



# Fundraising Guide

We Ride. We Walk.  
We Move Together  
to create a world free of MS.



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## **FUNDRAISING ... EASIER THAN YOU THINK**

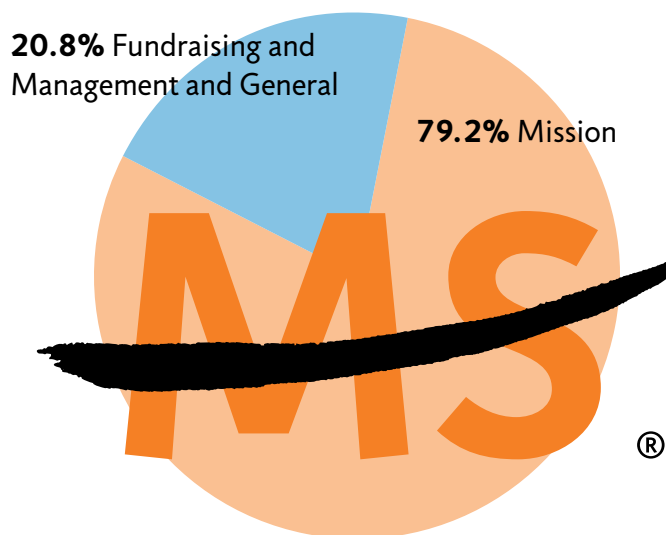
The information contained in this booklet provides techniques to help you become a successful fundraiser. You're guaranteed to find some new ideas, so please read on about the four basic fundraising methods:

- 1) Face-to-Face
- 2) Writing Letters
- 3) Telephone
- 4) Email, Facebook and more

The key is to find a combination of methods that is most comfortable for you. Whichever methods you pick, don't delay putting them into practice. The sooner you start, the sooner you'll see your pledges grow!

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## **WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?**



Source: FY13 financial audit

## **FUNDS SUPPORT:**

- Research into the cause, treatment and cure of MS
- Quality programs and services for people with MS including financial assistance, support groups, scholarships, camps for kids, access to community resources, educational programs, workshops and much more
- Advocacy efforts that impact legislation on behalf of people with MS



### **FACE-TO-FACE FUNDRAISING TIPS**

Face-to-face is the most effective way to raise pledges. Using the following guidelines may help increase your success.

- **Don't apologize for asking.** Remember, you are asking for a contribution on behalf of the National MS Society-Wisconsin Chapter and all people with MS.
- **Educate your potential donors.** The more they know, the more comfortable they will feel about making a contribution. Use the information on the "About MS" and "Where Does the Money Go?" on pages 2 and 3 of this booklet to help teach them how funds raised will be used.
- **Remind potential donors it's a tax write-off.** All donations made to the National MS Society-Wisconsin Chapter are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.
- **Treat your request as an everyday conversation.** Build your request around your excitement and enthusiasm for the MS Movement. Share stories about why the event is important to you.
- **Make the appeal personal.** Ultimately your friends, family and co-workers will support you because you are doing the asking.



## **WRITING SUCCESSFUL LETTERS**

By using the mail to raise money, you can solicit contributions from a variety of resources such as:

- Business associates (check your email and LinkedIn contacts)
- Family, neighbors, friends (review your greeting card list)
- College and high school alumni, search your Facebook friends

As you begin your letter campaign to ask donors for support, keep these helpful hints in mind:

- **Always include a self-addressed stamped envelope** (your return address, not the Chapter's). Make it easy for your potential donors to respond.
- **Personalize your appeal.** Keep your audience in mind. Thank business contacts for their help in the past year. Update friends on family news. People will respond to your letter because they know you and respect your efforts.
- **Include a deadline** by which to send those pledges.
- **Mention details about MS.** Make a copy of the "Where Does the Money Go" on Page 3 of this booklet and include it along with your letter.
- **Include your reason for participating in the event.** Write a "This is why I walk, bike, ride, etc." story and include it with your letter.
- **Follow up with a note or a phone call** to those who have not responded.
- **Always send a thank you note** when you receive a pledge. Better yet, after the event, send them details, even a photo.

See the sample letter on page 12.



