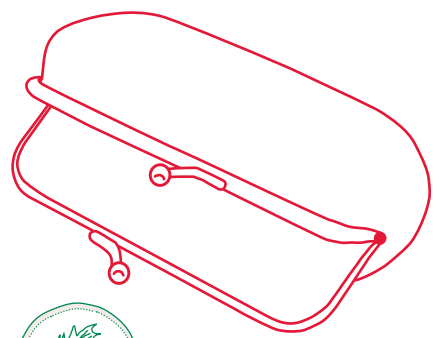
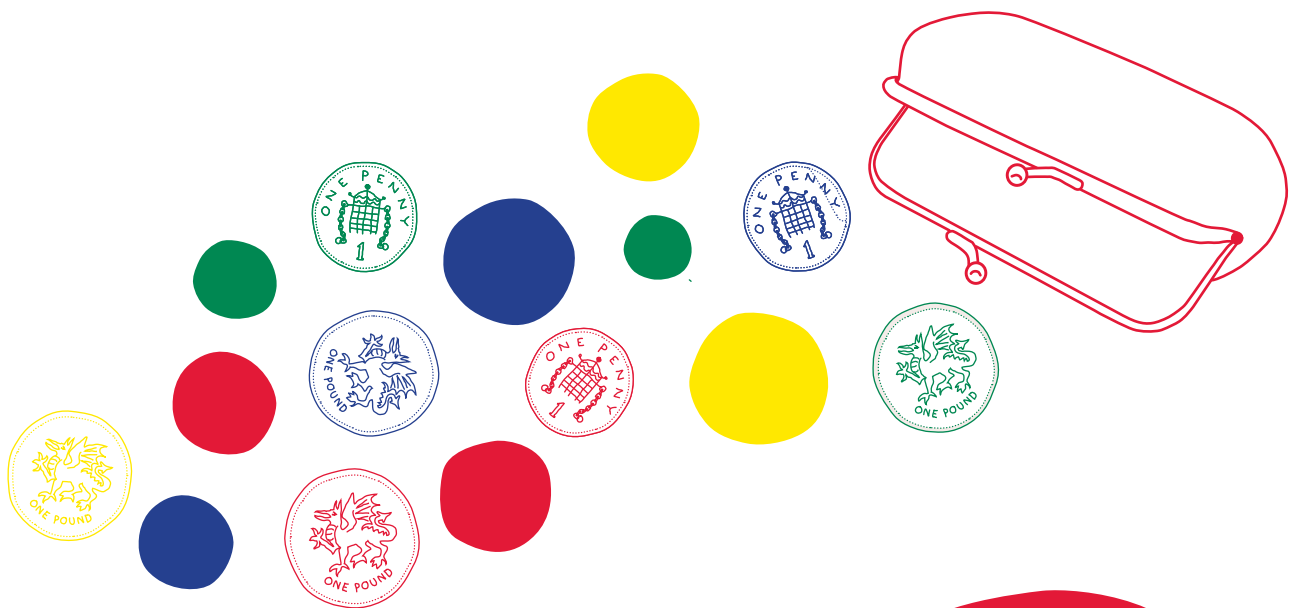
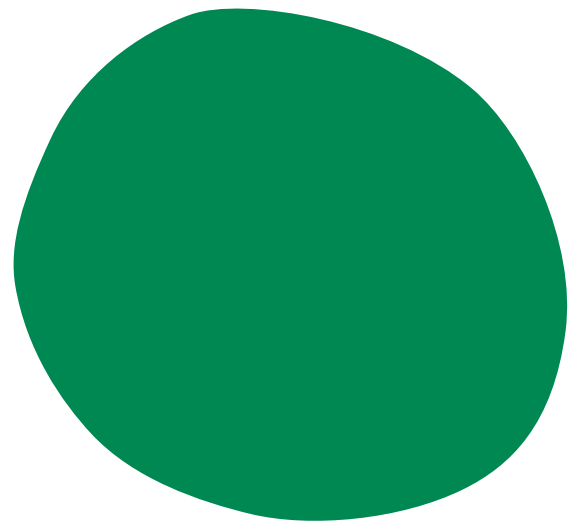


RAISING FUNDS for MERU...



