

PRSSA



2024-2025

FUNdraising Playbook & Sponsorship Guide

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Like a PPro

Community Media Training

Inspired by: Greek Media Training by Indiana University

Earned: \$1,200

How: Invite local business owners, nonprofit heads and other student organizations to a summit on how to promote their cause/business/club effectively on social media! Charge an entrance fee, network and make the most of the skills you know best.

Why: This may lead to future presentations/work opportunities with the community. It can also be used as a recruitment opportunity. Your Chapter will meet a wide array of prospective members.

Oh Snaps!

Inspired by: Oh Snaps! Professional Headshots to Start Your Professional Career! by Sam Houston State University, Sick of the Selfie? Headshot Fundraiser by Grand Valley State University, Headshot Fundraiser by University of Florida, and Headshot Days by the University of Texas at Austin.

Earned: \$210~\$520

How: Grab a camera and set up a tripod in front of a cool background, famous university building or a scenic landscape. Charge a fee per headshot.

Why: Make connections with other young professionals on campus! Hosting a headshot fundraiser provides a cost-effective way for students looking to update their LinkedIn, portfolios, etc. to get professional headshots, and raises awareness of PRSSA. Especially useful during the spring before graduation or during summer internship application season.

T-Shirt Fundraiser

Inspired by: Ohio Northern University

How: Host a t-shirt fundraiser partnering with your local community.

- Identify any games or local events in your community.
- Reach out to the organizers of these events to explore potential partnerships for selling event-themed t-shirts.

Why: By launching a t-shirt fundraiser for a local tournament, you will not only secure funding for your PRSSA Chapter but also cultivate a sense of camaraderie within your community. Moreover, reaching out to local events serves as a powerful platform to showcase the values and benefits of PRSSA, while simultaneously introducing the broader community to the exciting world of public relations.

Internship Expo

Inspired by: Internship Expo by Eastern Connecticut University

Earned: \$500

How: Find a space on-campus to host a career/internships expo for public relations/communications related majors. Contact recruiters in your area a few months in advance to encourage them to attend and purchase a booth. Optional to charge a fee for student entrance in addition to, or instead, of an exhibitor fee.

Why: Practice your pitching skills and get to know recruiters yourself! Scope out internships you're interested in and give your Chapter members a chance to further their professional development by attending.

Survey Says

Inspired by: Hainesport Public School Survey by Rowan University

Earned: \$550

How: Identify a business in your community to conduct research for. Contract payment per completed survey. Additionally, you can offer to analyze and provide reports on the findings of your survey to assist the client.

Why: Give your experience in research, insights and data-driven marketing. Data and insights are the backbone of all great and successful campaigns!

Media Contact List Fundraiser

Inspired by: Media Contact List Fundraiser by Grand Valley State University and Media Guide by University of Memphis

Earned: \$650–5,000

How: Create a Chapter committee of researchers to compile a list of local media contacts to sell to nonprofits, local businesses, event planners and more! Optional: Instead of just getting the contacts information via an online search, reach out to local media sources personally to form relationships that may further benefit your Chapter!

Why: This fundraiser allows for your Chapter to network with local media outlets. This may help you secure coverage and opportunities in the future!

Intern-for-a-Day Auction

Inspired by: Gold Picks Intern-for-a-Day Auction by Colorado State University

How: Conduct a live auction, but the twist is the prizes are Chapter members serving as an intern for the day! Invite local businesses, agencies and nonprofits who may need assistance with media, marketing and public relations. Make sure to set clear terms for the intern's responsibilities and clearly coordinate a day for the intern following the event. Don't forget to invite your PRSA Sponsor Chapter!

Why: This is a great opportunity to form relationships with the local public relations community and a chance for Chapter members to get industry experience for their resume!

Seal the Deal

Fundraising Ideas Related to Sales

Introduction

Selling a product on campus or in the community is a great way to raise funds for your Chapter. Planning a sales-based fundraiser can be done for one day or multiple days and can easily be made in to an annual source of income. To start your sales fundraiser consider these things:

What Will You Sell?