## **USE THE TELEPHONE TO FUNDRAISE**

Using the telephone can be an effective tool to reach out to those people on your list who you don't see on a daily basis. There are eight easy steps to raising pledges via the telephone:

- **Develop your phone list.** Determine who needs to hear your voice.
- **Pick the best time to call.** Avoid late night and the dinner hour.
- **Know what you are asking before you call.** Do your homework and avoid uncomfortable pauses.
- **Go for it.** Explain your commitment to helping those with MS, state your pledge goal and request their help!
- **Silence is not a "no."** Some people may take time to consider the contribution.
- **Thank them.** Regardless of the outcome, thank them for their time, consideration and support. If they are unable to contribute and may want to help, suggest that they volunteer.
- **Follow up with a written thank you note and a return envelope.** Personalize your appeal and retain those donors for the next year. The return envelope will make fulfilling their pledges easy.
- **Have fun!** If you are excited about the event and the movement toward a world free of MS, it will be contagious.



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## **FUNDRAISING WITH EMAIL, FACEBOOK, LINKEDIN & MORE**

Today more than ever, people are staying connected through the use of social media. Email is one of the easiest forms of communication. All the ideas that are used for the telephone and letter-writing are effective by email. Here are a few ways to make the most of this method:

- **Make a contact list from your email address book** and blanket all your contacts with your request. For those that respond, send out a thank you letter with a reply envelope.
- **Use the Wisconsin Chapter's online fundraising tools at wisMS.org.** Create a personal web page, receive donations through e-pledge and enhance your fundraising efforts.
- **Inform potential donors** during face-to-face or telephone conversations and letter requests that they can also donate securely to you online.

## **ONLINE FUNDRAISING TOOLS**

When you register for an event online, you are automatically assigned your own personal web space called "My Participant Center," which is designed to facilitate every aspect of your fundraising. Your participant center has a variety of features to help you fundraise online.

- **The Personal Page** is your own personal web page designed to assist in asking others to make a donation or to join you. You can also personalize this page with your fundraising goal, pictures and a personal story, or use the general information already displayed on the page. *Studies show that personalizing your web page can more than double your fundraising total.*
- **Donate/e-pledge** makes fundraising easy! This tool allows donors the opportunity to donate securely online with a credit card. Direct potential donors to e-pledge online through your personal page.
- **Customized email** messages automatically include a link to your personal page, making it easier for friends and family to donate to you or to join you by registering. This also allows you to easily thank donors or to remind those who have not yet responded. There is also the option to upload your email address list to your participant center to make sending emails even easier.
- **My Progress** section helps you keep up your fundraising efforts and see how far you've come!
- **The Facebook tool** lets you promote your fundraising activities on your personal Facebook page.
- **Studies have shown** that individuals who self-pledge and fundraise have *a total that's 2½ times as much as those who fundraise alone.* It also helps show your own personal commitment and lets others know how dedicated you are.

Try these fun and creative ideas to increase your fundraising efforts. The more creative you are, the better your results will be.

### **WORK THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

- Print out an event **poster** from **wisMS.org** and ask to put it in the windows of local stores.
- Offer to wear the company name on your team or personal **T-shirt or jersey** in exchange for a donation.
- Ask local retailers to host a **Pin-Up Program**. Contact the Chapter for details.
- Ask a **local restaurant** manager if he or she would be willing to pick a day of the week and donate a percentage of sales to you.



### **BRING IT TO THE OFFICE**

- Approach clients, **vendors** or anyone else that your company does business with to make a donation (make sure it's OK with the boss!).
- Host a **lunchtime meeting** and do a presentation about the National MS Society-Wisconsin Chapter events and your commitment to the cause. Contact the Wisconsin Chapter for assistance.
- Conduct a **Wear Orange Day** or **Dress Down Day** at the office, with each participant paying \$5.
- Sell **donuts or bagels** for \$1 each. Ask a local bakery/restaurant to donate the items.
- Speak with everyone in your office and get them to participate in an **office challenge**. The department that raises the most donations receives a prize.

### **TIMING IS EVERYTHING**

- Use **March and April** to suggest a great way to use tax refunds.
- **Birthday** coming up? Ask for donations in lieu of presents.
- **Throw a Super Bowl party** and sell betting squares with 50% of the money going into the pot and 50% toward your fundraising goal.
- **Valentine's Day** is a great time to make a donation.
- Plan activities during **MS Awareness Week** in March.

**For more creative fundraising ideas, visit wisMS.org!**



## DO IT YOURSELF FUNDRAISING

Start a movement in your community! Holding your own event is a great way to raise funds and awareness about MS while increasing your pledges. The Wisconsin Chapter is committed to helping you hold successful events by providing ideas, information and tools. The Chapter can supply you with banners as well as literature about MS to distribute at your event. We can also help you promote your event through our website.

Individuals organizing a Do It Yourself event must complete an application. Please call the Wisconsin Chapter to request an application, guidelines for Do It Yourself fundraisers and forms to be completed that allow you to use the Chapter's raffle license.