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WELCOME from MERU's Chief Executive

Thank you for deciding to raise funds for MERU. We need **every penny** you can collect!

Even though our skilled engineers are continually working at full stretch and we have a dedicated team of volunteers who help us with our work, there are always many more children who need our support than we can afford to help each year.

Imagine you can't walk, talk or move, without carers operating equipment for you. MERU might design you a switch you can operate with your swallowing muscles. Operating the switch means you are able to use a communication device to speak, control your wheelchair to move and use your PC – all without being dependent on carers.

We do not charge children or their families. Any money you raise will go towards designing and developing special equipment for disabled children. This includes our engineers' wages and the cost of running MERU, as well as the materials and tools we use in the workshops where we build the equipment.

There is no avoiding the fact that this unique service is, unfortunately, expensive to run. Some types of equipment are needed by **very small numbers** of children, often just one youngster. That is why there is nothing on the market for them; no company could afford the huge development costs for just a single customer.

MERU is here for those children who have no alternative – and your hard work will enable us to help them.

The following pages will give you **ideas** and tips on how you can raise these vital funds. You are not alone – many people have already run a wide range of activities and are happy to share their experiences via our 'Friends' Network.

Our Fundraiser Becky Millington (becky@meru.org.uk, 01372 725203) and PR Manager Sue Burch (sue@meru.org.uk, 01372 725203) are always happy to give advice and support.

So once again thank you, on behalf of the children and young people MERU is here to support. I wish you every success with your activity or event.

Susan Brumpton
Chief Executive
MERU



The **WONDERFUL** kids you will be helping...



Emily has cerebral palsy. She needed something to give her independence when getting in and out of the car. MERU made her this clever step that exactly meets her needs.



Ella loved her MERU Bugzi so much she kept it longer than any other user! She's pictured here with MERU's Patron Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen.

Blind, unable to speak and with cerebral palsy affecting all his limbs, **Ruben** needed help to communicate. MERU's work made it possible for him to operate his communication aid.



Abigail has multiple physical and learning disabilities, and complex medical needs. MERU adapted her walker to make it safer and more comfortable to use.

How **MERU** can **HELP** you with your fundraising...

Before I launch into all the things MERU can do to support your fundraising I'd like to say a big **thank you** to you for choosing to help MERU. If you need any help or support during your fundraising, please feel free to contact me, Becky Millington, on 01372 725203 or email becky@meru.org.uk

So, what can MERU do to help you?

It depends on what you want. We offer posters to help you advertise your event, either general posters about MERU, or we can personalise them for your event. We have stickers that you can hand out to people and collecting cans to encourage people to part with their spare change.

Sponsored events

If you are involved in a sponsored event, we can send personalised sponsorship forms via post or email. We are also signed up to My Charity Page (www.mycharitypage.com), an online donation page where you can register as a fundraiser and add your event to the page. You'll find a factsheet about My Charity Page in this pack, but if you need any help using the page please contact me or call into the office and I can talk you through the set up procedure.

A MERU display

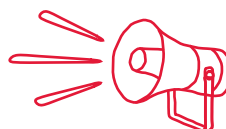
If your event is local to MERU in Epsom, Surrey we can provide a display stand with information about MERU and items illustrating the equipment we make. We can also send along a member of staff to give a talk on MERU and its work. Depending on your audience and their interests this could be our Chief Executive, our fundraiser, one of our engineers or another member of staff. The choice, as they say, is yours.

MERU is building a strong network of Friends via our bi-monthly updates and our presence on social networking site, Facebook. If you are happy for us to do so, we will advertise your event through our Friends network. We also have a newsletter, but would usually need your information a few months in advance.

I hope you have fun doing your fundraising event and remember, if you have any queries please contact me – I'm here to help!

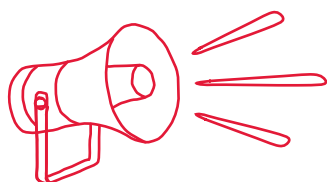
Becky Millington
Fundraiser

TOP TIPS for FUNDRAISING...



Have fun

Choose a fundraising project that you will enjoy. If you're having a good time people are more likely to respond.



Keep it simple

The best fundraising projects are the simplest. Be realistic and cost out your event carefully. Keep a checklist so you know exactly what needs to be done at every stage.