Survey your target consumer, think about what you would purchase and check out what other organizations are selling, see what is being sold and performing well on campus, or maybe go a completely different direction! You want a product that your consumers will be interested in and won't pass by to buy from another organization. Consider the funds you have to purchase the products you will sell as well. Some ideas of what to sell include:

- Baked Goods (cookies, donuts, muffins, etc.)
- Magazines
- T-shirts
- Flowers
- Holiday Themed Bags
- Candy
- Coffee/Hot Drinks
- Pizza
- Partner with another organization and sell their product/art
- Letters/valentines/notes to send to friends on campus
- Concessions/snack food

When Will You Sell?

Having a holiday themed sale can be a great way to drive sales! Try selling flowers on Valentine's Day for those who forgot them or coordinate with football season to sell concessions around tailgates. Timing is key. It's all about being strategic and offering your product at the right time and place. Coordinate your product with the season or if you are selling outside be sure it's a nice day to get the most customers.

Where Will You Sell?

Make sure you are in an area where your target consumer will see you and can easily access your set up. You want people to pass your product multiple times so they can continue to consider if they want to buy something from you. Make sure your product also fits the environment. For example, snack sales would be better at a tailgate and coffee might be better sold inside when less people are walking around outside in the winter.

Make Some Dough Fundraiser

Inspired by: Shippensburg University

Earned: \$600

How: Find the closest donut shop to your campus. Schedule the delivery or pick-up date. Print out order forms for Chapter members. And start selling!

Why: This is a low-stress fundraiser that's versatile to the Chapter's needs. You can customize the length of the fundraiser and what is sold.

Host With the Most

Fundraising Ideas Based on Hosting Events

Date Auction Fundraiser

Inspired by: A Match Made on Seventh by the Fashion Institute of Technology, Mr. Millersville by Millersville University, Bobcat Date Auction by Georgia College and State University, Mr. Wildcat 2011 by Indiana Wesleyan University, “Boy Toy” Auction by Rowan University

Earned: \$500–\$1,000

How: Rally up some volunteers from your Chapter and other student organizations, sports and Greek Life to participate in a date auction. Have attendees bid on contestants for a date with the participants. Have each participant write a little bio/speech about who they are looking for in a date and why people should bid on them. At the auction, a host has to read each speech and participants bid based on contestants’ bios. Consider providing food, music and some other raffles as well!

Why: Bring campus together for a fun social event that raises money for your organization. Be sure to have a PRSSA booth at the event to promote your organization as well.

Taste-Off

Inspired by: Hometown Taste-off by Northern Michigan University, Cardinal Chili Challenge by Ball State University

Earned: \$800

How: Challenge students organizations, local restaurants or the community to put their dish to the test! Either choose one standard dish for participants to prepare, such as mac and cheese or pizza, or have them whip up their specialty. Sell taste test tickets and have attendees vote for their favorite. Remember participants will need a count of how many mouths they need to feed so make sure to give them enough time to prepare.

Why: This will help your Chapter make connections with local businesses, restaurants, other student organizations and the community at large. Be sure to have a PRSSA booth at the event to promote your organization as well.

PRSSA Raffle

Inspired by: PRSSA Raffle by Universidad de San Martín de Porres

Earned: \$500

How: Start by choosing three prizes for the raffle:

- Consider buying tickets for a concert of a famous band or artist that’s coming to your city.
- You could partner with different start-ups. Offer your services (doing research for them or creating a social media strategy) in exchange for some of their products.

Once you’ve chosen your prizes, assign each Chapter member a number of raffles to sell. Record each sale and remember to contact the winners once they’re announced.

Why: Help Chapter members practice their pitching and negotiation skills! Also, while selling raffles, they’ll have to explain what PRSSA is and why they are doing a fundraising activity. This is a great opportunity to connect with prospective members and get people from your community to know you.

Battle of the Bands

Inspired by: Fourth Annual Charleston Battle of the Bands by the University of Charleston

Earned: \$1,400

How: Reach out to local bands and your university's music department to participate in a battle of the bands competition! Find a venue (music hall, performing arts center, local restaurant or bar) for bands to rock out for attendees to vote on their favorite performance. Figure out a prize for the winner, such as cash or time at a local/university studio.

Why: This is a great networking opportunity and can increase exposure for your Chapter to reach into the community and across campus. Be sure to promote PRSSA at your event.

5K Fundraiser

Inspired by: The Running Dead 5K by Louisiana State University

Earned: \$1,611.36

How: Host a mile run/walk on campus, in a local park or around town. Be sure to involve the local community members to ensure you are not disrupting any paths with runners. Give your run a theme such as:

- **Zombie Run** – Have volunteers dress as zombies and chase runners at parts of the race.
- **Color Run** – Bring some color to campus with a color run event! Have volunteers stationed at points along the run to throw colored dust at runners. (Be sure the dust is safe and you have permission to make a mess.)

