

# 101 FUNDRAISING IDEAS



- 1. House Party** –This is a sure-fire way to fund raise. The National MS Society Staff will be happy to give you some tidbits.
- 2. Corporate Matching Gift** –Ask your company to match the amount of pledges you receive from your fellow co-workers.
- 3. Your own Personal Friend Matching Gift** –Ask a friend to see if they can investigate getting their company to match pledges.
- 4. Corporate Sponsorship** –Identify one or several large companies and contact them directly. They may be willing to sponsor you completely.
- 5. Garage Sale** – Know all that stuff that’s been hanging out in your garage...in your attic...in your basement? 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 toward your pledge minimum!
- 6. Bake Sale** –Become Julia Child (and ask your friends to do the same) and host a bake sale. You can even have it in conjunction with your garage sale. It’s a fact that people will buy more stuff on an empty stomach!
- 7. 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.
- 8. Start your own Extra Change Box** –Keep a jar near your door and every day put all your extra coins in it. It adds up. Or put it on your desk at work –others will join you.
- 9. 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?
- 10. Answering Machine Message** – This will alert everyone who calls you at home that you’re up to something special! Let them know that you need their support!

- 11. Return Address Labels** –Print return address labels for your outgoing mail. Print something like, “I’m riding in the Great Mass Getaway – Will you sponsor me?” You may want to include a pledge form and a self-addressed envelope to make it really easy for them.
- 12. Internet Chat Rooms** – post a message on an Internet chat room. You’d be amazed at how many people you don’t even know who will be willing to help you.
- 13. Web Site Creation** –Create your own website about your journey. Send an email to everyone on your contact list and invite them to visit the website. You can do this by registering online or asking the National MS Society to set up an online account for you.
- 14. Ask your Local Waiter/Waitresses to Donate a Portion of One Day’s Tips**–Ask your local waiters and waitresses to donate a portion of their tips to your cause.
- 15. Ask your Local Bartender to Donate a Portion of One Day’s Tips**–Same as the waiters and waitresses. Ask them to donate tips from one night. You can create a sign for the bartender to place on the bar stating that “All tips collected tonight will go directly to “Judy Walker” who’s riding 50 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!
- 16. Ask your Local Restaurants to Place a Money Jar at the Front of the Restaurant** –Check with the restaurant manager. They may be willing to place the jar in a high traffic area so lots of patrons can see it.
- 17. Fundraising Dinner at Your Local Favorite Restaurant** –Ask your favorite local restaurant to host a Fundraising Dinner for you. They supply the food and you supply the pledge forms!
- 18. Happy Hour Party** –Invite all your friends (and their friends!) and get them to sign your Walk, Bike, or Challenge T-shirt. Charge \$10 per signature.
- 19. Theme Party/Dinner** –Hold a theme party for 10 (or more) of your friends. Donation: \$50 per person. Spend no more than \$20 per person on the food and you’ll have \$300 (or more) in pledges by the end of the night.



- 20. Movie Ticket Donation** –Ask your local movie house to donate several movie tickets. Sell them and put the money toward your pledges.
- 21. Host a Movie Party at Your House** –Pick up a new flick at your local movie store, make some popcorn, pick up some soda and invite your friends and family over for movie night. Of course have your pledge forms ready to go!
- 22. Local Theater to Donate Tickets to a Performance** –Ask a local theater to donate a couple tickets to one of their plays or musicals and auction them off.
- 23. Birthday Gift Pledge** – This is a very simple way to raise money and it'll be a lot easier for your friends and family to write you a check instead of spending hours trying to shop for you!
- 24. Delegate** –Give 10 of your friends 10 pledge forms each and ask them to help raise money for you.
- 25. Creative Friends** –Find a local artist or ask a creative friend if they would donate a piece of art or some jewelry that you could auction off.
- 26. House Warming Party** –Are you moving anytime soon? If so, ask your friends to make a pledge instead of purchasing a gift for your new place.
- 27. Color Pledge Forms** –These can be very eye-catching. Send them in colored envelopes, too. These will stand out among your friends' bills and stuff.
- 28. Signing your Correspondence** –Get in the habit of signing your note cards and letters with your name and Walker/Rider number. You'll be surprised at how many people will ask you what that means.
- 29. Business Cards** –Print up some inexpensive business cards (you can even do it on your own computer). Have all the pertinent information on the card including your name, rider/walker number, name of the event and your address (or PO Box #). Hand these out to everyone you meet!
- 30. Travel Agency** –Do you always make your travel plans through the same agency? Ask them to donate a travel voucher. You can auction it off at one of your parties.
- 31. Doctor/Therapist/Veterinarian/Insurance Agent** –Ask him/her to make a check out for you instead of the other way around!
- 32. Dentist** – Hopefully you won't have to pull teeth to get him/her to help you out a little!
- 33. Chiropractor** –They've cracked your back. Now ask them to crack open their checkbook and make a pledge.
- 34. Yoga Instructor** – You've bent over backwards for them...now it's their turn to do the same for you!
- 35. Radio Station** –Call your favorite radio station and ask them to make an announcement on the air. They may even interview you. Pledges can be sent directly to the pledge office.



