

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

FUNDRAISING for...

If you want to raise funds in order to put on an RE event, here are some suggestions to help you in what may seem a daunting task. In fact it may not be as difficult as you might think.

Begin by brainstorming – who do you know? Think about your existing network; family, friends, colleagues are an obvious place to start. Make a list of all your possible contacts who may be able to help you, either with fundraising ideas or practical and commercial help.

Then widen your field – parents, local community contacts, colleagues in other schools, faith community contacts, advisers, voluntary work contacts. What about people from your past who pop up on your list of Facebook friends- do they perhaps work for a cash rich organisation? Is there a local business or community group which could help, either with a cash donation, or perhaps prizes for competitions? Would it be worth placing a notice somewhere in your community that might attract offers of help, or could you write a letter to your local newspaper?

The secret is to be creative, imaginative and bold. It costs nothing to send an email, and even if no money is available or forthcoming, your request is still a way of promoting *Celebrating RE* month, and you may be offered use of a venue or perhaps a competition prize.

School based fundraising

Cake sales, fashion shows, mufti days, printing mugs or t-shirts, quiz nights, sponsored events, talent shows...

There are quite a few money raising possibilities to be found on the internet if you are stuck for an original idea. A quick Google search for 'Fundraising ideas for schools' will bring up a multitude of suggestions – some more readily usable than others. You will probably already know the kind of thing that works in your school or community.



CELEBRATING RE

If you are short of time why not establish a student committee who can take over all the organising and publicity for a fundraising event? Later on they could perhaps even take responsibility for the logistics of the event itself, if they prove to be an effective team.

R.E. specific fundraising events could be targeted at specific groups of children, and can be part of learning about a range of cultural experiences and observances.

'Food, faith and festivals' works well with all ages (including parents, if you're lucky), and fashion or talent shows are popular with teenagers.

Your school may have a policy on fundraising and it is important to follow the usual protocol. Consult with colleagues and gain the support of your headteacher, to highlight your efforts for your RE event and raise the profile of the subject in school. Governors may be worth approaching when planning curriculum based events, particularly if you are in a secondary school and have an RE link governor. The PTA could be a good source of help for school community fundraising events.

Electronic donations

You could set up a Just Giving or Virgin Money page for your event (again, this would have to be in line with your school's policy). This is the easiest way to collect sponsor money and donations on line. You can create your own page that promotes your event and explains exactly what you are trying to raise money for. Anyone can set up a page. These companies will calculate Gift Aid tax refunds for you, and donors can see a running total of money given as well as leaving a personal message of support. Be aware that a fee, usually around 5% is deducted for administration costs of the site.

www.justgiving.com

www.virginmoneygiving.com



Where else can you apply for money?

Local trusts and charities

This is a difficult time for all voluntary organisations which are struggling with reduced income from investment interest and the reduction in donations and subscriptions. If you already have contacts at a local charity or educational trust it may still be worth asking for help. Large charities which have an educational remit may be willing to work with you, as well as share contacts and expertise.

If thinking in very local terms, try your town library or information office. They may have details of organisations which, historically, were established to promote education or social cohesion in the local community, or know about local charities with very specific remits. Try to investigate whether any of these organisations have religious education as their focus; if they do, you may be able to apply for a grant or donation.

Contact your SACRE

It may be worth contacting your local SACRE. Tell them of the event you are planning, ask if they have any spare budget for special events, and ask them to raise it at their next meeting. Look at their website for further details. Sometimes individual SACRE representatives (e.g. of faith communities or teacher professional associations) are prepared to make a donation in kind, such as a prize for a competition.

Local Businesses

Contact local businesses and ask for a financial contribution to your project, to fund either part or all of it depending on the size of the business. What about support 'in kind'? A local company might donate prizes; a coach company could offer a coach journey for an offsite visit. For instance you could ask if they would consider offering a free trip to one or more places of worship or religious centres. When contacting local business, emphasise long term benefits and their contribution to the local community. Try approaching initially by phone, both to introduce yourself and to get an idea of possible support. A formal follow-up by email or letter could then confirm what you are asking for. If you choose 'Learning outside the classroom' as your focus, you could perhaps ask for a donation or subsidy towards travel to a place of worship that is further afield.

National trusts and charities

There is money available for suitable RE activities through some Church College Trusts – you may already know of these. Examples include The Culham Educational Foundation and The All Saints Educational Trust.

Look in the RE Directory for addresses

www.theredirectory.org.uk/trusts

If you decide to apply you will need to act quickly as they usually only meet once a term.

Local Faith Communities

Approach your local church and invite its members to support your RE event either financially or through a donation in kind. Other faith groups you have school links with may also be a source of help. Could they offer you space to display students' work or a meeting room for a debate or performance? Ask them to help you advertise your events and so get their extended community interested and involved.

Donations in kind

People or groups may be willing to help with contributions, particularly if they are 'cash poor'. Could you use their venue, perhaps in return for a skill or resources you may have (e.g. offering them a training session on effective ways of working with schools in RE)?

Refreshments are important to successful events and perhaps these could be offered to you. You can but ask!



Applying for a grant

If you decide to apply for a grant from a larger charitable organisation there will be some time and writing involved. Successful applicants for grants will have done some homework about the fund and perhaps looked at examples of previous successful applicants. Make sure that you include details about the number of young people potentially involved who will benefit from the activity, as well as details of how the money will be spent.

To inspire donors, why not give examples of previous successful events? Finally, stress the likely impact of the event and its positive effects on learning and social cohesion.

Cross curricular links with RE

Be creative when you think about what you might bid for. Could you join forces with another department in your school to put forward a stronger bid that may help you raise the funds you need? For instance, joining with the geography department may enable you both to benefit from funds from an environmental source. An international event such as Climate Week would offer an opportunity for RE students to focus on Green issues and faith in a climate change context. You could approach geographical and environmental sources together for possible financial support.

Do your homework before you submit your bid. Make sure that you are clear about exactly what the money will be used for and stress the likely impact of the money you request.

Colleagues in other schools

If you are not part of a local RE network why not start one? Contact a school near you and see if you can combine forces to fund raise and promote local events. Your local SACRE or NATRE group could also help you connect with others (see www.natre.org.uk).

