

# University

**PRACTICAL ACTION**

Technology challenging poverty



**Representing Practical Action  
at your University**

# handbook

**Thank you for taking the first step towards joining us in challenging poverty worldwide. Here you will find all the information you need to support us through your university community.**

It will provide a guideline for raising funds to support Practical Action in working with poor communities to develop technologies and share innovative knowledge, enabling them to find solutions to their most crucial needs. We focus on improving access to energy, sustainable agriculture, urban water, sanitation and waste services and disaster risk reduction. In this guide you will see how you

can campaign and initiate vital conversations on these issues.

This role will help you to develop invaluable skills for your future career and provide a context to your studies.

Thank you for actively supporting Practical Action's work. Enjoy reading through this pack and getting started!







“ *Development does not start with goods; it starts with people and their education, organisation and discipline*”

*E. F. Schumacher  
- Founder of Practical Action  
and author of  
‘Small is beautiful’*

## Contents:

- Fundraising
- 3 Getting Started
- 4 Organising an event
- 5 Promoting your event
- 6 Press coverage
- 8 Organising a discussion
- 9 Take practical action
- 9 Your CV

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# Getting started

## Getting sponsored:

Once you have decided on your event or challenge, ask everyone you know to sponsor you, and then ask them to share your challenge with others, and encourage them to give too!

Online fundraising pages are really effective and easy to manage - they are secure, fast and easy to share. There's also the more traditional method of using a paper sponsor form or getting people to donate via text-giving.

## Fundraising online and by text:

Sign up for a free account with either JustGiving or Virgin Money Giving – it's really simple to do!



Make the **name of your page** catchy and personal



Include a **fundraising target** to encourage people to give generously, and let them know how you are getting on



**Tell your story** – describe your challenge, what motivated you to take it on, why you're supporting Practical Action. Don't forget to include a link to Practical Action's website: [www.practicalaction.org](http://www.practicalaction.org)



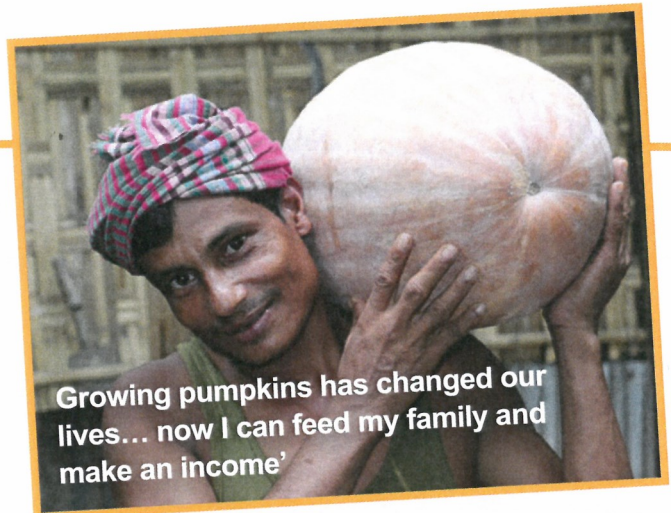
**Add highlights and updates** to your page regularly to keep other people motivated towards your cause.



**Share your fundraising page** link in as many places as possible - we recommend regularly posting about your fundraising page on Facebook, Twitter and other social networks.

## Tips for sponsorship:

- **Ask close friends and family to sponsor you first** – Close friends and family are most likely to be generous when supporting your fundraising efforts. Ask them first before sending to others, to help set the trend!
- **Matched funding** – Some companies will match the amount that you raise for charity. Ask your employer whether they operate a scheme of this type, as this could double your total raised!
- **After the event** – Make sure you send updates and say thank you to everyone that sponsored you or made a donation. Donations still come in after an event is held, so put out one final post to encourage those last few gifts!



## giftaid it

Gift aid is simple – it costs you nothing but increases the value of your donations to Practical Action... If you and your sponsors are UK tax payers, through the Gift Aid scheme your donations could be worth 25% more! Gift Aid is explained fully when you sign up for a JustGiving or Virgin Giving page, or alternatively, visit [www.practicalaction.org/giftaid](http://www.practicalaction.org/giftaid) for more details.



# Organising an event

There are a few things you need to consider if you're organising an event, but it's most likely going to be successful if you plan it carefully!

## What?

Make sure you've decided on the event whether it be a coffee morning, a disco, dinner, party or auction

## When?

Have you chosen the optimal date and time? Make sure it doesn't clash with any big national or sporting events and it's at a time when people are more likely to attend

## Where?

Have you chosen and booked the best venue you can for the right number of people?