Suggestions for holding your own Do It Yourself event include:

- Bake sale
- Bowling tournament
- Brat fry
- Concert
- Dance
- Dress down day or casual day at work
- Game night
- Golf outing
- Host a party and ask for a donation
- Host a poker game
- Host a "vendor" party
- Karaoke night
- Movie night
- Plant sale
- Pool tournament
- Rummage sale
- Silent auction/raffle
- Wine tasting

For more information and ideas, call 262-369-4400 or email [info.wisMS@nmss.org](mailto:info.wisMS@nmss.org).

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## **INCREASE YOUR MONEY WITH MATCHING GIFTS**

Many companies offer matching gift programs to encourage employees to support charities and non-profit organizations. Most companies match dollar-for-dollar and some may even double- or triple-match a donor's gift. Inquire with the Human Resources Department of your company to see if they participate in a matching gift program. Some helpful tips for matching gifts are:

- **Spread the word about matching gifts.** Encourage all of your donors to see if their companies participate in matching gift programs.
- **Secure matching gift forms.** If your company participates in a matching gift program, have the forms available when you approach your coworkers. When they make a contribution, you can hand them a form to complete. Simply by informing them of this opportunity, you could double, and maybe even triple, your contributions.
- **The earlier the better.** Enclosing the matching gift forms in your pledge envelope on the day of the event or even before will ensure that your matching gift will be included with your current year's fundraising total.

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## **SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

The Wisconsin Chapter has a track record of successfully producing special events that appeal to both participants and sponsors. A partnership with the National MS Society-Wisconsin Chapter offers your company visibility and marketing opportunities throughout Wisconsin. Companies may take "ownership" of an event component such as a rest stop, meal, etc.

Sample sponsorship benefits include:

- Company logo in event brochures, posters and electronic communications
- Company name/logo in MS Connection magazine
- Company logo on event T-shirts
- Company logo placement on the event website
- Promotional material(s) in goodie bags given to event participants and volunteers

For information on sponsoring the Wisconsin Chapter's fundraising events, please call 262-369-4400, or email [info.wisMS@nmss.org](mailto:info.wisMS@nmss.org).

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## **TEAMING UP FOR FUN AND SUCCESS**

What better way to enjoy Wisconsin Chapter events than with your friends? Whether you build a team of family and friends, a company team or a combination of both, your experience will be enhanced.

Did you know that the majority of the money raised at Chapter events comes from teams?

### **It's easy to start a team:**

A Bike MS or Walk MS team requires at least four participants; Challenge Walk MS starts with two participants.

1. Choose a team captain.
2. Register online as the team captain and set up the team name.
3. Recruit team members.
4. Be sure everyone who registers completes the Team section of the registration form. Every team member must register and check-in individually on the day of the event.

### **Benefits of starting a team:**

1. The event experience is enhanced when you have others joining you.
2. Fulfillment of making a difference. Others will notice your involvement and commitment.
3. Fundraising together through team-wide events makes raising money easier and more fun.

### **Benefits of being a team captain:**

1. Leadership experience
2. Enhanced organizational skills
3. Networking opportunities
4. Fun!

The National MS Society-Wisconsin Chapter provides team captains with the materials, ideas and support needed to achieve recruitment and fundraising goals.

## **INTERESTED IN FORMING A TEAM?**

Call the Wisconsin Chapter at 262-369-4400, or email [info.wisMS@nmss.org](mailto:info.wisMS@nmss.org) to get started. The National MS Society-Wisconsin Chapter staff is also available to visit your company or organization. The Chapter is here to help every step of the way!

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## **RAISE \$1,000 IN 10 DAYS!**

- DAY 1** Make a personal \$25 contribution.
- DAY 2** Ask two of your family members to contribute \$50 each.
- DAY 3** Ask 10 friends to contribute \$20 each.
- DAY 4** Ask five co-workers to contribute \$10 each.
- DAY 5** Ask five neighbors to contribute \$10 each.
- DAY 6** Ask 10 people at your place of worship to contribute \$10 each.
- DAY 7** Ask five companies that your business works with to contribute \$50 each.
- DAY 8** Ask four businesses that you frequent personally to contribute \$25 each.
- DAY 9** Ask five parents at your child's school to contribute \$5 each.
- DAY 10** Use your Facebook network to raise \$100.
- BONUS** Double your contributions. Ask your company if they participate in a matching gift program.

