

## United Way KFL&A Virtual Events Guide

As we all continue to face the impacts of this global pandemic, finding new ways to connect is more important than ever.

Special events have always been a fun, engaging way to bring your colleagues together to support your community through your local United Way. You don't have to miss out on having special events for your workplaces during a virtual campaign. This guide has been created by gathering ideas from other workplaces, to help you plan your campaign with some virtual engagement pieces.

### Adapting to Virtual Fundraising Events

With people working from home, this is a time where they might need fun and interaction with their co-workers.



### Ideas for Virtual Workplace Events

Even virtually, special events are great opportunities to engage employees and bring them together from across your organization. Here are some key event ideas:

**Silent Auctions:** Setup your fundraising auction via email or online for bidding.

- [32 Auctions](#) is a helpful online platform, free to use for setting up a virtual auction for up to 20 items, and low cost for more items.
- Gather Items: gift certificates bought from local businesses, ask management to contribute gift certificates from local businesses, or donate other items.
- Parking spots (if employees are back at work) and vacation days are always popular.
- Employees access to view auction items and submit their bids (via email, social media, or online).

**Health & Well-being Activities:** Challenge employees to pledge and set goals for themselves that make a positive impact on their personal well-being.

- Employees can choose from different healthy activities and create personal goals (e.g. drink 8 cups of water for a number of days, or make meals at home for dinner every night, walk 3 days a week, etc.).
- Employees are encouraged to share their personal goals
- Gather impact statements with photos to share online at the end.

**Walks, Runs, and Rides:** Get active with family or colleagues, outside or using virtual programs while practicing social distancing.

- Use these activities to raise donations through registration fees and/or pledges.
- Encourage employees to set their own physical goals.

## Virtual Fun Run

- Create a digital sign-up form.
- Decide on the goal: is it a 5k, 10k or is it a half-marathon?
- Decide on how your participants submit their results. It's up to you if you have a single winner or a raffle for the prizes with the results.

## Yoga & Fitness Classes Online

- Decide if you want to host a class in-person or as a simple guided class where your participants can comment. You can use Zoom or Google Hangout for an in-person experience or Facebook Live, Instagram Live and YouTube Live for a live broadcast with commenting and poll features.
- Make sure your background is appropriate and obstruction-free for the live stream; recruit a yoga or fitness instructor or stream an online video
- Download the list of participants beforehand to learn their names and what the exercise variations should be for each class

## Games/Competitions (*pledge to play*)

- Social Media Challenges such as Trivia, Guess Who's Who (coworkers baby pictures)
- Instead of Dress Down Fridays – Dress-up Days (share photos)
- Virtual real time auction (prizes such as parking spots, vacation/time-off etc.)

**Virtual Drive-thru:** Arrange a drive-thru menu of favourite food items and invite employees to sign-up for pick-up orders within certain time slots.

- Ribfest and other food festivals can be organized online. You may miss attending food festivals but you can still have your favourites ordered from local restaurants.
- Take advantage of the option to arrange your own virtual drive-thru and reserve take out ribs, burgers, pizza (or any popular food) for online orders.
- Employees can place their virtual drive-thru order online and are given a specific time slot for pickup to manage social distancing.

**Recipe Sharing:** Encourage employees to pledge for access to workplace recipe sharing group(s), to interact and exchange recipes with colleagues.

- Setup a social media group to curate communications for recipe sharing (groups can be made private with invite-only access for employees who wish to participate.)
- Employees can create and share their own recipe content, as well as interact together by commenting on other's recipes.
- Encourage employees to try each others recipes and post a photo of their results to the group for everyone to see.

## Food Trucks

- Food trucks are a great low-effort way to kickoff your campaign. Arrange for them to be at your location on a specific day. Negotiate with the food truck vendor about giving a portion (or all) of proceeds to United Way.
- All you have to do is promote the day, time and location.
- Don't forget to pick up aprons and logo banners from the United Way.

## Virtual Live Music

- Identify local musician(s) of interest and/or existing online concerts being streamed.
- Invite employees to attend the online show by making their pledge.
- You may even have some talented employees within your workplace that would be interested in performing some live music using an online streaming platform.

**Speaker Panels (*live or recorded*):** Real-time access to valuable insights from speakers to increase awareness of the value of United Way, and share the impact of their support

- Identify areas of interest for employees and work with your staff partner to see if it is possible to bring in a speaker virtually. United Way will provide subject matter experts to facilitate and moderate the discussion. (Allow 45 minutes – 1 hour for a panel discussion)
- Take advantage of pre-recorded speakers or tours available online through the United Way website to add to the experience.

## Box of Caring

- Determine an area of need within the community that resonates with employees, such as food insecurity or homelessness. Focusing on this area of need, compile a list of items that could help those in need (e.g. non-perishable food items, new clothing, blankets etc.)
- Share your goal with your employees to compile your Box of Caring with items they may be able to donate.
- Employees are able to make a pledge and donate in-kind items for the box. Deliver your box to us and share the impact with your workplace!

## Virtual Paint Night

- For employees who wish to learn or upgrade their painting skills, paint nights are a fun and engaging event that can also be hosted online.
- Using a live streaming platform allows you to schedule a paint night host that can share the instructions for creating the art and have as many employees attend as would like.
- Employees would need their own painting supplies available to participate. Encourage sharing photos of all artwork created.

