## Planning an Event

No matter what type of event you are thinking of organising, you will need to think about
- *when* to hold it
- *where* the best location is,
- *what* you are going to do
- *how* you are going to organise and promote it and *who* to,
- possible event sponsorship.

If this is the first time you have organised an event, you may wish to start with something small and follow these guidelines to help things run smoothly. You can always do a larger scale event next time.

### When?
- Check that the planned date of your event doesn't clash with any major events locally & nationally that you feel will impact on your event
- Think about what time of year will be most suitable for your event. For example, an outdoor fun run is much more likely to be rained off in the winter
- Pick a realistic date, giving yourself plenty of time to prepare.

### Where?
- Make sure the location is easy to find, has enough capacity and parking, and is accessible for disabled guests
- If you need to hire a venue, have a look around first.  Also, approach the venue well in advance so you have a better chance of your date being available
- Discuss your requirements with the venue manager.  Tell them what you want it for and they may even let you have it for free.  If not, ask for a charity discount – if you don't ask, you won't get
- If you're planning to hold an outdoor event in a public place such as a park, make sure you get in touch with the authority and find out about any restrictions or permit/licence requirements
- Set a budget for your event and stick to it! Think about how many people you will need to break-even
- Always try to keep costs as low as possible and always try to source as much as you can for free
- If you want to hold a raffle, quiz, or something with prizes, ask local businesses to donate prizes in return for publicity and contact your Regional Fundraiser for guidance on lotteries/ raffles

- Know your 'critical dates' such as when you might be liable for payments, what the cancellation policy is and when you need to confirm numbers to your venue
- Once you have a date and venue confirmed, get the word out.  You could get posters printed and ask committee members to put them up at work, in your local community centres, schools or colleges, supermarkets or even in the library

- You could promote the event in your newsletter, on your website, facebook, twitter, and you could ask your neighbouring branches and groups to promote it as well.
- Ask your friends and family to help you – and ask them to promote your event to everyone they know too.

Please complete a Risk Assessment form for your chosen venue.  Further information is available on the Volunteer Zone.


**Who?**
- Who would you like to attend your event, and who is most likely to want to come?
- If this is an active event, try spreading the word with local running or cycling clubs, or if it's a special evening event, make sure everyone in the local community knows.
- It's important that you target the right people to ensure you generate enough interest.


**Publicity**
Contact your local newspaper, radio or TV station about your fundraising, they may like to run a feature on your activities.  Remember to let them know about your activities and then send a press release.  Further information on using the local media and writing a press release is available in the awareness raising section on the Volunteer Zone

- The media always prefers personal interest stories. Explain to them why you are taking part and what your connection is to MND
- Include some facts about MND (we can provide you with these – our key messages are available on the Volunteer Zone)
- When sending documents and images, always put them in the body of your email.  Journalists are more likely to use information in a format they like
- Include quotes in your press release
- Keep information short and to the point
- Try to get them to include details of how people can donate, for example, your online giving page address if applicable
- Give them a follow-up call to remind them to publicise it and find out when it will appear
- Afterwards, why not send them photos from your event along with how much you raised, to announce your success.

**Event Sponsorship**

It may be worth considering possible sponsorship of your event or parts of the event in terms of covering some of the costs or donating auction/ raffle prizes early in your event planning.

If you are going to make an approach to local/ national companies be clear in writing what you are asking for i.e. covering some of the event costs stating what is required i,e, venue costs or auction/ raffle prizes and how much is required and what benefit this will be bring to people who are supported by us.  Companies will often be interested in how much you anticipate your event will raise, the numbers of people attending and what the funds will be used for.

Companies often consider local asks for local needs.  Before approaching a company please check through your Regional Fundraiser if the Association or other branches/ groups have made any recent approaches to the same company.

If you receive any sponsorship from a company consider advertising/ mentioning this in your event programme/ posters etc where appropriate and with the company's expressed permission.

In the event of gaining sponsorship for your event be sure to feedback how much was raised after the event and if appropriate ask if the company would consider supporting us again in the future.


**After the event**
- Make sure you collect all of your monies and bank appropriately.
- Please send a high resolution photo to us by email so we can use these within our communications – please remember to ask for permission from those in the photographs before sending them into us
- Remember to thank everyone involved and tell them how much you raised and what difference that will make to people living with MND.


> **For more information contact your Regional Fundraiser or the Volunteering Team:**
> Phone: 0345 6044 150
> Email: volunteering@mndassociation.org
> Website: www.mndassociation.org/volunteerzone