



A TOOLKIT FOR MAKING
YOUR FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

JOIN THE AUSM
FAMILY OF
FUNDRAISERS
TODAY!

ausm[®]

autism society of minnesota

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER HANDBOOK

CURRENT AS OF
JAN 2024

The whole state, the whole
life, the whole spectrum

2380 WYCLIFF ST #102
ST. PAUL, MN 55114

www.ausm.org



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The magic of your fundraiser for the Autism Society of Minnesota will go beyond the moments of your event. We extend our sincerest gratitude to you for your support and passion.



About AuSM

Founded in 1971, the Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) enhances the lives of individuals and families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder. AuSM serves Minnesotans, throughout their lives, with a fundamental commitment to advocacy, education, support, collaboration, and community building.

MISSION

The mission of the Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) is to create connections, empowering everyone in the autism community with the resources needed to live fully.

AuSM seeks to enhance the lives of all who are part of the Minnesota autism community, with a fundamental commitment to advocacy, education, support, collaboration, and community building.

We Seek To:

- Advocate for legislation and policies that lead to improved services, increased opportunities, and greater self-determination for people with autism.
- Educate and inform individuals, families, professionals, and the broader community about autism and effective strategies for support and inclusion.
- Support individuals and families through quality programs, counseling services, and resource information.
- Collaborate with organizations and individuals who share our commitment to enhancing the lives of those affected by autism.
- Build community and provide a welcoming and accessible environment for autistic people to connect and form their own social bonds.

[Click here to access our brand kit for logos, fonts, colors, boilerplate language, and more!](#)

Where Your Support Goes



You are a part of the Minnesota autism community. Whether you are a family member, a friend, a teacher, a professional, an autistic, or are simply passionate about an inclusive and just state, you know the importance of providing resources, services, and programs to support autistics.

AuSM provides a wide variety of services, including counseling, training, social and recreation programs, community events, an annual conference, advocacy, support groups, consulting services, and more. [Click here to learn more about the programs your fundraiser supports!](#)

Sample Giving Tiers

\$35	Scholarship for an autistic individual to attend a workshop
\$70	Creates new online resources
\$100	Pays for a support group facilitator
\$250	Hires a teacher for a social program
\$500	Supports our advocacy efforts
\$1,000	Allows us to host a virtual training

What is a Community Fundraiser?

Any time someone outside of AuSM raises money on behalf of AuSM, it's a Community fundraiser. If that sounds like it covers a lot of situations, that's because it does! You can create a fundraiser that is a huge event or one that is a simple online fundraising page: whatever works for you!

Who can run a Community fundraiser?

- Businesses
- Organizations
- Community groups
- Schools
- Families
- Individuals
- Anyone who wants to support AuSM!

Community Fundraiser Examples:

- Birthday fundraiser
- Sports event or tournament
- Bake sale
- Car wash
- Bingo night
- Employee giving drive
- Golf tournament
- Plant/flower sale

[Find more examples here](#)



Types of Community Fundraisers



There are many ways to raise money for a cause you love. If you're feeling a little overwhelmed with the options, we've broken down some of the most common types of fundraisers for you here. To see an example of each one, click on the header.

Crowdfunding

If you're looking for the easiest way to raise money, this is it! Set up a donation page, tell the world why you love AuSM, and watch donations come in. This is great for birthdays and events that don't have an in-person component.

Peer-to-Peer Fundraiser

If you like the idea of setting up an online donation page, but you want to involve your friends, family members, coworkers, or another group, you might want to create a peer-to-peer campaign. This allows multiple people to create their own donation pages and fundraise together. Peer-to-peer fundraising works well for activities like walk-a-thons, challenges, or group projects.