## Promoting it!



**Get Publicity** - Contact the local media, radio and tv - our press release template will give you a head start, and our Media Officer can help out too



**Get online** - Use Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Blogs, Videos and photos to let everyone see what you are doing, how your preparations are going and how the event goes



**Advertise** - stick up our posters at work, church, community centre, local supermarket - get permission first though



**Materials** - we have posters, balloons and Practical Action T-shirts to help your promotion

## Countdown to the event

### The Week before

- Double check the details; make sure that any bookings are confirmed; venue, food, dj etc
- Who's coming? Are your guests invited or have you advertised and promoted your event to enough people?
- Does everyone know what they have to do? Delegating jobs takes a lot of the work off you.
- Have you reminded the media about what you are doing?

### On the day

- Make sure people know you're doing the event for Practical Action – call us to get lots of posters, leaflets and balloons, and don't forget to wear your fabulous Practical Action t-shirt!
- Have fun, get lots of photos and video footage and raise lots of money! – photos and films are great promotional bits for us
- Remember your initial motivation for the event and feel very proud of what you are doing – cherish the moment.





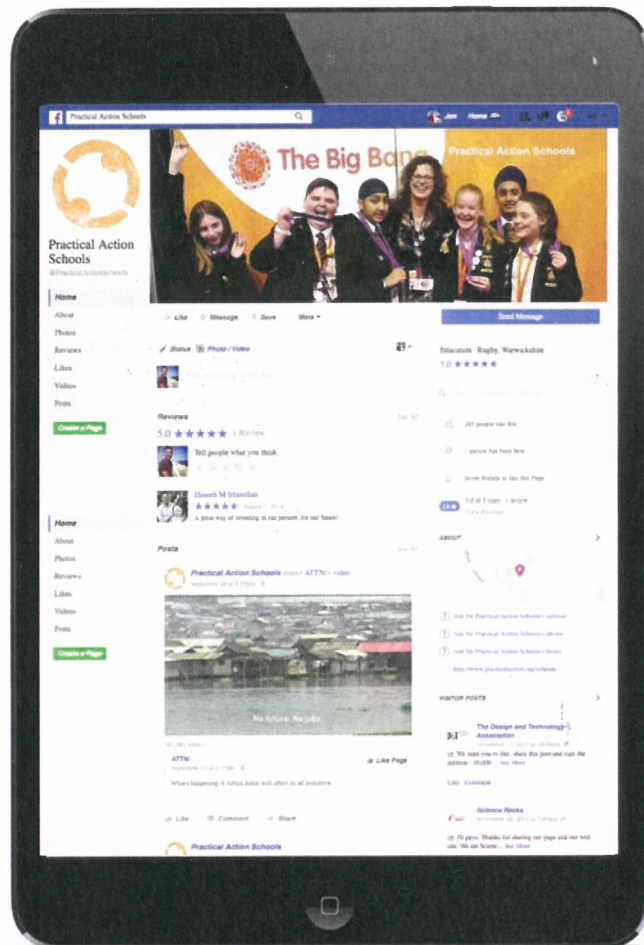
# Promoting your event

## Social media

Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram are brilliant fundraising tools. Some tips for using social media for fundraising are:

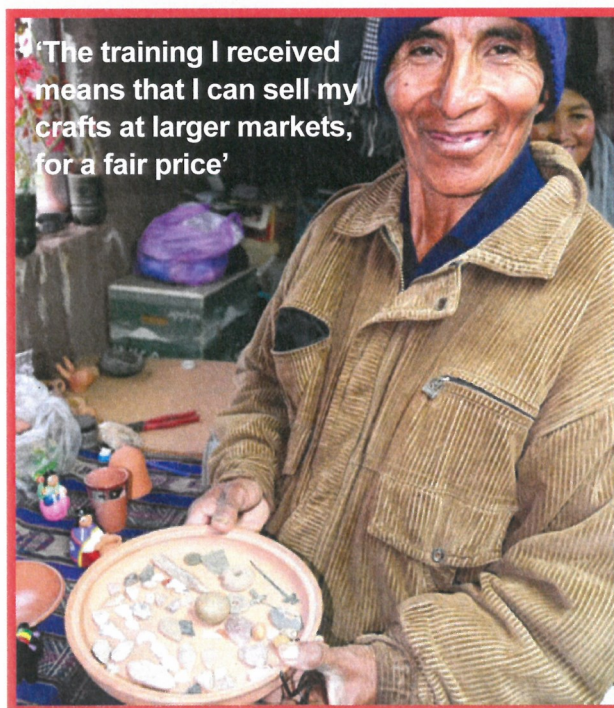
- **Create a page to describe what you're doing and why** – make it personal, and include stories and photographs
- **Show your progress**, and update with a thank you message or video at the end of the event
- **Use links to Practical Action's website** and videos to illustrate why you are raising money
- **Prompt people to like, share and re-tweet** your posts to encourage donations and support

Like Comment Share



## Fundraising materials

Get in touch with the team at Practical Action at [fundraising@practicalaction.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@practicalaction.org.uk) to see how we can help you out with fundraising materials.