Why: Planning events is a huge part of public relations. Runs require a lot of unique attention in planning. Your Chapter members will need to recruit and coordinate volunteers, discuss the event with local authorities or university staff and promote the event.

University Idol

Inspired by: WVSU State Idol by West Virginia State University

Earned: \$1,375

How: Organize an "America Idol" style singing competition with local singers. Have a variety of different rounds themed with certain styles of music and have the audience select who they think should be your next university idol star. Offer a prize for the winner such as a slot to sing at a local venue, cash or time at a local recording studio. Charge an entrance fee for attendees.

Why: This event can benefit Chapter members interested in entertainment and music PR. The event will need a host and a photographer, be sure to select students who are outgoing and interested in the music industry to add to their resume! This can be a great exposure opportunity to the community as well, be sure to have information about PRSSA there.

Paws with Claus

Inspired by: Paws with Claus by Michigan State University

Earned: \$680

How: Have a photographer and volunteer Santa Claus set up shop to take pictures with locals pets. Charge a fee for owners to get a picture sent to them digitally. Additionally, you can hold pet-related raffles.

Why: This is a very fun, timely event. If you are looking for a holiday fundraiser, this can be a unique idea from selling baked goods or candy canes! This also gives a members a chance to practice their photography skills.

Sports Tournament

Inspired by: Golf Tournament by the University of North Carolina at Pembroke and Volleyball Tournament Fundraiser by The Ohio State University

How: Choose your sport and invite all students to participate in some friendly competition. Participants must pay to play and are welcomed to organize their own teams or be placed onto a team if they are registering as an individual player. Play tournament-style games until time runs out. Afterwards, host a raffle for participants to win prizes.

Why: This is a great opportunity to network with other campus organizations. Focus not only on recruitment from these organizations but potential cross-events you can host, projects you can work on together, and opportunities to practice PR for them to allow your members to get more experience.

Additionally, playing sports is a great way for people to bond, practice teamwork, and network with their teammates and competition while on and off the court. Most importantly, successful teams must practice the best communication between themselves.

Restaurant/Bar Benefit Night

Inspired by: Downtown Dive Bar Fundraiser by Cleveland State University, Samurai Japanese Steakhouse by Rowan University, Applebee's Dining to Donate by Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, Raise a Bunch at Brunch by SUNY Oswego, Kona Bistro Community Night by Miami University Ohio, Mad River Social by Temple University, Big Daddy's FUNdraiser by Southern Illinois University, Spring Wine Trail Outing by Southern Illinois University

Earned: \$100-\$400

How: Contract a "benefit night" with a local restaurant. This can be done in three ways:

- **Percentage Night:** Select a date and time slot where restaurants donate back a percentage of sales made. This can also apply to cover charges or tabs for a local bar.
- **Ticket Sales:** Sell tickets to an all-you-can-eat or designated menu meal at a local restaurant for full return on sales or percentage of sales profit back. This can also apply to a discounted cover or a drink special with a specific wristband or ticket at a bar.
- **Food/Drink Tour:** Organize a restaurant/bar crawl with a number of local restaurants. Sell tickets for people to get a taste or drink at each stop.

Why: This event can be very low stress for planning and execution. The restaurant becomes the host and your Chapter members just need to focus on promoting and getting people in the door.

Lights, Camera, Fashion!

Inspired by: Lights, Camera, Fashion! by Illinois State University

Earned: \$650

How: Ask local clothing stores to donate outfits to be shown off on the runway. Find models from around campus to represent their organization and walk the runway. Include special events in your fashion show to keep it interesting, like performances from local dance groups or singers, a raffle and more.

Why: This is a great way to network with local organizations and the community. This is also a great opportunity for members to practice public speaking as hosts and for those interested in fashion and beauty PR to get more relevant experience.

Best of Broadway

Inspired by: Best of Broadway by Montclair State University

Earned: \$8,000

How: Contract local musical theater performers or some of Broadway's best to perform a showcase of Broadway's greatest hits. Charge admission for those interested in watching the performance or add a "dinner and a show" component and charge for admission and food. Additionally, you may host a raffle of Broadway/performance related giveaways.

