane Fonda video and get physical. Get sponsored for every five minutes of aerobics you can manage.

Art Exhibition - Could be a great earner if you're a dab hand with a paintbrush. Even if you're not, give it a go and pass it off as modern art.

Auction of Promises - Visit local businesses and ask them to donate their services for you to auction off. Or rope in your friends, who could promise to wash cars, mow lawns or do housework for the highest bidder.

Apple Dunking - Charge people to stick their faces in cold water in an attempt to win a mouldy Granny Smith. Who couldn't want to pay for that?

Arm Wrestling - Charge your mates - or the local rugby/footie/any testosterone driven team - to arm wrestle one another. You could even fashion a snazzy badge/medal type thing for the winner.

Abseil - Get a group of people to abseil down a local building in aid of your cause. You are likely to get press coverage for this type of event too.

Arts or crafts stall - Let your imagination go wild and reap the rewards. Try making greetings cards, pot pourri or jewellery to sell.

Badminton tournament - Grab those shuttlecocks and hit the courts. Get sponsored for every ten minutes of rallying you can manage.

Barn Dance - Sweet talk a farmer into lending you his barn and then organise a night crammed full of dosy doeing. Charge £10 a ticket and organise a collection part way through the night. Alternatively, hire or blag your local community centre/ church hall.

Bingo - Make your own bingo cards and invite your mates around for a few games. Charge them a pound a ticket. Prizes should be something small like sweets or promises of eternal friendship.

Blind Date Evening - Get some single folks in the same room and charge an audience to watch you give Cilla a run for her money. Hopefully will raise a lorra lorra money chucks!

Bring and Buy Sale - We bet you've got loads of junk in your attics and under your bed. Why not raise some money by organising a Bring and Buy sale. You could even charge other people to set up their own stalls.

Back to Front Day - Get sponsored to wear your clothes the wrong way round for a whole day.

BMX bike display - Raid your local skate park for skater boys and organise a display for them. Invite the press and promote it locally. Charge people to watch and try to swing some discount at a local skate shop for those that take part.

Car Boot Sale - All you need is a car (preferably with a boot), some junk and some people to buy it from you.

Coffee Morning - Bake some cakes, bring out the tea and coffee and they will come. Remember to charge them for the privilege.

Cricket Match - Organise enough people to make up two teams and get them to pay a small amount to take part. Organise a collection for the spectators.

Car Washing - Grab some willing friends and get knocking on your neighbour's doors. Tell them why you are offering to wash their car - to fund your trip - and chances are, they'll gladly stump up a bit of cash.

Dry Cornflakes/Cream Cracker eating contest - Charge a small fee to enter and move back to avoid the spraying of crumbs.

Disco - Book a hall or blag one and ask a local DJ to donate his service for free. Throw in some drink and nibbles and hey presto! You've got yourself a disco - well, once you invite some people and charge them to shake their stuff.

Dog walk - Get some exercise and raise money at the same time. Offer your services as the neighbourhood dog walker and charge per dog per walk.

Dinner dance - This one will take some organising, but could make you a packet. Charge

twenty quid for tickets, and make more money by running a bar.

Egg Painting - Something to have at your craft fair or fete. Set up an egg painting stool, provide the eggs and the paint and charge people to get creative.

Easter party - Seasonal parties are always a good idea. Incorporate an Easter Egg hunt and the egg painting to keep the children amused whilst you mingle with the parents telling them all about your upcoming trip - and how they can help you get there.

Fairs, fetes, bazaars, etc - Get yourself a big space (a hall, a field or even a car park) and let your imagination go crazy. Set up a coconut shy, apple bobbing stand, races and white elephant stalls.

Film show/premiere - There are two main ways to do this. Speak nicely to your local cinema manager and ask if you can rent out a screen - or even if they will donate one to your worthy cause. Charge your friends and family an admission to watch the newest blockbuster. Alternatively stage a screening in your own home - maybe you could theme the type of films you show with your trip? Ask people to bring their own snacks and to pay a small amount for the screening.

Football Match - Ask your local team to play a match in aid of your target. Organise a raffle at half time and get prizes donated by local businesses. Alternatively, organise a match pitting your mates against their dads and older relatives. Ask each player to pay a fee to play and buy a small cup for the winning team.