**Share your success with a friend!**

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## **SAMPLE FUNDRAISING LETTER TEXT**

Dear *(insert name)*,

It's that time again! Time to participate in the *(insert event name)* to support more than 11,000 Wisconsin residents diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

MS is a chronic, often disabling disease of the central nervous system. Symptoms may be mild, such as numbness in the limbs, or severe – paralysis or loss of vision. Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, but children now represent the fastest-growing MS population. While the progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted, advances in research and treatment are giving hope to those affected by the disease.

This year I hope to raise \$(*enter dollar amount*) for a world free of MS. Your tax-deductible pledge will help me meet (and exceed!) that goal, and give people with MS a brighter tomorrow. Please make your check payable to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society-Wisconsin Chapter and send it to me at *(insert your address)*.

You can also learn more about MS and donate toward my goal online by visiting [wisMS.org](http://wisMS.org).

Thank you! Together, we can make a difference by supporting research, programs and services that help people affected by this disease.

Sincerely,  
*(Your name)*



## **DOWNLOAD FORMS FROM THE CHAPTER'S WEBSITE**

You'll find a variety of fundraising tools at [wisMS.org](http://wisMS.org) under the Fundraising Headquarters heading on each event page. They include:

- Event Brochures
- Event Posters
- Sample Fundraising Letters
- Participant Center Tips
- Pledge Sheets
- Thank You Receipts
- Chapter and Event Logos
- Prize Forms

## **2015 WISCONSIN CHAPTER EVENTS**

### **MS SNOWMOBILE TOUR**

[MSsnowmobiletour.org](http://MSsnowmobiletour.org)  
January 22 - 24

### **PUBLIC POLICY CONFERENCE**

March 9 - 11

### **MS AWARENESS WEEK**

March 2 - 7

### **MS SUMMIT**

March 7

### **WALK MS**

[walkMSwisconsin.org](http://walkMSwisconsin.org)

### **APPLETON**

Sunday, April 26

### **CEDARBURG**

Saturday, May 2

### **DE PERE**

Sunday, April 19

### **EAU CLAIRE**

Saturday, April 25

### **FOND DU LAC**

Saturday, May 2

### **JANESVILLE**

Sunday, May 3

### **KENOSHA-RACINE**

Saturday, May 9

### **LA CROSSE**

Saturday, April 25

### **MADISON**

Sunday, May 3

### **MARSHFIELD**

Saturday, April 25

### **MENOMONEE FALLS**

Saturday, May 2

### **MILWAUKEE**

Sunday, May 3

### **OCONOMOWOC**

Saturday, May 9

### **OSHKOSH**

Sunday, September 13

### **PLATTEVILLE**

Sunday, May 3

### **RHINELANDER**

Sunday, September 20

### **SHEBOYGAN**

Sunday, April 26

### **STEVENS POINT**

Saturday, September 19

### **WAUKESHA**

Sunday, September 13

### **WAUSAU**

Saturday, May 2

### **MS WORLD DAY**

[worldMSday.org](http://worldMSday.org)  
May 27

### **BIKE MS:**

### **BEST DAM BIKE TOUR**

[bestdambiketour.org](http://bestdambiketour.org)  
August 1 - 2

### **CHALLENGE WALK MS**

[challengewalkMSwi.org](http://challengewalkMSwi.org)  
September 18 - 20

## STAY CONNECTED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Visit the Wisconsin Chapter website regularly or sign up to receive the Chapter's monthly email newsletter for more new and returning events as they're announced, including webinars, teleconferences, Do It Yourself Fundraisers and other options for joining the Movement. You'll also find information on visits to MS partner clinics and details on monthly self-help group meetings throughout the state.

website: [wisMS.org](http://wisMS.org) | fundraising support center: 855-372-1331  
Wisconsin Chapter: 262-369-4400 | email: [info.wisMS@nmss.org](mailto:info.wisMS@nmss.org)

## FOLLOW US ONLINE



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[youtube.com/user/NATIONALMSSOCIETYWI](https://youtube.com/user/NATIONALMSSOCIETYWI)



**National Multiple Sclerosis Society**  
Wisconsin Chapter

1120 James Drive, Suite A, Hartland, WI 53029

262-369-4400 | 800-242-3358

[info.wisMS@nmss.org](mailto:info.wisMS@nmss.org) | [wisMS.org](http://wisMS.org)

*Early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can make a difference for people with multiple sclerosis. Learn about your options by talking to your health care professional and contacting the National MS Society at [nationalMSSociety.org](http://nationalMSSociety.org) or 1-800-FIGHT-MS (344-4867).*