Why: This can be a major opportunity to build relationships with strong music influencers. Partnering with music organizations can open doors to music industry and performing arts related PR opportunities for your members. Promoting a large art and culture event like this can also expand your reach in to the community for brand exposure.

Non-alcoholic Happy Hour

Inspired by: Non-alcoholic Happy Hour by the University of Texas at Austin.

Earnings: Profit will come from tickets for the event, estimated prices: \$8 for members, \$12 for non-member students, and around \$20 for industry professionals.

*Profit margin dependent on the cost of drink materials/appetizers.

How: Host a "Happy Hour" event with members and industry professionals to create a casual opportunity for networking.
*For this event, Texas PRSSA partnered with a unique department at their university called SHIFT to make the drinks for the event.

Why: Casual networking opportunities like this are very common in the professional world. This event gives students a chance to get comfortable in these settings – and grow their network while they do so. It can also lead to more industry professionals wanting to get involved with the Chapter as mentors or donors.

Professional Development Workshop

Inspired by: Professional Development Workshop by Universidad de Medellín

How: Invite all students to a Professional Development Workshop. Host multiple sessions, such as "How to Enhance Your LinkedIn Profile," "Improve Your Public Speaking Skills" and "Setting and Achieving SMART Professional Development Goals." Charge an entrance fee for attendees.

Why: Hosting a Professional Development Workshop can bring multiple benefits to both your Chapter members and the wider school community, including skill development, networking opportunities, leadership development, school community engagement and unique learning opportunities. Additionally, it is a great opportunity to connect with prospective members and enhance the visibility and reputation of your PRSSA Chapter within your community.

Promoting Your Fundraiser

Introduction

The most important part of your fundraiser is making a profit! Make sure the target audience for your fundraiser knows about your plans.

Promotion Ideas

- **Make an eye-catching flyer:** Design a flyer for your event that is fun, provide the information needed to participate in the fundraiser and where/when it will be.
- **Alert the media:** Write a press release about the event to send to local radio and news outlets. Let them know not only what the fundraiser is, but why you are holding it and why they should cover it.
- **Get social:** Promote you fundraiser on social media using graphics and tagging organizations that you think would be interested in participating. If you are including any other businesses or organizations in the fundraiser be sure they are promoting the event on their social channels.
- **Make a class visit:** If your fundraiser is targeted to a specific major or academic audience ask professors of those classes if they can make an announcement in class or if you can visit and speak at the beginning of class.

Sponsorship

What is it?

Sponsorship is more than putting a logo on a t-shirt or slapping a sticker on the back of your car. Sponsorship is forming a relationship with a business or organization who provides funds, materials, resources or services to another organization, event or cause. The key word is relationship; sponsorship is all about building positive relationships and mutual benefits.

How Can My Chapter Use Sponsorship?

Putting on a large event? Hosting a District Conference? Trying to cut costs for members attending International Conference? You need sponsorship! Sponsors help cut out of pocket costs for your Chapter and can develop into great partnerships that renew yearly, open up internship and mentorship opportunities by established organization leaders.

Who Should I ask to be a Sponsor?

This depends on what you are seeking sponsorship for. For example:

- **International Conference:** Local agencies and firms, family members, friends, professional network, student government association, college of communications/journalism, local PRSA Chapter.
- **District Conference:** Local restaurants, small businesses, local firms and agencies, former/current internship employers, locally based brands, local PRSA Chapter, professional network, college admissions office, PRSSA Alumni and college alumni.
- **Fundraising/Event Materials:** Local businesses, local restaurants, external student organizations, college of communications/journalism.

Consider how well your “ask” aligns with the mission, product or interests of the organization you are asking.