Garden party - Whip up some cucumber sandwiches, dust off the picnic tables and crack open some Pimms. Charge a small entrance fee and organise a collection during the event.

Go-Karting - Organise a group of mates to head to the local Go Kart track. Inform the staff of your fundraising efforts and hope that they waive the admission fee - best to go off-peak times if you want to give this a try. Ask each person to pay a fee to enter a series of races. Award the winners a small prize each.

Guess the Weight... - Find something suitably heavy - anything from a jar full of sweets to your Grandma - and ask friends and family to guess its weight. Charge folk 50p to enter and buy a small prize for the winner.

Hair beading/plaiting - An idea for a stall at a fete. Charge people a small fee to make them look like Floella Benjamin.

Highland Games - Tug of war...in kilts, tossing the caber...in kilts and throwing the hammer...in kilts. Charge all entrants a fee and buy some small prizes to award to the winners.

It's a Knockout competition - Get some teams together and arrange assault courses, games and quizzes galore. Each team member pays a few pounds to take part - with the winning team being awarded a prize donated by a local company.

International Evenings - Hold themed evening events to let people know more about the country you intend to visit on your trip. Cook themed meals, have themed table decorations and wear appropriate clothing. Once everyone is digging into your delicious food, take the opportunity to tell them all about your plans... then get the donations bucket out. To cover costs, it's probably best to charge a small entrance fee.

Igloo Building - Get a group of friends together and have some fun in the snow. Build an igloo in a public place and collect coins from impressed passers-by.

Ice-cream Eating - Get sponsored to make lifelong friends with Ben and Jerry or buy huge tubs of ice cream and sell them by the scoop as cornets on a hot day.

Jazz Night - A good idea if you're a jazz singer. Perhaps a better one if you're not. Raise money and have a giggle at the same time by belting out some classic jazz tunes like 'Summertime'. Pass around the donations bucket to your spellbound audience and watch the money roll in.

Jog-a-thon - Get sponsored for every mile you complete. If it's raining outside - and you're a bit of a wimp - you could even do it on a treadmill. It might be something to get sponsored for at your local gym.

Joke-a-thon - Go up to people on the street and ask them to pay you fifty pence if you can make them laugh - best to be armed with a ready supply of hilarious jokes for this one.

Jigsaw Marathon - Get some willing people around and ask them to donate a small amount to be part of the jigsaw marathon. Each person has a jigsaw and is timed to see how long it takes to complete. Once all are completed, the jigsaws are passed onto the next team and so this continues until all jigsaws have been completed.

Jewellery Making/Selling - Buy beads and wire in bulk and get creative. This should be particularly profitable around Christmas time.

Karaoke competition/display - Rent a karaoke machine and hold an event. Sell tickets, or make it a competition and charge people to enter. Get a local company to donate a prize.

Kite flying - Hold a kite-flying day for kids. Charge for tickets, and provide refreshments (ice-creams or hot-dogs, depending on the season). If you're a creative type, run a kite-making workshop before the grand kite-flying session.

Knobbly knee contest - Works especially well at the seaside in summer. Charge a quid for people to enter the competition, and get a local company to donate a 'quality' prize. You get the fun of being the judge.

Line-dancing - Hold a line-dancing party. Find out about all the line-dancing classes and clubs in your area (you'll be surprised at how many there are) and send out invites; charge a fiver for tickets. Get in the spirit with costumes and decorations.

Longest chain of paper clips, line of coins, etc Get sponsored per metre - you could even get a bunch of friends together and try to break the record. Alternatively, start a line of coins in your local park. Publicise what you're raising money for and get passers-by to add their loose change to the line. Try to make it reach from one side of the park to the other.

Lawn Mowing - Borrow a lawn-mower and drop leaflets through doors, charging a couple of quid for your services. Make sure the leaflet explains what the money is for, and people will be more inclined to pay.

Luncheon - Invite everyone in your workplace, school or street to a grand lunch (for a small fee, obviously). Make posh sarnies and nibbles. This could work especially well in an office, where people will appreciate an unusual break in the middle of the day.

Lilo Races - In the local swimming pool, lake, pond or river. Charge teams for entry and give a prize to the winner. Be aware of safety and insurance issues.