Involve your friends

Get a group of four or five people together to help organise an event. Give each person a key area to organise, such as catering, printing tickets, promoting the event, booking venues and entertainment or getting volunteers to help out on the day itself.

Tell others about it

Do you know who you will sell your event to? Make sure there is enough time to reach them and get them involved. Remember to tell your friends, family and work colleagues what you're up to and let your local paper and radio station know (see our guide on generating publicity for your fundraising – page 10).

Tell us about it

We'd love to hear what you're planning and can provide you with posters and materials to help make your event a success.

Don't be shy about asking for

money! This can often be the most difficult part of fundraising. There is some excellent advice on www.how2fundraise.org but don't be shy about asking MERU for help or advice either.

You can ask for donations to be made online via www.charitychoice.co.uk, or you can set up an event on www.mycharitypage.org.uk, where people can donate easily and quickly.

There are also several applications on Facebook that allow you to collect money. We have a factsheet that explains how to set up a charity page, but if you have any problems Becky, our fundraiser, will be happy to talk you through the process.

In this pack there's a template for a sponsorship form you can photocopy or print out. Get friends and family to write their amount on the sponsorship form first – they tend to be the most generous and set the standard for everyone who sees it next. Please remember not to send us cash in the post.

Find out what others are doing

There may be a local event you can join in with or add a fundraising activity to. You could add a raffle or tombola to an existing event that will attract lots of people. There is a list of things you can join in with, such as marathons or bungee jumps, on www.how2fundraise.org. Also, make sure your event doesn't clash with another event or with a major football match. Keep an eye on your local papers.

Keep it legal

There are all sorts of laws connected with certain types of fundraising. We have set out some basic guidelines in our 'Keep it Legal' factsheet, which you'll find in this pack. Please email becky@meru.org.uk if you have any questions.

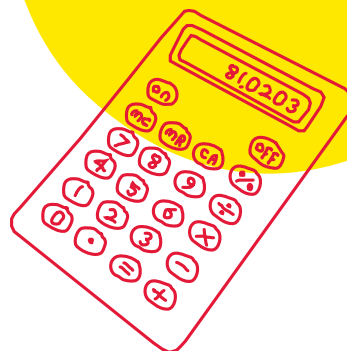


Find out about matched giving

If your employer has a matched giving scheme, ask them to equal the amount you have raised. In other words ask your boss if they will donate £1 for every £1 you raise. Not only is this a great way to raise extra money, but it's also a great incentive for your colleagues.

Tell people why you are helping us

If you have a personal reason for supporting MERU you can share it with potential supporters and the local press. It will help bring your appeal to life.



Do your SUMS

If you are organising an event are you sure you will raise more money than you will spend? Have you got written confirmation of any agreed costs? Make sure you keep accurate records of all financial transactions. For a major event it is a good idea to set up a separate bank account to manage the money. Don't forget to ask your supporters to 'Gift Aid' their donation, so that MERU can claim back 28p for every £1 donated from the tax man. It won't cost the donor anything extra – we just need their home address and postcode. Please ensure all cheques are made out to MERU .

And finally...

Thank everyone

Let people know how grateful we are for their support and when you have a final tally of how much you have raised, tell them. That way they will know what a valuable contribution they have made.

A - Z of fundraising IDEAS

Animal day, Abseiling, Antiques fair, Arts & Crafts sale, Aerobathon, Art exhibition, Auction of promises

Bad hair day, BBQ, Barn dance, Beer festival, Bingo, Book Sale, Bridge party, Bring & Buy sale

Curry night, Cake sale, Car boot sale, Car wash, Carol singing, Christmas fayre, Coffee morning, Coin mountain, Concert, Conker competition, Cooking demonstration

Darts tournament, Dress as a superhero, Dinner dance, Disco, Dog walking, Donkey Derby

Easter egg hunt, Egg & spoon race, Easter bonnet competition, Egg painting, Exhibition, Expert talk

Face painting, Fireworks party, Fancy dress party, Film show, Flower sale, Football tournament, Fashion show, Fun run

Ice cream party, Ice skating

Gala evening, Guess the number of sweets, Garage sale, Garden party, Go-karting, Golf day, Gymkhana, Guess the weight of the cake