## **Karaoke Party / Virtual Theatre / Stand Up / Improv performance**

- Karaoke: Download the list with songs & participant names and set the order of songs for the day. Have people sign up and select their song.
- Decide on a streaming tool to use: if you have a single web-cam performance, you can set up Zoom, Instagram Live, Facebook Live or YouTube Live stream. If you want to create an audience participation set up, consider Zoom or Google Hangout
- Employees can sign-up for performance time slots.

## **Virtual Scavenger Hunt**

- Create a list of things that everyone will have in their home to find during the scavenger hunt. If you're organising a scavenger hunt for kids it could be a good idea to share the items to be found with their parents prior to the event.
- Test your webcam and your internet connection on the day of the event, get the list of participants and start hosting your virtual scavenger hunt.
- You can also create a simple social media-based virtual scavenger hunt competition. For this, you can also pick the items that need to be found around the home and let the participants share their found items on their social media with a hashtag of your choosing. You announce a winner picked at random.

## **Online Crafts Class**

- Chances are you have some talented employees who have crafting skills in a variety of subjects. Hosting your own crafts class online allows for employees to join from anywhere and learn about new skills.
- Check your class set on the camera, make sure you don't have anything distracting on the background.
- You're ready to host your class!

**Virtual Luncheons:** *You can offer your team to join together virtually and share lunch by making a pledge donation of a specific amount. Arrange with a local restaurant to prepare pick-up lunches for employees who register for the luncheon. Or provide registrants a voucher for ordering their own lunch (such as skip-the-dishes) to arrange delivery for themselves.*

- Plan a virtual luncheon via online meeting platforms to gather teammates for entertainment and sharing of lunch. Offer entertainment such as videos, speakers, or music for participants to enjoy during the event.
- Create a lunch menu that participants can choose from. Ask employees to pay a minimum registration fee to cover the cost of the lunch. Arrange pick-ups or deliveries of lunches in time for the virtual luncheon.
- Add a link to the live stream in the order confirmation & confirmation email for luncheon registrations.

## Online Cooking Classes

- Organize a cooking class to be taught by an employee with specific skills or recruit a chef to facilitate the training online.
- Determine the best video platform for your team members to join and set-up the event for a specific date and time.
- You can request a specific donation pledge amount for participants to join in the fun!
- Get your recipe ready and make sure that you have all the ingredients you need to be lined up for the class.

## Gratitude Challenges:

- Did you know people are more likely to give when they recognize things they are grateful for? Encourage employees to share something they are grateful for, during a period of time.
- Gather all the wonderful things that your employees appreciate and share with others.
- Collect feedback from employees on their exercise in gratitude.

**Virtual Escape Room:** *Virtual escape rooms are web-based escape rooms conducted via Zoom and other platforms.*

- Gather your teams to solve riddles and complete puzzles in a fixed amount of time, with a goal of “escaping the room.”
- The purpose of these experiences is to encourage collaboration, teamwork and team building.

## Virtual Event Tips

- 1. Consider shortening the time slots you would use for a physical events by 15 or 30 minutes.** For example, a 60-minute breakout face-to-face should be 45 or 30 minutes when delivered online.
- 2. Remember that virtual events give an opportunity for more employees to attend or participate due to less physical limits.** For example, an in-person event such as a luncheon would have only been available to a limited number of employees based on venue size etc. Now we are able to think outside the box in terms of these limitations, and have the option for more employees to attend in the comfort of their (remote) office.
- 3. Don't miss an opportunity to collect great photos and videos of your events!** Consider if there is opportunity for employees to submit or share photos and videos across your workplace social media channels.

## Key Considerations and Planning

- 1. Technology Platform** Confirm the online web conferencing platform that is approved by your workplace and learn about the platform's functionality, so that your United Way staff partner can help you build your kick-off agenda and activities on the platform. If you cannot host your kick-off on your own technology platform, speak to your Staff partner.
- 2. Senior Management Support:** Support from your executives is critical to show your organization is behind the campaign. Book their time so they can participate in your virtual kick-off or see if there are existing meetings that you can piggyback on.
- 3. Consider your Audience:** For best results, we recommend a kick-off event that is no longer than 30 minutes. If your employee base is large, you may consider hosting a series of kick-offs (ex. divided by department) throughout the day, or across a few days. While there is no ideal, you want to strike a balance between being able to reach all your employees, and helping people be comfortable enough to ask questions and interact.
- 4. Determine the Meeting Host and Other Company Speakers:** It is best if the Employee Campaign Chair (ECC) acts as facilitator to ensure your kick-off sticks to the agenda. If the ECC needs support, your United Way staff partner can act as co-host. Invite your CEO or other executives to take part and speak too as their leadership can inspire others and demonstrate support of United Way from the top down.
- 5. Make it Interactive:** Engage your colleagues during the kick-off. Consider interactive activities like online polls or quizzes to keep their attention online. Your United Way staff partner can help you build this activity.
- 6. Raise Awareness about Impact:** United Way has speakers, online engagement activities and campaign videos that can help show the impact of donations and inspire people to give. Your Staff partner can help you select the best activities for your agenda.
- 7. Set Clear Action Steps:** Let people know how they can donate and how they can get involved in the campaign. We recommend sending your donation link immediately following your kick-off event, so people can take action while they're feeling inspired.

## Processing Special Event Funds

Please use this page to transmit special events donations on behalf of your workplace.

<https://andarweb.unitedwaykfla.ca/specialevents>

- Special event funds can be sent via Credit Card, PayPal or e-Transfer using the online payment form.
- Cash donations collected can be delivered to United Way KFL&A by arranging the delivery with your staff contact.
- No tax receipts are issued for special event fund donations as per CRA regulations.