



Fundraising for a Blue Ventures Expedition: The entertaining way to pay

conservation
education
research

A practical guide to help you with this challenging pre-expedition task

Planning

First and foremost, the most important questions to ask yourself are **'how much?'** and **'by when?'**

Start off by drawing up a total expenditure list. This will include the cost of the expedition, travel expenses, insurance, vaccinations and expedition equipment that you may not already have or are unable to borrow. The next step is to calculate how much time you have before departing on your Blue Ventures research expedition and set yourself **realistic** fundraising targets to match over that time.

If you plan well in advance, you will increase your chances of being successful, and can also plan around times when you will be unable to fundraise e.g. during work and holidays. Vary your activities to keep things enjoyable and interesting, but if you find an event particularly profitable, by all means stick to this winning formula, perhaps targeted a different audience. A useful tip whilst fundraising is to set up a separate bank account from your personal savings. Accounts with limited access will not only help prevent accidental spending, but they also usually have higher interest rates, all

adding to your total target. It is worth investigating a few bank or building society accounts to see which offers the best scheme or incentives.



Also, when collecting any sponsorship money, please ensure you use the Gift Aid scheme. This is a system that allows charities to claim a tax rebate of 28% from the government on donations made by tax paying individuals. For more information refer to the following page of the Blue Ventures website:

www.blueventures.org/ourstory_donations_uk.htm

The following pages contain a variety of methods that you may want to use to fundraise for your expedition. There is no set way to fundraise, and you can combine as many of the suggestions as you see fit in the time you have. Or alternatively, use this as inspiration for your own ideas – we welcome any recommendations our volunteers may have.

Personal contribution

Perhaps the most obvious way to start fundraising is by setting aside a portion of your weekly salary or, for those of you who are unemployed, to start thinking about temporary entrepreneurial and money-spinning ventures. Offering to do odd jobs for friends and family such as ironing, cleaning, gardening, walking dogs etc, may be a great alternative if you are struggling to find part-time work. Remember to advertise yourself well (how you advertise will be dependent on who you are offering the service to, e.g. posters or leaflets or word-of-mouth?), and always remember to make a note of any bookings you have.

If you're fed up of temping, why not cash in on

your own skills? Catering for fundraising dinner parties and organising cake sales have been extremely successful events in the past. Budding artists might enjoy designing and selling cards, T-shirts, badges, sketches, or trying your hand at face painting. Graduates and academics have found advertising their services for private tuition to be a particularly lucrative fundraising initiative. If you're a big kid at heart perhaps try monopolising the baby-sitting in your area. If you're a hoarder, pull out your junk and get down to the local car boot sale. Keen writers or photographers could pledge to sell copies of their expedition diary or artistic photographs on their return.

Use friends and family as contacts and to spread the word of what you are up to. But remember that a big effort on your part to raise the money will encourage others to help you too, once they see your commitment and enthusiasm to the project.

Sponsored Activities



Neil Madigan (volunteer December 2004) jumping out of a plane to raise money for Blue Ventures Conservation.

In the past, volunteers have enjoyed undertaking a huge variety of sponsored events, including sponsored marathons, skydives (check out www.skylineadventure.demon.co.uk), triathlons, cycles, and even rowing the length of the Thames.

You could increase public awareness and invite the local newspaper along to report your sponsored event. Below is an example of the publicity Kate Jackson (2005 volunteer) got for her sponsored swim between Bournemouth pier and Boscombe pier.

Splash out for Kate's mission

By CHRIS CARSON

A BRIDPORT woman is hoping residents will splash out when she stages a sponsored swim next month.

Kate Jackson, 25, of West Bay Road, needs to find £1,780 to finance a six-week aid expedition to Madagascar.

And she is hoping to raise most of the money by tackling the tricky mile-and-a-half swim between Bournemouth and Boscombe piers.

Kate has signed up for a marine conservation project run by the Blue Ventures Organisation. It focuses on preservation and scientific research of the surrounding coral reef in the south of Madagascar.

Volunteers also take part in local socio-economic projects with the indigenous Vezo people and other local environmental conservation work.

"As one of the poorest nations in the third world, Madagascar has suffered a great deal of economic hardship in the past few decades," said Kate.

"The registered charity Blue



PIER PRESSURE: Kate Jackson who is planning a fundraising swim from Bournemouth to Boscombe.

Ventures is one of the non-profit making organisations which have helped to alleviate some of the hardship."

Now Kate needs to come up with the money to pay for her trip and is planning her big swim early in September - depending

on the tides and weather Bournemouth lifeguards have offered to paddle alongside her to see all goes well - the swim involves some tricky tidal conditions.

She said: "I will be paying for my own flights and necessary equipment and in the unlikely event that I raise any surplus it will be distributed directly to the registered charities Anafidy and Feedback Trust both based in Madagascar.

"I would be thrilled if any local businesses were able to contribute any amount of sponsorship towards my swim."

Kate who works for an aerospace company in Wimborne added that she had always wanted to be a marine biologist.