Hair plaiting, Hangman competition, Halloween party, Head shaving, Horse riding event

Jigsaw puzzle evening, Job swap, Joke competition, Japanese evening, Juggling, Jelly eating, Jumble sale

Kite flying competition, Karaoke night

Leg waxing, Line dancing, Literature evening, Lottery, Luncheons

Make the tea day, Marathon, Midnight party, Murder Mystery event, Magic show, Musical statues, Masked ball, Musical chairs, Music quiz

Night walk, Name the bear, Nature walk, Non-Uniform day

Odd jobs, Odd socks day, Obstacle course, Open house, Open garden day

Pancake eating, Parachute jump, Picnic, Penalty shoot out, Pet show, Pie eating competition, Pantomime, Pancake race, Plant sale, Poetry competition, Pyjama party, Pram push

School Fair, Santa's grotto, Sponsored silence, Skateboarding, Slide show, Sponsored bike ride, Sponsored swim, Sports day, Swap shop, Swear box

Quiz night

Raffle, Raft race, Race night, Rock 'n' Roll night, Rowing competition, Rugby match

Tea party, Teddy bears' picnic, Themed day or evening, Three legged race, Table tennis, Tombola, Treasure hunt, Tug of war

Uniform day, Underwear over your clothes, University challenge

Washing up, Water games, Wear Wellies full of jelly, Wheelbarrow racing, Wine tasting, Wine & cheese party

Vegetable sale, Variety show, Vicars & Nuns day, Vintage car day

X-men party, Xylophone concert

Yacht race, Yoga, Yoyo competition

Zoo day out

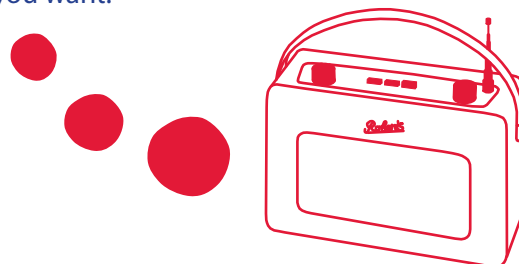
How to **GENERATE PUBLICITY** to **BOOST** your fundraising

Identify the most important **media**

Most fundraising efforts will mainly be of interest to local newspapers, magazines, TV and radio stations, so it pays to concentrate on them.

You can get free information on the contact details for these media on the internet. www.mediauk.com has an easy-to-use, searchable database you can use to look them up – searching by the name of your nearest town, for example.

Also helpful is a downloadable ‘book’ in PDF format, called the Clever Communications Directory. You will find it at <http://www.vamu.org.uk/>. The contacts directory is at the back of the book – which is also full of interesting hints and tips from journalists and PR professionals. It’s quite a long book so you might be better just printing out the pages you want.



Consider offering an ‘**exclusive**’

Every publication or broadcaster likes to have stories their competitors don’t, so if you’re thinking of doing something a bit different – or you want support for a longer campaign – it can be worth giving one publication exclusive access to the story. Again, do feel free to contact MERU for advice.



Send a **press release** announcing what you plan to do

If you’re not offering an exclusive then create a press release and send it to all the local media you think might want to cover your story. A press release is a ready written story that you send to the media about yourself and what you are doing. Every newsdesk receives hundreds of these a week, so you need to try and make yours stand out from the crowd.

Please see our press release help sheet at the end of this pack for more details on writing and sending one.



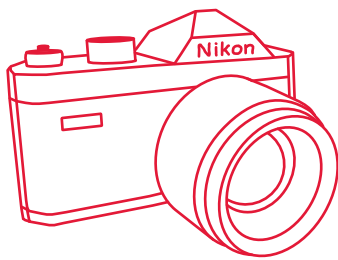
Follow up your press release with a **phone call**

It is a good idea to give the journalist a quick ring to say that you've sent them a press release and ask if they need any more information.

Introduce yourself by name then always ask: "Is this a good time to call you?" If the journalist is struggling to meet a deadline they won't be able to stop and chat to you, so respect their wishes and call back later. If you know when their deadlines are then religiously avoid calling at that time. But as it's hard for you to know the deadlines for every publication, asking first is a courtesy they will very much appreciate.

