

Crowdfunder Crib Sheet

1. **Select your partner** – we suggest **Crowdfunder.co.uk** as they have a link with Sport England for matched fundraising (you can apply for funding directly from your admin account once you've launched the appeal site)
2. **The best ideas come from other clubs** – learn how they positioned their appeal.
 - Ours isn't perfect, but may help get you started. Check out [Help Save City of Milton Keynes Swim Club - a Community crowdfunding project in Milton Keynes by City of Milton Keynes Swim Club \(CMKSC\) \(crowdfunder.co.uk\)](#)
 - Crowdfunder also have tips on how to be effective with some handy films, but other clubs will give you specific ideas for how to tap up swimming people
3. **Decide how much you need to raise** – really important. From looking at the many swimming clubs who have completed crowdfunding, this is what you can expect (**including** matched funding from Sport England – explanation below):
 - Large/city clubs typically raise £20-25k
 - Medium clubs £10-20k
 - Small clubs <£10k
 - If you therefore need £20k from your appeal, set this as your target with a stretch of a couple of k above this (consider the stretch as a bonus)
 - Once you have the site live, you can apply for matched funding through the link on your Crowdfunder admin account. Typically Sport England will look to give you half '**what you need**', so if your appeal is for £20k, you could get the max of £10k from them – this goes towards your £20k (so you only need to raise £10k yourself) BUT you'll only actually get it when you hit your own £10k.
 - The challenge here is that if you pitch your fundraising too low, you won't get that much from them, but if you go too high, you may not get what you need to. So always start with what you need and work from there
 - When Sport England decides how much to match, they add this to your site, so it looks like you're flying and helps build momentum with your campaign – and you can message "we have to hit £X to unlock £Y from Sport England"
 - Don't be nervous. You'll be surprised how many of your members and ex-members rally around you. Most large clubs should be able to raise £10k themselves, so the £10k from Sport England is 'free money'
 - Get your matched funding request in early. If you hang around and manage to get lots raised via your club before your bid goes in, Sport England may conclude you can reach your target with minimal contribution from them – this happened to us at CMK. We got off to a flier and we ended up having to negotiate hard and push our target to £25k to get the full £10k from Sport England, whereas Maxwell got in earlier and secured their £10k against a lower target of £20k
4. **Rewards are crucial** – and something Sport England will assess in awarding matched funding.
 - Look at what other clubs offer.
 - Run a raffle and get people to buy their tickets through the site. We set our price at £10 and raised £780. People are more likely to throw a tenner into this sort of reward linked to an appeal than if you sell tickets at a gala or via email
 - Encourage people to do their own fundraising and wash the proceeds through your appeal site. For example, one of our members walked up Snowdon (when you could do such things) and his £1500 sponsorship went against the appeal target

- Sell branded club merchandise (special edition hats or water bottles). We offered a free bottle for a £10 donation knowing we could buy them for £2.50 from our supplier. Interestingly, we had lots of £10 donations where people didn't select this reward, but still shifted 62 (and that's £450 profit for the campaign)
- If you have famous members or ex-members, get something swimming related to raffle or sell. Joss Ulyett secured some ISL branded stuff for us and it literally flew out of the door
- Ask your members to buy goods that you know people will want and get them to donate to the club – e.g. Echo Dot costs £35 on offer from Amazon with an RRP of £45. If someone donates you can charge what you want via your appeal – i.e. £30 promoted as an RRP of £45 is a bargain. If stuff is slow to shift, you can always run a sale in the last week, which we did. We literally cleared just about everything that was donated
- Do members have a service they can offer and donate? We had personal training sessions, hair cuts, massages etc. Again, offer at lower than RRP
- Get your kit supplier to donate stuff you can sell below RRP. Our supplier TYR was generous
- Consider business rewards e.g. sponsorship of your open meets when they can restart
- Could your coaches offer personal swimming training when out of lockdown – e.g. one hour personal skills session with X for £50

5. Consider how you pitch your appeal – we went for 'help save CMK' and used this as the main message throughout (i.e. we could close if we don't raise £X).

- On your appeal message, focus on how you support kids, what swimming does for them (don't forget mental health etc.)
- Reinforce you're not for profit, run by volunteers, get no funding from local authorities etc.
- Mention history, famous past members and achievements
- Go hard on how Corona has hammered the club financially, that survival is at risk and what you will do with the money – try to think of things beyond just paying the bills (e.g. help us to expand our academy when we're back training)

6. Consider how you launch your appeal

- A video featuring the swimmers is simple yet effective. We scripted a simple story, chunked into 10 segments, asked the kids of committee members to record a segment each on an iPhone then used an app (we used GoPro) to stitch the films together with a bit of editing to remove before and after pauses, then added some pictures and selected a soundtrack. Probably took 3 hours of time yet simply and effectively told our story. We used it on the Crowdfunder website and on social media
- We launched the appeal at our annual presentation meeting – the timing was lucky – when everyone was together on Zoom. We explained the financial plight, showed the film, and gave everyone a call to action:
 - Consider supporting us financially if you can
 - There are rewards for donations – pick up a bargain
 - Can you donate a reward (a good or service)?
 - Spread the word via your social media
 - Push our story to your contacts – work, family, friends
- Social media is key. You have to keep pushing via the club, but get members to push hard too. Local Facebook sites work (we reached lots of ex members from MK community sites) and get the media on board too (Witney were particularly effective with this)
- We also used the #saveCMK hashtag on all our Tweets

- If you have contacts with ex-members, work them
- Many businesses support employees' community work, so ask members to check if theirs do. We got lots via this route, and most went for the business sponsorship rewards

7. **Reinforcement is key.** It's hard work, but you have to continue updating your campaign and pushing members – and you need thick skin

- Add rewards as and when the members donate them and use this as an opportunity to push again and reinforce. We got quite a long list donated and then emailed members and spotlighted them individually via social media. We were fortunate that we launched in the immediate run up to Christmas, so pitched as an opportunity to do some lockdown xmas shopping – always consider angles for promoting
- Use the updates section of your Crowdfunder website as you make progress or when new rewards are launched, email members and post via your social media
- Crowdfunder allows you to embed a widget of your appeal on your club website – see [City of Milton Keynes SC : \(teamunify.com\)](https://www.teamunify.com) It's really easy to do by following the instructions on your Crowdfunder admin account

Good luck.

If you have any specific questions, please feel free to contact me on stephen.wynne-jones@hotmail.co.uk