"But my GCSE biology teacher put an end to that - at my parents' evening he said, 'well as we all know Kate is never going to make a scientist'. But I can at least give it a go. I have felt chained to my desk and feel the need to give something back to society."

Any local businesses or individuals who wish to sponsor Kate should send their cheque made payable to Mrs K A Jackson Blue Ventures at 50 West Bay Road Bridport, DT6 3QQ.

helmets standing in the snow on local high streets, and 'male mermaids' on pub-crawls. With a touch of imagination, opportunities for ridiculous fundraising activities are endless!

"...it's not every day the public see someone in a wetsuit with a bucket standing in the middle of Liverpool town centre, but despite being initially daunting, it was great fun and very rewarding. I raised around £35 an hour!"
(Mike Cowdy, 2004 volunteer)

There are great opportunities to combine your fundraising activities with helping the local community. Not only does this widen your targeted potential sponsors, but adds to the publicity of both the event and the ultimate expedition.

People also tend to be more willing to make donations when something is being provided for them or their local area benefits in some way, and is a great starting point for getting them interested in your overseas conservation project. Cleaning cars and washing window-screens at supermarket car parks (with permission) is an obvious service and always does well. Or maybe, on a more conservation-oriented slant, you could arrange a sponsored litter pick-up on a local beach or a regularly used footpath, and you will be bound to meet up with more potential sponsors along the way. Why not ask your local council if they have any ideas....



Above, Richard Selway shortly after running the Flora 2004 London Marathon in aid of Blue Ventures Conservation.

Also, think about clubs and sports teams etc. you might be a member of. Is there an event you can hold with them, or even ask for individual sponsorship from? Remember, it advisable you try not to hold too many sponsored events if you just end up keep targeting the same people – there is only so much sponsorship people will be willing/able to give.

Events

It may be possible to fundraise your entire costs from one event, bearing in mind that organisation is crucial. Well-advertised club nights have previously raised over £2000. Raffles and lotteries can be successful, especially if you are able to get prizes donated from local companies, but you must abide by licensing laws where operating outside an academic institution - if in doubt, contact The Gaming Board for Great Britain on +44 (0) 20 7306 6200. A lottery licence can be acquired through your local council, it costs around £35 and lasts a whole year. Bear in mind that the conditions do state that raffle tickets be printed professionally. Auctions are also a great idea - sell your friends as slaves or get the prizes donated! Alternatively, organise a fashion show, concert, pub quiz, treasure hunt, jumble sale, sports tournament, blind date night....

Remember to use all resources to advertise the event; Blue Ventures can supply posters as well as sample lectures (or even a lecturer!) for the event itself. Minimise costs by finding a free venue and by getting as much donated as possible - again offer sponsors publicity e.g. their names on the tickets/posters. And finally, always check if you need a permit.

Sponsorship and Donations

Writing letters asking for sponsorship and donations can be a very lucrative and time-effective way to raise funds, but only if you target potential sponsors well. A sponsorship campaign **must** have a clearly defined strategy, in which you focus on marketing yourself well to potential sponsors and donors.

It's worth taking time to draw up a list of names and addresses of potential sponsors or donors, to see what may be available to you. Grant-giving organisations and charitable trusts are great places to start, although remember that many charities are very specific about who they will sponsor, so research the guidelines well before sending any letters. You can get hold of a copy of *The Directory of Grant-Making Trusts* (published annually by the Charities Aid Foundation) from your local library, which will give you a comprehensive list to search through.



Companies also often set aside finances for sponsorship such as this, as they win tax advantages through giving charitable donations. However, it is important to remember that companies will not give money away for nothing and you'll be expected to offer something in return. See the 'letter content' section later in this handbook for examples of advertising opportunities you can offer companies. An alternative to monetary sponsorship from companies would be to ask for donations or part donations on equipment they sell that you will need for the expedition. Targeting smaller businesses is often more successful than multinationals, as well as approaching those with

a specific interest in Madagascar, diving or conservation. Or you can also try relevant exploration societies with similar interests.

The letter itself is crucial, so spend some time drafting this and refer to the following guidelines. Any documentation that you produce in support of your participation in the project should aim to address these points. NB. you can save time by drafting a general letter that you can then easily tailor for each individual company/charity.

Letter Aesthetics

- Your letter should be easy to read and one page only, any further relevant information can be included as an attachment.
- Think about presentation. Given that Blue Ventures is a conservation organisation, using recycled paper would be appropriate and consistent with the aims of Blue Ventures.. Letters that appear to have been printed in bulk are more likely to end up in the bin than those that are personalised. Therefore avoid writing 'Dear Sir/Madam' and only address it to the most appropriate person. If in any doubt, make sure you take the time to telephone the company or trust's secretary to find out the relevant contact before sending the letter. You might even think about hand-writing the letters - the more effort put in on your part will mean more effort put in on the reader's part. For example, from our experience, as well as that of past BV volunteers, e-mailed requests are rarely even considered.

