



**CONSORTIUM**  
for stronger lgbt+ communities

Toolkit Resource

## Fast Fundraising Ideas

### How to raise cash fast!

We'd always encourage groups to fundraise strategically so there's no need to scabble for emergency cash. *But* there are times you may need a few extra £££s in order to take advantage of a new opportunity, cover an unexpected cost or avoid disaster. You may also have sudden offers of help from external volunteers and need something for them to do. Here are our best ideas for fast fundraising...

**Cash Collection** – Borrow some buckets or collecting tins, gather some volunteers and get out there asking for cash. This method is great if you have a willing group of volunteers e.g. corporate staff group, local councillors, professional group. You could even get teams to compete over who could raise the most cash! You can collect at privately-owned venues by getting the permission of the owner/manager e.g. theatres, cinemas, sports venues, train stations, shopping centres, supermarkets; bars and clubs... **If you want to hold a street collection, you'll have to get a permit.** Check with your local authority or police force to see who issues these as there are different rules in different areas. Draw up a rota for the volunteers and a plan for how you're going to empty the tins or buckets safely and efficiently – if you're collecting for a long period, you may have to empty them several times.

**Write an appeal letter** – This one works best if you already have a mailing list of supporters. Or if you have a trustee or volunteer with a large network of contacts who is motivated to raise some extra money on your behalf. Write an email or e-newsletter telling people about your group's need and asking for support. Try not to sound desperate – even if you are - but do make your tone urgent. Write in a personal style as if you were talking to the reader face to face. If a volunteer or trustee is sending the letter, it's a good idea to work with them on the content. Inspire readers with a real-life story (it can be anonymised) of someone they will help by donating. If a volunteer or trustee is fundraising, they could instead tell their story and why your group is important to them. Include photos or video (these can be anonymised too). Plus, some relevant statistics about the needs your work is meeting and the impact supporters could help achieve. Tell readers how to donate – do you want a cheque, bank transfer, or gift via your website or an online donation site. Include all relevant links and make sure they are working! Appeal letters work best if they are timed around significant events such as Christmas or Pride, when people are traditionally giving-giving or feeling good. If a trustee or volunteer is fundraising, they may want to send the letter around a significant time for them e.g. a birthday, wedding or anniversary. If it's an emergency appeal, send it as soon as you can. This is a personal letter, but you could also post the contents on social media if you wish. It's best to do this after it's been distributed to the more personal or 'warm' networks and has generated some cash already.



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**Crowdfunding** – Do you want to reach more people and raise a larger amount? Set up a page on a crowdfunding site (check their terms & conditions carefully first). A big crowdfunding campaign takes a lot of time and effort, but a short-term appeal can be effective. Fundraising for a project will generate more money than asking people to cover your running costs (you can include running costs within a project budget). Describe who you are helping and what will happen if you don't raise the cash. If you're crowdfunding to prevent your group from shutting down, that's ok if you only do it once. Who can you rely on to donate e.g. trustees, volunteers, friends or family members? Send your campaign link to them first to build up the first few donations - people are more inclined to give if they see others have done so first. Plan your publicity before you start. You could: Share on social media, using inspiring content to encourage resharing. Identify social media 'influencers' e.g. celebrities or others with large followings and ask them if they can share the campaign for you. Post regular updates and keep encouraging people to share to help you reach your target. Send the campaign link out in newsletters and via appropriate mailing lists. Write a press release for magazines, papers, radio and tv, particularly the LGBT media.

**Benefit Night** – Running an event in your local LGBT venue can bring in some quick cash and help raise local awareness of your services. A quiz, games night, party or other themed event could be a winner with your local LGBT community. A raffle or bucket collection on the night will bring in extra cash. This type of event is unlikely to raise thousands unless you have some celebrities on board or another way to make the event extra special. You could also ask supporters, trustees and volunteers to organise their own mini benefits. This may just be a gathering of their friends for dinner or other social event, at which they ask for donations; it could be a fundraising coffee morning at their workplace; or a more formal event. They may even do something such as shaving their head, giving up smoking, alcohol or a favourite food in return for the cash. Let them decide as long as it's ethical, quick and doesn't take up your own time.

**Apply for grants with imminent deadlines** – Grants are not usually a quick source of cash as it can take 3 months plus to hear the outcome of your bid. However, some funders have faster processes and, if you apply shortly before the deadline, you may hear the outcome within a couple of weeks. Have a look at local authority small grants programmes, Police and Crime Commissioner funds, your local Community Foundation and any relevant charitable trusts you have on your list or can find. Read the terms and conditions to see how long you can expect to wait for their decision. Grants are usually intended for project funding, but you may be able to raise running costs too – include core costs in project budgets. If your group is in danger of going under, reach out to funders on the telephone first to see if they consider an emergency appeal. If you're a local service provider, your local authority's Communities team may be able to work with you to find some cash so that you can carry on providing important services for LGBT people. It's best if you've already established a relationship with them, however.



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**If you have any other proven fast-fundraising ideas, let us know!**