

Fundraising

HOW TO GET STARTED

1. **Set a fundraising goal** - Set your goal well above the fundraising minimum for your Bike MS Ride. The average cyclist raises 2 1/2 times the minimum.

2. **Start Early.** - There are always a large variety of charity events going on. Therefore, it is always best to be the first one asking for donations.

3. **Identify Potential Donors** - Get out your address book, Rolodex, and your holiday card list. Make a list and check it twice! Don't leave anyone out.

4. **Ask, ask, ask** - Remember, you are giving your potential donors an opportunity to help people with MS. It never hurts to ask people for a donation—the worst they can say is “no.” Ask businesses, not just individuals. Ask your spouse or other family members to collect donations too.

TOP FIVE WAYS TO FUNDRAISE

1. **Your Online Participant Center:** Your donors can pledge directly online. It's easy, no envelopes to address, and no need for stamps!

2. **Matching Gifts:** Many companies have instituted matching gift programs that can increase or even double a charitable donation. Your donors can take advantage of this by asking their employers.

3. **Emails & Letter-writing:** Far and away the most effective fundraising tool. Tell your story and watch the donations roll in.

4. **Parties:** Put the FUN back in FUNdraising! By hosting a fundraising party, you can raise money and have fun at the same time.

5. **Suggest Donation Amounts:** When sending out a donation request include a contribution form that offers suggested donation amounts.



The National MS Society and eBay have formed a partnership that gives you a brand-new opportunity to help yourself while you help find a cure for the devastating effects of

MS. **Sell anything on eBay and donate from 10% to 100% of your net proceeds to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.**

Matching Gift Information

What is a “Matching Gift”? Many companies sponsor matching gift programs to encourage employees to support numerous charities and non-profit organizations. Most companies match dollar for dollar and some may even double or triple match a donors' gift.

6 EASY Steps to Receive a Matching Gift

Inquire with the Human Resources Department of your company to see if they participate in a matching gift program.

↳ If your company participates in a matching gift program, obtain their Matching Gift Form and complete the first section that is reserved for the “Donor”.

↳ Send your completed form to: National MS Society
1501 Reedsdale St., Ste 105
Pittsburgh, PA 15233

↳ Once received, we will verify the information and complete the section marked “Organization”. Please note: we may contact you for additional information during this verification. When completed, we will send the Matching Gift form to your employer.

↳ Your company will then process the request and send a check to the National MS Society.

↳ When received, we will apply the matching gift to your event contributions.

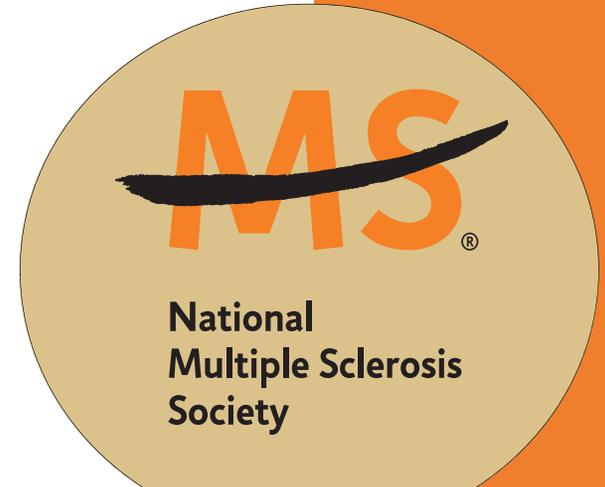
IT'S THAT SIMPLE!

Helpful Tips for Matching Gifts

Spread the Word about Matching Gifts: Encourage all of your event donors to see if their company participates in a matching gift program.

Have Matching Gift Forms when you approach your coworkers: If your company participates in a matching gift program, have the forms available when you approach your coworkers. When they make a contribution, you can hand them a form to complete. Just by informing them of this opportunity, you could double, maybe even triple your contributions. *Please remind your donors to include information on whose event campaign they are supporting so the gift will be credited to the correct event participant's account.*

The Earlier the Better: Enclosing the matching gift forms in your pledge envelope on the day of the event or even before will ensure that your matching gift will be included with your current year's prize total. To assist us in the process, please include a copy of your pledge form for the National MS Society to reference.



Fundraising Ideas

A World Free of MS

Western Pennsylvania Chapter
1501 Reedsdale Street, Suite 105
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
www.nationalMSsociety.org/PAX
Tele. 412 261 6347

Letter or Email Campaign

Every year, participants tell us that letter writing and emailing campaigns are the easiest and most successful ways to raise money.