Leap Frog - Get sponsored per leap, or per quarter-hour. More fun if you're leaping over strangers, in the local park or on the beach. Tell them what you're doing; they'll either laugh and agree or walk very quickly in the opposite direction. Take photos to prove you did it!

Limbo Competition - This could work well in your church! Charge a quid for entry to the competition, and get the refreshment team to donate a large cake for the winner.

Litter Picking - People will be very willing to pay you if you're cleaning up a local park, beach or kids' playground. This is a way to help your local community while raising money for yourself, so everyone's a winner.

Marathon events - Hire a local hall, or see if you can get one free for a good cause. Hold a marathon table tennis, aerobics, line dancing or badminton session (in shift teams). Get relevant companies to sponsor you in exchange for publicity in the hall (local gyms, sports shops etc). Get sponsorship from friends and family too.

Midsummer masked ball - This will take a lot of organisation, but could be a very special - and lucrative - event. Go all-out to make it as posh as possible, and charge £10 - £20 for tickets. Got a mate with a barn? Glam it up with candles and decorations, request that guests wear black tie, give a free glass of bubbly to everyone on arrival, the works!

Midnight film shows, midnight feasts etc - These could be held in your house, or in halls at college / university. Make a feature of the fact that it's being held at midnight, with atmospheric lighting etc. Charge for entry, naturally.

Mini Marathon - Get sponsored to run five or ten miles around your town or the equivalent around your garden. The smaller the garden the better - just make sure you change direction occasionally to reduce dizziness!

Murder Mystery Night - This could be great, especially if you're a member of an amateur dramatics group, or a drama group at school or college, who'll help you out.

Musical Evening - Get some talented friends together and hold a concert. If you do this in a pub or bar, it will be more low-key than in a hall or theatre, and there will be things for the audience to do during gaps between performances (i.e. drinking and mingling).

Marshmallow Eating - Lull your mates into a sense of security with a campfire-and-guitar evening, then crack open the marshmallows and charge extortionate rates for them (a quid each?) Who can resist the gooey-marshmallow-over-campfire experience?

New Year's Eve dance/party - This could be as big or as small as you like - in your front room, upstairs in a pub, or in a mammoth marquee.

Nearly New Sale - This is a posher version of a jumble sale. Be selective - only sell nice stuff that's in good nick - and you can charge a fiver for items that would cost 50p in a jumble sale.

Netball Tournament - Get local and school teams to pay to enter; get a sports shop to donate cool prizes for the winning team.

Non-Uniform Day - People pay a couple of quid for the privilege of coming to school or work in their civvies.

Name the Baby/Teddy - No, we're not suggesting you have a baby and charge people for the privilege of naming it. A photo of a friend's baby will do. Make a list of 100 names, charge people a quid to choose a name, make a hundred quid and give £25 for the correct guess. Ask if you can put the photo up in your local shop, with a moneybox and list of names.

Nature Trails - Know a bit about the wildlife in your area? Charge people for guided nature walks.

Noodle Sucking - Don't forget to get sponsored, or this is kind of stodgy and pointless.

Old-time music hall - Ever heard of the grey pound? Put on an old-fashioned music hall show and invite local grannies...

Obstacle Course - Set up a hard-core obstacle course and charge people to race.

Office Collection Day - Stick a pot on your desk with notices telling people what you're raising money for. Loudly remind your colleagues that it's for a good cause. Probably best to do this the day before you leave your job...

Odd Job Days - Lawn-mowing, DIY, carrying shopping, walking dogs... offer your services in the neighbourhood - no job too small. Dress in a superhero costume to get noticed.

Outgrown Clothes Sale - This is good if you know lots of families with kids. They bring clothes that their little ones have grown out of, and buy clothes that others have brought.

Origami - If you're good at this Japanese art-form, hold an origami workshop for kids.

Pancake Day party - Everyone loves pancakes, right? Hold a Shrove Tuesday party for all your family and friends (charge them a fiver each).

Serve unlimited pancakes and hold a pancake-tossing competition.

Parties - Know some busy parents? Organise their kids' birthday parties for them in exchange for cash. Jelly and ice cream here we come.

Penalty shoot-out competition - People pay to enter; you get your hands on a signed football or some sports goodies for the winner. Get a football team or sports shop to donate the prize.

Pet show - Get a pet shop to donate prizes in exchange for publicity. Why not make it an alternative pet-show, with prizes for the waggiest dog, pet look-a-likes etc?