Letter Content

- You should stress that Blue Ventures is a

marine conservation organisation and give details on what our work aims to achieve, outlining the project and its importance on a wider scale. Sponsors will want to know why the work of Blue Ventures in Madagascar is so important, in terms of conservation, education and research. Detailed information about all our work can be found in the research section of the Blue Ventures website, at <http://www.blueventures.org/researcheducation.htm>

- Explain why your participation in a Blue Ventures expedition is critical to the sustainability of the research programme on site: without volunteers, we're unable to continue our research.
- Market yourself and the personal development that you stand to gain from the project. Discuss the ways in which you personally will benefit the expedition and what you hope to gain from it in terms of experience, skills and development.



- Mention the efforts you have already made for fundraising and specify the target you need to reach. It's advisable to provide a clear-cut breakdown of your target, perhaps as an attachment. This

will show the reader exactly where the money goes; towards getting you out there, running the operation and overseas research costs. For example, you might suggest that your target sponsors you for one of the following:

- a day out in the field;
- a specific piece of equipment; or
- a day's worth of fuel on the research boat (£50)

For further examples and ideas don't hesitate to drop us a line in the Blue Ventures London office.

- Be prepared to offer something in return. Promise a report or slide show for family and friends when you get back. Unlike private donors, companies will be more interested in publicity – tell them explicitly what they stand to gain from supporting you on this expedition. Perhaps the best way of doing this is through emphasising to them the PR and advertising opportunities that their association with you may bring them: you could offer to put their logo on your expedition T-shirt and contact your local newspaper about printing a photo and article about your project, in which you personally thank the company. You might target companies that specialise in travel or diving equipment and request that they donate a rucksack or wetsuit to be tested out in the field, for which you will provide a report, as well as photos of their equipment being used in one of the most beautiful environments in the world!

Finally, always remember to include your contact details- these are easily forgotten



If you fail to hear from the recipient, do follow up the letter with a call to check that they received it and ask whether they can help: it's far harder to say 'no' on the phone! Or even drop in and try to sell your case face-to-face.

And finally...keep your promises and also send thank you letters both at the time of donation and on completion of the project. You might want to ask these people for sponsorship another time and so might future Blue Ventures volunteers.

Scholarships and awards

Students, school leavers, and employees of many companies are often eligible for travel awards, scholarships, bursaries and prizes. These come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and eligibility varies widely depending on your age, experience, and the organisation or institution to which you belong.

Blue Ventures will be happy to speak to employers about the benefits of sending employees on an expedition, or can supply a 'letter of participation' detailing the same. In the past, a range of

organisations have sponsored employees on Blue Ventures expeditions. From small independent businesses to large multinational firms, they have all acknowledged the invaluable leadership skills and personal development experience that volunteers acquire whilst working on a Blue Ventures project.

In offices and academic institutions, more information about grants, bursaries, studentships and travel awards can normally be found on departmental websites or notice boards. School leavers and students should also check out university and careers magazines for information of specific awards.

It's also worth approaching social clubs such as Rotary clubs, Inner Wheel groups, and Probus clubs. These also often have funds set aside for



awards to people wanting to do voluntary work. We hope that you have found the information contained in this guide useful, and that it has been able to provide you with some insight into the multitude of different fundraising options that are available to help you participate in a BV expedition. With sensible planning and preparation, fundraising can be an effective and

enjoyable means of funding your way on a Blue Ventures expedition.

ONE LAST IMPORTANT POINT

If you are fundraising, please ensure to let Blue Ventures know exactly how much was raised, because fundraised money must, by law, be accounted for properly. It is recommended that you initially use money you have raised to purchase your equipment and your flights. If you raise more than enough to cover these, please ensure to send us the rest of this separately from the money you are contributing personally.

GOOD LUCK!

Useful publications and websites

- For further ideas and information on fundraising, have a look at any of the following publications.

The Complete Fundraising Handbook - Sam Clarke and Michael Norton

Raising Money For Good Causes: A Starter Guide - Jane Sutherland and Mike Eastwood

The Complete Fundraising Handbook, and Tried and Tested Ideas for Raising Money Locally - published by The Directory of Social Change, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2DP. Tel: 020 7209 5151

Ideas Annual - published by the Scottish Community Education Council, Rosebury House, Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5E2. Tel: 0131 313 2488

Tried and Tested Ideas for Raising Money Locally: Small and Medium-Scale Events, and Good Ideas for Raising Serious Money: Large-Scale Event Plans and Organising Local Events - Sarah Passingham

- If you're thinking of writing letters to trusts...

The Directory of Grant-Making Trusts - published by The Charities Aid Foundation

Avoiding the wastepaper basket - A practical guide for applying to grant-making trusts - Tim Cook

The Environmental Funding Guide – published by The Directory of Social Change

Association of Charitable Foundations website - www.acf.org.uk "Applying for Funding"

For books referenced here, plus forums, try <http://www.fundraising.co.uk>

For general fundraising issues, <http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk>