

Grassroots community sport is estimated to contribute \$18.7 billion to the Australian economy annually!¹ Would you like your organisation to be able to earn a greater share of this massive pie?

Making money in sport is not about running your organisation 'like a business'; your organisation is a business! So when trying to earn more money for your organisation, think about it as the business it is and apply sound business practices.

Budgeting and setting fees

The core business of your organisation is sport. Therefore, when it comes to making money, setting the right pricing structure is the most powerful tool you have. As you'll see in the *Setting fees* guide, the costs of providing sport for your members and running your organisation should ideally be more than covered by your membership fees.

Yet too many organisations try to keep their fees low and make up the shortfall with other business units, relying too heavily on a small number of volunteers to take up the slack. Use the *Guide to budgets* to properly understand the true cost of running the business of your organisation, then set your fees in a way that recognises your amazing value proposition to members.

Your membership fees are likely to be your largest regular source of income, so make sure you set them right!

Collect your fees!

Before looking at ancillary activities to increase your revenue, make sure you are collecting all your fees from members. If you don't collect all of your fees, then your other fundraising activities are only making up for non-paying members.

Develop clear guidelines, like a 'no-pay, no-play policy', which explains that members will not be able to participate in your activities if their fees are overdue.

You could also offer payment plans to members who prefer to spread out their payments. Payment plans must be closely monitored and members must be aware that any late payment will result in them being unable to participate in your activities under your 'no-pay, no-play policy'. When you collect all your fees on time, you can use the revenue you earn through other fundraising efforts to help your organisation grow!

Many people find it uncomfortable to chase members for outstanding fees, but this should not be an excuse for letting people play for free. Having a clear, well-communicated 'no-pay, no-play policy' can make it easier to have what can be a difficult conversation. When people sign up to be members of your organisation, they are agreeing to pay their fees in return for you providing a season of sport. If you're meeting your end of the bargain, make sure they're meeting their side. If your organisation believes in fair play, your members should play fair by paying their fees on time.

Make it easy for people to pay

Make it as easy as possible for your members to pay their fees. Most people pay for purchases today using debit or credit cards, often using their phones or smart devices. So make sure you can accept these forms of payment. Today more than ever, it is simple to arrange an EFTPOS payment solution with your bank or other electronic payment platform so that you can receive card payments.

Switching to digital payment methods like EFTPOS, bank transfers and credit cards helps to speed up transactions and also creates a digital record, making it easier to track and manage your organisation's income. By reducing the amount of cash handled, you eliminate the need for time-consuming cash counts, secure storage and bank visits. Digital payments help minimise the risks associated with cash handling, such as loss and theft, saving your volunteers' time, enhancing financial transparency and boosting your organisation's financial security.

Fundraising plan

A fundraising plan is a simple way that you can outline your targets, strategies and actions for raising funds. It should consider your objectives, target audiences and fundraising strategies to help you organise your efforts and maximise fundraising potential.

Use the following steps to keep your fundraising plan simple. Then, get in and give things a try! There are plenty of great ideas you can test out for your organisation, but you don't need to do everything. When you find those fundraising initiatives that work best for you, do more of them!

1. Be clear on your objectives: Clearly define your fundraising goals and objectives. These may include specific financial targets or raising funds for a specific project.

2. Understand your target audience: Identify your primary target audience for each fundraising effort. These could include parents and players as the target for canteen sales, businesses for corporate sponsorship, senior players and their partners for an annual trivia night or participants in your annual carnival for event ticket sales and raffles.

3. List your preferred fundraising strategies: Brainstorm which fundraising strategies you think would work best for your target markets. Be creative when coming up with fundraising initiatives.

¹ Economic value of community club-based sport in Australia, Australian Sports Commission and the Griffith Business School at Griffith University, Queensland, (2018)

Making money

4. Determine budget and resources: Develop a clear picture of what financial and volunteer resources will be required to implement your preferred fundraising initiatives and set a budget. Consider the costs associated with things like marketing materials, event logistics, volunteers, staffing, technology and administration.

5. Give it a try: Try out your ideas! Take your best ideas and put them into action. Be prepared to make changes along the way and have patience to put in the effort needed to make your fundraising initiatives successful. For example, it can take two or three years for an annual event like a big trivia night to become a hit, but it's worth the effort!

6. Evaluate and review: Set up ways to assess fundraising effectiveness. For example, compare the actual money you raise through particular initiatives with your targets and against your budgets. Keep good data and do more of what works best!

A note about grants: Grants are not included in this list as they are project based and therefore don't contribute to your profit in the same way other fundraising activities do.

Here's a short list of fundraising ideas you can use as a starting point:

- **Canteen** sales
- **Special events** (e.g. carnivals, presentation day, gala dinner, fundraising lunch, trivia night)
- **Merchandise** sales (e.g. supporters shirts, training jerseys, beanies and scarves for winter sports, bucket hats)
- **Out-of-season** activities (e.g. social summer comps for winter sports)
- **Modified versions** of your game to appeal to a different audience (e.g. corporate comps)
- **Raffles** (making sure you keep records according to the requirements of the *Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming Act 1999*)
- **Bar** sales
- **Facility hire** (e.g. hire out space in your clubhouse to other community groups or businesses through the week; hire out additional field or court space to other organisations or sports, subject to your lease or tenure agreement)
- **Drives** (e.g. lamington drives, pie drives)
- **Sponsorship** (see the *Sponsorship Guide* for more information)
- **Online fundraising** campaigns

And the list goes on...

Use your imagination and have fun!