Pram push - Dress up, push your mate in a pram through the streets of your town, shake a bucket and be prepared to tell a lot of curious bystanders why they should give you money.

Parachute - Raise sponsorship - you'll need enough to pay for your parachute-jump; the rest can go towards your trip. Contact friends, family, colleagues, your parents' colleagues, and local companies.

Photo Competition - Charge people to enter. Get a camera-shop to donate a prize and judge the comp - good publicity for them.

Plant Sale - Requires forward planning. Buy a packet of seeds for a quid, plant them, and when they're looking impressive, set up a stall and sell the plants for a quid each. From little acorns, mighty oaks shall grow, or something like that.

Polo - Not the easiest sporting event to organise, admittedly, but likely to attract the kind of people who have money to spare.

Pub Games - Skittles, darts, pool, cards... Charge people to enter; the landlord/lady will appreciate the custom, and might agree to donate free drinks for the winner. You could even make it a weekly league.

Pantomime - Lure wannabe-luvvies with promises of fame and adulation; put on a fun panto and charge for tickets. Serve mulled wine and mince pies for extra money.

Pool Competition - People put money in a pot to enter; the winner takes half of what's in the pot, you take the other half!

Picnics - Sell tickets in advance; with a little imagination you can make great, fun picnic food from cheap ingredients.

Plastic duck race - Use Google to find a company near you that hires out plastic ducks. People sponsor a duck, and they're released at a set point to float down a river. The sponsor of the winning duck gets a prize.

Photography - Are you handy with a camera? Earn money by taking photos at office Christmas parties and other events.

Quizzes - Quizzes are very popular and hence a good way to make money. Pubs are the usual venue, but you could also hold one at a local college, at a day centre for older people, in your church or in a town or village hall.

Quiff competition - Warning: only try this if you want to bring large numbers of Elvis fans out of the woodwork.

Races - Be imaginative - think sack-races, baby races, electric wheelchair races, stiletto races... charge people for entry and get a local company to donate a prize.

Raffles - Get friends and local companies to donate prizes. Go for cool, unusual prizes like a day in a spa, a go-karting session or a takeaway pizza.

Rapping contest, show or sponsored event - You could organise this at a youth club or skate park, and get your younger family members and their mates involved.

Read-a-thon - Get sponsored to read books - this works best if you're someone who never normally reads.

Rounders Tournaments - Charge teams to enter, and award a sport-related prize - or a slap-up post-match picnic - to the winning team.

Rowing - Get sponsored to row on a rowing machine; aim to row the equivalent of crossing the channel.

Recycling - Recycle cans for money! Some places will give you up to a penny a can. Do a massive Blue-Peter-stylee appeal and get your friends, family and neighbours to give you their empty cans. Over a year, you could make a fair bit, and help the environment too.

Santa's grotto - Set up a Santa's grotto in a shopping centre, at a Christmas fayre, or just in the street (get permission first). Charge kids (or their parents) for the chance to meet Santa, a polaroid snap, and a cheap prezzie.

Scoff-a-hotdog competition - Who can eat two in the shortest time? Who can eat the most in two minutes? Charge people to enter, with a free meal (donated by a fast-food joint?) for the winner. You'll be surprised how many people enter a comp like this just for the 'glory'.

Shakespeare marathon - Get sponsored to over-act your way through the complete works... in a public place. Tights obligatory.

Silly games afternoon - Egg and spoon, silly races, wet sponge throwing... use your imagination.

Skateboard display - Firstly, get a local skate shop to agree to give a discount to participants in your show. Secondly, use this to persuade talented kids to show off their skills. Thirdly, sell tickets. Parents are probably your best market; other skaters won't pay, as they see this stuff every day.

Sponsored events - You can get sponsored to do pretty much anything, so think creatively.

Sports contests - Again, think creatively. Any sport can bring in the money - either charge individuals or teams to enter with the hope of winning a prize, or charge spectators to watch.

Strawberry and cream tea party - Pick-your-own works out cheapest. Hold the party in your garden on a sunny day and charge for tickets.

Sponsored Silence - Could you talk for England? Reckon your family and friends would pay good money to shut you up for a day? A sponsored silence is really easy to organise, and can make you a fair bit of dough.

