

Event Idea Bank

Examples of events to help you generate ideas for raising funds in your community

The ideas are categorised into main themes to help you to find a suitable event idea. The light bulbs next to event ideas will also show you if they are easy, medium or more challenging event to organise. The document is a live document so please ensure you have the most up to date copy.

You will find other resources to support you with organising events on [our volunteer area of the Marie Curie website](#). Resources include Event Activity Plan templates, event toolkits, documents to help ensure you events are safe and legal.

If you have any other event ideas that you think should be included in this guide, please email frvolunteering@mariecurie.org.uk.

February 2025

Overview

1. Community Events
2. Games, Sports, Competitive and Active Events
3. Music and Parties
4. Arts and Crafts
5. Food based events

1. Community Events

- **Car Boot Sale:** 💡
 - Ask for donations and unwanted items, clear out your loft or sell crafts with proceeds going to Marie Curie. Make sure that you have Marie Curie branding and tins on your stall as this will ensure people haggle less and may also donate.
 - Potential Income: £100-£400
- **Car Wash:** 💡
 - Grab a few buckets, sponges, and squeegees, find somewhere suitable for cars to safely park, with access to a tap for your hose and you're nearly ready to run a Charity Car Wash. The key to success is advertising your event to the local community plenty of time ahead of the event. It's also easier in good weather. Remember to have a rota of volunteers to carry out the washing, so you can avoid keeping your customers waiting.
 - Potential Income: £250-£500
- **Daffodil Planting** 💡💡
 - Maybe your group could arrange with your local authority to plant a commemorative field of daffodils. You can raise funds by asking members of the public to pay for a daffodil to be planted on their behalf. And maybe you can secure daffodil bulbs for free, or at a minimal cost, by asking local businesses or sponsors to help provide them.
 - Potential income: £500 - £5000
- **Fashion Show** 💡💡
 - Are you the next big designer? Or like to show what the best second-hand shopping has to offer? Or want to work with a local school or college that hosts a fashion course? No matter what time of year, a fashion show can be a great community event to raise money for Marie Curie. If you have a local Marie Curie shop in your area, this could be a fantastic joint event for fundraising groups and shops to run together, whilst engaging other businesses.
 - We do have a useful event toolkit to get you started with planning this event.
 - Potential income: £500 - £1000



- **Festive Shopping Experience**



- Why not offer local businesses the chance to come together for a Christmas, Easter, Spring or similar event and either pay for a stall or donate a percentage of their profits? Craft people, stall holders or health and beauty therapists, and networking groups are all keen to find seasonal ways to market themselves. All you need to do is to think of a suitable theme, find a venue (ideally free of charge) and use your local contacts to secure stall holders. To add more value and entice more visitors, think of any musicians or performers who could add to the ambience.
- Potential income: £500 - £1000

- **Lights to Remember**



- Many people wish to remember loved ones over Christmas. One way to do so is to organise a Lights to Remember service at your local church or religious centre. In the service, participants are given the opportunity to hear readings, prayers and music and reflect on the cherished memories of loved ones who have sadly died. Whilst not primarily a fundraising idea, a retiring collection can be made.
- A quieter and more personal idea is to organise a "Light up the Night" event in your community. Participants pay for a paper lantern on which they can write the name of their loved one. At night, all the lanterns are lit with a tea light to combine into a beautiful and moving display of remembrance. If you wish, this can be combined with an existing religious Christmas or winter service.
- We do have a useful event toolkit to get you started with planning this event. Just ask your Community Fundraiser.
- Potential income: £500 - £1000

- **Open Gardens**



- Is your garden your passion? Do you know of any local gardens that have the wow factor? If so, why not charge visitors to come and enjoy it? Choose a suitable day when the plants are at their best, advertise beforehand and think about providing refreshments and maybe plant sales. Invite local musicians to perform to add atmosphere.
- Did you know that The National Garden Scheme are a supporter of Marie Curie encouraging members to open their gardens to the public? You can attend as a guest to visit these gardens, maybe sign up to take part, or sometimes we are invited to hold a small tea and coffee stall at the event.
- Potential income: £500 - £1000

- **Picnic:**



- Everybody loves a picnic. So why not invite your contacts to enjoy eating outside in aid of Marie Curie? Find a suitable location, but remember to check local rules or ask permission. If children are attending, think of organising games for families to take part in, or make it a Teddy Bear's picnic and ask them to bring along their furry friend.
- Potential Income: £50-£250

