

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PLANNING FUNDRAISING EVENTS FOR COMMUNITY  
BASED NON-PROFIT COUNSELLING SERVICES**

by

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## **Abstract**

Non-profit and charity organizations often rely heavily on fundraising as their primary means of covering expenses. Non-profits, being eligible for far fewer grants than registered charities, may be especially dependent on the outcomes of their fundraising efforts in order to continue providing services to their community. Since many organizations struggle to find enough time, resources, and volunteers, it is essential that the time and effort applied to fundraising are successful in attaining the necessary funds. This project supplies organizations with a guide for planning and producing major fundraising events. While the majority of the guide is applicable to any group planning to host a major fundraising event, some points may need adjustment in order to best fit the given organization. The timeline of the guide begins six to nine months before the date of the event. The guide includes a series of checklists and numerous appendices that outline in detail the various steps necessary for planning and hosting a major fundraising dinner.

## Table of Contents

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Abstract.....                               | ii  |
| Table of Contents .....                     | iii |
| Acknowledgments .....                       | 6   |
| Chapter 1: Introduction & Overview.....     | 7   |
| Significance .....                          | 7   |
| Background and Personal Location.....       | 8   |
| Overview .....                              | 9   |
| Chapter 2: A Brief Literature Review .....  | 10  |
| Working and Volunteering for Charities..... | 15  |
| Chapter 3: Project Plan.....                | 18  |
| References .....                            | 20  |
| Chapter 4: .....                            | 22  |
| Table of Contents .....                     | 24  |
| How This Guide Works.....                   | 27  |
| Initial Planning .....                      | 28  |
| Choose a Venue.....                         | 28  |
| Catering .....                              | 29  |
| Entertainment .....                         | 29  |
| Further Planning & Publicity.....           | 31  |
| Theme .....                                 | 31  |
| Decorating .....                            | 31  |
| Make Some Important Decisions! .....        | 31  |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Publicity & Ticket Sales .....                    | 32 |
| Sponsorship .....                                 | 33 |
| Preparation for Donation Requests.....            | 34 |
| Schedule of Events .....                          | 34 |
| Crunch Time!.....                                 | 35 |
| Ticket Sales & Invites .....                      | 35 |
| Donations.....                                    | 35 |
| Publicity.....                                    | 36 |
| Event-Day Volunteers .....                        | 36 |
| Random To-Do's .....                              | 36 |
| 1 Week Before Event.....                          | 38 |
| Donations.....                                    | 38 |
| Venue/Catering.....                               | 38 |
| To-Do .....                                       | 38 |
| Stuff to Bring.....                               | 39 |
| Event Day!.....                                   | 41 |
| Pre-Event To-Do .....                             | 41 |
| During Event .....                                | 41 |
| Follow Up.....                                    | 42 |
| Appendix 1: Venue.....                            | 43 |
| Appendix 2: Entertainment.....                    | 44 |
| Appendix 3: Decorations, Set Up, & Take down..... | 47 |
| Appendix 4: Fundraising During Your Event .....   | 48 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Appendix 5: Ticket Sales.....                          | 51 |
| Appendix 6.1: Creating Tickets.....                    | 52 |
| Appendix 6.2: Ticket Sales Sign Out Sheet .....        | 53 |
| Appendix 6.3: Ticket Sales Tracking Sheets.....        | 54 |
| Appendix 7: Creating Posters .....                     | 55 |
| Appendix 8: Creating Save the Date Cards.....          | 56 |
| Appendix 9.1: Sample Title Sponsor Letter .....        | 57 |
| Appendix 9.2: Sample Sponsor Letter (All levels) ..... | 58 |
| Appendix 9.3: Another Sample Sponsor Letter .....      | 60 |
| Appendix 10: Donation Request Letter .....             | 61 |
| Appendix 11: Potential Silent Auction Items .....      | 62 |
| Appendix 12: Sample Event Schedule .....               | 63 |
| Appendix 13: Volunteer List .....                      | 64 |
| Appendix 14: Items to Bring on Event Day .....         | 65 |
| Appendix 15: Silent Auction Bid Sheet .....            | 66 |
| Appendix 16: Payment .....                             | 67 |
| Appendix 17: Press Release Sample .....                | 68 |

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction & Overview**

Acquiring substantial funding is often an essential part of sustaining a charitable or non-profit organization. However, obtaining the knowledge and means to acquire such funds is often an overwhelming and taxing undertaking for many who work or volunteer for charitable or non-profit organizations. This project was initiated in order to provide community-based charities and non-profits with a guide to planning and implementing major fundraising events. The intention of this guide is to reduce some of the stress that organizations might face in regard to fundraising. Furthermore, the guide aims to increase the potential for financial success of organizations' fundraising events.

The contents of this guide can generally be applied to serve the event planning purposes of any small to medium size non-profit or charitable organization. Some aspects of the guide may need to be adapted to suit timelines, location, and goals specific to a given organization. Similarly, while this guide outlines the stages of planning that are specific to a fundraising dinner, its broad stages are also applicable to the preparation and implementation of other fundraising events. Some adaptation may be necessary in the more event-specific stages of planning.

For the purpose of this project, several words, where appropriate, may be interchangeable. These words include: organization, charity, charitable organization, non-profit, and not-for-profit organization.

### **Significance**

Planning and hosting a major fundraising event is an incredibly demanding endeavour. Staff and volunteers typically have limited time available to dedicate towards fundraising efforts. This shortage can result in a chaotic struggle to gather the resources necessary for holding a

major fundraiser. Because of the hurried scramble that is often the nature of planning major fundraisers, the outcomes are frequently not as successful as they might have been if more time could have been devoted to the task. Unfortunately, while many organizations rely heavily on such fundraisers in order to continue providing the community services that they are passionate about, the time needed to plan them well is not available in many cases. It is intended that this fundraising guide will significantly decrease the time and energy required for successful planning, and therefore reduce the pressure experienced by staff and volunteers in their efforts towards fundraising. Ultimately, this guide will enable organizations to hold more successful fundraising events with a higher level of staff and volunteer satisfaction.

### **Background and Personal Location**

The Community Counselling Centre (CCC) is a non-profit organization that was started in 2009 with the intent of providing a centre for Masters level counselling students to complete their practicum requirements as well as to provide the community of Prince George with low-barrier, low-cost counselling services. At the beginning stages of the CCC the local university provided a physical space and funding for one paid position (the CCC director) from 2009 to 2015. The local health authority has provided funding for the one paid position since 2015, but a new rental location was required. This means fundraising efforts are now a necessity. The CCC has only one paid position, the director, and all other counsellors are unpaid students who cycle through the CCC on practicum placements which can be as short as 4 months. This makes having a cohesive fundraising effort extremely challenging. It is hoped that this fundraising guide will significantly lessen the difficulty of the task.

In 2019, myself (a CCC student counsellor at the time) and a past CCC student counsellor took on the task of planning and implementing a major fundraising event. Having minimal



experience in planning fundraising events and with no guidelines to work from, this was an enormous task. It was only due to our appreciation for what the CCC had given us, our ability to work well together, and the incredible support we received from a wonderful member of the community that we were able to successfully plan and host the “CCC’s 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ball.” It was from the experience garnered through the planning and implementation of that particular event that this guide to planning fundraising events was born.

### **Overview**

The fundraising guide includes a series of checklists and numerous accompanying documents outlining in detail the various steps necessary for planning and hosting a major fundraising dinner. Accompanying documents include items such as templates for donation request letters and considerations for choosing a venue. The timeline of this guide is broken down into six sections with one checklist for each section: Initial planning (6-9 months before event), Further Planning & Publicity (3-5 months before event), Crunch Time! (1-2 months before event), One Week Until Event Day, Event Day, and Follow-Up (up to 1 month following event).