Sports Day - Organise a sports day at your workplace, local pub, university or college. You'll be surprised how many grown-ups jump at the chance to don a PE kit and go back to their youth.

Squash Tournament - Charge people to enter. Get a sports centre to donate five free sessions on the squash court for the winner.

Swim-a-thon - Get sponsored per length. If you're a fit swimmer, try to swim the equivalent of crossing the Channel (or half-way across).

Scavenger Hunt - People pay to enter. They each receive a list of items they need to scavenge (a beer-mat, a yellow flower, etc.) Give a prize to the person who brings all the items to you first.

Scalextric Grand Prix - This one can be done in your front room - or anywhere really.

Slave auction - Get a few of your mates together and hold a slave auction, at your school, college or a local fete. People bid to have a young man/lady accompany them for the day. The 'slaves' should dress to impress!

Tea party - Tea is the new fashionable drink of choice, or so they say. Charge your mates a couple of quid to attend, and go all-out with the fairy-cakes and cucumber sandwiches. Very civilised.

Teddy bears' picnic - Charge families for tickets, and publicise it through playgroups and primary schools. Don't forget to bring your own teddy!

Theme days/evenings - There are loads of possibilities. Going to Africa on your trip? Why not have an African night (lots of rice). Or you could hold a 60's or '70s night. Charge people to take part.

Top of the Pops show - Put on a fake TOTP, with talented types impersonating their fave band or artist. Works best at a school or college.

Treasure hunt - People pay you for the first clue. You lay a trail of clues, with a top prize at the end. Car treasure-hunts can work really well.

Tuck shop - Buy cheap multi-packs of chocolate bars and crisps and sell them at extortionately inflated prices. This works well at offices and factories, as well as schools and youth clubs. Sell home-made cakes and cookies too if you've got time to bake them.

Tennis Tournament - Hold your own mini-Wimbledon. People pay to enter, and the winner gets a prize donated by a local business. Sell champagne and strawberries-and-cream to the spectators.

Themed Dinner Party - A Mexican, Indian or Moroccan meal could go down really well. Charge people to attend - try your parents' friends.

Tug-of-War - Teams pay to enter, with the hope of winning prizes. Teachers vs students, boys vs girls, or one town or village vs another could be fun.

Twister-a-thon - Get sponsored to play an all-day game of Twister with your mates. People will donate more if you're doing it in a public place - your embarrassment is always worth a few quid.

Tombola - You don't need a fancy-turny-handle-thing - just put the tickets in a box and shake well. Get local businesses and family friends to donate prizes.

University Challenge - Pit your university, school or college against another one. We're not promising Jeremy Paxman will agree to host...

Unwanted Gift Sale - Get your friends and family to donate their unwanted Christmas gifts in early January. Flog them shamelessly.

Unicycle Racing - Helps if your friends can ride unicycles.

Used Stamps - Get your family, friends and neighbours to donate their used stamps, and sell them to collectors.

Variety show - Does your Dad play the Didgeridoo? Can your dog dance the tango? Put on a variety show with a difference!

Volleyball Tournament - This could work well on the beach in summer-time. Promote it through a loud-speaker, and get teams to pay to enter. Get local businesses to donate prizes for the winners: try the nearest ice-cream van.

Vegetable eating - Does your family despair of your unbalanced diet? Get them to sponsor you to eat your greens.

Video-a-thon - Rent a bunch of classic movies and play them back-to-back for the whole day. Print schedules and hand them out to your friends as they turn up and get them to make a donation to watch their favourites. Don't skimp on the popcorn.

Valentines Day Event - Soft music, mirror-balls, largely heart-based decor... you get the idea. Sell tickets to the love-sick and desperate. Alternatively, hold an anti-Valentine party.

Vegetarian Evening - Cook all your favourite veggie recipes and people pay to come eat them. Don't just target veggies - meat-eaters will come too, out of interest.

White Elephant stall - Sell anything and everything you can get your hands on at a fete, jumble sale or car boot sale. You'll be amazed at what people will buy...

Who's that baby - Get old baby-photos of your mates or - much better - your bosses or teachers. Stick them up around your school or office and get people to pay to guess who they are. Needless to say, you'll need a quality prize for the winner.

Window Cleaning - Spend a weekend cleaning windows for your neighbours or local shops. Ask for donations rather than charging a set fee.