Best Practices

- **Never ask a sponsor to “Donate”:** Ask them to “Join in supporting your Chapter”, “Help build future professionals”. Make their contribution about them also.
- **Get personal:** Make the direct ask to a sponsor. Social media and email asks are great but sponsors love to see exactly who they are supporting.
- **Back it up with facts:** Highlight how your “ask” helps students in your Chapter. Utilize success stories from past events, conference attendance, etc.
- **Send a thank you:** ALWAYS send a thank you for your sponsors, even if you shout them out on social media. Personalized notes can be the gateway to a lasting sponsorship partner.
- **Be on brand:** Always utilize branded letterhead, make sure it is clear who is making the ask!
- **Make it worthwhile:** Provide specific incentives for sponsorship based on the amount/type of sponsorship they provide. Ensure potential sponsors see this as a mutually beneficial partnership. Potential incentives:
 - Verbal acknowledgment at event
 - Logo placement on program, website and/or event signs
 - Ability to distribute handouts
 - Access to attendee email list
 - Social media content

Templates

District Conference/Event Corporate Sponsorship



Dear **SPONSOR NAME**,

The **UNIVERSITY NAME** Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) Chapter would like to invite you to participate in our **DISTRICT CONFERENCE TITLE/EVENT** as a corporate sponsor. The conference will be held on **DATE** in **LOCATION/FORMAT**. It will feature **INFORMATION ABOUT CONFERENCE/EVENT**.

This event is expected to be highly attended by **ATTENDEE INFO (DEMOGRAPHICS AND EXPECTED NUMBERS)**. Furthermore, your support will be broadcast to the full network of current PRSSA members.

Sponsorship opportunities are available at different levels.

Sponsor Level 1: \$ Amount

- INCENTIVES

Sponsor Level 2: \$ Amount

- INCENTIVES

Sponsor Level 3: \$ Amount

- INCENTIVES

Our goal is to keep this student led, student focused society affordable for attendees. If you are interested in covering the cost of attendees through a scholarship donation, we are happy to discuss that format further. If you would like to discuss a customized sponsorship opportunity or to participate as a corporate sponsor please contact **CONTACT INFO (DIRECTOR OF SPONSORSHIP NAME, EMAIL, PHONE, WEBSITE, ETC.)**.

In-Kind Donation Letter for Event/Community Service

CHAPTER NAME SEEKS DONATIONS TO SUPPORT **EVENT NAME/CAUSE**

On **DATE**, **CHAPTER NAME** will be holding **EVENT NAME** at **LOCATION**. The organization is currently seeking in-kind donations for **NEED/EVENT (IF APPLICABLE- TO BENEFIT CAUSE)**.

CAUSE INFORMATION/EVENT INFORMATION.

Businesses interesting in supporting **CHAPTER NAME/EVENT NAME/CAUSE NAME** are welcome to donate **IN-KIND ASK**. PRSSA is grateful for any donation and thanks you for supporting its efforts in **REASON FOR EVENT**.

PRSSA is willing to pick-up any item at the most convenient time for you before **DATE**. If you have any questions please contact **CONTACT**. Thank you for your interested and support!

Crowdfunding

What is it?

Crowdfunding is a method of raising funds through small donations by individuals/organizations to a larger fundraising goal. By utilizing the collective effort of a large number of individuals, organizations can reach their targets over time through marketing the campaign on social media, through email marketing, personal asks, etc.

Why Crowdfund?

Crowdfunding platforms have a pre-established large reach to investors and business owners looking to support meaningful projects. These websites are also easy to share via email, social media, etc. It can be less expensive and time consuming than mailing letters or putting flyers around your community.

Crowdfunding Websites

- **GoFundMe:** This platform is great for personal causes, such as funding a trip to ICON. Once your GoFundMe starts receiving online donations, you can request a withdrawal at any time. Withdrawing money does not affect the progress meter displayed on your fundraiser.
 - *Fees:* There's no fee to start or manage your fundraiser. However, a transaction fee of 2.9% + \$0.30 is automatically deducted from each donation received.
- **Indiegogo:** This site is great for creating campaigns for tech innovations, creative works, and community projects. You can choose between two crowdfunding options: a fixed funding or a flexible funding. If you choose a fixed funding, all donations are returned to contributors if you don't meet your set goal. If you choose a flexible funding, you can keep all donations even if you don't meet your set goal.
 - *Fees:* 5% platform fee, transaction fee of 2.9% + \$0.30.
- **GiveCampus:** This platform is specifically designed for any cause related to a university or school, such as funding student travel. Allows for creation of specific forms that can be completed on any device easily.
 - *Fees:* Requires individual university subscription, ask your college if they have an account.

Crowdfunding Examples

- ["Support our Latin American PRSSA Chapters' Journey to the Leadership Assembly"](#)
- ["Shippensburg PRSSA Chapter Seeks Donations"](#)
- ["Help support the next generation of PR leaders!"](#) (PRes Play District Conference, DePaul University)

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