VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING
20 Special Event Ideas

01. Trivia Night

WHAT: Feed the trivia lovers by hosting a trivia night with group and/or individual teams. Charge a participation fee for both participants and audience members.

HOW: Use a free jeapordy template, a crowdsourcing platform like Mentimeter or Kahoot, or create your own platform.

IDEAS: A popular TV show, your company history, Charlotte facts

02. Talent Show

WHAT: If your organization is in the creative and performing arts communities, host a virtual talent show for employees to show their talents.

HOW: Request paid registrations in advance using an event registration app and then provide a link to acces the talent show. You could also live stream via YouTube or Facebook.

IDEAS: [Company]'s Got Talent, family talent show, department showdown

03. Virtual Cooking Lesson

WHAT: Live-stream a cooking lesson with a local or popular chef.

HOW: Find a chef willing to create a menu with ingredient and cookware lists, and they demo how to cook it. The chef could even include a special ingredient like a house sauce they distribute and ship to participants.

IDEAS: Cooking Lesson with [Chef], Fine Dine at Home, make it family friendly

04. Virtual Painting / Craft Night

WHAT: Live-stream a craft lesson with a local or popular artist.

HOW: Find an artist willing to create a craft and demo how to produce it. The artist could offer to send attendees all the items they need or require them to purchase from a list.

IDEAS: Cocktail & Crafts, painting, wood working, horticulture, kids craft

05. Virtual Gala

WHAT: Host a fundraising event and invite guests to 'attend' by watching a live stream of your program, presentations and activities.

HOW: Live stream on your event page, YouTube or Facebook. In your programming announce throughout easy ways to give, like text-to-give or online webpage.

IDEAS: Bring-your-own dinner and watch gala, no show cocktail party, brown bag luncheon

06. Day of Giving

WHAT: A 24-hour online fundraising challenge solely focused on giving to an organization.

HOW: Create a dedicated online giving form or campaign using peer-to-peer, crowdfunding or an event page with a tracking thermometer and donor wall.
IDEAS: Select a date that has meaning to your organization and promote it heavily through social media, outbound texting, and email leading up to and on the day.

07. Peer-to-Peer Challenge

WHAT: Get a handful of captains to lead a Peer-to-Peer challenge participants. Challenge the captains to fundraise the equivalent amount of what their team members do.

HOW: Provide a dedicated fundraising page, unique keyword and shortcode for easy donation collection, along with images and powerful stories they can share on social media.

IDEAS: Have weekly challenges and provide fun, inepensive rewards for leaders.

08. Virtual Charity Run

WHAT: Supporters pledge to run or walk any number of miles, steps or laps they choose wherever they choose: treadmill, elliptical, neighborhood, dog walking, in spirit.

HOW: Host individual or team signups with peer-to-peer software and provide team and individual fundraising pages with text-to-donate keywords and shortcodes.

IDEAS: Supporters pledge and fundraise per mile, per lap, per step, number of consecutive days 'run'. Could also be amount lifted or number of reps.

09. Virtual 5k

WHAT: Participants pay to register. They can choose to get a bib/medal/t-shirt or donate the entire registration fee.

HOW: Use an event page like Eventbrite to gather registrations. Have participants submit their results and share online.

IDEAS: At-home 5k, run, walk, bike

10. Paw-a-Thon Walk

WHAT: Utilize a walking path for pet lovers to bring their animal and walk.

HOW: Use an event page like Eventbrite to gather registrations. Offer people to come watch and have treat stations.

IDEAS: Pups in the Park, Paws for Cause

11. NPO TV

WHAT: Make your fundraising appeal while streaming live and/or posting videos to your social channels at least once a day for a week.

HOW: Go live on Facebook, Instagram or YouTube and share your message and text-to-donate keyword and shortcode for easy giving.

IDEAS: Go behind the scenes at your organization, spotlight supporters and why they are involved, host a puppy party, tour your offices or facilities.

12. Celebration Days

WHAT: Supporters receive donations to your organization in lieu of presents for their birthday, wedding, graduation, anniversary, and other special events.

HOW: Establish the occasions as teams, supporters become a fundraiser under a 'team' to create their celebration occasion fundraiser.

IDEAS: Promote around days special to your organization; founding day, holidays, birthdays

13. Silent Auction

WHAT: An online auction with a variety of items and experiences supporters can bid on and acquire for the highest donation amount.

HOW: Set up a page on your website or use silent auction software to accept bids, notify supporters when they are being out bid, and accept payment when the auction has closed.

IDEAS: Lunch with a community leader, week in a vacation timeshare, tickets to a sporting event, basket of spa items, local experiences and events.

14. Opportunity Drawing

WHAT: Supporters enter for a chance to win one large prize or a few unique prizes.

HOW: Supporters obtain entries through donations made through online giving or crowdfunding software functionality. The amount donated dictates the number of tickets given.

IDEAS: Car, house, all-inclusive vacation, season tickets, dinner with a dignitary, spa

15. Voting Competition

WHAT: Host a virtual competition where donations count as "votes" to determine the winner of your contest.

HOW: Determine how much each vote is worth ($1, $5, $20) then track winners through votes received.

IDEAS: Talent show, best chef, favorite bartender, house decorating, best holiday lights

16. Matching Gifts

WHAT: Incentivize donors to give and give more by doubling their gift with a matching gift program, typically dollar for dollar matches.

HOW: Partner with a major donor, board member, local business, or group of supporters to fund the matching gift pool.

IDEAS: Use a countdown clock on the campaign event page to show supporters when the matching funds will expire to create a sense of urgency.

17. Small-Group Virtual Discussions

WHAT: If your community is highly engaged on key issues you are tackling, or in the world, consider bringing together a group of them to discuss.

HOW: Using online virtual meeting tools such as Zoom or Google Hangouts, you can create different rooms for groups of discussions. First, you can welcome everyone to the virtual event, and then make a request for a contribution via a link embedded in the meeting system.

IDEAS: Improve [topic], social justice, top news stories, best local beers

18. Marathon (no, not the running kind)

WHAT: Host a 'test-of-endurance' event in which an individual or group agrees to test their endurance for a certain amount of time based on donations.

HOW: Find a person(s) who is willing to test their talent for a long period of time. Then create a landing page with a clear goal and call to action. Goal: Raise $10,000 and Rick runs a marathon. Call to Action: For every $1,000 donated, Rick will run 2.6 miles.

IDEAS: Watch a popular show, stand, walk/run/row, cook, golf

19. Free Digital Download with Donation

WHAT: This is the 2020 version of the "free tote bag or coffee mug with a donation".

HOW: Offering something desirable to anyone who makes a donation. You can vary what the download is based on the amount given.

IDEAS: video download, a digital book, a printable poster, audio file, image, webinar, consultation session

20. Online Gaming Tournament

WHAT: Determine an online game people in your network would be excited to play for a great cause. Make it a multiplayer game with scores and a time limit.

HOW: Use an event registration site like Eventbrite to collect registrations and participation fees. Create a bracket and set up a live stream system using Twitch so anyone with the link can watch.

IDEAS: Call of Duty, Rock Band, Mario Kart, FIFA, Rocket League

United Way
United Way
of Central Carolinas