# Press coverage

We at Practical Action are really proud of what we do, and because you are doing something special to support our life-changing projects – you should be too!



'With the power provided by the project I can now work and make an income to look after my son'



To help you prepare, we have put together some simple tips for writing a concise, interesting story for the press:

- 1) Shape your press release template to suit your event or challenge
- 2) Make sure you emphasise the local angle
- 3) Sum up the key story in the first 30 words
- 4) Include a quote from yourself or one of your supporters
- 5) Look up the contact details of the local media
- 6) Briefly explain what you are doing and ask for the email address of the person you should send your press release to.
- 7) Include a relevant photo if you have one, and remember to add your contact details
- 8) After the event send an updated photo and story



## Safe and legal

It is essential that you fundraise in a safe and legal way. There are many rules and regulations around events and fundraising so if in doubt, please seek professional advice. The Institute of Fundraising website offers invaluable advice and best practice guidelines for anyone fundraising, we urge you to visit their website when considering a fundraising event: [www.institute-offundraising.org.uk](http://www.institute-offundraising.org.uk)



### There are a few legal requirements that are a must:



**Raffles and Lotteries**— there are strict laws surrounding these which must be adhered to



**Licenses & permissions** are needed for collections - ensure that you follow the requirements of your local authority



**Alcohol** - always check to see if events and drink licenses are needed from your local council

### We also urge you to consider the following:

- Health & Safety
- Food Standards
- Insurances
- First Aid
- Carrying Money
- Electrical Equipment
- Lifting

Practical Action cannot accept liability for any problems or accidents during events raising funds for us. Please make sure that you keep it safe and legal, as well as having fun!

## After the Event/Fundraising

- The most important thing to do is thank everyone involved; whether they have donated to your cause, helped you with an event or just simply wished you luck
- Send in any offline donations and sponsorship to our head office:

**Practical Action**  
**Bourton Hall**  
**Bourton-on-Dunsmore**  
**Rugby**  
**CV23 9QZ**

- We don't advise sending cash in the post
- If you have set up an online fundraising page then the money will be automatically paid to us from your chosen site





# Organising a discussion

Facilitating a discussion in your student union or within your department of study greatly increases the awareness not only of Practical Action's work but also of the wider issues of development. On our [policy and practice website](#) you can download papers on technology justice, energy access, DRR, agriculture, urban services, climate change, markets and gender. Gather students from all manner of disciplines and engage in a progressive conversation on anything from the role of the private sector in the distribution of clean cook stoves to practical methods for empowering communities to work alongside municipalities in planning and implementing development strategies themselves.



“To talk about the future is useful only if it leads to action now.”

E. F. Schumacher

## STEM Challenge

If you feel like bringing in some practical inspiration, have a look at our STEM challenges. These have been designed for schools, but can easily be adapted for a university audience. Take the Squashed Tomato Challenge for example. This involves designing a model to move tomatoes down a mountain. Undoubtedly providing your group with an entertaining and competitive task it also can trigger a discussion looking at both specific technology but also the social impacts and resultant community collaborations it incurs. This can be found at [practicalaction.org/schools](http://practicalaction.org/schools).





# Take practical action from within your university

Fundraising is only one of the ways you can help Practical Action. An equally important mission is to raise awareness of the issues Practical Action seek to tackle, and the benefit of finding simple, sustainable solutions for both beneficiaries and the planet.

- Write an article for your university newspaper, or even the local paper. This is not only a good way to promote events but offers you the chance to communicate why the work of Practical Action is so important.
- Organise to have an interview with your student radio.
- Use your social media networks to campaign with Practical Action. Social media has such an immense impact on people's lives. As a young person, connected with other young people, you can become a fundamental part in engaging our society and highlighting serious development issues through sharing our work.
- Write to or meet with your local MP to tell them why these issues are important to you and encourage them to be part of the global conversation.



## Your CV

Representing Practical Action is not only an invaluable asset to our community but will allow you to gain essential skills transferable to any employer:

- 1) Event management
- 2) Team work – through working with a team of representatives or through your collaboration with outside actors
- 3) Communication skills – writing, promoting and successfully engaging your audience
- 4) Finance and fundraising skills – budgeting, collecting donations and managing profits
- 5) Admin duties – fundraising efforts, preparing documents
- 6) Creativity – through both fundraising, organising discussions and awareness raising
- 7) Social media – being active on social media is often becoming a significant part of many jobs





# Thank you

# and good luck!

**Practical Action**

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