Once you do have their attention, use the opportunity to engage them in a conversation about your story (don't simply repeat everything that's in the press release, without giving them a chance to join in!). But keep it short, all journalists are likely to be busy.

And don't be upset if they don't remember your press release – they get so many they could easily have overlooked it. If they seem interested just offer to send it again.



Send a further press release **after the event**

Whether or not they published an article about what you planned to do, they may still be interested in how you got on. Send them a further release saying how the initiative went and how much you raised.

Send a **photograph too, if possible**

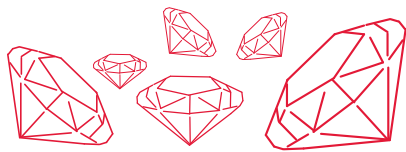
You need to make sure you have taken a high resolution image (call MERU if you need more information on how to take digital photos) but always email a low-resolution jpeg version of it with your press release. A large file may jam up their email system (which they won't thank you for!). As long as they have your contact information they can call you later to get the high resolution image.

Think about the photo before you take it. If you know a professional or gifted amateur photographer who can cover your event you are more likely to get an image that will succeed. Please see our press release help sheet for more info.

Incidentally – it may seem pointless to send a photo to a radio station but lots of them now have websites so it might turn up there. Send it anyway!

CASE STUDIES how other people have raised money for MERU...

Maggie organised a dinner and dance with the help of her local rotary club. She asked everyone to dress up for a theme of 'Diamonds' and got a local jeweller to show some of the jewellery from his range. All the profits from ticket sales went to MERU (after taking off the cost of the venue and food).

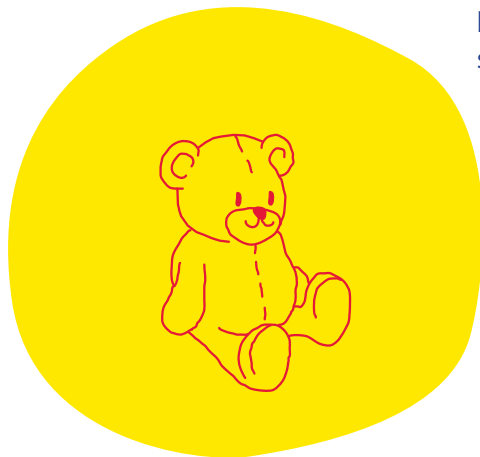


Hayley gathered a group of friends to enter Mountain Mayhem a 24-hour cycle relay. By entering a pre-organised event she could tap into their publicity and resources, then she set up her own sponsorship page on the website www.mycharitypage.com.

There are lots of pre-organised events like this, from sponsored runs to skydiving, that you could join in with.



When **Christine** became lady captain of her local golf club she made MERU her charity of the year and organised several fundraising events for the other players. Many sports clubs and businesses choose one charity a year to support, so why not suggest that groups you belong to support MERU?



Ann collects good-condition secondhand soft toys and uses them to run a highly popular Cuddly Creatures Tombola at local carnivals and community events. She washes and wraps each soft toy beautifully in cellophane, charging £1 per ticket – with each ticket winning a cute and cuddly prize!

MERU FUNDRAISING registration form

Name of Fundraiser:

Address of Fundraiser:

Postcode:

Telephone number:

Date of event:

Name of event:

Location of event:

I hope to raise £

Link to My Charity Page:

I would like MERU to publicise my event on: Facebook Friends Update

When complete, please either post this form or email the information to:

Becky Millington
Fundraiser
MERU
2 Eclipse Estate
30 West Hill
Epsom
Surrey KT19 8JD

Email: becky@meru.org.uk

Mother of two **Annie** ran the Royal Parks Half Marathon, raising nearly £1000 for MERU. "I wanted to raise money for a local charity that I felt a connection with," she said.

"I was really inspired when I went to visit MERU and saw the dedication and selflessness of the people who work there. They really must make a huge difference to the children and young people they design for. Everyone who sponsored me commented on what a great charity it is, and I think some gave more because MERU is so unique."





Paul cycled from Dover to London and asked friends and family to sponsor him. You can get sponsorship for all sorts of activities – from running a marathon to sitting in a bath of baked beans! MERU can supply you with paper sponsorship forms, or you can set up an online donation page such as [mycharitypage](#) – you could even ask for donations via Facebook.