1. **Start Early!**
2. **Make a list of everyone you know, including family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, etc.** Your holiday card list is a great place to find potential donors.
3. **Set a fundraising goal.** It's important to tell your friends and family how much you plan to raise. The average cyclist raises \$650!
4. **Personalize each letter.** A handwritten note, a picture, or a signature can all add a personal and important touch. Tell your donors, "This is why I ride." Use the sample letter on the next page or others found on our website to compose your own. Including a contribution form like the one at the bottom of the following page makes donating easier.
5. **Encourage ePledging.** One of the most convenient ways for your donors to support you is to give online. ePledging also makes it easier for you to track your fundraising. Online giving saves you money on return envelopes and postage and uses much less paper overall. By including a link to your personal page, you make it easy for your supporters to ePledge.
6. **Remember to send a THANK YOU card or email when donations come in.** Your friends and family will appreciate the recognition and are more likely to donate again in the future.

nationalMSSociety.org/PAX

Visit our website to see
101 Fundraising Ideas or to print out
Fundraising Letters, Pledge Sheets and
Receipts to help you collect donations!

Other Ideas

1. **Garage Sale** – Know all that stuff that's been hanging out in your garage? Gather it up and ask your friends to do the same. Put it in your front yard and sell, sell, sell! Put all the money raised towards your pledge!
2. **Bake Sale** – Host a bake sale with your friends. You can even have it in conjunction with your garage sale.
3. **Extra Change in My Pocket Box** – Create these little boxes for your friends and family and have them place it on their dresser. At the end of the day they can drop that spare change in the box.
4. **Office Fundraising Challenge** – Speak with everyone in your office and get them to challenge each other to raise the highest amount. Give the "winner" a prize. Maybe some movie passes? Gift certificate to dinner?
5. **Answering Machine Message** – This will alert everyone who calls you at home that you're up to something special!
6. **Return Address Labels** – Print return address labels for your outgoing mail. Print something like, "I'm riding in the Escape to the Lake Ride – Will you sponsor me?" You may want to include a pledge form and a self-addressed envelope to make it really easy for them.
7. **Ask your Local Waiter/Waitresses/Bartender to Donate a Portion of One Day's Tips** – You can create a sign for the bartender to place on the bar stating that "All tips collected tonight will go directly to "Joe Schmo" who's riding 150 miles to raise money for those people living with multiple sclerosis." If the patrons see that sign they may be willing to dig a little deeper in their pocket!
8. **Karaoke Night** – Who cares if you can't carry a tune. Spend a Friday night at a Karaoke Bar and sing your guts out! Have the announcer tell the crowd that you're singing for pledges!
9. **Curse Jar** – C'mon, everyone does it. Now they'll have to pay for it. Place a Curse Jar in your office and whenever someone says a bad word they have to open up their wallet, grab a dollar and put it in the jar.
10. **Dress Down Day** – Ask your company to allow an official Bike or Walk MS Dress Down Day. For the privilege of dressing down, employees pledge \$5.

Easy ways to use the Internet!

Personal Page/Participant Center

- Set up Your Personal Page – Your page is your invitation to the world to become involved in the movement. Here are a few hints to help make your page one to remember:
 - Make it personal – Write the story of how you are moving toward a world free of MS. While there is sample text available, nothing is more compelling than your own words.
 - Change it often – Keep your page current to generate interest. Provide updates on how your training is going or how close you are to your goal with the new blog feature.
 - Create your page URL shortcut – By doing this you will be able to easily direct people directly to your page. Put a link to your fundraising page in the signature of your email.
 - Fundraise Online – Now for the fun part! After you send your personalized e-mail to all your friends, family and colleagues, you can watch your up-to-the-minute fundraising tracker. The website automatically embeds the ePledge link into the email, so that people can click through and donate without searching for you. If you wish to send emails via your own service, we strongly recommend that you send one to yourself from the Participant Center, and then forward that one to maintain the embedded ePledge link.

Email Tag lines

- Add a signature line to both your personal and work (with permission) email accounts so that everyone you email will be informed that you are raising money for MS.

Facebook

- From your Participate Center or e-mails add Boundless Fundraising and a link and image will be added to your Facebook Page.

MySpace

- Post a bulletin about why you are fighting MS and include the link to your participant center.
- Write a blog about your training, fundraising goals, etc. and make sure to link it back to your participant page.

Ten Great Things About Our Online Tools

1. Post your pictures online
2. Set up a simple URL for your personal page
3. Set a fundraising goal that everyone can see and support!
4. Email all your sponsors at once
5. Track your fundraising progress
6. See your real time fundraising total
7. Track and thank your donors
8. Easily update your page and photo