

Abseil event: An introductory guide for Fundraising Groups

This guide was compiled before COVID19 restrictions were brought into place. All events must comply with local and national restrictions, Government Guidance and Marie Curie COVID safety measures, which your community fundraiser can provide you with details of. Due to this you may need to review the number of people that are allowed to take part and attend to spectate and adjust any financial income calculations accordingly.

Organising an abseil event for Marie Curie has the potential to raise a good amount of income as well as introducing new people to your fundraising group and to the charity. Whether people take part individual, as a pair or a group, this is a fantastic adrenaline event for people of any fitness level.

If this is something you are considering, please read on to find out more. If you decide to go ahead, your Community Fundraising can send you a more detailed guide, including a list of abseil companies, press release templates and participant welcome packs.

1. What is an abseil event?

Put simply...sponsored individuals come down the flat walls of a building using ropes to lower themselves down, controlling how fast or slow they descend, whilst being on an additional safety rope controlled by a trained instructor from the organisation used.



Marie Curie Dundee Fundraising Group Abseil 2019

Depending whether you do a half day session with the company or a full day will depend how many people can take part. If an organisation is using 2 ropes on a full day up to 120 will take part in stepping over the edge of the building used and abseiling down whilst gaining sponsorship to do so.

After securing a venue, date and recommended abseil company, the Fundraising Group can begin to recruit participants to take part.

Participants register with a fee and in doing so sign up to raise a minimum amount of sponsorship. Upon registration they receive a participant pack with further information about the activity and raising sponsorship.

On the day of the event, the booked abseil company provide everything needed to set up and run the abseil. Participants are guided up to the top of the building where the trained staff will talk through what to expect before they are set up with the ropes and get ready to take on the challenge. The company are responsible for assessing suitability of people to abseil.

Spectators are welcome to come and watch and add to the atmosphere by cheering on their friends and family. Whilst spectators are waiting for participants to complete the abseil, it is a good opportunity to offer food and drink and to have fundraising activities such as tombola/raffle. It is likely 2-3 times the number of participants will come along to watch.

It is also worthwhile having a photographer to take some great pictures.

Groups could also contact abseiling companies who are running an abseil in their local area and buy Marie Curie places. A group would need to be confident that they can fill the number of places they buy so as to not make a loss.

How much can be raised?

Typically, a successful abseil event can raise anywhere from £4,000 and higher.

- The Dundee Fundraising Group have held a successful abseils for over 10 years, each raising an average of approximately £10,000.

What type of group can organise a successful abseil event?

Feedback from fundraising groups that have organised an abseil event, and the companies themselves, strongly suggest a successful fundraising event is due to a group having:

- A good network of support
- Prominence in local communities
- Prominence on social media

2. How does the fundraising work?

Participants cover event costs by paying a registration fee on booking and income is generated by raising sponsorship. We recommend setting a minimum sponsorship level.

Registration fees and minimum sponsorship levels vary. Parameters to ensure a successful fundraising event are laid out below. However, within these parameters a decision should be made based on local knowledge of the community.

- We recommend aiming for a minimum of 40 participants as this should cover costs and the maximum will depend on if a full day or afternoon session.
- Registration fees should be set between £25 -£35
- Minimum sponsorship should be set between £75-£125

Cost of companies can vary slightly around £1,500, and we would recommend setting a registration fee that ensures the cost of booking an abseil company is covered by the expected number of participants, for example 50 participants x £30 registration fee = £1,500.

3. Organising the event

1. Book a venue and choose a date
2. Book a company
3. Fill the event

How much time is required to organise this event?

The event requires approximately six month lead time, in order to allow time securing the venue and company and for recruiting participants and raising sponsorship.

Choosing a venue

The best venues are places that are an iconic venue in your local area. Venues will need:

- A flat roof
- The higher the building, the more exciting it is.
- An area to register participants
- An area for spectators to watch
- Plenty of parking

Selecting a date and time

Abseils are run throughout the year but most would be between April and October. The time of the event will depend on sun up and sun down, so dependant on the time of year you choose. Typically companies would be set up and ready to go for 9am.

You would need to open registration at least 30 minutes before the event, but the company you work with will be able to advise on this.

Booking a company

The detailed document will include a checklist that you need to consider when booking a company. This will include aspects including technical qualifications. We would also need to see documents from the company, including Risk Assessment and safety procedures and public liability insurance.

Filling the event

The event attracts a wide variety of people – younger and older, male and female, individuals and groups. You can work with your Community Fundraising Team to engage local corporate and community partners.

Participants must be over the age of 16, a maximum of 18 stone and fit enough to undertake the abseil (check with the company you are using for any other specifications they may have).

Community Fundraisers will have all the materials you need such as press releases to help you recruit participants

What happens next?

If you are interested in going ahead with organising an Abseil event, your Community Fundraiser can send you a more detailed document about how to go about it. This will help the group determine the amount of input required to host an event, and the amount they can raise.

If organising your own abseil event is not for you, keep an eye in your local area for abseiling companies that offer a set number of places to charities. If this is an option in your area and you think you have enough people to get involved, speak to your community fundraiser who will be able to give you further advice on the next steps.

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