LEGAL ISSUES fact sheet

If you are taking part in someone else's event, such as joining in a sponsored walk or marathon, then it is their responsibility to ensure the activity is safe and legal. However, if you want to run an event yourself then some of the things you need to consider are set out below.

The Institute of Fundraising produces the Codes of Fundraising Practice, which look in detail at the issues you need to consider when running public and group fundraising events. They can be used as a very helpful guide when planning an event or collection.

Licences

The simplest way to check that you have the correct licences to carry out your event is to contact your Local Authority. You are likely to need a licence if you are:

- Providing alcohol or entertainment (which includes recorded music)
- Holding a raffle, lottery or auction
- Doing any sort of public collection (collecting tins)

Food

Food at events often brings in lots of fundraising income, so we really encourage you to give it a go. But you need to make sure you comply with the Food Safety Act 1990 and Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995. You can get helpful, practical advice on understanding what you need to do from www.eatwell.gov.uk.

Health and safety

If you are organising an event you must carry out a risk assessment and implement the 'precautions' identified through that risk assessment. This pack contains a template that highlights some of the risks you need to consider, but as each event is different you must think carefully about what you are planning.



LEGAL ISSUES fact sheet – continued . . .

Insurance

Consider the issues your risk assessment has highlighted and make sure you have insurance cover for areas where you might be subject to a claim. Check the venue you are using has insurance that covers your activities and that you are able to access the insurance should you need to. If you are hiring any equipment or service, check they are fully insured. Double check the contract you are signing with them, it is not unheard of for providers to try to pass the insurance responsibility on to you.

First aid

Your licence, risk assessment, and/or insurance will most likely require you to have a first aid service on-site. There are a number of organisations that will provide this, including St John's Ambulance and British Red Cross.

Data protection

If you collect any information on the people donating money then there are rules governing how you can use that information and how it should be looked after. MERU's template sponsorship form has all the required information on it.

It is essential that any information you collect is used only in the way you have said it will be used and it must be stored safely. Unless you have permission to store information for longer, it should be destroyed once the event is over. You'll find lots of helpful advice at www.how2fundraise.org.

Inform the authorities

Depending on the type of activity, you may need to let the emergency services know about the event, including:

- Police
- Fire service
- Local Authority
- and for large events the Ambulance Service should be informed



Template for RISK ASSESSMENT

A full risk assesment should be carried out for all events. This will be a legal requirement in many circumstances. The following guidance should aid you in carrying out your risk assesments. A form to record your findings has also been provided.

Hazards	Who is at risk?	How severe is the risk?			What precautions need to be taken?
All hazards should be identified, including those relating to the individual activities and any equipment. A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm. Only note hazards which could result in significant harm . You may also want to consider financial risks in the same way.	For each hazard identified, list all those who may be affected. Examples might be: stewards, employees, volunteers, contractors, vendors, members of the public, people with disabilities, children, elderly people, local residents.	High, Medium or Low? How likely is someone to come to harm from each hazard? And how serious would that harm be?			For each risk consider whether or not it can be eliminated completely. If it cannot, then decide what must be done to reduce it to an acceptable level and who is responsible .
		High	Medium	Low	
Slipping, tripping or falling					
Fire or fire evacuation					
Lifting and carrying					
Temporary structures					
Loud noise					
Electrical safety and portable appliances					
Poor lighting, heating or ventilation, dust or fumes					
Vehicles - on site and traffic					
Crowd control and access					
Vulnerable visitors - children, elderly and disabled					
Cash collection and storage					
Cancellation					
Weather					

Mary-Ellen cooked a giant curry for her friends and neighbours and asked them to make a donation. Meanwhile Reigate Rotary Club baked delicious cakes and sold them on a stall at a local fete.



PRESS RELEASE help sheet

Want to **publicise** your event through the media?

Here's the usual format for a press release - it's helpful to stick to this, as it will ensure you don't forget anything important.