- **Plant Sale:** 
 - o If you have green fingers or know of any keen gardeners, why not hold a plant sale? Encourage your contacts to donate plants and seedlings to sell to the public. You can sell your plants at a stall in an existing event, car boot sale, market or fair, or even set up a stall outside your home with an honesty box. If you're selling seasonal plants, you can advertise on local social media as people are often keen to buy this way, especially strawberry and tomato plants.
 - o Potential income: £100 - £300

- **Scarecrow Trail** 
 - o If you have good links with your local community, why not organise a scarecrow trail? After agreeing on a date for when the event will launch, it's simply a case of persuading local individuals, schools and businesses to make scarecrows and then display them in the local area. You can produce a guide or map of all the scarecrows on the scarecrow trail, which visitors can buy. Some scarecrow trails tie in these displays with a country fete, with all entries being brought together for judging, but you can make your event as simple or complicated as you like.
 - o Alternatively, if you don't want to organise your own scarecrow trail, why not enter a scarecrow into one that is already established in your local community? Many organisers are happy for there to be charity entries that can raise money through honesty tins or selling refreshments next to their scarecrows along the route.
 - o Potential income: £100 – 500

- **Stalls at community or local events** 
 - o Holding a stall at an existing local event is a simple way to raise funds without requiring large numbers of volunteers. Your stall can offer craft items, cakes, tombola, bric-a-brac, games or activities, as well as accepting donations. Local events that you might want to look at for having a stall could include summer fetes, agricultural or country shows, and Christmas Lights Switch On events. Look at local magazines, council websites or social media for what events are happening in your local area.
 - o We have a toolkit with stall ideas to help you with deciding what activities to do.
 - o Potential income: £80-£300

- **Tractor Run**   
 - o Imagine a long procession of tractors, driving through your town or village, raising money for Marie Curie. A tractor run is simply this. Organise a route through your local area, passing through towns and villages so that spectators (especially children) can enjoy the show. Charge entrants a small fee to take part and then arrange a suitable finish point where all of the vehicles can go on display. You can collect additional donations along the route too.
 - o Top Tip: When planning a tractor run you need to get permission from the council and the police to ensure they are happy with your planned route.

- Alternatively, if you don't want to organise your own tractor-run, why not see if there is a tractor-run that already takes place annually and ask if they would make Marie Curie the beneficiary that year?
- Potential income: £2000 - £5000



- **Treasure Hunt** 💡 💡

- A Treasure Hunt is a game in which each person or team attempts to be first in finding something that has been hidden, using written directions or clues. Usually played outside, you will need to write clues that direct players to various points, with the final clue directing them to the prize, or to the endpoint. Top Tip: Do a test run of your treasure hunt to ensure all the clues are clear and take the route you want people to follow.
- Potential income: £150 - £500

2. Games, Sports, Competitive and Active Events

- Abseil



- If there are notable tall buildings or famous landmarks near you, why not consider organising an abseil down one of them? This challenging event can raise a lot of money via participants getting sponsorship to brave the heights. This is also a great way to encourage local businesses to enter a team to help further increase income.
- We do have a useful event toolkit to get you started with planning this event.
- Potential income: £5000 - £7500

- Auction



- Whether it's an event on its own, or an add-on to another event, an auction is a tried and tested way to raise funds. It's surprising how many people and businesses will donate auction items if asked and often these items will raise more by being auctioned than simply sold off. Just ensure to secure a good variety of lots, a large number of potential bidders and, most importantly, a charismatic auctioneer.
- Potential income: £1000 - £5000

- Bingo



- Organise Bingo at a local venue or as part of a larger event. All that is required is bingo equipment (cards, balls, and mixers), prizes and helpers to call and check winning cards. This is a great activity for a variety of groups, including family bingo, friendship clubs and so on.
- Potential income: £200 - £1000
- Idea! Why not see if a local club organises a regular bingo night, and ask if they can make Marie Curie their chosen charity for a night? This would mean you don't need to organise the whole event.