## Chapter 2: A Brief Literature Review

Fundraising is often a major part of working or volunteering for charities and non-profit organizations but is rarely given the allocation of time and resources that are needed. Despite being a foundational aspect to a charity's ability to thrive, fundraising is often seen as one of the most stressful aspects of working or volunteering at a charity. This stress is one of the main reasons for the fundraising guide associated with this literature review. According to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) (2012), both non-profits and charities largely depend on monetary donations as their primary source of funds. These funds allow the work and vision of the charity to be carried out and expanded on. The following pages of this literature review are divided into two sections. The first provides a brief overview of the history and organization of charities in Canada, trends in Canadians' support of charities, and the differences between charities and non-profits. The second section summarizes (a) some brief findings on the longevity of a volunteer's commitment to an organization and (b) the struggle for funding and the sacrifices incurred through operating under constant pressure from insufficient or unreliable funding.

### **History, Organization, and Support of Charities in Canada**

**Community Chests.** In her book *Contributing Citizens: Modern Charitable Fundraising and the Making of the Welfare State, 1920-66*, Shirley Tillotson (2014) portrays the development of charitable work in Canada and the United States as a continuous interplay between charitable organizations and government taxation. According to Tillotson, Community Chests were a defining feature of the modernization of charities in Canada. The first Community Chest organization was founded in 1913 in Cleveland, Ohio and developed into the long standing and well-known organization, United Way (United Way, 2020). When Charles Darrow created the board game "Monopoly," there was no need for him to explain the Community Chest space on

the board since by the time the game was created in 1934, nearly 400 American cities and every major Canadian city had a Community Chest organization (Tillotson, 2014). These Community Chests advocated for local charities and helped them obtain funding. They were foundational to the innovative nature of charities in the mid 1900's and were a uniting factor among charities across the United States and Canada. Community Chests increased the efficiency of charitable work as a whole through efforts such as making one common and precise funding appeal each year. They streamlined the fundraising process by holding one large fundraising campaign, known generally as the Red Feather Appeal. These campaigns raised funds on behalf of all local charities rather than each charity organizing their own individual campaigns and door to door canvassing (Tillotson, 2014).

With the first welfare federations beginning just before World War I in the United States and just afterwards in Canada, by 1958 they were well integrated into Canada's Welfare system. During World War II, a model of citizen obligation that the Community Chests organizations had implemented in the 1920's and 30's was introduced into the Canadian tax system. In addition to their citizen obligation model, Community Chest campaigns worked to change the public's perception of donating from one of obligation to specific causes to one of general civic duty (Tillotson, 2014).

Today, the concept of the community chest is still widely in use. Many are now familiar with the organization, United Way, or in Canada, United Way Centraide, which has been known in the past by many names including Community Chest, United Appeal, and Red Feather (United Way Centraide, n.d.). While active at the national level, United Way Centraide emphasizes local involvement. Even here in Northern British Columbia, the support from United Way Centraide among charities is powerful. CanadaHelps is another example of an organization that has taken

the Community Chest approach of creating an umbrella organization that facilitates the fundraising efforts of every registered charity in Canada. However, unlike the original model of Community Chests, which attempted to evenly distribute the funding received, CanadaHelps allows individual supporters to learn about and donate to any charity they wish (CanadaHelps, 2020). Organizations like CanadaHelps also take some of the administrative strain off individual charities by providing donors with tax receipts on behalf of the individual charities.

**Trends in supporting charities.** Another area of interest relating to the development and structure of charities and non-profits is that of the differing roles of men and women. Tillotson (2014) notes that “literature shows that both public and private agencies relied on and helped to reinforce a breadwinner/housewife division of labour in family welfare” (p. 10). She goes on to outline such gender normative roles in the world of social work and charity with the field being initially dominated by women in the 1910’s. Although it became increasingly mixed by the 1950’s, roles remained divided with men taking administrative roles and women taking staff positions. Today, however, we see that women and men vary only slightly in their tendency to volunteer in Canada (Turcotte, 2015).

In 2015, Statistics Canada released a review of volunteering and charitable giving in Canada (Turcotte, 2015). They looked primarily at trends in 2013 and compared those numbers with trends seen in 2004, 2007, and 2010. Compiled data shows several encouraging findings including 82% of Canadians contributing financially to charitable or non-profit organizations and a 14% increase in amount donated by Canadians in 2013 compared to 2010. While these findings seem positive overall, there are some nuances that may indicate funding challenges for some charities and non-profits. For example, although the total amount donated increased between 2010 and 2013, the total number of people who donated decreased by 2% over the same time

period. While 2% may especially influential, if the number of supporters continues to decline over the next few years, this could mean fewer organizations receiving all the funds and the competitive nature of organizations seeking funds may become even greater. Additionally, findings show that the average age of donors is increasing. It makes sense that as the average age of the population increases, so will the average age of donors. However, this could lead to a continued reduction in the size of the donor pool for organizations which attract a younger demographic of donors. It could also lead to an increased struggle to find funding when that large group of donors enters retirement and has less discretionary resources available for charitable support.

**Organizational lifecycles.** While Tillotson (2014) looks broadly at the history of charitable organizations in Canada, authors Kimberlin et al. (2011) narrow their focus to the exploration of organizational histories and financial trends of twelve individual organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area. Organizations were interviewed and their records were analyzed in order for researchers to develop a comprehensive interpretation of the organizational history of each of the twelve non-profit organizations. Financial data was also collected in order to develop financial trend lines for each organization. As part of their literature review, the authors summarize several organizational lifecycle models, for example, Greiner's five phase business lifecycle framework and Stevens' six stage model specific to non-profits (Greiner, 1998, as cited by Kimberlin et al., 2011; Stevens, 2001, as cited by Kimberlin et al., 2011). For example, Stevens' model includes the stages: idea, start-up, growth, maturity, decline, and turnaround. A key element of these lifecycles is that each stage, "culminates in a crisis that leads to the next stage" (Kimberlin et al., 2011, p. 8). In summary, an organization's ability to survive during

crisis and then move into the next stage of growth is founded in the organization's level of resilience.

**Non-profit VS charity.** The work and funding of charities today are still very much linked to taxes in Canada. In fact, taxes are one of the primary ways in which charities differ from non-profits. Although non-profits gain several benefits through becoming incorporated, non-profit organizations are not required to incorporate in Canada (Corporation Centre, n.d.). Organizations are, however, required to go through a registration process should they wish to become a charity and there are several reasons to do so (Canada Revenue Agency [CRA], 2012). One of the primary reasons an organization may wish to become a registered charity is to become qualified to provide financial supporters with tax receipts. The most common way of qualifying to be able to issue official donation receipts is by becoming a registered charity (CRA, 2012). The CRA lays out a four step process encouraging organizations in Canada that wish to become registered charities to (a) "make an informed decision about becoming a registered charity," (b) "set up [an] organization before applying for registration," (c) "apply for registration," and (d) "gain an understanding of the application review process" (CRA, 2019, n.p.). Although these steps seem simple, the process can be very complicated and time consuming.

In addition to being able to issue tax receipts, becoming a registered charity is often essential to the fundraising efforts of an organization as donors, especially large companies, often require the status of registered charity before they will offer financial support. Having the status of a registered charity also opens up opportunities for organizations to apply for government grants available only for registered charities. Because the CRA application process can take so long (sometimes more than a year from start to finish!) organizations often rely on

major fundraising events to sustain them until they are eligible for the extra funding available through becoming a registered charity.

