

8

Fundraising

About Fundraising

Fundraising is essential to the success of Kokanee Karnival. Fundraising is necessary to increase equipment and supplies inventories, maintain the existing inventory of equipment and supplies in good working order, pay recurring operating expenses, and pay salaries of regular and contract employees. The main sources of funding for Kokanee Karnival include:

- Donations from producing partners (individuals, businesses, and members of sponsoring organizations)
- Donations from sponsoring organizations
- Grants from private and corporate foundations, charities, and government agencies
- Events designed to raise funds
- Planned giving

To fund a program on a regular basis, develop a funding plan for at least three years and perhaps five years. The plan should include a variety of fundraising activities from as many sources as possible. Donors want to know who else is contributing to your success.



Managing Fundraising

Assign fundraising responsibilities to an experienced individual. If an experienced person is not available, choose someone with good business and writing skills, and send them to training classes immediately—consider it an investment in the future of the program. The cost of most classes is very reasonable, especially when compared with the high level of return for skillfully written grant applications.

Technical Assistance for Community Services (TACS) is a nonprofit corporation created in 1977 to assist nonprofit organizations in achieving their missions. TACS provides low cost training, professional networks, and consultation services to support management, planning, and fund development capacity building efforts. TACS works with the full spectrum of nonprofit organizations from start-up community groups to well-established charitable institutions. Technical Assistance for Community Services, 1001 SE Water Ave., Portland, Oregon 97214, www.tacs.org, 503 239-4001

Fundraising Activities

In general, the following six activities are effective fundraising methods:

1. Combining fundraising with an event
2. Arranging planned giving
3. Asking individual members of producing partner organizations to make donations
4. Asking producing partner and sponsoring organizations to make renewed donations
5. Asking local businesses for donations
6. Acquiring grants from private and corporate foundations and government agencies



Combining fundraising with an event

Sponsoring organizations can combine fundraising activities with annual banquets or other special events. Methods of fundraising include raffles, silent auctions, live auctions, casino games, bingo, golf tournaments, etc. Be sure to check local and state laws regarding regulations for fundraising activities. These events can be accomplished on all kinds of budgets, and they can have significant return potential. They can also provide good public relations and experience for volunteers. However, each event is manpower intensive, and the event can drain limited financial and volunteer resources.

Arranging planned giving

This activity includes acquiring large gifts and/or proceeds from an estate. Planned giving may take years to develop, and it requires expertise to accomplish successfully. However, the potential for large gifts is quite real.

Asking individual members of producing partner organizations to make donations

Toward the end of each calendar year, add a request for Kokanee Karnival donations to your reminder for dues. Remind your membership that donations are tax deductible if your program is qualified. This method is fairly labor intensive, and the return is usually relatively low.

Asking producing partner and sponsoring organizations to make renewed donations

These contributions are critical to the success of the program because they add a significant amount of direct funding. They also demonstrate a level of commitment that helps the success of other forms of fundraising.

Asking local businesses for donations

This activity is simply a direct mail campaign to local businesses that might want to support the program. It is labor intensive with a low to moderate return. If done annually, you can build a good base of regular contributors. The more businesses you contact, the larger the return.

Members of your organization can identify local businesses that will support the program. Businesses that frequently support youth

activities are potential donors, and utility companies are often good donors. It is helpful if a member personally recommends the program to a local business. When you mail a letter of introduction to a potential donor, include a program brochure. Consider ending the letter with "I will call you in a few days to answer any questions you have. I hope you can help our program." Be sure to follow-up with a phone call. For examples of letters, see the **Appendices**.

Acquiring grants from private and corporate foundations and government agencies

Grants can potentially fund a very high percentage of your cash needs. An experienced or well-trained grant writer is helpful in obtaining grants. A large number of foundations, corporate giving programs, and government agencies are available as general-purpose donors. (These entities will fund worthy programs that provide the required information.) Other entities can be very specific about the type of programs they will fund and expect strict adherence to all requirements. The competition for these limited funds is intense. Grant writing activities require a significant investment of time, but can generate great returns.



Plan one year in advance when applying for grants. If you receive a grant, six to nine months could elapse before you receive the cash.

To identify potential sources of grants, look for entities that support educating youth about natural resources and the environment. Talk to friends and acquaintances for possible leads. Read local newspapers and other publications for news about grants. Check with local agencies and the library. Search the Internet.

Before preparing a grant application, determine if the prospective grantor requires a specific format; be aware of deadlines for submitting the application; know to whom you must submit the application; and understand the timeline and procedure for the grantor's evaluation of your application. You can usually get answers to your questions by calling the grantor, checking their Web site, sending an email message, or mailing a letter of inquiry.

If the potential grantor does not require a specific format for the application, use a standard grant template similar to the one developed by Kokanee Karnival. For an example of the template, see the **Appendices**. On any grant application, state that your program has been audited or reviewed by a certified public accountant and be prepared to back up the statement.

After submitting the application, follow-up in a week or so with a phone call to ensure the grantor received it. Ask if there are any questions or if the grantor needs more information. Some grantors ask for a presentation in person. If the grant application is successful, the grantor might require periodic reports.

Acquiring In-Kind Donations

It is not necessary for all donations to be in the form of cash. Some groups may choose to support your program with in-kind donations of supplies such as rain canopies, portable toilets, signs, lunches, display items, and bottled water. Local businesses, organizations, and individuals are potential sources of in-kind donations. If an individual or group prefers to not donate cash, ask if they will support the program with an in-kind donation of equipment or needed supplies.

Make the initial contact with a potential donor in person. After a donor agrees to an in-kind donation, follow-up with a thank-you letter that confirms the donation, who will pick up and/or return the donated item and when. Clarify who is responsible for damage. Describe how the donor will be recognized. For example, let the donor know if they will be listed as a program sponsor or recognized in some other way.



Prepare a list of needed items before contacting groups or individuals for in-kind donations.

Acknowledging Donors

It is important to acknowledge everyone who contributes to your program and to let donors know how much you appreciate their support. There are several ways to acknowledge donors. List donors in a single group and identify the type of donor (grantor, business, individual, in-kind). Or, list donors as sponsors in different categories based on the level of funding. Mail a thank-you letter to every donor. Kokanee Karnival also thanks donors in the following ways:

- Acknowledges donors in the organization's newsletter
- Lists donors in any correspondence that teachers send to parents
- Posts signs listing donors in conspicuous places at the Streamside, Hatchery, and Angling Clinic Experiences and at

community events so parents, volunteers, and other community members see the signs as they participate in the day's activities

- Places a thank-you advertisement in the local newspaper
- Has students mail "thank you" notes to donors

Maintaining Donor Interest

Donors are interested in how the program progresses, results of the program, and how children and adults react to the program. Items used to reflect participants' reaction to the program include written comments from teachers, students, and parents; printed news coverage by local newspapers and television stations; photos; and education benchmarks students achieve. Enclose examples of these items with correspondence to donors or include them in a special mailing.

Letters of appreciation written and illustrated by students have the greatest influence on donors. Teachers enrolled in Kokanee Karnival at the Comprehensive Level are required to have students write letters to donors once a year. It is also helpful (and often amusing) to have the teacher include photos and a list of reactions and comments from students.

