

Introduction to fundraising for conservation

Fundraising is a powerful way to support environmental and conservation efforts. It involves collecting money from individuals, organisations or businesses to fund projects, research and initiatives that protect the natural world. For young people passionate about conservation, fundraising can be an effective way to make a tangible impact on the environment and support causes they care about.

Why is fundraising important for conservation?

- 🌿 **Supports conservation projects:** Many conservation projects need money to run. This includes things like restoring animal habitats, protecting wildlife and stopping poaching.
- 🌿 **Raises awareness:** Fundraising campaigns can raise awareness about critical environmental issues, educating the public and encouraging broader support.
- 🌿 **Enables research and innovation:** Funding is crucial for research into sustainable practices, biodiversity and the impacts of climate change. It allows for the development of new technologies and approaches to conservation.
- 🌿 **Empowers communities:** Fundraising can provide the resources needed to support local communities in conservation efforts, ensuring sustainable livelihoods and community engagement.



Historical example of fundraising for conservation

World Wildlife Fund “Panda” Campaign (1960s)

- **What happened:** The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) launched its first major fundraising campaign using the now-iconic panda logo. This effort attracted global support and donations to fund conservation projects for endangered species.
- **Impact:** Funds raised helped launch several early conservation initiatives and raised awareness about species at risk of extinction.
- **Why it matters:** WWF’s campaign illustrated how a recognizable symbol and strong brand could attract worldwide support for conservation.

Contemporary examples of fundraising for conservation

Plastic Bank (2013-present)

- **What happened:** Plastic Bank raises funds to pay individuals in coastal communities to collect plastic waste, reducing pollution and supporting local economies.
- **Impact:** This approach has led to the collection and recycling of millions of pounds of plastic while providing income to underserved communities.
- **Why it matters:** Plastic Bank illustrates how fundraising can be used to create a circular economy solution to plastic pollution, combining environmental and social benefits.

Chester Zoo's 'Run for Nature' (2023-present)

- **What happened:** Chester Zoo organises an annual event called "Run for Nature," where people of all ages can run or walk to raise money for wildlife conservation. Participants sign up, raise sponsorships and take part in a fun race around the zoo and local areas.
- **Impact:** The funds raised help Chester Zoo support projects that protect endangered animals and restore habitats, both in the UK and globally.
- **Why it matters:** This event brings people together to make a real difference for nature. By running, participants raise awareness about conservation and help protect wildlife around the world.

How you can get involved

- 1. Organise a fundraising event:** Plan physical or virtual events such as; a quiz, online gaming tournaments, sports competition, pop up pre-loved clothes sale or the classic car washes or bake sales to raise money for a chosen conservation cause. There are several ways to generate donations from these events whether that be through ticket sales or entry fees or selling products themselves. A compelling way to engage attendees, create relevance or spark some inspiration for an event could be by aligning it with seasonal celebrations like Halloween and Christmas or significant national days such as International Rainforest Day, World Wildlife Day or specific animal days. Use the event to educate attendees about the environmental issue you're supporting.
- 2. Host a sponsored activity:** Activities such as a walk, run or cycle can be sponsored by friends and family, with all proceeds going to a conservation organisation. A great way to add relevance is to connect the challenge to the cause you are trying to support. An example might be running a certain distance to represent the amount of money you're hoping to raise. e.g. Walk 250k in a month to raise £250. These activities can be promoted on social media to reach a wider audience.
- 3. Create an online crowdfunding campaign:** Platforms like GoFundMe, JustGiving or Kickstarter are great for raising funds online. Share your campaign widely and tell a compelling story about why the cause matters to you.

🌱 TikTok has features that allow creators to link fundraising campaigns directly in their profiles or videos.

🌱 Make sure to regularly update your donors on the progress and impact of their contributions.

- 4. Partner with local businesses:** Approach local businesses to sponsor your fundraising efforts or match donations. Businesses may also offer in-kind donations, like food for a fundraising event or raffle prizes. Collaboration with businesses can also help raise awareness of the cause within the community.
- 5. Take part in digital fundraising:** Use social media to run fundraising campaigns, create viral challenges, or host virtual events like webinars or workshops to raise awareness and funds. Digital fundraising tools and apps can help streamline donations and reach a global audience.
- 6. Reach out to local conservation organisations:** If you are interested in starting your fundraising journey for environmental causes, consider reaching out to local conservation organisations or using online resources to learn more about ongoing projects that need your support.

Fundraising is a critical tool for supporting environmental and conservation initiatives. By organising fundraising activities, you can contribute to vital environmental causes but also develop valuable skills in project management, communication and leadership.

Every effort counts and with creativity and determination, you can be a force for positive change in conservation.