### **Working and Volunteering for Charities**

Charities and non-profits can be incredibly challenging workplaces. There are many types of challenges with a myriad of underlying causes staff and volunteers face. Funding is one of the overarching challenges of many charities. Funding challenges are often intertwined with the work carried out by a charity's employees and volunteers and contribute to the workplace environment and even the well-being of staff and volunteers.

**Volunteer experience and commitment.** In their work on "Sustained Helping without Obligation," Omoto and Snyder (1995) describe the development of their "conceptual analysis that identifies three stages of the volunteer process: antecedents, experiences, and consequences" (p. 672). Although Omoto and Snyder's research focuses primarily on AIDS volunteerism, the concepts laid out in their work are broad and applicable to volunteerism in general. The first stage of their volunteer process, antecedents, is broken down into three sub-sections:

(a) personality attributes that may dispose some people to become involved in helping relationships, that is, a constellation of traits that may be said to constitute a helping disposition; (b) personal and social needs and motivations that may prompt some people to seek out and become involved in volunteer work and that may sustain their volunteer efforts over time; (c) features of people's life circumstances that create supportive social climates for them to engage in volunteer work, such as normative influences and social support provided by friends, family, and coworkers. (p. 672)

The second stage, volunteer experiences, consists of two central concepts: satisfaction and organizational integration. In other words, Omoto and Snyder suggest that greater satisfaction and greater involvement with the organization may lead to sustained volunteerism.

Finally, the third stage is consequences of volunteerism. The primary consequence Omoto and Snyder focus on is length of volunteer commitment. Factors that influence the length of commitment made by a volunteer are incredibly broad and interconnected with the volunteer's motivations (stage one) and experiences (stage two) of volunteering. Similarly, in their 2007 research on "Volunteering for Charity," Boezeman and Ellemers found support for their hypotheses that (a) a volunteer's pride and respect for the organization would be directly and positively associated with their commitment to the organization and (b) a volunteer's "pride and respect would be indirectly and positively associated with cooperative intent on behalf of the volunteer organization through organizational commitment" (p. 776). The concept of having pride in the organization for which an individual works or volunteers for was also mentioned as a foundational motivating factor in an article by Shaw and Allen (2006) on the dynamics of funding relationships.

Experiences that affect the longevity of a volunteer's commitment may involve and be influenced by fundraising. The need for fundraising within a non-profit may influence an individual's volunteer experience in a variety of ways. For example, if an organization is effective in its fundraising efforts and can successfully carry out its mission, a volunteer may experience a great deal of satisfaction with the work they are a part of. However, if the opposite is true, and an organization struggles to find the funds to carry out its goals, volunteers may struggle to find satisfaction since the work they want take part in is restricted financially. As a consequence, volunteers may feel pressured to become part of fundraising efforts when their



motivations for being part of the volunteer effort may have little to do with fundraising. This is just a small sampling of the many ways an organization's need for funds may impact the longevity of a volunteer's commitment.

**Funding and sacrifice.** While an organization's financial stability may affect a volunteer's commitment to the organization, funding may also dictate the quality and type of work volunteers are expected or feel obligated to do. In his article, "Being "Business-Like" in a Nonprofit Organization," Raymond Dart (2004) takes an in depth look at one specific non-profit organization that focuses on counselling and interpersonal social support. Within a few years this organization lost a large portion of its government funding and was forced to become more business-like. Dart explores the business-like conduct of the organization in the ways it sought revenue generation. One of the ways this organization brought in funding was through their EAP clientele. Another was through fee for service debt management programs. Because of resource scarcity in the organization, most of the counsellors' time was taken up with these revenue generating services. However, those services that did not generate revenue and had much less counsellor time devoted to them were the services that counsellors were most passionate about and described as significant community needs. Because of financial demands and lack of funding, the organization was not able to devote as much focus to the services it was most passionate about. The manager was quoted as saying, "If my staff were adequately paid, I'd chuck this out the window in a second... With our staff so poorly paid in these kinds of nonprofit agencies, it was the only way my staff had of making some extra bucks a year" (Dart, 2004, p. 298). Though not their initial passion, staff recognized that these revenue generating services were essential, saying, "Ultimately, that's the goal . . . to make sure the service is available, that we are finding those people who need help. . . If the revenue isn't there, then the service isn't

available” (Dart, 2004, p. 298). This is a sentiment that every charity and non-profit is likely very much aware of; this is where the fundraising guide associated with this literature review comes into play. It is hoped that the guide will play an influential role in providing community organizations with efficient ways of bringing in funds that allow them to continue offering the low revenue-accruing services they provide to their communities. Although the organization studied by Dart above found a way to keep its doors open, it was at the expense of the services they most desired to provide. It is hoped that this project will help other organizations avoid being forced to take a similar route.

### **Chapter 3: Project Plan**

This project takes the form of a step-by-step guide to planning and implementing a major fundraising event. The guide consists of six phases: (a) Initial Planning; (b) Further Planning & Publicity; (c) Crunch Time; (d) Event Day; (e) Follow-Up. Each phase consists of a basic summary checklist with numerous appendices expanding on the tasks seen in the checklists. The appendices are separate from the summary checklists to allow event organizers to see the details of certain tasks when they are ready for them while preventing those details from cluttering the at-a-glance summary that the checklists provide. Appendices include resources such as sample donation request letters, suggestions for information to include on tickets and posters, and a list of suggested event day volunteers.

Finally, it is intended that the guide will allow fundraising sub-committees to be responsible for separate phases while still producing a cohesive event. This is to avoid one person having to take on the enormous responsibility of being directly involved in every step of the event planning process. While one or two people will likely still need to oversee the planning and implementation, it is expected that the guide will prevent event planning from overwhelming

the other goals and responsibilities of event coordinators. In other words, it should make the task of delegating easy!

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**Chapter 4:**  
**A Practical Guide to Planning Fundraising Events for Community Based Non-Profit**  
**Counselling Services**

**A Practical Guide to**

# **Planning Fundraising Events**

**For Community Based  
Non-Profit Counselling Services**

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## Table of Contents

---

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Table of Contents .....                 | 24 |
| How This Guide Works .....              | 27 |
| Initial Planning.....                   | 28 |
| Choose a Venue .....                    | 28 |
| Catering.....                           | 29 |
| Entertainment.....                      | 29 |
| Further Planning & Publicity .....      | 31 |
| Theme .....                             | 31 |
| Decorating.....                         | 31 |
| Make Some Important Decisions!.....     | 31 |
| Publicity & Ticket Sales.....           | 32 |
| Sponsorship.....                        | 33 |
| Preparation for Donation Requests ..... | 34 |
| Schedule of Events .....                | 34 |
| Crunch Time!.....                       | 35 |
| Ticket Sales & Invites.....             | 35 |
| Donations .....                         | 35 |
| Publicity.....                          | 36 |
| Event-Day Volunteers .....              | 36 |
| Random To-Do's.....                     | 36 |