- 36. Gym** –Ask you gym to place a Pledge Jar at the front desk! Leave a stack of pledge forms at the counter, too.
- 37. Spinning Class** –Have a stack of pledge forms with you and ask your spinning instructor to make an announcement in class.
- 38. Hair Salon** –Ask your barber or hairdresser to donate \$2 of every haircut they complete over one weekend.
- 39. Picnics** –National Holiday Picnics are a great place to raise some pledges!
- 40. Mow-a-thon** –Get your kids involved in this weekend activity. Check ahead of time with all your neighbors and ask them if you can mow their lawn for \$50.
- 41. Neighbor** –Write to all your neighbors on your block (or in your building). Attach a letter stating what you're training for and ask them to make a donation.
- 42. Free Rent!** – Ask your landlord to donate one month's rent to the cause!
- 43. Good Karma Tipping Jar** –Ask local businesses to put one of those jars near the register or on their front counter. Tape of picture of yourself near your bike and short explanation of why you're raising money.
- 44. Errand Boy/Girl** –Offer to be your friends and coworkers personal assistant for a day (or maybe for just a few hours) in exchange for a large donation. Maybe \$250 or more!
- 45. Garden Tour** –Check with a local historical society to see if they would sponsor a garden tour of one or several homes in your area. Promote the event in local newspapers.
- 46. Meet the Press** –Does your company distribute a newsletter? Does your company have interoffice email? Take advantage of these! It's a perfect way to get the word out.
- 47. Baby-Sitting** –Offer up your services and let your friends have a nice, quiet night out of the house!
- 48. Pet Sit** – Are your neighbors going away and they don't want to leave "Spot" at the boarding facility? Again, offer up your services and charge them what they would have had to pay at the facility!
- 49. House Sit** –Friends going out of town for a while? Maybe they need a warm body to stay in their place in their absence!
- 50. Neighborhood Chores** –Are you a Mr. Or Ms. Fix-it? A lot of your neighbors would probably rather pay you than someone else. Place signs around your neighborhood advertising your services (i.e. watering gardens, cleaning roof gutters, sweeping the driveway, fixing an easy plumbing problem, painting a room, etc.).
- 51. 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!



**52. Talented Friends** –Do you have a little piano bar in your neighborhood and a talented piano playing friend? Ask the owner to let you bring some friends in one night for a cocktail and piano night. Charge anyone who attends and let them know that it's a fundraising event for California AIDS Ride.

**53. eBay.com** –Remember the garage sale idea? How 'bout rounding up the goods from your friends and putting it all in eBay.com to be auctioned off?

**54. Company Vacation Days** –Ask your boss or human resources director if they can swap one of your vacation days for a day's pay.

**55. Sell Spokes** –Sell each spoke of your wheels for \$20 each.

**56. In Memory of...** – If you're riding in memory of a loved one, include a picture of you with your loved one in your pledge letter, on posters, etc.

**57. Pledges for Each Day on the Ride** –Ask people to pledge an amount for each day on the Ride. Remember, they can pledge over a 10-month period – \$50 minimum if it's on the credit card. Translation = \$50/day over 7 days means you will receive \$350 from each person.

**58. Pet Birthday Party** –This might sound a little dorky, BUT people love their pets. And they love other pets...even yours. Get the word out that if they were thinking about buying "Sparky" if new toy maybe they should think about writing a check out to the National MS Society instead!

**59. Television Show Finale Party** –Remember M\*A\*S\*H? Remember when Ross married Rachel? Remember when Jerry, George, Elaine and Kramer ended up in jail? How about when Niles and Daphne sped off in an RV on the "Frasier" finale last year? It'd be fun to gather a big group and friends to tune in to watch a big season or series finale. Of course, charge 'em at the door and put the \$\$ toward your pledges.

