

Northwestern Memorial Foundation

# Toolkit for Planning Community Fundraising Events





# Fundraising together to put patients first

Thank you for your interest in fundraising on behalf of Northwestern Medicine. Because we are a nonprofit healthcare system, support from our community is instrumental in achieving our mission of putting patients first and advancing health care from discovery to delivery.

Hosting your own fundraising event is a fun and rewarding way to work with your friends and give back to your community. We welcome events of any size; all the money you raise will support the program that matters most to you. Dedicated fundraisers like you help Northwestern Medicine deliver world-class,

compassionate care so our patients can live longer, healthier lives.

Whether this is your first event or you're a veteran fundraiser, this guide can give you the tools to make your event a success. On the pages that follow, you'll find:

- › A basic checklist for successful planning
- › Creative event ideas
- › A brief description of setting up fundraising online
- › Tips for promoting your event



# Bringing your fundraiser to life

## Here are some ways we can help:

- › Identify an area of interest within Northwestern Medicine that you can support.
- › Share fundraising best practices.
- › Provide use and guidance of Northwestern Medicine's online fundraising platform, DonorDrive.
- › Create and sign a letter of authorization to validate the authenticity of the event.
- › Send tax receipts to donors who make donations directly to Northwestern Memorial Foundation, the fundraising branch of Northwestern Medicine, or any of its affiliates.
- › Generate fundraising reports as requested after the event.

## Your responsibilities before, during and after the event will include:

- › All event-related expenses
- › Promoting your event
- › Creating communication materials, posters, etc.
- › Recruiting and managing volunteers
- › Obtaining all necessary permits and/or event insurance

Ready to get started? Email [nmfevents@nm.org](mailto:nmfevents@nm.org) to tell us about your event.



# Planning and growing your event

Knowing in advance the different parts of planning an event will help you recruit volunteers for different tasks. It will also help you grow the event to its fullest fundraising potential. Here's a basic checklist:

- ☐ **Set a goal.**

Setting a fundraising goal is an essential step to help you track your progress, motivate your donors, and measure your impact year after year.

- ☐ **Get organized.**

Create a plan of action for yourself or form a committee to support you throughout the planning and execution of your event.

- ☐ **Identify your target audience.**

Consider those in your community who are likely to attend and have an affinity for the area you are supporting.

- ☐ **Choose the right event format.**

The type of event you choose should fit the size, interests and goals of you, your committee and your audience.

- ☐ **Develop a budget.**

Identify all the potential expenses for your event (invitations, postage, rental space, signage, food and catering, promotional materials, website, advertising, etc.). Then think about possible sources of funds, and people and companies you know who may be able to donate products (food, equipment) or services (design, printing, photography) to reduce your costs and maximize your donation to Northwestern Medicine.

- ☐ **Spread the word.**

Develop a promotional plan that will best reach your audience. This plan could involve your own social media, community businesses or organizations, and local media outlets.

- ☐ **Collect and mail donations.**

Set up your online fundraising page with our help, or send us a check from your event.

- ☐ **Say thank you.**

Show your donors how much you appreciate their support with a thank-you note, email or follow-up call. Consider creating a post-event recap that celebrates your success. This could serve as an additional way to thank those who supported your event, especially the businesses who helped make it happen. Building these relationships is essential in making your event successful year after year.

- ☐ **Grow the future of your event.**

Build on your success by setting a date for your next event. Plan to repeat what worked well, develop your skills in fundraising through online resources, speak to our team for tips or attend a fundraising conference.



## Creative event ideas

Fundraisers can be large or small, and they can also be a lot of fun for all ages. Your target audience will inform your choice. Here are some ideas to ignite your imagination:

- › Golf outing
- › Walk-a-thon
- › 5k race
- › Dance marathon
- › Field day
- › Restaurant or retail promotion
- › Step challenge
- › Carnival
- › Trivia night
- › Open mic night
- › Gala
- › Benefit concert