|  |    |
|--|----|
| 1 Week Before Event.....                               | 38 |
| Donations .....  | 38 |
| Venue/Catering .....                                   | 38 |
| To-Do.....   | 38 |
| Stuff to Bring .....                                   | 39 |
| Event Day! .....                                       | 41 |
| Pre-Event To-Do .....                                  | 41 |
| During Event.....                                      | 41 |
| Follow Up .....  | 42 |
| Appendix 1: Venue .....                                | 43 |
| Appendix 2: Entertainment.....                         | 44 |
| Appendix 3: Decorations, Set Up, & Take down .....     | 47 |
| Appendix 4: Fundraising During Your Event.....         | 48 |
| Appendix 5: Ticket Sales.....                          | 51 |
| Appendix 6.1: Creating Tickets.....                    | 52 |
| Appendix 6.2: Ticket Sales Sign Out Sheet .....        | 53 |
| Appendix 6.3: Ticket Sales Tracking Sheets.....        | 54 |
| Appendix 7: Creating Posters .....                     | 55 |
| Appendix 8: Creating Save the Date Cards.....          | 56 |
| Appendix 9.1: Sample Title Sponsor Letter .....        | 57 |
| Appendix 9.2: Sample Sponsor Letter (All levels) ..... | 58 |
| Appendix 9.3: Another Sample Sponsor Letter .....      | 60 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Appendix 10: Donation Request Letter.....        | 61 |
| Appendix 11: Potential Silent Auction Items..... | 62 |
| Appendix 12: Sample Event Schedule .....         | 63 |
| Appendix 13: Volunteer List.....                 | 64 |
| Appendix 14: Items to Bring on Event Day.....    | 65 |
| Appendix 15: Silent Auction Bid Sheet.....       | 66 |
| Appendix 16: Payment.....                        | 67 |
| Appendix 17: Press Release Sample.....           | 68 |

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## How This Guide Works

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This guide was designed to help non-profit and charity organizations plan and implement major fundraising events. The suggestions in this guide are based on the things that went well and areas that could have been improved in organizing and implementing a fundraising event I coordinated in 2019.

This guide is broken into six main sections:

1. Initial planning: 6-9 months before event
2. Further Planning & Publicity: 3-5 months before event
3. Crunch Time! 1-2 months before event
4. One Week Until Event Day!
5. Event Day
6. Follow-Up: Up to 1 month following event

Each section consists of a checklist of the tasks to be completed in that time block. Throughout each checklist, reference is made to multiple appendices that breakdown tasks and provide suggestions related to some of those tasks. In addition, appendices include information such as a sample event schedule and donation request letter templates.

Within the checklists several words, titles, or phrases are bolded and highlighted in teal. Each of these highlights corresponds to an appendix. The number associated with the corresponding appendix can be found in the footnotes of each page.

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## Initial Planning: 6-9 Months Before Event

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### Choose a Venue

- Ensure the venue's capacity is sufficient for your event.
- Ensure **venue**<sup>1</sup> is equipped with:
  - WIFI – you may need WIFI or data to use a device for taking payments.
  - Basic sound/light equipment – your entertainment may have their own, but you won't know until you confirm them.
  - Stage – Not necessarily required but you may decide you want one depending on your entertainment.
- Find out if venue requires you use their catering.
- Find out if venue does their own decorating.
  - Having a venue who does their own decorating will save so many hours and hugely cut down on the number of volunteers you need.
  - If venue does not do the decorating, we suggest you find a decorator to donate their time and decorations.
- Obtain complete contract from the venue that includes:
  - What they provide: catering, bartender, decorating, centre pieces, chairs, tables, tablecloths, extra tables for silent auction and displays
  - Insurance & licenses
  - Cancellation Policy
  - Cost breakdown:
    - Venue rental
    - Cost per meal

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1

- Deposit
- Amount your organization receives from drink sales
- Equipment rental
- Date(s) payment is expected.
- Times you have access to the venue.
  - Set up/take down times.
  - Earliest start/latest possible end times for event.

## Catering

- Book Catering (venue may require that you use their catering).
- Check if there are vegetarian/gluten free meal options (guests will ask!).

## Entertainment

- Decide if you are giving entertainers (and their plus ones) complimentary meals.
  - Options: full complimentary, at cost ticket, full ticket cost.
- Book **Entertainment**<sup>2</sup>
  - MC
  - Speakers (e.g. Organization Director, community members who have been positively affected etc.)
  - DJ
  - Photographer
  - Main event (dancers, performance, magic show etc.)
  - Live Music
- Keep list of contact information.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 2

- Phone number – for planning purposes.
- Email – to send out event schedule etc.
- Address – to send thank you cards to after event.
- Have entertainment confirm whether they are bringing a plus one.

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## Further Planning & Publicity: 3-5 Months Before Event

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### Theme

Come up with your theme/name/catchy phrase/colours/logo. Maintain the same feel throughout all publicity material.

### Decorating (Skip if venue does their own decorating)

- Put together a **decorating**<sup>3</sup> team.
- Decorating is a huge job!
  - This team should not have any other responsibilities during event set up time besides decorating and setting up the event space .

### Make Some Important Decisions!

- Decide on the ways you will **raise money**<sup>4</sup> during your event.
- Decide how you will sell **tickets**<sup>5</sup>. You may want to use more than one of the following options:
- Sell tickets through an online ticketing platform.
  - Sell tickets on your organization's website with an online payment system.
  - Sell tickets at your organization.
  - Have members of your organization sell tickets.
- Decide what forms of payment/donations you will accept during your event.
- Cash, card, cheque

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 3

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 4

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 5

- Although it might sound like an easy solution to not accept cash, many guests specifically take out cash to spend at fundraising events. People are also more likely to spend money if they have/can pay in cash!
- See [Appendix 16](#)<sup>6</sup> for a suggestion on collecting payment and donations.

## Publicity & Ticket Sales

Ask a printing business if they will sponsor the printing. Sometimes local printing businesses will donate printed materials if you include a message like “printed and donated by [name of printing business]” on the print items.

Create & print [tickets](#)<sup>7</sup> (find free ticket, poster, & invitation templates online) .

Create & print [posters](#).<sup>8</sup>

Create & print [Save The Date](#)<sup>9</sup> cards.

Give Save the Date cards to past guests and specific community members you hope will attend (E.g. mayor, school board, etc.).

If you decide to have tickets sold by members of your organization, print a [“sign-out” sheet](#)<sup>10</sup> to keep track of who takes tickets.

Print [Ticket Sales Tracking Sheet](#)<sup>11</sup> to ensure you get all the guest information you need.

Create an online ticket sales page.

- Be sure you are able to gather contact info for the ticket purchaser via the ticket sales site.
- If possible, include a section with your online ticket sales so the purchaser can input names of each guest they have purchased a ticket for. See [Appendix 6.3](#) for info that is helpful to have from guests.

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 16

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix 6.1

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix 7

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 8

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix 6.2

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix 6.3



- Create social media event page(s) with link to online ticket sales site.
- Put event with link to ticket sales on your organization’s website or sell tickets directly from your website.
- Invite other like-minded or supportive agencies you want to be there.
- Keep track of each ticket sold! Make sure you have the name of every guest so that when they forget their tickets you can check them off the guest list. See [Appendix 6.3](#).
  - Ticket purchasers don’t always know right away who they will give all their tickets to. You may need to follow up with them closer to event day to get the names of each guest.

## Sponsorship

- Edit the **“Event Sponsor” letters**<sup>12</sup> to suit your event.
  - Consider adding a statement like, “we will follow-up with you in 2 weeks’ time.”
- Come up with 5-10 individuals/groups/companies who may want to sponsor the event.
  - It may be helpful to have someone from your organization who has previously connected with these people to connect with them again this year.
  - It may be difficult to receive major financial support if your organization is not a registered charitable organization.
- Deliver **event sponsor letters**<sup>13</sup> along with **Save the Date cards**.<sup>14</sup>
- Follow up with those you gave sponsorship request letters to.

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<sup>12</sup> See Appendix 9.1 & 9.2

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix 9.1 & 9.2

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix 8

## Preparation for Donation Requests

- Edit the **Silent Auction Donation Request Letter**<sup>15</sup> template to suit your event.
- Print at least 30 Silent Auction Donation Request Letters.
- See list of **possible silent auction items**<sup>16</sup> for ideas on who to give letters to.