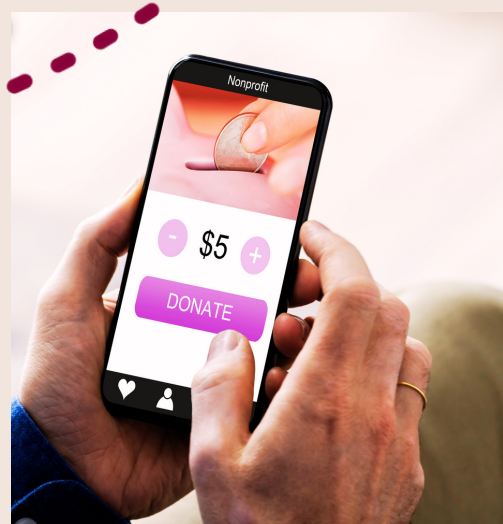
Event

An event is exactly what it sounds like, and there are endless ways you can use an event to raise money. You can raise money through ticket sales, sponsorships, direct donations, or activities. One of the best parts of events is that you can combine them with almost any other fundraising option. One thing to think about is that planning an event is a lot of work: be ready before you take this on!

Auction

An auction is one of the most time-intensive ways to raise money, but it can also have great payoffs. Gather items from businesses, friends, or colleagues and create an online or in-person auction. These pair especially well with events.

Ways to Fundraise Online



According to [Nonprofit Source](#), “54% of donors worldwide prefer to give online with a credit or debit card.” If you want to be the most effective at fundraising, you’ll need to have a way for people to make donations online. There are many online platforms that can help you set up online giving, and you’re welcome to use any of them.

If you’re not sure where to start, AuSM recommends using **Givebutter**.

Givebutter is a free platform that AuSM uses for our fundraising campaigns. There are three ways you can use it:

1. **If you just need a donations page:** Visit the [“Fundraise for AuSM”](#) page and click on “fundraise”. You’ll get to add your own copy and set up a profile to start accepting donations. All donations will go straight to AuSM through the page: you don’t have to do anything!
2. **If you want to set up peer-to-peer fundraising (a page that others can join to fundraise with you):** Fill out the Proposal Form on our website and indicate that you’d like AuSM to create a peer-to-peer fundraising page for you. You’ll provide details like copy and images, we’ll set it up and send you the link.
3. **If you want to accept event registrations, manage communications with donors and attendees, or run a silent auction:** Create your own Givebutter account. This is best for organizations or businesses. You’ll need to connect a bank account and when your fundraiser is over, send the funds to AuSM.

HELPFUL GIVE BUTTER TUTORIALS

- [How to create/manage a profile](#)
- [How to create a campaign](#)
- [Information about running events](#)
- [Information about team fundraising](#)
- [Information about running auctions](#)

Access Givebutter’s Help Center for more articles and to ask questions about the technology by [clicking here](#).

How We Can Support Your Event

AuSM CAN:

- Create an online fundraising page for your event
- Provide guidance on organizing an event or fundraiser (check out the resources section!)
- Promote your fundraiser on our website and social media platforms, pending review from AuSM staff
- Provide and approve use of our logo on materials related to your fundraiser
- Provide a donation tracking form to record cash donations
- Provide a letter of support to validate the authenticity of the fundraiser
- Coordinate a check presentation
- Attend your event, depending upon staff availability

AuSM CANNOT:

- Fund or reimburse event expenses
- Provide insurance or liability coverage for your event
- Provide our sales tax exemption number
- Guarantee attendance of staff
- Fundraise on your behalf
- Apply for permits and/or licenses for your event
- Provide donor or sponsor lists
- Manage registration or ticket sales
- Provide software or resources to run a silent auction





Fundraising How Tos: Getting Started

- | | |
|--------|---|
| STEP 1 | Read through the AuSM Community Fundraiser Handbook |
| <hr/> | |
| STEP 2 | Complete and submit your Community Fundraiser proposal online by clicking here. |
| <hr/> | |
| STEP 3 | Set up your Givebutter online fundraising page (see page 12 for more details)
<i>*optional</i> |
| <hr/> | |
| STEP 4 | Review the Fundraising How Tos and resources on pages 7-13 |
| <hr/> | |
| STEP 5 | Create a timeline for your fundraiser, then get started! |
| <hr/> | |