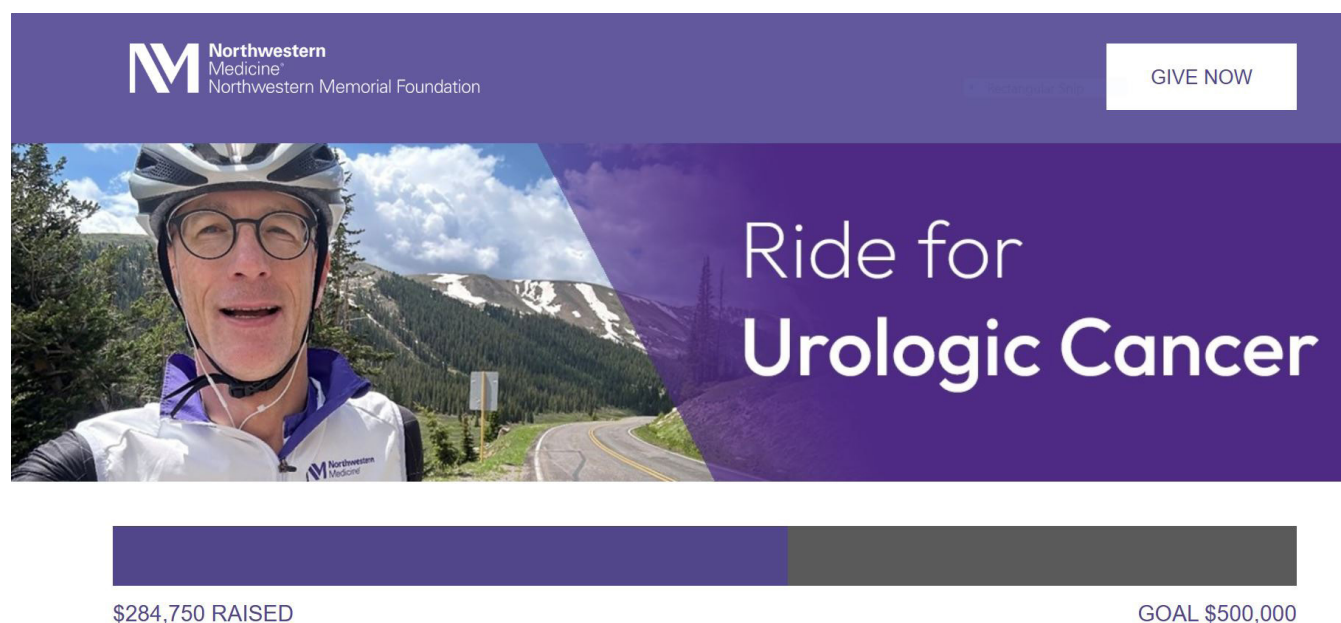


## Online fundraising

Once your event is approved, our team will give you a form to fill out with the information we need to create the fundraiser landing page. That includes:

- › Event title
- › Which Northwestern Medicine program you want to support
- › Fundraising goal
- › How long should the page be open (before and after the event date)
- › Content for the page, such as photographs, rules and other descriptions

We will give your completed form to Northwestern Memorial Foundation staff, who will build your event page on DonorDrive. This process can take 1 to 2 weeks. Once the page is ready, we will send you the link and provide donation reports on request.





# Promoting your event

These tips will help you maximize awareness of your event and motivate your donors.

## Share your own story

Tell your friends and followers why you are fundraising for Northwestern Medicine. What is your connection to this cause? Include the event details (date, time, location) and specifics on how to sign up or support your event.

## Engage your followers

Keep your community engaged by sharing updates consistently, whether in person, via email or on social media. Share your wins and behind-the-scenes photos. You can also take this opportunity to thank donors personally. Don't be shy about asking your friends to share your event with their networks.

## Engage local businesses

Post fliers in community centers, share the event in local newsletters and reach out to local businesses or media outlets to see if they are willing to amplify your event. Consider setting aside a portion of your budget for some paid advertising.

## Make a plan

Develop a communications calendar and identify target dates for sharing save-the-date reminders, invitations and fundraising updates.

## Capture it

Photos are a great way to document your event, whether for promotional purposes or simply to share with family and friends. Write out a shot list, get a mix of candid and posed photos, and be sure to get pictures with your top donors or event sponsors. Please share your best pictures with us!





# Frequently asked questions

## How will I know if Northwestern Medicine approved my event?

A member of our team will review your application within 1 business week of receiving it. Once approved, we will send you an authentication letter. Generally, the reasons events are not authorized is because the event:

- › Does not reflect the missions and values of Northwestern Medicine
- › Promotes a political party or candidate or appears to endorse political issues
- › Potentially conflicts with marketing or public relations campaigns
- › Involves Northwestern Medicine in selling tickets or coupons, telemarketing or door-to-door sales

## Can I use the Northwestern Memorial Foundation EIN for donations at my event?

We can send the tax receipts if they make donations directly to Northwestern Memorial Foundation or any of its affiliates.

Because Northwestern Medicine is not hosting your event, it is considered a third-party event. For this reason, you will not be able to use our IRS 501(c)(3) charitable classification or tax-exempt certificate.

Please note: You cannot use the Northwestern Memorial Foundation EIN in a receipt for someone who donates in kind (if they give goods such as food, or services such as music, photography, etc.). Legally, an in-kind donation to your event is considered a donation to you or your organization and not to the hospital; therefore, it is not eligible for a tax receipt from us.



## Can someone from the foundation or hospital help me plan our event?

We have a large number of events and only a limited number of staff, so we cannot work on your event directly. However, we're happy to provide guidance and best practices to get you started, and we're available to answer questions.

## Can you guarantee the attendance of physicians or staff at our event?

We cannot guarantee that Northwestern Medicine staff (including medical staff) will be able to attend or participate. If you want physicians or employees to attend your event, please describe the request in your application.

## Who can I contact if I have questions?

Email [nmfevents@nm.org](mailto:nmfevents@nm.org) or call 312.926.0674 (TTY: 711).





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**[nm.org](https://nm.org)**