## Schedule of Events

- Create a detailed **schedule of events**<sup>17</sup>. Continue to adjust this schedule as you get closer to event day.
  - It may be helpful to have a basic schedule for the majority of your volunteers and a detailed schedule for your MC and event coordinators.

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<sup>15</sup> See Appendix 10

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix 11

<sup>17</sup> See Appendix 12

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## Crunch Time!

### 1-2 Months Before Event

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#### Ticket Sales & Invites

- Follow up with the people you gave Save the Date cards to during the “Further Planning & Publicity” block, above. Ask directly if they would like to purchase tickets.
- Make ticket sales available however you chose in the previously planning block to do so.
- If you have individual members of your organization sell tickets:
  - Ensure you **keep track**<sup>18</sup> of who takes tickets to sell.
  - Ensure people selling tickets are getting names of each person who plans to attend. If someone buys a whole table, you still need individual’s names so you can check them in at the door if they don’t bring their **tickets**.<sup>19</sup>
  - If people/companies are buying a whole table, make sure you get the correct name for their reserved table sign.
- KEEP TRACK OF TICKET SALES!** No matter how you have chosen to sell tickets, keep track of sales!

#### Donations

- \*\* Do this early!** Have volunteers take donation request letters (edited and printed during “3-5 months before event” block) to **stores & businesses** around town.<sup>20</sup>
- Designate a space to store donations until event day.
- Be ready to send volunteers out to collect donations when businesses call.
- Keep track of value of items donated (need for applying for gaming license).

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<sup>18</sup> See Appendix 6.2

<sup>19</sup> See Appendix 6.3

<sup>20</sup> See Appendix 11

## Publicity

- Have volunteers put **posters**<sup>21</sup> up around town.
  - Putting up posters may seem like an unnecessary task, especially if you anticipate most of your ticket sales coming from in person sales. However, posters provide an opportunity for companies to gain advertising via those posters and are therefore a good incentive for gaining event sponsors.
- Go to radio stations and ask if they will promote the event.
- Share your social media event (created during the “3-5 months before event” block).
  - Try to have lots of different people share once per week on as many community pages as possible.
- Share with newspapers, TV, and event pages specific to your city.

## Event-Day Volunteers

- Ask **volunteers**<sup>22</sup> to sign up for event day tasks.

## Random To-Do's

- Apply for gaming license \*\* BC requires this at least 10 days before event\*\**
- Edit/Update your **event schedule**<sup>23</sup> created in the previous planning block.
- Touch base with **entertainment**<sup>24</sup> and send them a copy of your event schedule.
- Create a welcome sign if your venue does not have one – e.g. use a large picture frame, black poster board, and gold sharpie to make an eye-catching welcome sign.
- Start gathering items you will need on event day. See Appendix 14 for a **suggested list**<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> See Appendix 7

<sup>22</sup> See Appendix 13

<sup>23</sup> See Appendix 12

<sup>24</sup> See Appendix 2

<sup>25</sup> See Appendix 14

2 weeks before event-day, follow up with ticket purchasers who did not provide names of each guest at the time of purchase. You will need every guest's name to have a complete guest list for checking guests in at the door (specifically if they purchased tickets online or forget their physical ticket).

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## 1 Week Before Event

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### Donations

- Go through silent auction/raffle donations and make them look pretty.
  - You may have to redistribute or combine some donations.
- Type item information into template for [Silent Auction Bid Sheets](#)<sup>26</sup>
  - It will take some time deciding how much to make your starting bids and which items you want to provide the approximate value for (e.g. Some items may be unexpectedly high in value. You may want to note the value of such items).
- Type up short descriptions for each raffle item.
- If venue will allow it, take silent auction/raffle items to venue the day before the event.
  - It is a surprising amount of work getting them all set up. They also take up A LOT of space!

### Venue/Catering

- Send final attendee numbers to venue/catering.
  - If you plan to continue selling tickets up until event-day, you may want to inflate numbers (unless you have already sold to capacity). Be aware you may end up paying for unsold meals.

### To-Do

- Send day-of volunteers a detailed schedule
- Touch base with entertainment
- Print guest list
- Print reserved table signs

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<sup>26</sup> See Appendix 15

Follow up with ticket purchasers who were unable to provide names of each ticket holder at the time of purchase. It is so helpful for you to have the names of *each* guest who will attend.

### **Stuff to Bring<sup>27</sup> – Do not wait till event day to gather these things!**

- Fanny pack for 50/50 seller
- Device for taking (with charging cord!)
- Lots of pens for silent auction bid sheets
- Bowls for raffle tickets
- Art easels for silent auction artwork & welcome sign (venue may have some you can use)
- Sponsorship Catalogues (at least 2 per table)
- 50/50 tickets
- Raffle tickets (legally must be a different colour than 50/50 tickets)
- Clip boards for greeters
- Supplies for information booth (business cards, rack cards, etc.)
- Stands to hold reserved table signs
- Lamp for info table. It can get really dark in event spaces! You'll need to be able to see when charging people for their silent auction items
- Cash box or a payment **filing box**<sup>28</sup>
- Gather items for a "just in case" box
  - Scissors
  - Tape
  - String/twine
  - Extra pens

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<sup>27</sup> See Appendix 14 for a copy of this list

<sup>28</sup> See Appendix 16

- Extra silent auction/raffle sheets for last minute donations
- Extra clip boards in case you have to hang a silent auction bid sheet



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## Event Day!

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### Pre-Event To-Do

- Float (if you are taking cash)
- Flowers for people who helped a lot
- Put one raffle ticket at each place setting (if raffle is part of your event)
- Set up info table
- Put place cards/reserved table signs on tables
- Set up photo booth or other activity stations
- Put up balloons outside (or other eye-catching event markers!)
- Set up a welcome sign
- Charge your electronic payment device

### During Event

- Give each volunteer a detailed schedule including where they should be & when.
- Ensure volunteers know the goals of your event so when they are talking to guests, they have the basic information. For example, your goals may be to (1) raise awareness about your organization and (2) raise enough money to complete a building renovation.
- Continually check in with your MC to ensure things are on schedule and they know what is coming next.
- Once silent auction winners are announced people will come to collect their items right away. Be ready! Depending how you are taking payment, consider having guests pay for their item before receiving it. You may want to have volunteers as runners to find each guest's silent auction items as the guest pays.

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## Follow Up

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- Finalize \$ and give to whoever is in charge of finances at your organization.
  - Finalizing spread sheet, cheque to venue/catering/shuttle, etc.
- Send a **press release**<sup>29</sup> to your local paper, send out through your organization's newsletter, post to your Facebook event page etc.
- Send photo link to guests/post photos if you have permission from guests.
- Write thank-you cards to people who donated (silent auction, day-of donations, etc.) and people who gave their time (entertainment, MC, speeches).
  - You can use a similar message as the one in your press release. Just edit it to make it personal!
- Send out tax receipts.

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<sup>29</sup> See Appendix 17

## **Appendix 1: Venue**

While the venue checklist (under the section, “6-9 Months Before Event”) includes most of what you need in order to choose a venue and clarify with venue staff, the following provides some insight into how to look for and work with a venue.