- 1.** Write **Press Release** at the top, so the editor knows what it is at a glance.
- 2.** Include the **date** – do try to avoid embargoes, they are largely unnecessary and journalists find them irritating.
- 3.** Write an attention-grabbing **headline**. Look in the newspapers to get some good ideas or contact MERU for help.
- 4.** Write a strong but short **opening paragraph** that sums up the main point of the story. Journalists are busy people and will make a decision on whether to use it (or bin it) based on this first paragraph.
- 5.** Then write the main body of the release – flesh out your story to include the **important details**.

Answer the key questions:

Who is the story about?

What have they done or what are they going to do?

Where will it happen?

When will it happen?

How are you going to do it?

Why – are you going to all this effort to support MERU?

The last one is often the key question – for example, do you have a **personal connection** with or experience of the charity and its work? (maybe someone in your family has benefited from our services). Or is there something that especially **appeals** to you about fundraising in a particular way? (maybe you have just learned to ride a bike and now you want to cycle from Lands End to John O'Groats).

- 6.** Include a **quote** if possible – this gives the editor or journalist a 'voice' to illustrate the story. Don't be surprised if they call you to get a more in depth interview.
- 7.** At the end put your own **contact details** in a paragraph headed Notes to Editors. Include a mobile number if possible. They may want to arrange to send a photographer or speak to you in more detail.

PRESS RELEASE help sheet – continued . . .

8. Try to keep this type of press release to **one page**. If the journalist wants more information they will get in touch with you
9. The easiest way to send press releases is now by **email** – if you don't have facilities to do this then you can still post them. Do call MERU if you would like any further advice on who to contact and how to reach them.
10. An important note about **timing** – If your event is happening on a specific day do give the newspaper or broadcaster as much notice as possible – their deadlines are sometimes well ahead of the date itself.

If you only let them know a couple of days before it's happening you could easily miss that week's paper, and then it's old news...

11. Try to send an interesting **photo**. Consider posing people in an unusual way – have a look in the publications you want to target. The kinds of photos they use will give you a good idea what the newspaper will like.

Unless you can arrange them in an interesting way that makes a good photo it's best to stick to photographing small groups of people rather than large crowds. A sea of people doesn't usually make an interesting newspaper picture.

Kids are especially eye-catching so major on them if you can. Same applies to cute animals!

Make sure you can see people's faces and that nobody has their eyes closed or their heads cut off! Snap away again and again to maximise the chances of getting a good picture – it's too risky to take just one or two.

Be careful about what's in the background... is it relevant to the story? If not it will be distracting or could just look downright odd!

Avoid the classic 'giant cheque presentation' photo. They're considered to be 'old hat' now, and publications loathe them!

If you are a business that's fundraising for MERU please be very, very subtle about including your logo. If your photo looks more like an advert for your company the newspaper probably won't use it. But if someone has a small logo on their tee shirt... that would almost certainly be fine.



MY CHARITY PAGE fact sheet

My Charity Page (www.mycharitypage.com) is a free online fundraising site that you can use to raise money for MERU. It's easy to use and they have a good FAQs or help section: <http://www.mycharitypage.com/help.php>

However, to get you started, I'll take you through how to set up a fundraiser page and an event.

Setting up your fundraiser page

First, as with most of these things, you need to register. Click on 'sign up', fill in your details, choose MERU as your charity, agree to the terms and conditions and you're done. You just need to get your verification email then you are ready to begin.

Creating an event

Begin by logging into your account and select 'my event' at the top of the page. Select 'add an event'. If you haven't already chosen to fundraise for MERU you can do so now. Add an event title and description, so that your friends can see what you are doing to raise money. Choose a fundraising target and the date that your fundraising ends (this is normally the date of the event).

Once you've finished your event

You can leave your page active for a while after the event, so you can still get people to sponsor you. Once you're happy that you've got all the money in you can select 'complete event' and it will be added to 'completed events' on your fundraising page. You can then add a new event and start fundraising all over again!

You can add photos and videos to your fundraising page and keep track of how much money you have coming in.

A good example of a page is <http://www.mycharitypage.com/MERUmayhem>. This page was set up by Hayley Smith, who got several friends (including some of MERU's engineers) to do the Mountain Mayhem challenge – a 24 hour bike ride. Hayley's page shows such a good use of pictures and videos that it won an extra £500 donation from My Charity Page!

Thank you SO MUCH!