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS OUR BRAND KIT FOR LOGOS, FONTS, COLORS, BOILERPLATE LANGUAGE, AND MORE!](#)



Fundraising How Tos: Sample Timeline

3-4 Months in Advance

- Brainstorm and select what type of fundraiser you would like to have
- Find a venue if necessary
- Select a date
- Create a project plan so you'll stay on track: ideally you'll also have a plan for communicating about your fundraiser
- Recruit anyone else you need to help: be clear about who is responsible for each task
- Create a budget
 - What is your fundraising goal?
 - Will you have any expenses? How much are you willing to spend on them?
- Optional: create a website with a way to accept donations
- Brainstorm your audience
- If applicable, create marketing materials
- If applicable, start reaching out to sponsors
- Get approval from AuSM by filling out our [fundraising form](#)

This allows us to keep track of all fundraising that is done in the community on our behalf and helps us to inform the public about legitimate fundraising efforts

4-6 Weeks in Advance

- If applicable, launch ticket sales/registration
- Start preparing logistics like food, entertainment, day of schedule, etc.
- Send invitations
- If applicable, recruit volunteers

Fundraising How Tos: Sample Timeline

1-2 Weeks in Advance

- Make final phone calls and emails
- Continue promoting your event
- Double check with all your vendors to solidify the details
- Confirm your day of schedule with volunteers and your team
- Share any final communications with your attendees

Event Day!

- Arrive early to make sure everything is set up
- Double check your details
- Try to remember to take pictures
- Have fun!

After the Event

- Evaluate the success of your event: What went well? What could go better?
- Send out thank yous
- Post photos and thank yous on social media, and share with AuSM
- Send payment to AuSM within 30 days of the event:

Mail your check to AuSM

2380 Wycliff St #102 St. Paul, MN 55114

Include name of fundraiser + event date with check

Or pay by card by [clicking here](#).





Fundraising How Tos: Best Practices

You don't have to be a professional fundraiser to make a difference. Here are some helpful tips and tricks from the experts to get you started.

- Personalize! Don't just copy and paste from AuSM's website or this guide. The more you add your own story, the more likely people are to donate. Even better: add images or videos.
- Talk to people individually. Sure, it's great to post on social media or send an email to all your family and friends, but asking one on one is much more effective.
- Prepare ahead of time. If you're nervous about asking, write down your "pitch" to help you articulate why AuSM is important to you.
- Your community cares about what you do. Share how AuSM has made a difference in your life. Include stories or anecdotes about the impact AuSM has had.
- Be yourself! Write with your natural voice to show that you authentically care about this cause.
- Share powerful facts. [Click here](#) to get information about autism, AuSM, and the need for supports and services. Use these facts to power up your personal story.
- Reach out to AuSM to get any information or materials you may need to share with your network that aren't available in this guide.
- Remember to thank everyone who contributes, whether as a donor, volunteer, or by sharing information.



Fundraising How Tos: Resources

The internet has abundant resources that can help you learn more about fundraising and support you on your journey. We've compiled some of the most useful here. They include templates and guides that you can use for your fundraiser.

- [The Ultimate Guide to Storytelling for Personal Fundraisers](#)
- [How to Write an Effective Fundraising Letter](#)
- [Peer-to-Peer Fundraiser Email Templates](#)
- [Fundraising Event Budget Template](#)
- [Plan an Event Templates](#) from Microsoft
- [Event Planning Template](#) from Adobe
- [Event Marketing Plan Template](#)
- [Virtual Event Checklist](#)
- [Accessible Events Toolkit](#)

Meet The Team

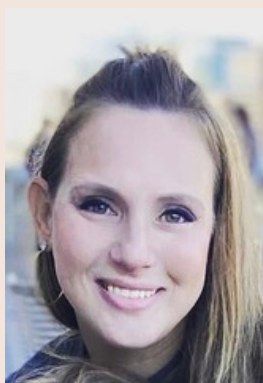


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Thank you for being a part of the AuSM family of fundraisers!