### **Things to Look for in a Good Venue**

- They will waive the rental fee if the facility rental is for a fundraiser or if there is a certain amount of seat sales for catering
- They have their own decorations and do all the decorating
- They do all the set-up of tables, chairs etc. It’s really nice if all you have to do is bring your silent auction items and whatever else is yours for the event
- They will give you time the night before or early on event day to bring your silent auction items
- They have WIFI and basic sound equipment (microphones, speakers etc.)
- They have sufficient washroom facilities
- They donate a portion from drink sales to the non-profit

### **Recommendations for Working with Venues**

- Look into multiple venue options; find out if they will seat enough people for the event size you’re planning and if they do their own decorating. If yes to both of these, consider booking them!
- Try to get as many details sorted out as possible in your first meeting. And meet with them early!
- Depending on what you have in terms of entertainment, ask the venue to leave the stage free of decorations
- Get a complete invoice early so you know what to expect in terms of upcoming payments, donations from drink sales etc.

## **Appendix 2: Entertainment**

In this fundraising guide, entertainment refers to roles such as speakers, MC, DJ, and a main event such as dancers, or magicians, or comedians. There are many reasons for being very intentional with the entertainment you decide to have at your event. Entertainment can help guests feel more connected to your organization or it can put people off. Entertainment can be part of communicating the message you want to send your guests and can be very influential in creating an atmosphere that encourages guests to support your organization.

### **Tell Your Guests a Story**

Successful fundraising events often have a theme or story that is told throughout the event. If that story is one that pulls at heartstrings and draws people into the vision of the organization, the your fundraising efforts will be more successful. That being said, there is material that evokes emotion and material that is potentially triggering. Get the balance right!

You can begin to tell this story through your entertainment. For example, you may decide you want to tell the story of personal change/growth throughout the night. Have your speakers and MC continually refer to this concept in their stories and in their dreams for the organization.

### **Include the Community**

Including community members in your program, especially if they are well known in the community, can give your guests a greater sense of connection to your organization. For example, you could do this by having the mayor give an opening welcome or by having a well-known radio personality take the role of MC.

### **Roles You May Want to Include**

#### **Speakers**

- Director of your organization
- Organization volunteer/member
- Community member who has had a positive experience

## **MC**

- This role is one of the most important roles of the night! It is important to have someone who knows your organization and who is spontaneous and engaging enough to get guests excited about whatever is going on in the moment. This person also needs to be organized enough to keep things relatively on schedule.
- The MC will need to constantly communicate with the event coordinator throughout the night.

## **DJ**

- Important for the lulls in the program. While lulls are valuable opportunities for guests to check out your silent auction, info booth, and buying 50/50 tickets, you don't want those lulls to be silent!

## **Live Music**

- For example, have a live jazz piano musician play during dinner. This adds to the atmosphere of the event and helps make the whole night feel more glamorous.

## **Photography**

- Ensure you have an easy way to give guests access to the photos they have taken.
- Consider having guests sign a consent saying you can post photos of them on social media and/or on a site where all event guests have access to the photos.
- Make sure you have a fun/attractive backdrop! Even just a sparkly gold curtain makes a fun backdrop. You might also want props like funny hats and feather boas.

## **Main Event (e.g. magician, dancers etc.)**

- Highly recommend *not* bringing in a comedian! While comedians *can* brighten up the atmosphere of an event, it can be very stressful hoping that inappropriate or discriminatory jokes would not be made. Even if you talk to them ahead of time about the kind of jokes they will tell, once they get on stage it is out of your control.

## **Sound/Lighting Technician**

- DJ's can be a great point person for taking responsibility of all the sound and lighting. You do not want your event organizers to be scrambling to fix IT problems the day of your event! They will have other things to worry about!

- If you're DJ is unable to handle all sound/lighting tasks, consider bringing in someone else who is competent to do the job.

**Other Entertainment**

- Be creative!
- Some examples include: a caricature artist, a sommelier, a dance instructor etc.

### **Appendix 3: Decorations, Set Up, & Take down**

If you can find a venue that does their own decorating, set up, and take down it will make your event day much easier. If not, you will need to come up with your own decorating scheme and a team to set up and take down.

#### **Finding Decorations**

- If possible, find a decorations company who is willing to donate the rental of decorations for your event. You may be able to find someone who decorates for weddings who is willing to do this for your organization. They may even be willing to donate their time and help you do the decorating!
- Consider buying decorations if this is an event you are planning to host for years to come.
  - Buy simple items that are easy to dress up in different ways so your event doesn't look identical year to year.

#### **Other Equipment**

- You may need to rent or borrow other equipment such as:
  - Chairs, tables (both for dinner and for silent auction etc.)
  - Tablecloths (for dinner, silent auction, information tables – bring extra!)
  - Speakers
  - Portable stage
  - Lighting

#### **Set Up/Take Down Teams**

- If your organization is responsible for the decorating, set up, and take down, create one or two teams who are assigned to this role. Make sure these teams are familiar with where to pick up and return decorations and equipment.

### **Appendix 4: Fundraising During Your Event**

There are several ways you can raise money during your event. Below is a list of some of these ways. Be creative! There are so many ways you can encourage guests to contribute financially!

#### **Silent and/or Live Auction**

- Major airlines trip (many donate flight/getaway packages to charities!)
- Outing with a well-known member of your community/organization
- Wine wall: Guests donate a bottle of their favourite wine in the weeks leading up to the event
  - Option 1: Bottles are all on display and guests bid on the entire wine wall
  - Option 2: Bottles are displayed but labels are hidden. Guests pay a given amount, maybe \$25, to choose a “surprise wine”
- Year’s membership to local gym
- Fun excursion packs
- Helicopter or hot air balloon rides
- Find many more ideas online!
- \*Do not be afraid to withhold a donated item from your silent auction if it is not at the quality you are aiming for.

#### **Auction off first few tables to go for buffet**

People know how long it can take to wait their turn to get in line for buffets! Most are also willing to chip in a little extra in a little extra in order to skip the line!

#### **50/50**

Make sure you get your gaming license in at least 10 days before event!

- See Appendix 13 for event day volunteers and what you will need for 50/50.



### **Just Ask!**

One way to bring in donations is to just ask. Your MC can be a huge help in this area. They can get guests excited about giving and remind them that they came to support your organization. One prompt they can give would be something like, "I've seen the silent auction sheets and know that many of you with money in your pockets haven't got to spend it yet! How about donating now?!"

It can also be helpful to come up with specific things you need donations for, like the funds to be able to provide pro-bono counselling. Your MC might ask guests to donate the funds required for 6 pro-bono counselling sessions. If the specific item you are asking guests to donate towards pulls at the heartstrings, you're likely to have higher levels of donations.

### **Donation Matching**

Donation matching is another great way to increase donations from guests. Having one of your supporters agree ahead of time to match donations up to a certain value or to double donations if they reach a certain amount can increase the appeal for guests to donate. Again, your MC can be an enormous help in promoting this request for donations. Donation matching may be more successful if a running tally of donations is kept throughout the night and announced periodically.

### **Raffle**

Raffle can be really easy to set up and is really fun for guests! If you choose to have raffle items, here are some examples of how you might go about it:

- One way you can do a raffle is to have several raffle items, with a bowl in front of each item for guests to drop their raffle tickets into (make sure guests keep their half of the ticket!). Guests love browsing the items and getting to decide which items to go for
- Helium balloon raffle: This works best and raises more money if you have lots of raffle items. Let's say you have 50 items. Take small pieces of paper numbered 1-50, roll up the papers, put them into balloons (one paper per balloon), fill the balloons with helium

Display your balloons near your info booth. Sell balloons for a specified amount (\$10 each at least!). At a given time, warn guests that balloons will be popped and have guests pop their balloons. Whoever has number 1 inside their balloon gets to choose their raffle item first, number 2 goes second, and so on

- You can always keep it extra simple and have just one or two big raffle items

## Appendix 5: Ticket Sales

Selling tickets and keeping track of sales is one of the most important parts of planning your event. There are a few ways you can go about this.

### Selling Tickets

- Sell physical tickets
  - Create physical tickets through a free online platform
  - Have a local printing shop donate the printing of the tickets
  - Sell tickets at your organization
  - Decide whether or not to have members of your organization take and sell physical tickets
  - Keep track of who takes tickets to sell
  - A bonus of selling physical tickets is that it provides extra opportunities for you to connect personally with guests
  - Ensure those selling tickets collect names of each guest (See Appendix 6.3)
- Sell electronic tickets
  - Create an account with an online ticketing platform
  - Put the link to your online tickets on your organization's website
  - Put the link to your online tickets on your social media event page(s)
  - If possible, have ticket purchasers fill out the names of the guests they are purchasing for when they purchase the tickets (make sure including all guest names is not mandatory for purchasing ticket. Some people won't know who they will give all their tickets to right away)
  - 2 weeks before the event, follow up with those who did not know all guest names at time of purchase
- Keep track of all ticket sales and payment methods in a spreadsheet.
- Create a guest list based on these ticket sales so people who purchase tickets online or who forget their physical tickets can just give their name at the door.

### **Appendix 6.1: Creating Tickets**

You can find many websites with free templates for creating tickets, posters, and invitations. Although these sites often require the user to create an account, signing up and multiple templates are often free. Often, the free templates allow the user to edit all information and download a pdf version of the ticket, poster, or invitation.

If possible, try to maintain the same theme on your tickets, posters, and invites.

It is a good idea to connect with a local printing shop who will donate printed materials. They will likely be willing to do so if you add “printed and donated by [printing company]” on the print items.

#### **Recommendations**

Some points to include on your event tickets:

- Ticket number –very helpful for keeping track of them
- Name of event
- Date, time, location
- Suggested attire (formal, semi-formal etc.)



### Appendix 6.3: Ticket Sales Tracking Sheets

Ticket Costs:

- Individual Tickets: \$50
- Table: \$450

Please be sure to gather the following information when you sell tickets!

| Name of Ticket Purchaser | Phone Number of Ticket Purchaser | Names of Each Guest | # of Individual Tickets Bought | # of Tables Bought | Name for Reserved Table Sign* | Method of Payment |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |
|                          |                                  |                     |                                |                    |                               |                   |

\*Guests only receive a reserved table sign if they purchase a whole table.

## Appendix 7: Creating Posters

You can find many websites with free templates for creating tickets, posters, and invitations. Although these sites often require the user to create an account, signing up and multiple templates are often free. Often, the free templates allow the user to edit all information and download a pdf version of the ticket, poster, or invitation.

If possible, try to maintain the same theme on your tickets, posters, and invites.

It is a good idea to connect with a local printing shop who will donate printed materials. They will likely be willing to do so if you add “printed and donated by [printing company]” on the print items.

### Recommendations

Some points to include on your event posters:

- Name of event
- Date, time, location
- Suggested attire
- A catch phrase – For example, “Celebrate with us! 10 years of counselling services and mental health advocacy.” You could make note of things specific to your organization, such as:
  - Services provided
  - Low cost counselling
  - The community members who benefit
- Where to buy tickets
- Event sponsor names/logos

### **Appendix 8: Creating Save the Date Cards**

You can find many websites with free templates for creating tickets, posters, and invitations. Although these sites often require the user to create an account, signing up and multiple templates are often free. Often, the free templates allow the user to edit all information and download a pdf version of the ticket, poster, or invitation.

If possible, try to maintain the same theme on your tickets, posters, and invites.

It is a good idea to connect with a local printing shop who will donate printed materials. They will likely be willing to do so if you add “printed and donated by [printing company]” on the print items.

#### **Recommendations**

- Include only very basic information on your Save the Dates such as the event name, date, and where to find more details.
- If this is the first year your organization is holding a major fundraising event or doesn't have many supporters yet, you may want to hold off on Save the Date cards until later years when you have those contacts.



### Appendix 9.1: Sample Title Sponsor Letter

[Date of letter being sent/delivered],

Dear [insert name],

It is with great excitement that [our organization] is asking for your participation in our upcoming [fundraising event]. As a non-profit organization we rely on fundraising to continue providing [counselling services and mental health advocacy] to the community of [your community].

Since [year of organization establishment], [our organization] has been providing [low barrier and low-cost counselling services] for [the people your organization serves]. [Our organization] is a unique agency in that it [something unique and meaningful about your organization]. The centre facilitates the improvement of mental health in [our community] through individual clients and by training skillful counsellors to work in the community.

This fall we are hosting our second annual gala dinner on [date of event]. Our [name of event] will include dinner, live entertainment, dancing, silent auction, raffles, and more!

We hope you might be interested in coming aboard as a title sponsor for the event. Your sponsorship would allow us to cover some of the operational costs of the centre and keep our doors open.

Here is what you will receive as a title sponsor for your donation of \$6000:

- Be prominently featured on print media that will be distributed throughout [our community], including posters and tickets
- Tagged in social media posts promoting the event
- Your banner displayed in the event space
- 10 complimentary tickets to the event
- The opportunity to speak onstage during the event
- A plaque featured on [our organization's] sponsorship wall

If you have any questions, please contact:

[Name of event coordinator] (fundraising coordinator): [phone number] OR

[Name of organization director] ([your organization] director): [phone number]

Thank you so much for considering our request, we look forward to hearing from you.

With respect,  
[Your organization]

## Appendix 9.2: Sample Sponsor Letter (All levels)

[Date of letter being sent/delivered],

Hi there!

It is with great excitement that [our organization] is asking for your participation in our upcoming [fundraising event]. As a non-profit organization we rely on fundraising to continue providing [counselling services and mental health advocacy] to the community of [your community].

Since [year of organization establishment], [our organization] has been providing [low barrier and low-cost counselling services] for [the people your organization serves]. [Our organization] is a unique agency in that it [something unique and meaningful about your organization]. The centre facilitates the improvement of mental health in [our community] through individual clients and by training skillful counsellors to work in the community.

This fall we are hosting our second annual gala dinner on [date of event]. Our [name of event] will include dinner, live entertainment, dancing, silent auction, raffles, and more!

We hope you might be interested in coming aboard as a sponsor for the event. Your sponsorship would allow us to cover some of the operational costs of the centre and keep our doors open.

Here is what you would receive for your sponsorship:

### **Title Sponsor \$6000**

- Be prominently featured on print media that will be distributed throughout [our community], including posters and tickets
- Tagged in social media posts promoting the event
- Your banner displayed in the event space
- 10 complimentary tickets to the event
- The opportunity to speak onstage during the event
- A plaque featured on [our organization's] sponsorship wall

### **Gold Sponsor \$3000**

- Be prominently featured on print media that will be distributed throughout [our community], including posters and tickets
- Tagged in social media posts promoting the event
- Your company signage displayed in the event space
- Your name announced at the event
- 4 complimentary tickets to the event
- A plaque featured on [our organization's] sponsorship wall

**Silver Sponsor \$2000**

- Be featured on print media that will be distributed throughout [our community], including posters and tickets
- Tagged in social media posts promoting the event
- Your company signage displayed in the event space
- Your name announced at the event
- 2 complimentary tickets to the event

**Bronze Sponsor \$1000**

- Be mentioned on print media that will be distributed throughout [our community] including posters and tickets
- Tagged in social media posts promoting the event
- Your company signage displayed at the events
- Recognition on our [our organization's] sponsorship wall

If you have any questions, please contact:

[Name of event coordinator] (fundraising coordinator): [phone number] OR

[Name of organization director] ([your organization] director): [phone number]

Thank you so much for considering our request, we look forward to hearing from you.

With respect,

[Your organization]

### Appendix 9.3: Another Sample Sponsor Letter

To Whom It May Concern,

We are seeking your help with the development of [a new initiative of your organization]!

Your Logo

How can you be involved? By becoming a sponsor of the “[Name of Fundraiser” Gala, your business will gain exposure within our organization’s community and beyond. You will be given complimentary tickets to attend the gala and enjoy the evening with a guest or group (depending on your sponsorship level). And, most importantly, you will be investing in a very needed [your organization’s project] that will increase the impact of our organization in the community!

Here are some sponsorship details for you to consider:

|   | Title Sponsor<br>\$5000+        | Community Partner<br>\$1000+ |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Tickets for the gala  | 10<br>(complete table reserved) | 2                            |
| Print acknowledgement in the event program, website, organization newsletter, and posters | ✓                               | ✓                            |
| Verbal acknowledgement at the event   | ✓                               |                              |

**Please call me at [phone number] or email [emailaddress@email.com] to further discuss this sponsorship opportunity. We will be accepting sponsorships until [Date a couple weeks before event].** Your business will be given a tax receipt [if your organization is a registered charity] for your sponsorship.

It is with great excitement that we celebrate [something exciting about your organization, like a decade of service]!

Sincerely,

[Name of Event coordinator, Title, e.g. Fundraising Coordinator]

## Appendix 10: Donation Request Letter

[Date of letter being sent],

Dear Community Member,

It is with great excitement that [our organization] is asking for your participation in our upcoming [fundraising event]. As a non-profit organization we rely on fundraising to continue providing [the service you provide] to the community of [your community].

Since [year of organization establishment], [our organization] has been providing [the services you provide] for [the people your organization serves]. [Our organization] is a unique agency in that it [something unique and meaningful about your organization].

This fall we are hosting our [name of event] on [date of event]. Our [name of event] will include dinner, live entertainment, dancing, silent auction, raffles, and more!

Here's how you can help:

1. Donate a product or service for the silent auction which will be held at our [name of fundraising event]
2. Make a monetary donation
3. Mark your calendar and plan to attend the [fundraising event]. We encourage you to bring a friend or colleague.

Any donation would be influential in enabling the continued provision of [the services your organization provides], as well as [something else your organization does for the community].

If you have any questions, please contact:

[Name of event coordinator] (fundraising coordinator): [phone number] OR  
[Name of organization director] ([your organization] director): [phone number]

Thank you so much for considering our request, we look forward to hearing from you.

With respect,  
[Your organization]

### Appendix 11: Potential Silent Auction Items

- Gym memberships
- Yoga studio passes
- Driving range passes
- Climbing Gym passes
- Movie tickets
- Flights
- Local business gift cards
- Night in a hotel
- Helicopter ride
- Ski passes
- Art classes
- Winery gift basket
- Trail Riding
- Spa package
- Food tasting basket
- Mountain bike/Skis/Snowboard
- Landscaping company voucher
- Sports tickets
- Sports team jersey
- Hot Air Balloon ride
- Local artwork/pottery
- Theatre tickets
- Jewelry item

## Appendix 12: Sample Event Schedule

6:00 doors open  
6:30 Event start time  
6:45 Welcome address  
7:00 Dinner (Live music)  
7:45 Speeches  
8-8:15 Break (background music)  
8:15 Main event  
8:45 Break (photobooth, raffle browsing, connecting with guests)  
9:00 50/50, Raffle  
9:15 One song to place final bids, etc.  
9:20 Silent auction announcements  
9:30 Live auction  
9:45 Dance & DJ

\*Important to tell guests a start time that is about 15 min before the first part of your event actually starts! You don't want guests arriving at start time which will disrupt the flow of your event program.

## Appendix 13: Volunteer List

### Door Greeters (2)

- Welcome guests
- Take tickets/mark people off on master list
- Explain seating (e.g. reserved tables have name card, open seating for everyone else)
- Point out coat check, bathrooms
- Explain shuttle (if applicable)

### Personal Connection Team

- Make connections with guests throughout the night.

### Info booth (2)

- Sell raffle tickets
- Give info about organization – \*\*we don't get any outside funding; we are low/no cost/accessible/only low barrier, long term, counselling for adults
- Assist guests with sponsorship catalogue
- Take silent auction payments
- \*\*These volunteers will have to trade off during dinner so that someone is always at the info booth. Even if it seems like no guests are looking to buy tickets at the time, they need to know they can if they want to!

### 50/50 (2)

- One main person, one assistant – selling 50/50 can get very busy!
- Carry payment machine/take donations

### Directors/Troubleshooters (1-2)

- Have physical copy of order of events. Remind people 5 min ahead of time when it's their turn to present, perform etc.
- Only other jobs are to answer questions, troubleshoot, connect with guests

### IT person (1)

- Help set up/make sure everything works
- Stay until last transition
- This person could be one of your entertainment volunteers. In our 2019 event, our DJ took on this role and was amazing. We didn't have to think at all about anything IT related!

### Set up/Take down Team

- A team dedicated to setting up for the event and clearing up afterwards.
- You may want to have two separate teams for these jobs
- Helpful if they have knowledge of where to pick up/return supplies
- Could work well if the same people who decide on decorations are on these teams



### Appendix 14: Items to Bring on Event Day

- Fanny pack for 50/50 person
- Lots of pens for silent auction bid sheets
- Bowls for raffle tickets
- Art easels for silent auction artwork & welcome sign (venue may have some you can use)
- Sponsorship Catalogues (at least 2 per table)
- 50/50 tickets
- Extra/Blank Silent Auction Bid Sheets in case some fill up with bids
- Raffle tickets (must be different colour than 50/50 tickets)
- Clip boards for greeters
- Info Booth stuff (business cards, rack cards, ect)
- Stands to hold reserved table signs
- Lamp for info table. It can get really dark in there! You'll need to be able to see when charging people for their silent auction items.
- Cash box or payment filing box (see Appendix 16)
- Gather items for a "just in case" box
  - Scissors
  - Tape
  - String/twine
  - Extra pens
  - Extra silent auction/raffle sheets for last minute donations
  - Extra clip boards in case you have to hang a silent auction bid sheet



## Appendix 16: Payment

### **Bidding Numbers:**

One way of having guests donate and pay for things throughout the night (50/50, silent auction etc.) is to assign bidding numbers to each guest. If you have a seating plan each guest could have a bidding paddle waiting for them at their table. Alternatively, as guests arrive your greeters could direct them to a table filled with bidding paddles attached to guest names. Guests would then use their bidding numbers throughout the night for anything requiring payment. Then at the end of the night guests would pay for everything they have put on their bidding number "account." As you would also have the contact information from the information you gathered when selling tickets, you would have the option of calling guests who have not paid.

### **Filing Box**

Depending how you decide to collect money throughout the event, it may be helpful to have a way of separating payment according to what the guest is paying for (e.g. 50/50, silent auction items, donations etc.).

One idea is to use a filing box with hanging file folders. Label the folders with the names of each category you may receive payment for. During your event, you can easily drop receipts, cheques, and cash into the various folders to keep it organized. In addition to the labeled files, you may want envelopes for collecting cash.

**Appendix 17: Press Release Sample**

On behalf of [*insert organization*], thank you [name of community] for your support at our [name of event] last Saturday! Thanks to your support we were able to raise over \$[amount]! However, we are still a little short of our goal of [e.g. half a year's rent]. If you would like to donate and help us reach that goal, please call the [insert phone number]. Every little bit helps!