- Climbing Wall



- Why not take on the heights, and organise a climbing challenge? Organising a climbing wall challenge for Marie Curie is a fantastic way to get people involved in an adrenalin-fuelled activity, no matter where they are based. Teams or individuals can take on the challenge to help reach the heights of a mountain set by you and this has the potential to raise a good amount of

income as well as introduce new people to your fundraising group and to the charity.

- We do have a useful event toolkit to get you started with planning this event.
- Potential income: £5000 - £7500

- **Firewalk**



- Not afraid of the heat? Then a Firewalk is a challenge for you and others to get involved in. Sponsored individuals (after a motivational training session) walk across burning wood embers without experiencing any pain or injury. This is a great event for teams or individuals to take on that doesn't require prior training but is an exciting challenge. It can raise a lot of money from sponsorship and is an ideal event to take place in the Autumn or Winter, bringing together spectators.
- Top Tip. Why not join up with another fundraising group to put on the event? This can increase the number of people signing up to take part and help to split the workload when organising.
- We do have a useful event toolkit to get you started with planning this event.
- Potential income: £5000 - £7500

- **Quiz**



- There are many ways to fundraise with a quiz. You could organise your own quiz at a local venue or approach a local pub to hold a quiz night for you, where participants pay to enter, or you can create a quiz sheet to sell to individuals, who then return it to you at an agreed date. For a group quiz, you will need to find a suitable prize, or a number of prizes, produce the questions and find someone to host it. Quiz sheets work well over the holiday season. For these, you simply need to compile the questions and spread the word. Ask friends and colleagues if they will take part or encourage others.
- We do have a useful event toolkit to get you started with planning this event.
- Potential income: £500 - £2000

- **Race Night**



- A Race Night is a popular fundraiser that can be run at a local pub, club or similar venue. Often run alongside a meal or refreshments, guests are invited to place bets on pre-recorded horse races as the evening progresses, with prizes awarded to each race's winner. There are a number of companies that can provide all the equipment, tickets and betting slips. All that is left to find is a suitable venue (pubs work really well here), a master of ceremonies to keep the excitement going and a good network of people to invite to take part. Additional funds can be raised by asking local companies to sponsor each race and by holding raffles or auctions on the night.
- Potential income: £1000 - £4000

- **Walk**



- A sponsored walk is a great way to run a larger outdoor event in a popular or scenic location. You will need to map out a suitable route, ideally taking in places of interest. Participants should be provided with a clear map, and it may also help to place markers along the route. You will need to check

walkers out and back in, post marshals at regular intervals in case walkers need assistance and have sweepers walk the route last to ensure no one is unaccounted for. Being an event that needs more helpers on the day, it may be advisable to work with other fundraising groups or local clubs, groups, or associations.

- Top Tip: make sure you have tested the route in advance to ensure it is suitable and can be followed easily.
- We do have a useful event toolkit to get you started with planning this event.
- Potential income: £500 - £2500



- **Yoga in Yellow** 💡

- Can you help people feel more relaxed, calm and healthy whilst raising money? Yes, if you put on a Yoga in Yellow event. You'll need to find a suitably qualified instructor and venue, but once you've done this and decided upon a date, all you need to do is to share the event as widely as possible with your group's contacts. Keep in mind, when organising this type of activity, you will need to ask for additional paperwork to ensure that we are asking someone who is qualified and that they will ensure a safe and active workout for everyone taking part.
- Is Yoga not for you? You could also think of other exercise fundraisers such as static bike challenges, Zumbathons and much more.
- Potential income: £200 - £2000

3. Music and Parties

- Carols



- Why not help spread Christmas cheer by organising a fundraiser around Carol singing? At its simplest, you can arrange a group of singers in your neighbourhood and obtain permission from the local landowner or council for a permit. An hour or two spent singing, whilst collecting donations, can be a lovely way to raise income. Maybe there are local choral groups or schools that can join in the festivities. Or, if you have a contact at a suitable church, why not organise your own Carol Service, with ticket money or a collection to fundraise? Selling Mince Pies, Tea, Coffee and maybe Mulled Wine can add to the Christmas spirit.
- Do you organise collections in your area? Why not invite carol singers to come along and sing at one of your collections?
- Potential income: £150 - £500

- Music Events



- There are several different ways to fundraise via Music Events. Local choirs, bands or orchestras could be brought together for an evening's entertainment. Do you know of any tribute bands or singers? Or, if you know of existing music events in your local area, why not ask if you can have a stand or collection on the day?
- Potential income: £500 - £5000