**60. Game Night** –Get out those board games and start playing! Break into teams and let the fun begin.

**61. Host a Poker Game** –call your serious (or not so serious) card-playin' friends invite them over for poker night.

- 62. Bowling Nights** –plan a fun night of bowling at your local lanes. Ask the owner to waive the cost of bowling and you can collect that money and turn it into pledges.
- 63. Used Book Sale** –Everyone has books that have been sitting on shelves or in the attic in boxes or in the basement collecting dust. Ask your friends, family and neighbors to donate whatever they've got and set up a little weekend book sale in your front yard. Put up some signs so people will know where the money is going. Once they know that they may even give you more money! And in the words of Martha Stewart, "That's a good thing."
- 64. Local Stores** –Ask a local store manager what the hot selling item is these days and THEN ask them if they'd be willing to donate a percent of the sales from that particular item to you.
- 65. 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.
- 66. Dress Down Day** –Ask your company to allow an official MS Challenge/Bike MS or Walk MS Dress Down Day. For the privilege of dressing down, employees pledge \$20.
- 67. Company Grants** –Find out if your company offers grants to employees who volunteer their time for charitable causes. If so, you can volunteer your time at the Central & Eastern Virginia Chapter office and get paid grant money (pledges!) for the work. You may need a letter from us stating that you'll be volunteering in the office and we'd be happy to make that happen.
- 68. Church Bulletin** –place an advertisement in your Church bulletin letting the congregation know what you're up to!
- 69. Is there a Teacher in the House?** –Get your students to help you fundraise. Kids are incredibly creative and cute, too!!
- 70. Other Parents** –If your kids play on soccer leagues or any other sports teams distribute your pledge forms to the other parents at the event.
- 71. Ride/Walk Along** –Ask a potential donor to ride along on one of your training rides. They may be more willing to donate once they fully understand what you've committed to doing!
- 72. Remind Them** – In case you didn't receive an answer the first time you asked...ask again! Your potential donor may need a little coaxing.
- 73. Inspirational Book Marks** –Create them and sell them to your friends and family.
- 74. Universities and Colleges** –Contact your local schools and ask if you can put an advertisement in their school newsletter asking for donations. Some of the organizations may even invite you to make a short presentation.
- 75. Bicycle Companies** – Contact a couple of the big bike companies. Tell them what you're training for and ask them if they would like to sponsor you for the entire amount! You may even get some cool riding gear, too. Ask big and ye shall receive!

- 76. Computer Screen Savers** –Create a walk MS/bike MS/MS Challenge screen saver and send it to everyone in your company! A gentle reminder is a good reminder!
- 77. Mechanic** – You’ve given ‘em lots of money to work on your car. Now it’s time for them to give a little back to you!
- 78. Rock On!** –If you know any musicians, ask them to perform a benefit concert. Tell people that their admission ticket is a check made out to National MS Society.
- 79. Share the Ride** –Tell your story. The more you talk about your upcoming adventure, the more people will share in that excitement and want to pledge to you.
- 80. Children’s Party**–Throw on that Barney outfit and get out there! The kids will be having fun as their parents are writing you pledge checks!
- 81. Wine and Cheese Party** –Host a party at a local restaurant and ask the owner to donate the wine and cheese.
- 82. Temporary Tattoos** –Swap a temporary tattoo for a pledge.
- 83. Do you have a Favorite Magazine?** –Call the editor and ask them to sponsor you on the Ride. If you’ve subscribed to a particular magazine for a long time they may be willing to give something back to you.
- 84. Fraternities and Sororities** –Contact the national chapter of your college fraternity or sorority and ask them to make a donation.
- 85. Alumni Organizations** –Call your own college or university and ask them to place an ad in the alumni newsletter asking for donations.
- 86. Ask for the Right Amount** –Take a good look at who you’re asking for donations and make sure you ask for the right amount. Don’t ask for \$100 if you know they can pledge \$1,000.





- 87. Beneficiaries –** Get to know them well. You'll be asked where the money is going and it will be very impressive to a potential donor if you're able to speak eloquently about it.
- 88. Make your own Contribution –**Lead the way by making your pledge first.
- 89. Be a Massage Therapist for a Day –**For every contribution of \$100 offer a massage to the donor.
- 90. Pizza Party –**Check out your local Pizzeria –they have a great deal to help you fundraise.
- 91. Clubs and Organizations –**Send a solicitation letter to your local Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Kiwanis, etc. They support individuals in their communities.
- 92. Shop at Wal-Mart –**Some Wal-Marts have a Sunshine Fund to support individuals in the community.
- 93. Raffle –**Everyone that contributes is entered into a raffle to win a special item such as a homemade quilt or concert tickets.
- 94. Contact your Local Paper and get an Article.** Make sure that you put in information about how people can contribute. And have a photo ready to go!
- 95. Ask Someone You Don't Know for Money!**
- 96. Send Updates on your Training and a Reminder on how to Support you in your Efforts.**
- 97. Write to your Local Politicians!** You supported them don't you think they should support you?
- 98. Send a Letter or Email Asking for Support to EVERYONE you Know.**
- 99. Don't get Discouraged!**
- 100. Start Now! –**The earlier you begin fundraising the better off you'll be. You'll be able to go way beyond your pledge minimum and then can focus on your training.