- Themed Parties



- School Discos, The World Cup, Wimbledon, Royal Wedding, Halloween, the 80s, and New Year, all provide a fantastic opportunity to hold a themed party or event to celebrate and raise funds. Simply find a suitable venue with a dance floor and DJ, decide your theme, which could also be the 60's, 70's, 90's or Noughties, and invite everyone you know to a party.
- Other dance themes could be a Barn Dance or Ceilidh. You'll need a live band and a caller to help everybody understand the dances and moves, but all ages can participate in the fun.
- Have you caught the Strictly Come Dancing bug? Why not have a "Strictly"-themed dance event, which is a mix of dances and an opportunity for everyone to win their very own Disco Ball Trophy?
- Think about upcoming events and plan suitable food and entertainment around them. Your party can be small and intimate, or bigger, ticketed and hosted at a local venue. The possibilities are endless.
- Potential income: £300 - £1500



4. Arts and Crafts

- Craft Fair



- To organise your own Craft Fayre, you just need to secure a room or hall where you can then charge individual stall holders an amount to set up a table to sell their wares. You'll need a reasonable number of stalls to make this event attractive to the public and it's important to publicise the fayre widely to bring in a good crowd. You might also be able to provide teas/coffees and light refreshments to further increase your fundraising.
- Potential income: £150 - £400

- Crafting Workshops



- Can you get crafty in our fundraising? If you know of an expert wreath maker, florist, jewellery maker or cake decorator, why not arrange an event for members of the public to come along and learn new skills? There has been an increase in people taking up these hobbies, so finding willing participants is not difficult. This is an easy event to run at a local village hall or similar venue. Just make sure to check that it is suitable for the type of crafting you are demonstrating and think about providing light refreshments for attendees.
- Please note, some more complex demonstrations might require additional checks and will take a little longer for sign off.
- Predicted income: £400 - £1000



- Photography Competition



- There are many ways in which you could organise a photography competition to raise funds for Marie Curie. At its simplest, you can ask entrants to pay a small fee to allow them to submit up to 5 photographs around a theme or your local area. After judging, winners receive a prize or voucher.
- For the more adventurous, allow entrants to submit images for free, but look to create a calendar or sets of prints/cards featuring the winning entries to sell as a fundraiser.
- Potential income: £250 - £1500

5. Food based events

- Buffet or Party Food events



- o Rather than organising a fully seated meal, why not consider a buffet or party-style get-together? Cheese and Wine nights are simple to organise and can often be put on with the help of a local bar, which can then provide all the refreshments, leaving your group to add a suitable markup to the ticket price.
- o There are many variations of this, for example, Mulled Wine and Mince Pies at Christmas.
- o Potential income: £500 - £2000

- Dinner Fundraisers (themed nights)



- o Putting together a meal either in the daytime or evening is a great way to bring people together. And who doesn't like good food! Whether it's a curry night, an afternoon tea, or an evening steak night, you can easily tailor this type of event depending on who your group knows and how simple or complicated you would like it to be. You can either cook food yourselves or ask a local venue for their price and add a little more to your ticket sales.
- o Potential income: £1000 - £3500

- Formal Events



- o Organising a formal dinner, ball or grand evening's wining and dining can raise large amounts of money. Often held at hotels, which can provide the venue, food, service and drinks, keys to success are finding a great theme, thinking about suitable entertainment to have at the night and making sure to attract a healthy number of attendees. Don't forget the possibilities of adding a suitable live or silent auction, especially if you can generate enough buzz, as you'll find local businesses often prepared to donate prizes or provide sponsorship.
- o We do have a useful event toolkit to get you started with planning this event.
- o Potential income: £5000 - £7500

- Tea or Coffee Morning



- o Everybody loves coffee, tea and cake. An easy fundraiser that can take place at any time. Invite your friends, work colleagues or neighbours to join you for a cuppa. If you're a baker or know people who love to bake, ask them for donations. Just remember to keep a note of ingredients and follow food hygiene advice. If you'd prefer to meet outside of your home, maybe a local hall, community centre or similar building will fit the bill.
- o If you're feeling more adventurous, why not add some fizz and hold a Sparkling Afternoon Tea with the addition of Prosecco!
- o Potential income: £200 - £800

